

Winning in a Zero-Sum-Game-World

Isaiah 2: 4: He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

After being away from routine for two weeks, my homecoming was met with grief and sadness as I turned on the news. Alone, the tragedy that escalated in the last two weeks between Israelis and Palestinians makes my heart ache. Add to this the senseless shooting of an airliner full of civilians, leaders avoidance of leading for justice with compassion for unaccompanied children fleeing violence, and I am ready to pull up my spandex and saddle my bike to escape a hurting world.

While acknowledging the reality of the complexities of the conflicts that surround us, may we be challenged even more so to become more knowledgeable by broadening the scope of information we receive. I would encourage all of us to be open to go deeper, to hearing different sides, and challenging our sources of information that tend to support the way our ideological wind is already blowing. For one of the great injustices perpetuating division today is our tendency to live in our own echo chambers that only compounds the zero-sum-game thinking that categorizes my winning at the expense of the other losing. It is this kind of thinking that dehumanizes and demonizes the other at the great cost of sacrificing collegiality or compromise by castigating this as weakness resulting in an all in, winner take all world. Martin Luther King Jr. said it best, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

Thankfully, our journey is paved by an unconventional and different kind of leader. A leader who entered into the fray of conflict to stand for the marginalized, oppressed, and



the outcast. A leader who when the going got tough, proclaimed in his most challenging moment to the masses that had turned on him, “Forgive them, for they know not what they do.” **In a world that wants to display its power through military might and prosperity, may we open our eyes to the power displayed in Jesus Christ—the power found in the paradox of weakness.** The power of entering into humanity in the weakness of a baby, born of a single mother, who didn’t have a place to lay his head, and who died a criminal’s death on a cross. A leader who challenged zero-sum thinking by challenging the power structures. To follow this leader means to live by the example already set by being willing to carry a cross. May this confront us as much today as it did 2000 years ago by redefining the term ‘winning.’

Winning as a follower of Christ, may we risk together entering deeper, and leading ourselves unconventionally to seek kindness, love justice, and walk humbly together with our God. Winning means we can go deeper and are willing to risk asking hard questions and challenge conventional thinking that is quick to align our self-interests with conveniently labeling the good guys and the bad guys. Winning, may we have the humility to find conviction in the many stories that challenge status quo by raising up examples of the Samaritan being the neighbor, or celebrating the degenerate son who squandered everything, or the many references of the outsider as the one who displays the greatest faith. To follow in the way of Jesus Christ, may our eyes be opened to shatter the categories that label others as ‘enemy.’ For if we were to really learn what it means to love our enemies, we would truly discover that there is only one kind of person, and we call that person our neighbor. The easy path is to jump back on the bicycle and hide from the conflicts that surround us, or to align ourselves into groups of like-mindedness. But to bear our cross means we enter into the struggle and truly wrestle with what it means to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ. For all of God’s people, may God’s love and mercy prevail.



Spirit of Life is again participating in our local school district’s **School Supplies Program**. We will be purchasing supplies for students in need from Highland Elementary, which is located just north of our church. A list of requested items is on the table in the entry. Updates will be made to this list. Supplies will be delivered to Highland Elementary in Mid-August. Watch for sales of the items in late July and August. Thanks for participating in this fun project! The school has always shown great appreciation for our donations.

VITAL SIGNS...for May

WEEK	ATTENDANCE		(+/-)	CONTRIBUTIONS		(+/-)
	2013	2014		2013	2014	
Week 1	46	76	+30	\$3,368.22	\$2,469.00	(\$899.22)
Week 2	61	66	+5	\$1,900.00	\$2,133.00	\$223.00
Week 3	48	64	+16	\$1,822.00	\$1,368.00	(\$454.00)
Week 4	24	52	+28	\$3,426.00	\$5,266.04	\$1,840.04
Week				\$1,062.44	\$1,030.00	(\$32.44)
AVERAGE ATTENDANCE / TOTALS	45	65		\$11,578.66	\$12,266.04	\$687.38

For questions in regard to the Church finances or your personal giving statement, please contact our financial team: Barb Ostlund-Treasurer or Steve Raatz-Financial Secretary



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

08/03 Brett Johnson
08/13 Joshua Cornormia
08/15 Peter Raatz
08/17 Ruth Shepard
08/20 Jerry Johnson
08/23 Scott Johnson
08/25 Paul Ryan
08/29 Jayne Wilgus

**Spiritcare
Prayer Team**
call **1.507.263.5975**
952.423.2212 (office)



Outdoor Worship

Sunday August 10, outdoor worship will take place in the backyard. The *Spirit of Life* Jazz Band will be taking part in the worship service. Join us for this special worship service.



Calling All Men



The **August Men's Breakfast** will be held on Saturday, August 9, 7:15 am at the church. Duane Brause will be fix'en the "fixens" so we know it will be good.

Please plan to come and enjoy sharing of faith, food and fellowship. Please let Bob Shepard at shepardsprairie@gmail.com or 507.589.5793 or Pastor Rob know if you can attend.

CARD CARE LIST REMINDER :

If you had someone on Loving Community Ministry Team's Card Care List in July 2014 and wish them to remain on in August 2014, please resubmit them with an update to Ruth Shepard at: rshepard2@frontier.com or 507.263.5975 or by filling out a blue Prayer Request card during worship.
*BE SURE TO CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX(S) ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE CARD.

***NOTE:** Each month our Card Care List starts with new and updated submissions only.

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Wednesday Club

Wednesday Club will meet on Wednesday, August 13, at 11:30 AM at Chianti Grill in Burnsville. Chianti Grill is located just off County Road 42 at Plymouth Ave. The buffet consists of two soups, two pasta offerings, a salad, a sandwich and pizza. The price is \$9.95.

We will talk about the plan for our September meeting.

All are welcome. Call Jana 952-686-0268 with questions.

Mission Trip 2014



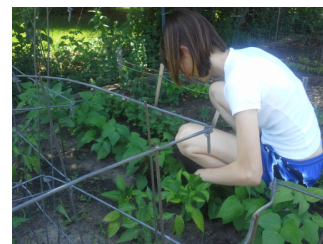
STOCKHOLDERS DINNER:

The mission trip Stockholders Dinner will be Wednesday, August 6, at 6pm. All church members are invited to come and hear the great report. Some of the accomplishments were 47 homes repaired, over 10,000 hours of community service provided, and 1500 food items donated to the local food pantry. Fourteen members of *Spirit of Life* joined over three hundred volunteers from across the country.



From the Garden

Over 4# of fresh produce were donated to 360 Communities Rosemount Family Resource in June along with 71# of canned goods. Work continues weekly in our community Garden by church members. Donations of food containers for the fresh produce are appreciated.



Spirit of Life Presbyterian Church Session Minutes – June 19, 2014

A quorum was present (6 of 9 Session members) for the Session meeting on June 19. Pastor Smith offered an opening prayer and devotion based on Mark 3:13-15 – the appointing of the apostles and Matthew 28:16-20 - the Great Commission and Acts 2:1-21 – Pentecost video. Clerk Johnson welcomed the new Session members, Walt Ullrich, Bob Shepard and Deon Ford and returning Chris Sachs. She thanked retiring members Denise Lewis, Marge Lewis, Leslie Hohmann. New Session members received training Wednesday, June 18, 2014.

The financial report was given by Barb Ostlund. Contributions year to date are \$51,700 which is just over budget. Per Capita donations from members cover about 50% of the bill so the rest is paid out of the General Fund.

Pastor Rob gave his report. He discussed welcoming guests without overdoing it. The group Narcotics Anonymous will be meeting weekly on Saturday evenings at our church building and giving a donation.

Clerk's report was given by Clerk of the Session Karen Johnson. The minutes for the May 15, 2014 and the Congregational meeting on June 1 were approved as read. Attendance report was reviewed.

Team Reports were given. Welcoming Guests committee report was submitted by Marge Lewis, no action required. Youth and Children's Programming committee will be meeting June 22, Sunday, no action required. Outreach committee report was submitted by Peggy Roeske, no action required. Worship and Music committee had no report. Community Service committee report was given by Denise Lewis. Crop Walk planning is under way. Our church will sign-up for just.good.food, a Presbyterian garden for giving project. Kate Brause was thanked for volunteer work in the church garden. HUB report was submitted by Denise Lewis. Scouts and members were thanked for helping with the May 10th outdoor clean-up. Personnel committee reported that staff reviews are being done. Deacon's minutes for June were reviewed, no action was required.

Old Business

The usher/greeter/communion lead assignments were made for the rest of 2014. Session members were asked to list their choices for committee liaison positions, compiled by Pastor Smith. Session retreat will be September 13, Saturday, at Bob Shepard's. July and August Session meetings will be combined and held on August 7, 2014 at 6:30. It was agreed that anyone who needs a key (Session, Deacons, committee chairs) should contact Shari Shaw and she will record who has keys.

New Business

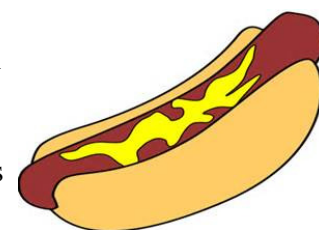
Discussion was held concerning people resigning from Session and Deacons. They are reminded to submit a letter of resignation as stated in the Book of Order. A possible church wide garage sale was discussed to be held at a later date.

Concerns and joys of individuals were expressed and prayers were offered to close the meeting.

Clerk of Session, Karen Johnson

Wednesday Potluck and Devotions

Pastor Rob and Bob Shepard are ready to fire up the grill again. Everyone is invited to Wednesday Potluck and Devotions in the back yard of the church. The Potlucks will be on Wednesday, Aug. 13, and another will be held on Wednesday, Aug 27. Bring your meat to cook on the grill, your own beverage, and a dish to share. Plates and plastic ware will be provided by the church. See you there.





Congratulations to Pat and Larry Buchholz

Pat and Larry celebrated
50 years a marriage in a
renewal ceremony
here at *Spirit of Life* on
June 21, 2014.



Lectionary Texts and Service Highlights

Sunday, August 3

Gen. 32: 22-31
Ps. 17: 1-7, 15
Rom. 9: 1-5; Matt. 14: 13-21

Sunday, August 10

Gen. 37: 1-4, 12-28
Ps. 105: 1-6, 16-22, 45b
Rom. 10: 5-15; Matt. 14: 22-33

Sunday, August 17

Gen. 45: 1-15; Ps. 133
Rom. 11: 1-2a, 29-32; Matt. 15: (10-20) 21-28

Sunday, August 24

Exod. 1: 8-2: 10; Ps. 124
Rom 12: 1-8; Matt. 16: 13-20

Sunday, August 31

Exod. 3: 1-15;
Ps. 105: 1-6, 23-26, 45c
Rom. 12: 9-21; Matt. 16: 21-28



Snickers Salad, one of my favorite deserts! *From Rebecca Brandt*

6 regular size Snicker Bars, chopped
1 (5.1 oz) pkg. dry vanilla instant pudding
1 (16 oz.) tub Cool Whip, thawed

4 medium apples, chopped
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup caramel ice cream topping



Whisk vanilla pudding packet, milk and cool whip together until well combined. Add chopped Snickers and apples. Put in a large bowl and drizzle with the caramel topping. Chill at least one hour before serving.

2014-2015

Officers

Session
Rebecca Brandt
Deon Ford
Brian Gracek
Karen Johnson
Julie Raatz
Peggy Roeske
Chris Sachs
Bob Shepard
Walt Ullrich

Board of Deacons

Alice Gracek
Loretta Hunt
Jerry Johnson
Sayra Maberry
Don Roeske

Treasurer

Barb Ostlund

Financial Secretary

Steve Raatz

Please contact the
**Clerk of
Session,**
Karen Johnson,
in regard to
membership
changes and any
Session member
with questions or
concerns.

NEXT LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

DEACON MEETING

7:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 14, 2014

SESSION MEETING/

6:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 7, 2014
(combined July & August)
SESSION RETREAT: September 13,
10-3 @ Bob & Ruth Shepard's home

We need your picture!

If you call *Spirit of Life* your home church we need your family picture. Recently we updated the directory and now we're beginning to pull together photos of each family/household to be included in the next photo directory update. Alvine Siaka had offered to take pictures for us and will be in the conference room following services through August. Please see her to have your/you family picture taken. You may also email an updated photo to the office for submission at spirit@spiritoflifeav.org. Picture deadline is Sunday, August 31. Thanks everyone and look for the new directory coming soon.



Everyone is invited to join us in a great celebration **Friday, August 16, 5-7:30 p.m.** at the Erythrean Center, St Paul. Included traditional dances from West Cameroon; a fashion show; Bamileke diverse food; art display from the Western region of Cameroon; and much more! Ticket cost is \$20/adult and \$10/children over 5.

*Volunteers also needed for venue decoration & registration tables. Contact Alvin Siaka at 612-229-2679 or alvinelaure_cm@yahoo.fr for details.

Communications Policy Statement

It is Spirit of Life's policy to...

- ▶list names, and place photos of members associated with church events, in the newsletter and on the website.
- ▶Spirit of Life also acknowledges birthdays (month & day) in the newsletter, during the member's birthday month.
- ▶Finally, Spirit of Life plans to put a copy of the monthly newsletter on its website.

Any member who does not want his/her name, likeness, or birth month listed in these, or any other church publications, is requested to contact the church office with a formal request to keep their personal information confidential.

Send newsletter announcements to: spirit@spiritoflifeav.org.

SPIRIT OF LIFE STAFF

PASTOR Rev. Rob Smith:
pastorrob@spiritoflifeav.org - 952.807.4413

PARISH ASSOCIATE Rev. Tony Winter
tonypwinter@gmail.com - 507.360.3343

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR Shari Shaw:
spirit@spiritoflifeav.org - 952.423.2212

MUSIC DIRECTOR Kate Olaf:
music@spiritoflifeav.org - 952.423.2212

NURSERY CAREGIVER Trista Hansen:
spirit@spiritoflifeav.org - 952.423.2212

OFFICE spirit@spiritoflifeav.org / www.spiritoflifeav.org
14401 Pilot Knob Road / Apple Valley, MN 55124
952.423.2212

Office Hours

10:00 AM—3:00 PM M
10:00 AM—3:00 PM Tu
10:00 AM—3:00 PM W
10:00 AM—3:00 PM Th
FOR PASTORAL EMERGENICES
PLEASE CALL 952.807.4413



10 PM ~ SUNDAY, August 17
for the September issue.



14401 Pilot Knob Road
Apple Valley, MN 55124

Office 952.423.2212

www.spiritoflifeav.org
spirit@spiritoflifeav.org

Mission Statement

Spirit of Life Presbyterian Church, created by the Holy Spirit, seeks to be a loving community where all can grow in faith while serving and worshiping the God made known in Jesus Christ.

DATES TO REMEMBER

SUN, AUG 3	MISSION TRIP SUNDAY
WED, AUG 6	STOCKHOLDERS DINNER @ 6PM JAZZ BAND PRACTICE @ 7:30PM
THURS, AUG 7	<i>SURPRISED BY HOPE</i> BOOK CLUB @ 7AM SESSION MEETING @ 6:30PM
SAT, AUG 9	MEN'S BREAKFAST AT 7:15AM (<i>SPIRIT OF LIFE</i>)
SUN, AUG 10	OUTDOOR WORSHIP WITH JAZZ BAND PLAYING
WED, AUG 13	WEDNESDAY CLUB @ 11:30AM (CHIANTTI GRILL) OUTDOOR POTLUCK AND DEVOTIONS @ 6PM
THURS, AUG 14	DEACON MEETING @ 7:30PM
WED, AUG 27	OUTDOOR POTLUCK AND DEVOTIONS @ 6PM
SUN, AUG 31	CAMEROON CHOIR IN WORSHIP / BAPTISM SUNDAY

Weekly Events

MON	Cubs @ 6PM	TUES	Scouts @ 6:30PM
WED	6:30PM BELLS, Scouts	THURS	Cubs @ 6PM

Sunday Worship 10:00 AM

Sunday School/Youth Group/Adult Ed 11:10 AM (September thru May)
* Nursery provided during Worship & Education time

14401 Pilot Knob Road
Apple Valley, MN 55124-6610

