

Lewiston Church of the Brethren Lifestyle February 2007

Our vision: Bound together on a journey of faith, we are a Christ-centered community, prayerfully discovering and sharing God's love.

Our Mission: Knowing Christ and making Him known, through worship, growing in faith, community building and service.

Prayer for the beginning of Lent

God, should I fast this Lent? What is it you would have me consider, to give up, let go of, distance myself from? Should I go to Sudan and help refugees? Should I go to Iraq and “get in the way”? What do you want from me this season of reflection? More Bible study, more direct witness, more money, more service? I have forty days not counting Sundays...who made up this idea anyway? Seems like a short time to get my act together and yet an awful long time for deep reflection. Did Jesus struggle like I do? Is my wilderness as out of whack as His was? I know I can't turn rocks into bread and I really have no desire for authority over kingdoms and sometimes I think if I even take a small leap of faith I'm doomed...

God, help me find a place to start or a way to get better at what I'm trying to do. Maybe this purging, fasting thing won't work. Open me up, God, to these next forty-six days (yeah, I'm including Sundays as an extra bonus); open me to your Spirit and your guidance. Challenge me in new ways and embolden me with courage. Please, God, help me make the most of every day. These forty-six, and the infinite number that follow.

I love you, God. Amen.

--Phil Jones, Director
Church of the Brethren Witness/Washington Office

**Worship Team practices at
8:45 AM Sunday Mornings**

**Sunday School & Worship times:
9:15 AM Sunday School – 10 AM worship**

Lent

Lent is a time to evaluate our faith journey and our relationship with Christ. It is a time for recommitment, renewal and revival.

Spend time reading God's word. Ask God's Spirit to help you to hear His voice, understand His teaching, and then to obey. Read books that encourage you in faith. Listen to uplifting music that helps you to praise and worship God. Talk to God in prayer. Be in silence. Use the discipline of fasting.

If you are not already in the practice of doing so, read the scriptures listed below for each week. Reflect on them before coming to worship on Sundays.

Let us live the days of Lent leading up to Easter in ways that bring honor and glory to God and serve our neighbor's needs.

February Scripture

- 4 Luke 5:1-11; I Cor. 15:1-11; Ps.138; Is. 6:1-8
- 11 Jer. 17:5-10; Ps. 1; I Cor. 15:12-20;
Luke 6:17-26
- 18 Ex. 34:29-35; Ps. 99; II Cor. 3:12-4:1;
Luke 9:28-36
- 25 Luke 4:1-13; Ps. 91:1-2, 9-16;
Romans 10:8b-13

Hold in prayer ...

...*Purdy & Minnie Wright*, as they recover in Winona Manor.

...*Tom and Betty Wirt* as Tom faces kidney disease and possible transplant.

...*Arnold and Jeanie Lien and other volunteers* working with "Hands of Service for the Lord" in Mexico.

... *your sisters and brothers in Christ...in this congregation*. Listen for God's call upon our congregation. How is God asking us to be the church?

...*Paula Hoffert* who is serving in Brethren Volunteer Service in Kansas City, MO.

...*National and world leaders* that they seek God's wisdom in their leadership and work for peace and justice for all people

...*New Church Development projects* in our district; *Hands of Christ* in Rochester, *Living Peace* in Sioux City, IA. and *Common Spirit* in Minneapolis

...*Our Congregation* as we seek God's guidance for our future.

Because we have different ways of expressing our prayer requests and different needs for expression, we ask that you submit any prayer requests you wish to have listed in the bulletin and in the Lifestyle newsletter to the office in writing or via phone. Also notify the office when you wish to have that request removed or moved to "Thanks be to God" as we celebrate answered prayer. Let us continue to make prayer a priority in our congregational life.

Serving us in February 2007

Ushers: T/B Cage
 Greeter: F Bockenbauer
 Jr. Usher: Parker Cage
 Worship Leader: Sara Laqua
 Worship team: 4 Cliff, Sue, Karen
 11 & 18 Roger, Diane, Linda, Cassie
 25 Judy, Uli, Jess
 Special Music: 4 Diane Radatz
 11 Joyce Peckover
 18 Jess Hoffert
 25 Linda Risser
 Children's Story: 4 Uli Schorn-Hoffert
 18 Millie Bollinger
 Children's Church:
 11 & 25 Gordon Hoffert
 Nursery: 4 Marilyn S.
 11 Linda Risser
 18 Penny
 25 Linda Dahl
 Fellowship Meal Hosts:
 Dale & Judy Mill, Randy & Mary Lee
 Deacon Caregivers:
 Cliff & Sue Bollinger, Jim & Linda Risser

Thanks be to God...

For safety in travel and meaningful service in Mexico for Cliff and Sue Bollinger.

Thank You...

...For your donation of \$155 to Habitat for Humanity – Winona County's Season of Hope campaign. It is because of generous people like you that Habitat is able to continue its mission of constructing simple, decent, and affordable homes for people in need.

Stephanie Orr, Program Coordinator

* * *

Our sincere thanks for your donation of \$150 to Grace Place. Through your continued support and that of others, we will be able to serve the needs of women and their families as they make healthy decisions about their lives.

Thanks again, and God bless you!

Carla Burton, Director

Lenten Devotional:

Growing the Fruit of the Spirit

During this Lenten season, let us take time to tend and cultivate the seeds planted in us by God's Spirit that they may grow and bear succulent and nourishing fruit in our personal lives, in our congregation and in our denomination.

Lenten devotional booklets, written by Rhonda Pittman Gingrich from our district, are available for your use with readings beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 21. Donations toward the booklets are appreciated. (\$1.50 each).

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

2 Mike Bollinger
 14 Harlen Wilson
 15 Jennifer Pospichal-Heublein
 18 Lester Ladewig
 28 Linda Risser

JANUARY ATTENDANCE AND OFFERING (2 Sundays only; no church Jan. 21)

Date	S. School Attendance	SS offering Offering	Worship Attendance	Worship Offering
7th.....	21.....	\$15.25.....	36.....	\$691.00
14 th	24.....	115.00.....	36.....	1,453.20
	23	\$65.13	36	\$1,072.10

\$5,049.20 – Offerings received during December
(Current Deficit - \$4,860.16)

God is able to do exceedingly abundantly, above all we can ask or think!

February Mission: Food Resources Project: A Christian Response to World Hunger

Foods Resource Bank (FRB) works on behalf of its members – 16 of the mainline Christian denominations or their agencies – to mobilize and increase the resources needed to support smallholder, agricultural, food security programs in some of the world's poorest villages.

In the U.S., community “growing projects” raise a crop or other marketable resource, monetize it, and make the proceeds available to FRB. These financial resources are provided to the implementing members of FRB, who work with their in-country partners worldwide to help local communities to become self-sufficient and food-secure, producing enough to feed themselves and vulnerable individuals (AIDS orphans, the elderly, women and children), with extra to share, barter or sell to purchase basic medicines and staples, and send ALL their children to school.

All FRB assistance is provided in accordance with the principles of the International Humanitarian Code of Conduct.

THE MISSION

Foods Resource Bank's goal is to engage the grassroots agricultural community in the U.S., along with individuals, churches and urban communities, to grow solutions to hunger problems in our world.

FRB seeks to participate in helping to alleviate hunger throughout our world by working to establish food security through sustainable development activities. Food security is achieved “when all persons at all times have the physical and economic access to enough food to provide the nutrients they need for productive, active and healthy lives.

FRB helps to achieve this mission by:

- Forming a coalition in the U.S. of mission-minded farmers, along with agricultural business people supported monetarily by caring individuals, churches, and communities.
- Developing and carrying out plans to produce and provide an effective supply of new resources to be used for food security programs in the developing world, proposed to FRB by its implementing members and consummated through proven in-country partners.

Resources are derived from the sale of donations of agricultural or food commodities through:

- Farmer/community growing projects
 - Gifts of grain from individual farms
 - Other church/community fundraising efforts
- Donations and support are also received from:
- Individuals

- Corporations and Foundations
 - Government agencies.
- This concept ensures an effective mechanism and

structure to provide vital resources to FRB's implementing members and their proven in-country partners, while educating the U.S. citizens on issues of world hunger, and re-establishing a connectedness between rural and urban/suburban communities which has been lost over the last 75 years.

Let us help to bring immediate, tangible meaning to the words from Jesus' first sermon, “I have come to bring good news to the poor.”

Our offering to support Foods Resource Bank will be received during worship on Sunday, Feb. 18. For more information: www.foodsresourcebank.org.

Women's Fellowship plans year's events

Women's Fellowship met Jan. 13th to set its calendar of events for the year.

Women's Fellowship announces several upcoming events:

- We will provide lunch for a District training session to be held in our fellowship hall on Saturday, February 17.
- We encourage attendance at a comedy theater in Rochester – Friday, February 23 or Saturday, February 24. This will serve instead of our usual valentine event. Ultimate Comedy Theater will be held at Autumn Ridge Church, 3611 Salem Rd SW and features comedians Chonda Pierce and Kenn Kington. Tickets are \$15 each and may be ordered jointly through the church or individually at www.ultimatecomedy.org. Dinner out can be planned by each group, as one night will probably not suit all.

February Calendar of Events

Wed., Feb. 7.....Women's Bible Study @ 8:30 am
Wed., Feb. 14.....Women's Bible Study @ 8:30 am
Wed., Feb. 14.....Church Board @ 7:30 pm
Sat., Feb. 17.....Training Session for “Together: Conversations on Being the Church”, 9 am-3:30 pm. Lunch served by Women's Fellowship.
Sun., Feb. 18Mission offering: Food Resources Bank; Fellowship Meal hosts: D/J Mill & R/M Lee
Wed., Feb. 21.....Women's Bible Study @ 8:30 am
Wed., Feb. 21.....Villa Worship Service
Wed., Feb. 21.....Ash Wednesday – Lent begins
Fri., Feb. 23.....Dinner out & Comedy Theatre
Sat., Feb. 24.....Dinner out & Comedy Theatre
Sun., Feb. 25.... “Together: Conversations on Being the Church” – 7 pm in Church Fellowship Hall
Wed., Feb. 28.....Women's Bible Study @ 8:30 am

Unique Training Event!

Are you looking for a meaningful way to help children and families after disasters? Do you have a warm heart, patience, team spirit, a sense of adventure and time to give? Then...we are looking for you! So, you are invited to attend a Church of the Brethren 27-hour Level I Disaster Child Care Training Workshop scheduled at the Dallas center Church of the Brethren, 1207 Ash Avenue, Dallas Center, IA 50167-0167 on March 9 & 10.

The child care training begins at approximately 5 pm on Friday, March 9th and ends at approximately 7:30 pm on Saturday, March 10th. The registration fee of \$25 for the workshop (which includes curriculum, meals and lodging) is a reduced rate from the usual fee; the sponsoring organization is subsidizing the remaining cost. The deadline for receiving the registration form and fee in the Disaster Child Care office is two weeks prior to the date of the event.

If you have an interest in supporting the needs of children after a disaster; are over the age of 18; in good physical and mental health; and work well under stress and adverse conditions, then come join this unique training event!

Disaster Child Care (DCC) is a national organization that trains volunteers throughout the United States to set up special child care centers in disaster locations to provide crisis intervention for young children who have experienced disaster (while their parents are applying for assistance and putting their lives back together).

Potential child care volunteers are trained to recognize and understand fears and other emotions young children experience during and following a traumatic event. Since children won't always have the necessary verbal skills to express their feelings, volunteers are taught to provide play activities that provide alternate outlets. Without the opportunity to effectively release these feelings, harmful emotions may remain bottled up inside of them for many years.

The past several years have kept DCC very busy responding to disasters, primarily hurricanes: Charley, Frances, Ivan, and Jeanne in 2004, and Katrina, Rita and Wilma in the fall of 2005. In 2006, DCC certified volunteers cared for children arriving at BWI Airport in Baltimore, Maryland, during the evacuation of Americans from the Mid-East; DCC also responded following flooding incidents in Pennsylvania and New York.

To reserve your place in the training, call Jacquelyn Snyder, local On-site Coordinator at 515-677-2470, or email -grandmajackie@netins.net (<http://us.f515.mail.yahoo.com/ym/Compose?To=grandmajackie@netins.net>), or call the DCC

coordinator, Helen Stonesifer, at 800-451-4407 (ext. 5) or email hstonesifer-gb@brethren.org. To learn more about the Disaster Child care program, visit www.disasterchildcare.org. The training date is quickly approaching, so please register NOW!

Deacon Corner

The "WOW" Factor

At work, one of my colleagues has her screen saver on her computer set to run through all of her pictures that she has down-loaded on the computer. Being a mother of a 3 year old and a 6 year old, she has a lot of pictures. There is one picture on there that makes me happy every time I see it.

This is a picture of her son, Nick, then 5 years old, and her husband after their first duck hunting adventure. Nick was so excited to go hunting with his dad and "he" had gotten his first duck. So the picture shows his dad squatting beside him as Nick is hanging onto this duck's feet with all the energy he could muster. One would think that Nick would have a proud smile on his face or be looking at the duck. Instead Nick is looking off into the distance, his eyes are huge wide and shiny, his mouth the perfect shape of an "O".

When I asked his mom what had grabbed his attention, she said that just a few yards away from them was a big "Tom" turkey strutting right by them. Neither she nor her husband had noticed it but Nick was totally "wowed" by it.

When I look at that picture I can't help to think that there are lessons to be learned from Nick's experience. The first is to be wowed and then not be afraid to show it. The other, maybe most important lesson, is to recognize those "wow" moments when we see them as gifts from God.

God has provided so many of those moments that we sometimes become immune to them, not recognizing them for what they are. The first thing I think about is the wonderful nature around us. Last Sunday was certainly a "wow" moment as the snow was falling down so beautifully. The bluffs are always so gorgeous covered in fresh snow.

Then I think of all the people who have touched my life at times when I needed touched whether I knew it or not. The way God reveals himself to us through others is definitely a "wow" moment. It is one that sometimes goes unrecognized until a little while later when we have time to reflect on a visit made by someone, or a hug, or a comment. When that realization comes, that realization that we just saw a glimpse of God, it is good to be "wowed" by that. To show our excitement, to give thanks to a God that doesn't forget us and never ceases to wow us.

—Joyce Peckover

Faith Ramblin's

God's Love

Do you have any idea how much God loves you? In Ephesians 3:17-19 it reads, ***"And I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your hearts as you trust in him. May your roots go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous love. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love really is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it. Then you will be filled with the fullness of life and power that comes from God."***

As we learn how much God loves us, we will become confident that he is able to do far more in and through us than we could ever imagine! We can bank our lives on this truth! Having a deep understanding of God's love is also vital to seeing our faith be effective. The interesting thing about our faith is that it is only effective if God's love is operating in our lives. Galatians 5:6 says that faith is activated through love. How is faith developed? Through hearing the Word, praying in the Spirit and seeing God manifest His power in the difficult situations we face. As we continue fellowshiping with the Father, He demonstrates His true love again and again through His faithfulness, and our faith is made stronger.

Most of us make the mistake of believing that God only loves us when we do everything right. But none of us do everything right...we all make mistakes. When we do, it's easy for us to get upset and not like ourselves and even assume that God probably doesn't like us much either. The problem with this thinking is that love isn't just something God does—it's who He is. Our weaknesses and failures can never change God's love for us because His desire to love is His very nature.

Faith works by letting God love you. So let God love you, and as you do, you will learn to love and trust Him, and your faith will be effective. God doesn't bless you because of your good behavior or good works. He blesses you because He loves you—period.

When things start going wrong in our lives, we are tempted to believe the devil's lies. He seeks to convince us that we are not deserving of God's love. That God is angry or distancing Himself from us. Don't believe it! It's in these times that we must grab hold of God's Word and begin speaking it out of our

mouths. When I was diagnosed with cancer, I couldn't believe it. Why God why? I kept repeating God's word over and over until they sank deep inside of me and I came to know the love of God whether I had cancer or not.

In 1John 4:18 it says, Such love has no fear because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of judgment, and this shows that His love has not been perfected in us. God loves you! You are wonderful to Him! You are beautiful! You are precious! Nobody in the world will ever love you like God loves you! He wants to meet all your needs, walk with you through troubles and bless you above and beyond all that you can ask or think. Allow God to show you that you are the *Apple of His Eye*. Ask Him for the grace to receive the gift of His love every day and you will experience the joy of being set free from fear and walking in victorious faith like never before.

Romans 8:38,39NLT states, ***"And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord"***.

God loved us so much that He sent His son to die for our sins so that we might be saved. What more could God say or do to make us more secure in His love?

-Linda Risser

Training Session: "Together: Conversations on Being the Church"

Across the denomination, discussions are taking place on what it means for us to be the Church of the Brethren in this generation. What is God's yearning for us as a church at this time?

A training session for facilitators will take place in our fellowship hall on Saturday, February 17, 9 am-3:30 pm, with lunch provided. District facilitators will lead the training session. Representatives from Root River and Hands of Christ will join us.

Discussions for our congregation will begin on Sunday, February 25, 7 pm in the fellowship hall. Everyone is invited to participate! Plan now to attend these sessions that will continue through April 1.

Caregiving – Ministry Needs

In the Church of the Brethren, the deacons have traditionally had responsibility for the spiritual as well as the physical welfare of the members. They also are responsible for arranging baptisms, communion and anointing.

Deacons in our congregation serve in these areas, as well as in visiting those who are ill or are shut-ins, offering encouragement and supporting in prayer.

If you have a ministry need, or know of one, please contact the monthly Caregivers (listed in bulletins and Lifestyle), or Deacon chairs, Beth Cage and Penny Wilson. Also, do what you can to strengthen our congregation by sharing God's love with others. Send a note, extend an invitation, make a contact by phone or mail, etc. Pay attention to those "nudgings" as God brings people to your mind.

Current deacons are: Purdy and Minnie Wright, Penny Wilson, Jim and Linda Risser, Frances and Cleyson Plank, Roger and Joyce Peckover, Judy and Dale Mill, Mary Lee, Uli Schorn-Hoffert, Todd and Beth Cage, Cliff and Sue Bollinger and Fran Bockenbauer.

Deacon caregivers for February are Cliff & Sue Bollinger and Jim & Linda Risser.

Let's talk!

The Church of the Brethren began as a conversation. Today, nearly 300 years later, it is our hope that the Church of the Brethren might be reborn as people come together in small groups to talk about what it means to be the church now. What does scripture have to say about the church: How do we, as followers of Jesus in the 21st century, understand what it means to belong to each other as well as to God? How can we work together? How do we deal with our differences? What do we expect from each other? What do we have to offer each other? How is it that we belong not just to a local congregation, but to a district, a denomination, and to the larger church?

Answering these questions won't be easy and we may not all agree. Yet, if we are able to talk and listen to each other respectfully and with humility, we may find what the first Brethren found. They found the Holy Spirit moving in their midst, leading them to a better understanding of God's will and a greater love for one another.

We'll have opportunities for conversation on 6 Sunday evenings, beginning February 25th, 7 pm in the church fellowship hall. These will be informal times of friendship and fellowship. Everyone is invited to participate. Plan now to attend.

Ultimate Comedy Theater

Scripture tells us "A cheerful heart is a good medicine, but a downcast spirit dries up the bones". (Proverbs 17:22) And medical science supports the fact that laughter is health-inducing. So do something good for yourself and for some friends. Plan to attend the Ultimate Comedy Theater and invite your friends.

Chonda Pierce and Kenn Kington will be live on Friday, Feb. 23, and on Saturday, Feb. 24 at Autumn Ridge Church, 3611 Salem Road SW in Rochester. Tickets are \$15 each.

Women's Fellowship suggests this event in place of our usual Valentine event. See bulletins and clipboard in fellowship hall for further information.

For ticket information and to watch video clips go to ultimatecomedy.org. Tickets also available at 888-550-5366.

Brethren invest half-million dollars for turning hunger around

A half-million dollars to counter world hunger was raised in 2006 by the Global Food crisis Fund and the growing projects it spawned through the Foods Resource Bank.

Giving to the Global Food Crisis Fund topped \$318,000 in 2006. Of this amount, approximately \$100,000 came from the REGNUH campaign of National Youth Conference that featured tithing, a run/walk, and hunger education and worship components.

Fourteen Brethren growing projects, some engaging partner churches of other denominations, raised over \$200,000 for investing in Foods Resource Bank agricultural programs in poor countries, in the 2006 preliminary accounting.

Were the donations of Brethren to such efforts as Emergency Disaster Duns, Church World Service/CROP, Heifer International, SERRV, America's Second Harvest, Bread for the World, and other hunger – and poverty-focused endeavors taken into account, the level of giving would likely be tripled, commented fund manager Howard Royer.

"A significant initiative of the denomination last summer was the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals by Annual Conference," said Royer. "But more significant still is that the Church of the Brethren did not just sign on to the goals to reduce poverty and hunger, its response reveals Brethren sense deeply the call of Christ to feed the hungry and to work toward a healthier and more just world."

Both the Global Food Crisis Fund and the Foods Resource Bank issue grants that enable partner agencies in underdeveloped countries to launch sustainable, community-based agriculture. The grants currently support work in two-dozen countries.

--Brethren Newslines