

# *The Spirit*

*Byron Presbyterian Church     Mar– Apr. 2009*

*(Web Page Version)*

## ***The Basics***

Sunday Worship happens at 9:45 AM  
Christian Education for all ages on the 2nd Sunday of the month.  
Nursery Care is available for young children  
Church office phone is 548-2800  
Contact Pastor James Renfrew at 548-2800.

## ***Calendar***

***Beef on Weck Dinner; Sunday, March 15, 11:00 AM–2:00 PM;  
A fundraiser for Youth Group summer projects. Adults \$6, Youth \$3.  
Take-outs available***

***Bring a Friend Sunday, March 22 - 9:45 AM Worship***

***Palm Sunday, April 5 - 9:45 AM Worship***

***Maundy Thursday, April 9 - 6:00 PM Potluck Dinner and Communion Service***

***Good Friday, April 10 - Ecumenical service, Time and place to be announced***

***Easter Sunrise, April 12 - 7:30 AM at South Byron United Methodist Church, followed by a free Breakfast***

***Easter Sunday Celebration - 9:45 AM Worship, followed by an Easter Egg Hunt for Children***

## ***One Great Hour of Sharing***

For more than 50 years, Presbyterians have joined with Christians throughout the nation in supporting One Great Hour of Sharing, responding to Christ's love for all people by joyfully sharing that love with people in need. The refugee and the stranger have found food and safe shelter; those stunned by the aftermath of disasters have found relief and help rebuilding and communities seeking to take control of their future have found partners in development.



## Where do the monies go that are collected through this appeal?

### Presbyterian Hunger Program (36 percent)

For ministries working to alleviate hunger and eliminate its causes, responding with compassion and justice to poor and hungry people in local communities, in the nation and throughout the world, as well as ministries addressing homelessness and affordable housing.

### Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (32 percent)

For disaster response and ministries with refugees.

### Self-Development of People (32 percent)

For partnerships with groups of people who are oppressed by poverty or social systems, who want to take charge of their own lives, have organized to do something about their own condition and have decided what they need to do to produce long-term benefits for themselves.

To learn more about these programs and what the monies received do, please visit the website:

<http://www.pcusa.org/oghs/about.htm>.

We will be accepting your contributions on Easter Sunday. Envelopes will be available at church on Easter Sunday. Bulletin inserts describing various projects that this collection has helped make happen will be included in weekly bulletins leading up to the offering. A special skit will be portrayed by members of our youth group on March 22.

## *Forty Days of Prayer and Study*

We have prepared a prayer book for the season of Lent. Included our Bible readings, stories and prayers —prepared by participants in the Byron Presbyterian Church—for each of the days leading up to Easter. If you would like to obtain a copy, please call the church office or pick one up on any Sunday. Many thanks to those who contributed readings, stories and prayers!

## *Preaching Themes for March and April*

Prepare for Sunday worship by reading the Bible story for the day!

MAR 1	Mark 1:9-13 "Forty Days"	APR 5	Mark 11:1-11 "Not What I Want"
MAR 8	Genesis 8 & 9 "The Flood"	APR 12	I John 1:1 "Hear, See, Touch"
MAR 15	Mark 8:31-38 "The Cross"	APR 19	Guest Preacher
MAR 22	Mark 11:15-17 "A House of Prayer"	APR 26	I John 3:1-7 "What We Shall Be"
MAR 29	John 12:20-33 "The Hour"		

## *From the Pastor*

*"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" [II Corinthians 5:17]*

*Dear Friends,*

*Paul wrote these words nearly two thousand years ago, but he continues to amaze: "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see everything has become new." If anyone is in Christ - that means you - there is a new creation! Some of you read different translations of the Bible (Revised Standard, Good News, New English, Living), so where I am reading "new creation", you may be reading "new being", "new person", or, in one case, "new world" - which is the most amazing of all: if anyone is in Christ - that means you - there is a new world!*

*Just think of it, when your heart moves towards Jesus Christ, the whole world changes. New being, new person, new creation, new world - no matter how you translate it, things are different when we turn to Jesus Christ.*

*Paul has this exciting concept, that Christians can feel the new creation taking shape right in our hearts, and that as we step forward to become Christians, we see, feel, and taste that new world taking shape.*

*The days leading up to Easter become our opportunity to imagine and embrace the new world that God offers in Jesus Christ.*

*Always in the Hope of Christ,*

*Jim Renfrew*

## ***Deacons in Action***

The Deacon's have been meeting monthly. We welcomed new member Luan Riner, and thanked outgoing member Melanie Nesbitt. We will be starting to work on our Easter Basket project, so look for more information to come about that.

We continue to collect food items for the emergency food program through the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army is also happy to get grocery bags. Any and all nonperishable food items are welcome.

The Deacon's would like to remind all members of the church that there is a library of Christian Books available at the church, and any and all are encouraged to sign out a book and enjoy.

Deacons are also working with other churches and community organizations to develop a welcome packet for all new residents of our town.

## ***Session Notes***

Elders *Gwen George, Mary Ann Blair* and *Pam Kenward* have joined Session for a term of three years. *Harlan George, Jane Ezard,* and *Luan Riner* are the new Deacons class. And *Don C. Britt* and *Richard Mathes* begin a term of service on Trustees. *Mary Ann Blair* is now Clerk of Session. *Marc Kenward* is the new chair of Trustees. *Pam Lynch* continues as moderator of Deacons. Copies of the 2008 Annual Report are available from the church office on request.

Many thanks to those who helped with our recent fundraising events: Pancake Breakfast (\$1163 was raised in support of the church budget) and Spaghetti Dinner (\$874 was raised in support of a youth mission trip). The addition of gift baskets as auction items was a big draw.

Session has appointed a new Finance Committee to give focused attention to our budget during a challenging year in the economy. Members include Kim Dewey, Don B. Britt, Robin Glazier and David Franke. Noting an end of year deficit of \$3000 and a 2009 Budget that includes another \$4500 deficit (a total of \$7500), an "Extra Mile" appeal letter was sent to church members at the end of February seeking additional financial support in 2009.

Some additional fundraising efforts are being planned, including the addition of an auction to Memorial Day festivities, and a Roast Pork Dinner in conjunction with Heritage Day on July 25th.

A brief Congregational Meeting has been called for Sunday, March 22nd, for the purpose of electing two people to fill vacancies on Trustees and Deacons, and to elect a congregational representative to the 2009 Nominating Committee.

Trustees are working on a claim to the manufacturer to replace defective roof shingles, and to repair loose flashing on the steeple.

## ***Natural Church Development***

The Membership Committee recently met with General Presbyter Linda Badger-Becker to review our congregation's progress with the Natural Church Development program. She has recommended that we conduct a second survey in the spring to measure our progress with "Passionate Spirituality". We expect to do the second survey in May.

One approach we have been following to address Passionate Spirituality is to create ways for church participants to share their faith stories. Many thanks to Faline Tyler and Audrey Blount for sharing stories about family Bibles. And thanks to all who contributed personal stories to our Lenten Prayer booklet.

## ***Abitibi Paper Retriever Program***

We want everyone's newspapers, magazines, office and school papers, shopping catalogs, mail, envelopes, folders, fax and copy paper, colored paper! Bring it to the bins behind the church - it's that easy! No cardboard, please. We earn \$5 per ton.

## ***From Trustees***

Many thanks for snow shoveling volunteers. If you haven't signed up, look for the list at the rear of the sanctuary.

The Nursery School will be closing at the end of May. Trustees are looking for your ideas about how to use this space in the future.

## ***Hospital Protocol***

If you wish to have our pastor visit you during a hospital stay, please notify the church office. Due to privacy guidelines, hospitals no longer contact churches with information about hospitalized church members.

## ***Backpack Program Volunteers Needed***

Our church has helped to organize and kick-off the beginning of a new program at the Byron-Bergen Central School, the Backpack Program. The program is similar to a program that has been in place at the LeRoy Central School for a few years, which in turn is based on a nationwide effort in various states.

Basically, the program provides nutritious, easy to eat items for the weekend for children in families that may be struggling economically. The school social worker identifies the children and the program is anonymous (meaning we, and all those involved in making this happen, are unaware who the backpacks go to). We launched the program in December. Each week, a child from the family stops in the office at school and brings home a backpack with food items in it, then returns the backpack on Monday to be refilled. Most have been coming back very consistently.

***What might be in the backpack each week?*** We try to provide 100% juice drinks, 2 easy to prepare/eat breakfast items (such as instant oatmeal, small boxes of cereal, oatmeal breakfast bars, etc.), at least 1 and sometimes 2 lunch items (individual microwave soups or meals, individual mac & cheese, etc.), 2-3 healthy snacks (such as peanuts, raisins, granola bars, animal crackers, cheese crackers, etc.) and applesauce and fruit cups. The items are all shelf-stable and individually packed.

We have been packing bags on Thursday afternoons. Gillam-Grant Community Center graciously has allowed us to use the kitchen each week to pack the bags and to store food items. The bags get delivered to the elementary school on Friday mornings. Currently, we are supplying bags for 8 families (total of 18 children).

Monetary support has been received from several local churches, civic organizations, and businesses, including South Byron Methodist Church, North Bergen Presbyterian Church, Bergen Presbyterian Church, Bergen Rod & Gun Club, Tops Supermarket (Batavia), Bergen American Legion, Stone Church Presbyterian Church and the Bergen Grange. We are thankful for any monetary or volunteer support that we receive—and it is beneficial to children in our own community! If you would like to make a donation to the program, please send checks to Byron Presbyterian Church, 6293 West Main St., Byron. Please clearly mark your checks with "Backpack Program".

More volunteers are needed to make this program work! It is quite simple to do and only takes about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour each week.

## ***Choir News***

Choir is back! If you've ever wanted to join in - come on down!!! Rehearsals are on Thursday evenings at 7 PM and Sunday mornings at 9 AM. Feel free to join us - if you can't make all the rehearsals and or Sundays don't worry about it. Join us as your schedule allows. We're happy to have you join when you can. Youth in 7th grade and up are welcome to join as well!

## ***Tables and Chairs***

Here is information about borrowing tables and chairs: Folding tables and chairs may be loaned to church members free of charge. Non-members are charged a fee of \$5 per table plus \$5 for each set of five chairs. Those wishing to borrow these must make arrangements well in advance with the Church Secretary, 548-2800. Borrowed items must be returned within 24 hours. Make your reservations early during the graduation season!

## ***Prayer Shawl Ministry***

Please contact the church office if you would like to participate in or support this ministry of love. There is no charge for a shawl - they are a labor of love - except that we welcome donations of 3 skeins (same color) of yarn for each prayer shawl. More than 60 shawls have been offered to people in the church and community. Let us know if you know of someone who might enjoy receiving a prayer shawl.

## ***Church Finances Update***

So where do we stand after the first month of the new year? We finished 2008 with a \$3000 deficit. And the January congregation meeting recommended a budget for 2009 that shows an additional \$4,421.57 deficit. (You can request a copy of these financial materials by calling the church. They are also available on-line on the church web page.) While a deficit is nothing new in the life of our church, in the current economic climate it is important to address it as a very serious matter.

At the congregational meeting many helpful suggestions were made for reducing the deficit. The Finance Committee discussed these at length and is taking the following actions: (1) Sent out an "Extra

Mile" appeal letter at the end of February, with initial commitments of \$2,156 as of March 1, (2) Requested that Session call a Congregational Meeting for April 26th to review progress during in the First Quarter, (3) Prepare a graph in the newsletter to track our progress during the year. (4) Encourage additional fundraising efforts.

We pray that you will be able to respond to the Extra-Mile appeal. Please use the coupon that was included in the letter you received so that we can keep track of additional commitments. This will help us give a detailed report to the congregation in April. If each giving unit offers an additional \$150-200 we will be able to cover the deficit.

## ***Presbytery of Genesee Valley Resource Saturdays***

**Saturday March 14, 9:30 am-11 am; Registration Deadline: Thursday March 12**

Church Administration for Small Churches; Leader: Sharon Hann, Operations Manager, Presbytery of Genesee Valley: When you hear the words "church administration", you probably think, "That's something that large churches need to think about. We don't need to worry about that here." But every church has to manage its resources—its facilities, its people and its money. Good stewardship and effective management of church resources is particularly important for small churches with small budgets and small paid or volunteer staffs.

Sacred Cyber-Space; Leader: Rev. Phillip Phaneuf, Pastor of Youth and Young Adults, Asbury First United Methodist Church: when a visitor walks through the doors of your church, you want them to experience the very best of the welcoming Christ within the sacred space. How, then, do we move this same intention to the cyberspace, the "sacred cyberspace" that your church literally displays to the world? Is your website inviting? Is your website welcoming? What elements of technology are crucial to conveying a relevant faith community to online visitors?

