



UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KEOKUK
The Church by the River

Volume 11 Issue 4

April 2014

RIVERSIDE CURRENT

From the Pastor's Desk

The Puritans, who were our fore-fathers and mothers in the faith, incorporated into their daily routines what they referred to as “secret”, or personal, prayer (see Matthew 6:6). Their daily practice, however, was considerably more involved than what most of us would think of as daily prayer. The term included self-examination and confession, meditation, scripture reading, intercessory prayer, and various spiritual disciplines, like journaling, service to the poor, fasting, and reading theological books. All this effort was directed to cultivating the strong, abiding faith which would lead to an honest and earnest relationship with God.

All of us want to be in that kind of relationship with God, but it can seem overwhelming sometimes. How do you even get started developing spiritual habits like that? Well, like with any habit worth having, you pick a place and start. One of the easier places for me to get started was reading books about God and faith – I had a cup of coffee every morning, and so I started reading while I was drinking my coffee. Some days, it was only a page or two, but even a page or two was enough to get me thinking. And it was enough to make me hungry for more.

My friend, Dottie, absolutely devours books on personal prayer, and they are a great consolation and inspiration for her. One of her favorites is “Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire”, by Jim Cymbala. If you are thrilled by the idea of God’s Spirit invading your heart and teaching you to pray, you need to borrow the book on your way out today! Virginia, on the other hand, wanted to know why there were different translations of the Bible, which in turn led her to ask how the Bible came to be written in the first place. She started with the Gospel of Q (which I’d be happy to loan you), but quickly moved on to the history and archeology of biblical times. I love science, but I really struggle when people (on both sides) tell me I can’t believe both science and Christianity, that I have to choose one or the other. John Haught’s new book, “Making Sense of Evolution: Darwin, God, and the Drama of Life”, takes a very different approach. I’m still thinking about some of the things he said and how they seem to fit so well with what I know of God and Jesus from the Bible. That book is also on the book cart out in the Narthex – if you’re interested in science, feel free to take it home – and maybe we can talk about it when you’re done.

Take a few minutes on your way in or out, and pick up a good book to read. And if you have a favorite book, one that has meant a lot to your own spiritual growth, please share it – write a little review for the announcements, or mention it during CONNECTIONS, or bring it in so others can read it too. That first step of the journey is the crucial one.

Praising God always, in all ways!

Church Calendar April 2014

Tue Apr 1, 2014

2pm Pastor's Office Hours

Wed Apr 2, 2014

11:30am Lunch-N-Learn

Where: HyVee's Cafeteria

3:30pm Prayer group

6pm WoRM Wednesdays

7pm Confirmation Class

Thu Apr 3, 2014

10:30am Tri-State Women's Connection

6:30pm 50 Ways to Help Save the Earth

Where: 11 Park Place

Sat Apr 5, 2014

9am Pastor's Office Hours

Sun Apr 6, 2014

9:30am Adult Christian Ed

10:30am Worship Service

Tue Apr 8, 2014

2pm Pastor's Office Hours

Wed Apr 9, 2014

11:30am Lunch-N-Learn

Where: HyVee's Cafeteria

3:30pm Prayer group

6pm WoRM Wednesdays

7pm Confirmation Class

Thu Apr 10, 2014

6:30pm 50 Ways to Help Save the Earth

Where: 11 Park Place

6:30pm Caring Hearts Grief Support

Sat Apr 12, 2014

8:30am Earth Day Clean-up

Where: Rand Park & church

Sun Apr 13, 2014

9:30am Adult Christian Ed

10:30am Worship Service

Tue Apr 15, 2014

2pm Pastor's Office Hours

6pm Session Meeting

Wed Apr 16, 2014

8:30am Keokuk Ministerial Association

Where: All Saints Rectory

11:30am Lunch-N-Learn

Where: HyVee's Cafeteria

3:30pm Prayer group

6pm WoRM Wednesdays

7pm Confirmation Class

Thu Apr 17, 2014

6:30pm Maundy Thursday Service

Fri Apr 18, 2014

1pm Community Good Friday Service

Where: Bethany Baptist Church

Sat Apr 19, 2014

9am Pastor's Office Hours

Sun Apr 20, 2014

9:30am Adult Christian Ed

10:30am Worship Service

Tue Apr 22, 2014

2pm Pastor's Office Hours

Wed Apr 23, 2014

11:30am Lunch-N-Learn

Where: HyVee's Cafeteria

3:30pm Prayer group

6pm WoRM Wednesdays

7pm Confirmation Class

Thu Apr 24, 2014

6:30pm Caring Hearts Grief Support

Sat Apr 26, 2014

9am Pastor's Office Hours

Sun Apr 27, 2014

9:30am Adult Christian Ed

10:30am Worship Service

Tue Apr 29, 2014

2pm Pastor's Office Hours

Wed Apr 30, 2014

11:30am Lunch-N-Learn

Where: HyVee's Cafeteria

3:30pm Prayer group

6pm WoRM Wednesdays

7pm Confirmation Class

April Birthdays

2	Jana Hausch
3	Sara Shaffer
4	Marianna Derr
5	Heidi Cannon-Spring
8	Alicia Peterson
11	Angie Ames
21	Melody Burke
24	J. H. Wilkins
27	Ashley McMahon



2 March 2014

- Randi asked us to pray for the family and friends of Charlotte Hilmer, as they mourn her passing. She also offered a prayer of thanks for everyone who jumped in to help with the funeral arrangements.
- KJ asked us to keep the confirmation class in our prayers as they finish their retreat at Camp Wyoming. Dena especially asked us to pray for her as they all head off to the tubing slope!
- Barb R. let us know that Amy and Danny Miller are recovering, and asked us to keep up the prayers.
- Barb also asked us to keep LeRoy in our prayers. He is suffering from sciatica pain, and would appreciate calls and cards.
- Bill C. offered a prayer of thanksgiving for his swift recovery from knee surgery.

9 March 2014

- Rev. Randi reminded us of the Ash Wednesday service at 7 pm, invited us to a Lenten study on creation care at her home on Thursday evenings, and let us know that March newsletters are in the church mailboxes.
- Joe asked that we keep the Peterson family in our prayers as they mourn the death of father and grandfather Ken.
- Ann invited members to the World Community Day program being presented by Church Women United on March 7th at 1 pm.
- K.J. welcomed Amber and Andy back to Iowa.

16 March 2014

- Lori asked that we pray for her Uncle Harry and Aunt Marie, who are undergoing cancer treatments. She also requested traveling mercies for KJ and Dena, who are returning today from a visit to Arkansas to be with them.
- Kim lifted a prayer of thanksgiving for the connections we have in our church family. When Emily's next internship moved suddenly to a new town, Barb's parents, John and Beth, showed them all around town and helped them find a place for Emily to live.
- Steve let us know that Amanda and her family are currently visiting in Dubuque, and will then be moving on to their new home in West Des Moines. He offered a prayer of joy and thanksgiving to have them so close again.
- Joe shared his excitement over the Wednesday WoRM program, explaining the "decorations" on the chandelier to us. The children have been studying the Parable of the Sower, and spent the last session building "trees" with deep roots (biblical truths) and beautiful fruits (Christian virtues).

23 March 2014

- Randi let us know that Mae Foster's family is throwing a birthday party for her next Saturday at 1:00 pm in honor of Mae's 100th birthday. Please drop by to wish her a happy birthday!
- Cindy K. asked us to remember musicians and people coming together this afternoon for the concert at The Grand, and invited us to attend. May it be a successful and enriching afternoon for everyone who participates.
- Steve gave us the progress report on the great cross-country moving adventure of Amanda and her family. They'll be safely in their new home by Tuesday (which Kaylie

calls her castle). Most of all, he asked us to share in a prayer of thanksgiving for the blessing of having family close enough to spend time with.

- Ray let us know about the apprenticeship process he's applying for and how difficult it is – lots of applicants! He offered a prayer of praise for this opportunity, though, and shared how God is putting new possibilities in front of him to reach for.
- KJ offered a prayer of thanks for the extended family come to help celebrate Molly's baptism and to support Joe and Jessica.

30 March 2014

- Randi reminded the session to stay after worship for a brief meeting to receive new members.
- Joe let us know that LeRoy is grateful for visits and calls. If you can drop by to visit, the best hours are noon to six.
- Barb R. asked that we continue to hold Amy and Danny in prayer. Amy is struggling with her faith as Danny's medical challenges go on.
- Kim shared a prayer of thanks for the commitment of our young adults, who want to revitalize the church. She asked that we "let go" of our problems and our worries, and see what wonderful things God is doing.
- Sally asked us to pray for Barb and Harold, who are facing difficult health challenges ahead.

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