



UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KEOKUK
The Church by the River

Volume 11 Issue 2

February 2014

RIVERSIDE CURRENT

From the Pastor's Desk

Presbyterians love their statistics, and the end of the year is the time we look back, review, assess, and weigh. Some of our statistics are cause for a twinge of sadness. Losses are not just numbers, but friends and family members who have gone on before us, and we miss them. Other statistics cause a good degree of anxiety. Fewer people attend, donations decrease, many of those who do come have no interest in membership. We experience very few adult baptisms in our denomination, women still outnumber men by a pretty fair margin, and, on the whole, our congregations still have few persons of color.

You can see similar things in the data for our church. But, there is one difference that stands out like a flashing neon light. The average age of worshippers in the PC(USA) is 61 and rising. In our congregation, however, it's 45 and falling. Throughout the denomination, you will find 6 worshippers over the age of 65 for every one that is under the age of 25. But here at the church by the river, you need to flip that number – we had one and a half worshippers under 25 for every one over 65. I wonder what God is up to with that?

There are many small congregations in our denomination, with circumstances much like ours, who have no children at all. That does not mean those congregations are left without important work to do – people of all ages need to know the love and compassion of Jesus. But we have been given an extraordinary opportunity here and a clear responsibility to children, youth, young adults, and the people who love them.

There are one important thing you can contribute right away to support our work, and that is your regular presence and participation at worship and at one or more church activities of your choice. There is no substitute for you in our community – both children and adults need the friendship and fellowship of other Christians. There are opportunities to teach, to study, to pray, to visit, and to play! Come and see what kind of a life God dreams for us.

Praising God always, in all ways!

Church Calendar February 2014

Sat Feb 1

09:00 Pastor's Office Hours

Sun Feb 2

09:30 Adult Christian Ed

10:30 Worship Service

Tue Feb 4

14:00 Pastor's Office Hours

Wed Feb 5

11:30 Lunch-N-Learn

Where: HyVee's Cafeteria

15:30 Prayer group

18:00 WoRM Wednesdays

19:00 Confirmation Class

Sat Feb 8

09:00 Pastor's Office Hours

Sun Feb 9

09:30 Adult Christian Ed

10:30 Worship w/ communion

Tue Feb 11

14:00 Pastor's Office Hours

Wed Feb 12

11:30 Lunch-N-Learn

Where: HyVee's Cafeteria

15:30 Prayer group

18:00 WoRM Wednesdays

19:00 Confirmation Class

Thu Feb 13

14:00 Grief Support

Sat Feb 15

08:00 163rd Stated Meeting,
Presbytery of East Iowa
(no office hours - pastor)

Sun Feb 16

09:30 Adult Christian Ed

10:30 Worship Service

Tue Feb 18

14:00 Pastor's Office Hours

18:00 Session Meeting

Wed Feb 19

08:30 Keokuk Ministerial Association

11:30 Lunch-N-Learn

Where: HyVee's Cafeteria

15:30 Prayer group

18:00 WoRM Wednesdays

19:00 Confirmation Class

Fri Feb 21

16:00 Confirmation Retreat

Sat Feb 22

08:00 Confirmation Retreat

(no office hours – pastor)

Sun Feb 23

08:00 Confirmation Retreat

09:30 Adult Christian Ed

10:30 Worship Service

Tue Feb 25

14:00 Pastor's Office Hours

Wed Feb 26

11:30 Lunch-N-Learn

Where: HyVee's Cafeteria

15:30 Prayer group

18:00 WoRM Wednesdays

19:00 Confirmation Class

Thu Feb 27

14:00 Grief Support

February Birthdays

1	Beckah Swan
7	Amber Hall
9	Jeannie McMahan
11	Blayne Billings
12	Micah Winston
17	Steve McMahan
24	Rebecca Bliss
28	Angela Scully



12 January 2014

- Dena asked for volunteers to help with Eagle Days.
- Joann offered thanks for all those who helped with Doris Heller's funeral dinner.
- Kim offered prayers for Bill Heller as he mourns Doris.
- Barb A. introduced her visitors, parents John and Beth Kerr, and brother David Kerr and his wife Janelle.
- Ann let us know that the church directory is almost ready and to please check to make sure all information is correct.
- Steve asked us to keep Billy Graham in our prayers.
- Barb R. has asked the church to pray for her son, Ken. He was rushed by ambulance to the University hospital in Iowa City on Wed. night. He has pneumonia, a blood clot in the lung, and is very anemic. Please include his wife Cecilia and daughter Denise in your prayers as well.
- We also offer our condolences to Karen Wetzel on the recent death of her father.

19 January 2014

- Rev. Randi asked us to pray for Marianna Derr and family, as they mourn the death of Ernie. She also lifted Karen Wetzel, as she grieves for her father.
- Barb R. has asked the church to pray for her son, Ken, as he begins treatment for recurrent cancer.
- Joann lifted prayer for Lani, as he goes in for surgery tomorrow. She also asked the deacons to meet briefly following worship.
- Kim shared a joy. Her niece, Jessica, had her baby 5 weeks early, but both mother and daughter Molly are doing well.
- Ray asked us to keep Angela's Aunt Pam in our prayers. She is having a difficult time with recovery following her surgery.
- Cindy D. lifted praise for two recent joys. Steve announced his retirement from the paper at the end of the month, and they are looking forward to this new chapter in life. They also found out that Amanda and her family will be moving back to Iowa, which is cause for tremendous happiness.

26 January 2014

- Rev. Randi announced the annual congregational meeting, noting that the articles of incorporation will be taken up at a future meeting.
- Rev. Randi let us know that long-time member Mildred Carlson died on Thursday, and asked us to keep the Swan, Sisk, and Hausch families in our prayers.
- She also told us that Mike's sister, Becky, had a stroke and was in the hospital in Iowa City. She asked us to pray for Becky's complete recovery.
- Ray asked that we keep Barb R. in our prayers. She has two sons in the hospital and is in need of strength and peace of heart.
- Cindy offered a prayer of thanks for the gifts Ann has shared with us preparing the church directory and the Deacon's book.
- Meg lifted a praise to God for providing Beckah with a wonderful opportunity for an internship in the ICU at U of I. Along with this, we pray for God's guidance for Beckah, as she takes on this difficult path of service.
- Sally lifted a praise for Kylie's success in passing her CNA test.

Per capita dues for 2014 have been set at \$34.02. This money goes to support missions at both the presbytery and national levels, things no congregation could do by themselves. It helps support missions both here at home and overseas, sharing the good news of God's love in word of hope and deeds of compassion – missions like Camp Wyoming, Presbyterian colleges and seminaries, and relief agencies like Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. We pay this amount for every confirmed member on our rolls. Your special contribution for per capita goes entirely to support the greater mission of the church – just note “per capita” in the memo section of your check. Thank you in advance for your generous support.

The life and work of the church is made up of many individual tasks – someone folds the bulletins, someone shovels snow, others read Bible stories to the children, some run errands for our homebound members, other people type or make phone calls, take attendance or pray. Everyone of us has a gift to share with the people of God, for the benefit of the world God loves. Think about how you might like to be involved, and volunteer your time and talent – you'll be glad you did. Talk to Rev. Randi or any of your elders.

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