

# THE HERALD



You are probably aware by now that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recently voted on an amendment concerning same-sex marriage. It received a lot of press coverage, including the Associated Press, National Public Radio (NPR), and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The General Assembly (national meeting) in 2014 recommended to the presbyteries an amendment to the *Book of Order*. This amendment included this sentence: "Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives." The previous wording was, "Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man." The change requires a majority vote of all the presbyteries. As there are 171 presbyteries, it requires 86 presbyteries for approval. On Tuesday, March 17, 2015, Palisades Presbytery (in New Jersey) became the 86th presbytery to approve the amendment.

Also at the 2014 General Assembly, there was an authoritative interpretation that now permits teaching elders (pastors) to officiate at a same-sex wedding and permits churches to host same-sex weddings. However, there is the "local option." Pastors can refuse to conduct a same-sex wedding, and churches can refuse to host same-sex weddings. A session cannot deny the pastor from officiating a same-sex wedding, nor can the pastor stop a local church from hosting a same-sex wedding. So if a pastor is serving a church that refuses to host a same-sex wedding, but the pastor is willing to officiate at such a wedding, the wedding must take place in another location. Likewise, if a local church is willing to host such weddings, but the pastor is not willing to officiate, the church cannot force the pastor to officiate. All of this can be done only in states where same-sex marriages are permitted. Thus it currently has no effect on us in Nebraska. However, the U.S. Supreme Court is to rule later this year as to whether same-sex marriage bans are constitutional. It is expected that the court will make a final ruling by early this summer, perhaps in late June. Many experts believe the court will rule that such bans are unconstitutional. However, no one can be sure how they will rule.

I realize that this is a very controversial issue in the church. Many feel that the Bible absolutely condemns homosexuality. There are others who disagree, and do so based on their understanding of Scripture. The Rev. Dr. Jack Rogers, is a retired Presbyterian seminary professor, former GA moderator, and grew up in Heritage Church. He is considered a conservative evangelical. In 2006 he published a book entitled *Jesus, the Bible, and Homosexuality: Explode the Myths, Heal the Church*. Dr. Rogers makes a very strong case that homosexuality is NOT condemned by Scripture. Heritage Church has a copy of this book, and I encourage you to read it. There have been other evangelical scholars who agree with Dr. Rogers. Scripture tells us that we are not to eat pork. Women are to not speak in church. A person caught in adultery is to be put to death. We do not follow those commands today. Why not? Because we feel those commands are not relevant in today's world. Could the same be true of the commands against homosexuality? The Hebrew and the Greek indicates that the definition or understanding of homosexuality was different in the ancient world than it is today. It requires a deep study of Scripture to understand the necessary relevance of Scripture today.

We should not accuse those who disagree with us as sinners, or as those who have no regard for Scripture. Gradye Parsons, the Stated Clerk of GA, said, "Let us pray that we can allow the Spirit to continue to create in us a common call to follow Christ while respecting each other's convictions." If you would be interested in participating in a marriage study, I will be glad to facilitate such a class. There are two studies. One is for 5 to 6 sessions, one hour each, or a 2 hour session, perhaps on a Sunday afternoon. Let me know if you would be interested in such a study, and which study you would prefer.

*Raymond Meester*



## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

06 Wyatt Robert Kendle  
06 Carson Pierce  
07 Sloane Adrianna Gibson

07 Leanne Miller  
08 Barbara Geistlinger  
13 Stephanie Newman  
13 Shalene Shepard  
16 Lil Jurgena  
16 Duane Kennedy  
16 Chase Piel  
17 Zoe Tomas  
24 Greg Mason

Please contact the church office if any birthdays or anniversaries were misprinted or forgotten.



## APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

13 Greg & Robyn Mason  
13 Tylor & Shalene Shepard  
17 Richard & Cathy Wright

26 Chase & Shay Piel  
27 Lew & Karen Sieber



## BIRTHDAY CLUB

Thanks to **Barb Bratt-Kennedy and George Neill** for joining the “**Birthday Club**”.

Please consider making a donations to our Birthday Club (usually 1 dollar per year of life, but any amount is accepted). Birthday Club donations are deposited to our endowment fund. These gifts will be used to help our ministry continue. This is also a great way to honor a friend or relative!

## LECTIONARY FOR APRIL

**April 5:** Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9; Psalms 118:1-2, 14-24; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43; John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8.

**April 12:** Acts 4:32-35; Psalms 133; 1 John 1:1-2:2; John 20:19-31.

**April 19:** Acts 3:12-19; Psalms 4; 1 John 3:1-7; Luke 24:36b-48.

**April 26:** Acts 4:5-12; Psalms 23; 1 John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18.



Read an article by Gina Meester about her experience in Pakistan which was published in Unbound—An Interactive Journal of Christian Social Justice at this website:

<http://justiceunbound.org/carousel/teaching-girls-in-pakistan/>. A printed copy is available in the Coffee Corner.

## OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY...

To Greg Mason and family on the death of his aunt, Elaine Gulley.  
To Christie, Zach, & Clint Werner on the death of husband and father and grandfather, Terry Werner.  
To Earl Robinette and his children on the death of Margaret.

## IN PRAYER



Duane Kennedy (Barb Bratt Kennedy’s husband); Ray & Paul (Cynthia Smetter’s relatives); Marion Kantner; Shirley Dively; Jacob (head injury); Michelle (kidney failure); Vicky (cancer).

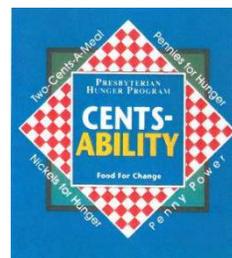
### From Homestead Presbytery:

Leigh Davis, son of Lynn & Ellen Davis

Send prayer request to the church office, 477-3401; or [assistant@HeritagePres.org](mailto:assistant@HeritagePres.org). Please update your prayer requests with the church office or Marilyn Smith weekly.

## PER CAPITA FOR 2015 IS \$36.00 PER MEMBER

Per Capita helps support the regional, national, and global ministry of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Our total so far received is \$1,866. Please continue to contribute your per capita as you are able.



## CENTS-ABILITY

On March 8, \$201.85 was received and forwarded to the Eastridge Food Pantry. Keep saving your coins. (2 cents per meal per person is a “suggested” amount. Our next “Noisy Sunday” will be August 23 when we collect our coins for the Presbyterian Hunger Fund.



Lilies are such a beautiful addition to the Sanctuary on Easter morning. If you haven't already filled out an order form, we hope you will consider ordering one or more plants in memory or in honor of someone special in your life. The plants are being provided by Oak Creek Plants & Flowers, and the

cost per plant will remain at \$9.25. Your check for the total number of plants ordered should be made payable to Heritage Presbyterian Church, Easter Lily. You can either place your order form and check in the offering plate on Sunday morning, or mail it to the church office. **Deadline for ordering is Monday, March 30, 2015.** Please call the Church office (402-477-3401) or Karen Minks (402-304-3934) if you have any questions. Please remember to pick up your Easter lily after the service on Easter or during the week following Easter.

## XXIX PEACEMAKING WORKSHOP

Keynote Speech & Workshops  
 Sunday, April 12, 2015, 1:00-5:30PM  
 Featuring Leonard Pitts, Jr.  
 American commentator, journalist and novelist.

## Eating (Jim) Crow



Divisions Created By Race & Divisions Created By Poverty

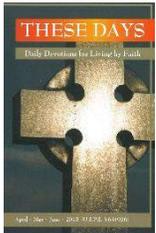
## MISSION TRIP

Who would like to join us on a mission trip to Colorado this summer? We understand that there are churches in Boulder and Loveland that are serving as host sites for work teams to assist with flood recovery. The team would be responsible for all meal preparation, so if you would rather cook than do the physical labor, please join us too! Contact Lew or Karen Sieber if you are interested in being part of the 2015 Heritage mission team.

## WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Currently we need someone to stop by the church office every two weeks or on-call basis to help with recycling and someone to change the signboard weekly. Please contact Pastor Ray or the church office if you are interested in one of these positions.

## "These Days" Devotionals



"These Days" devotionals for April - June are available for pick up in the narthex and by the back parking lot door. They are made available for your use by the Christian Education Committee.

### BEST CHOICE



We have over 2,000 Best Choice UPC symbols ready to send in for redemption. Each symbol nets our youth program 3 cents. It's surprising how quickly that adds up! Thanks to all who save the UPC symbols for us!

## OUR SOUP SUPPER WAS A SUCCESS!!!

Thanks to all who attended the Soup Supper on March 8<sup>th</sup>. The soup was delicious and \$600 was raised which will go towards the purchase of new kitchen counters.



## DUC POND... (Youth Group News)

DUCs Faith Retreat  
 at Camp Calvin Crest  
 April 24-26  
 \$25 due with Permission forms by  
 April 5th (Easter Sunday)  
 Forms are available in the DUCs room



For more details/information, contact Patty Wahlgren at [pwahlgren@netzero.net](mailto:pwahlgren@netzero.net)



## HOLY COMMUNION

We will be celebrating communion each Sunday morning throughout the Easter season and also on Maundy Thursday, April 2 at 7:00 PM.

## ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING: SHARING RESOURCES, CHANGING LIVES

For 66 years, Presbyterians have joined with millions of other Christians through One Great Hour of Sharing to share God's love with people experiencing need.

Our gifts:

- assist Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to restore communities around the world affected by disaster,
- help the Presbyterian Hunger Program alleviate hunger and eliminate its causes, and
- allow the Self-Development of People to assist the economically poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people.

Please use the enclosed offering envelope to share your gift and help the mission committee reach the goal of raising \$600 for this special offering. Thank you to all who give!



Synod School 2015

*"So many people having so much fun while examining issues related to faith."*

July 26-31, 2015  
Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa

Go to [www.lakesandprairies.org/school.html](http://www.lakesandprairies.org/school.html)  
or phone 1-800-328-1880, ext. 207.

**A Future with Hope**



## GAMES AND GROCERIES

We would love to see you at the next **Games & Groceries**, even if you have never come before! Please join us at 5:30 pm on Friday, April 10. We will then play games until we are "played out". Don't forget your friends and family, your games and your non-perishable food items!



Food Pantry Needs

The Food Pantry is always looking for non-perishable food donations. Food donated here at the church goes to the Eastridge Food Pantry.



## RED HAND CAMPAIGN

If you haven't signed your name to a red hand, found in the narthex, please do so today. We hope to soon have 125 red hands to send to world leaders with our message: No Child Soldiers!

**SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES** The following is a schedule for Sunday School for the next few months. Please mark your calendar:

March 29th: Children Sing/Palm Sunday

April 5th: NO Sunday School/Easter

May 10th: Children Sing/Mother's Day

May 17th: Sunday School Pentecost Party Last Sunday  
School until September 2015 Teacher/Student Recognition

June 7 – June 11 (Sunday – Thursday) Summer  
Vacation Bible School Sunday,

June 14: Vacation Bible School Children Sing in  
Worship

September 13th: Sunday School resumes

## PASTOR PERKS

Join Pastor Meester for coffee on Monday morning, April 20, in the Gibson Room at 10:00 AM and meet our new administrative assistant. He is hoping to host a monthly informal gathering with anyone wishing to chat with him. He will be serving Fair Traded coffee and teas.



## WE WELCOME OUR NEW ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, JODY HINES!

Jody began work at Heritage on March 16. Her office hours will be 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM Monday – Thursday.

(Using both first and last names of people will be most helpful

when leaving messages for Jody as she is getting to know our faith community.) Due to limited time in the office, please plan ahead and have items in the office before 9:00 AM on Thursday mornings if you wish them to be included in the Weekly bulletin insert.

## 125TH CELEBRATION EVENTS

**Save these dates...**

**April:** Plans on in progress to *celebrate our world* with some Earth Day activities – more details to come!

**May 17:** Heritage Sunday when we will celebrate our past and present ministers

**June 7:** Wedding Reception and Remembrance to celebrate couples who have been married in our church.

**Please share your wedding photos and stories with Ramona Meester and Dawn Thompson.**

**July 18:** Block Party/Kiddy Karnival to celebrate our neighborhood

**September 13:** Old-time picnic at the Auld Pavilion in Antelope Park

**December 13:** 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reception

Additional activities may be added. Dates are subject to change.