Souper Bowl—February 4th!

Super Bowl Sunday will be here in a few days and it is time for the JUPYs and UPYs to start gearing up to participate in what is known as Souper Bowl of Caring. February 4th will mark the 29th anniversary of Souper Bowl of Caring. Our JUPYs and UPYs at PCWS will participate this year in two ways:

First, they will collect money after worship in soup pots and bowls. Simply put your donation in the soup pot or bowl of the NFL team you wish to win the Super Bowl. Then on the following Sunday we will reveal which Team’s pots raised the most money.

Second, the JUPYs and UPYs will host a Chili Cook-off that you can enter. Simply sign up on the Signup Genius in the church hallway, or online. Then bring a crock pot of chili with you to church on February 4th with a clever name for your entry. After worship, members of the congregation can purchase tickets for lunch. They will taste test all they wish and vote for the pot of chili they like best. After the votes are totaled, we will declare the winner of our second ever chili cook off. This is a fun way for the entire congregation to get involved, help the youth raise money for a local charity, and compete to see who has the best chili around these parts.

Ash Wednesday Service
February 14

The Lenten season begins with the observance of Ash Wednesday with Highlands Presbyterian Church. We will celebrate beginning at 6:00 p.m. with a simple meal of a bowl of soup and roll in the Jones Room. Worship will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary so children and youth will be able to attend.

Volunteers are needed for providing soup, helping with setup or cleanup. Please indicate your preference via Ash Wednesday Signup Genius online or sign up on the lower level bulletin board.

Mark your calendar to participate in this simple and meaningful beginning to the Lenten journey.

For more information about Lenten Activities, see page 4.

Balloon-A-Grams

In February, we will be hosting another fundraiser to help fund the costs of our Mission Trip to Jacksonville, Florida, this summer. As is our tradition, the youth will be delivering “Balloon-a-Grams,” to our friends, loved ones, and neighbors in the community!

These little bags of fun contain candy, a balloon, and a hand written card. All you have to do is come to the Jones Room after worship on January the 28th, February the 4th, or the 11th and fill out a form for where the “gram” needs to be delivered and we take care of the rest! We do ask that the recipient live within a 2.5 mile radius of the church. We will be delivering the packages of fun on Sunday, February 11 (the Sunday before Valentine’s Day) after worship at 10:30.

Thanks in advance, and we can’t wait to see you at the table!
**Mission Matters!**

At the heart of the church’s life is mission. As the Reverend Paul Hooker puts it, “The Church is not a building or an institution but a community of witness, called into being and equipped by God, and sent into the world to testify to and participate in Christ’s work. The Church does not have missions; instead, the mission of God creates the church.”

That is especially true at the Presbyterian Church of Western Springs. At a recent meeting of the Session with newly elected officers, several of the new officers commented on how PCWS’s emphasis on mission was what attracted them to our church.

With this in mind, the Session recently appointed a Mission and Ministry Exploration Team (MaMET) to explore new opportunities for PCWS to do mission and ministry as well as to work on a mission study to best determine community needs that PCWS might address. This task force will begin meeting the end of January and includes Carolyn Bozek, Stephanie Carlisle, Debbie Cloutier, Nancy Glickman, Sue Kovalick, Kevin McDermott, Suzie Mosher, Hank Vaughan, and Kathy Wennerstrum.

To be sure, there are many ways PCWS already does mission. Let me name only a few: mission giving (11% of our church’s budget plus special offerings and loose coin offerings go to local, national, and international mission), youth and adult mission trips, hands on mission events at places like Maria Shelter, our new sister church project through Living Waters of the World to provide clean water for the village of Nuevo Paz where our Cuban sister church is located. The list goes on.

In this *Glad Tidings* newsletter, however, I hope you’ll take note of another way we do mission about which we do not often think: the use of our building. Our denomination’s constitution reminds us that the church’s property “is a tool for the accomplishment of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world.” Toward this end on many Monday and Tuesday nights for several years, PCWS has hosted Buddy’s Place, a program for bereaved children and their families. Please read the article in this GT about this wonderful ministry PCWS helps provide simply by letting them use our beautiful building. (See the article on page 8.)

Grace and peace,

*Bill*

**Theology and Brew**

During winter and early spring, Theology and Brew will be on hiatus. There are several other opportunities during Lent such as the Lenten Lunch for your continued faith formation.
Meet Eleanor Violet Schmidt
Born Nov 9, 2017     6 lbs 8 oz

She is already the most amazing thing we’ve ever experienced together. We’re primed for adventure (and enthusiastic about sleep).

Eleanor’s hobbies include:
- Staring at us with her deep blue eyes
- Smiling
- Crying very loudly (good lungs—future singer?) -Feeding all the time.
- Looking so dazed in her milk coma’s
- Pooping an almost alarming volume for such a tiny body

We are tired, but filled with joy, overwhelmed but comforted, confused but consoled, and oh my, are we excited for this new life.

Sending blessings and love to PCWS!
Matt Schmidt

Vacation Bible School
June 24—28!

In the midst of the winter, it is hard to imagine the warm days of summer and Vacation Bible School but now is the time to mark your calendar. Together, we will be making a splash roar down the river this summer for VBS. This year there will be something for everyone: classes for Pre-K to 5th grade, JUPY and UPY volunteer positions, and a class for adults.

Dinner will start at 5:30 p.m. each evening followed by classes and activities from 6:00 p.m. -7:30 p.m.

Thank You Deacons & Elders!

We are grateful to the following elders who completed their three year terms (one year for the youth elder) and rotated off the Session with the ordination and installation of new officers on January 21st:

- Tanner Booth: Youth elder who served on the Technology Committee
- Kathy Boxell: Was in Charge of the Church Life Committee events and responsibilities
- Kim Fronk: Moderated the Faith Formation Committee and served on search committees for Faith Formation staff
- Neil Pendleton: Moderated the Property Committee and helped originate the Capital Funds Campaign
- Lance Smith: Served on the Youth Committee (and will be going as an adult advisor on this summer’s Youth Mission trip) and as moderator of the Technology Committee

We are so grateful to our retiring PCWS Deacons who have faithfully cared for our congregation over the last three years, giving of themselves cheerfully in various roles of service.

- Lisa Wennerstrum has been instrumental in leading our efforts in the College Care Packages this past year. She was also helpful with receptions and looking after various members in need.
- Michelle Hennessy took a leadership role with emergency meals as well as many other “hidden” organizational tasks which the Deacons could not have done without!
- Mary Jo Sindelar was active with our non-emergency Heartwarmers program as well as our Ride Coordinator.
- Bruce Barnes led us with our Blood Drives for 3 years!
- Jan Paddock served as Moderator, Home Communion Coordinator, and on the Nomination Committee as Deacon representative. As Moderator, she kept our Deacons on task by keeping them organized!
- Ellie Pendleton was active as our Youth Deacon with the College Care Package program.

When you see them, please thank them for their years of service.

Well done, good and faithful servants! (Matthew 25:21,23)
Family Camp

Family Camp 2018 was a huge success this year! Eleven families, comprised of forty-one campers, spent the first weekend in January at Camp Edwards in East Troy, Wisconsin. We played board games, hiked to Tiki Island, cross country skied, zipped down the Black Hole, ate a lot of jelly beans and Twizzlers, and most importantly laughed and had fellowship with our extended PCWS family. Saturday night we gathered for worship which included singing, praying, and challenged each and every one of us to be kind in this coming year. We are blessed to be part of our PCWS church family and continue this twenty plus year tradition!

Pastor Nominating Committee

Greetings PCWS Family, here is your friendly update from your local Pastor Nominating Committee. The PNC has met over thirty times (almost every week since last summer- do you even remember summer?) We have spent hours deliberating and discussing over 170 PIFs (Pastor Information Forms) and we are confident that the Spirit has a hand in the success of the journey we are on. Our pastor is out there and we are getting closer every day to finding him/her. If you have any questions, please reach out to Pastor Bill or one of the members of the PNC! Thank You,
Walt, Kay, Matt, Tricia, Sarah, Mark, David, Peter, and Candice

Lent

Lenten Fair

February 18th after worship!

This year as we begin Lent together, we will prepare for the journey with our Lenten Fair. The theme for the Lenten Fair is “God’s Abundant Love.”

Come learn and experience ways we share God’s abundant love every day especially during Lent:

Shrove Pancake Breakfast

Since our Lenten Fair is February 18th (after Lent begins on February 14th), we will celebrate Mardi Gras with a Pancake Breakfast during our Fellowship time after worship as we experience the Lenten Fair.

Lenten Lunches

Join us on February 20th, 27th, March 6th and March 13th for lunch and worship. Each week, we will gather for a light lunch of soup and sandwiches followed by a brief (10-15 min. time of worship that will consist of prayer, music, scripture and reflections). Cost of lunch is by donation. Members of the community are invited to join us so spread the word. Lenten Lunches begin at 12:00 noon. Worship will start at 12:35 p.m. and everything will end by 12:50 p.m. for those who need to return to work or have an appointment.
Shout Out For The Youth!!

January brought an amazing start to a new chapter in the Presbyterian Church of Western Springs Youth Program! Being new to the role and relatively new to the church I still have much to learn. I am so glad to be surrounded by the coolest kiddos in the world to help me with the learning curve!!

UPYs started the new year with a ski trip – and had an epic weekend at Cascade Mountain in Wisconsin. Thank you to everyone who helped make this experience a success. We also had a ‘welcome to the new role party’ for me (Candice) that was attended by both the UPYs and the JUPYs as well as a sneak preview for our Fifth graders! This party was modeled after a Tom Brown (the legendary associate pastor from the early 2000’s) original idea known as ‘Fast Food Frenzy’. If you want to know more about it show up for our meetings or volunteer to help me make our youth be the best that they can be! We’re always looking for adults to help out!

Things to look forward to this month include the cherished Balloon-a-Gram tradition - please send a treat to a friend. Visit the table in the Jones Room after worship for more info or to purchase your “Gram!” Deliveries will be Sunday the 11th. The month will close with a regular meeting on the 25th for both Jr. High and Sr. High Schoolers at the usual times (5:30 p.m & 7:00 p.m. respectively) in the youth room where we will play alien and discuss new ideas including but not limited to: how to improve our youth room; plans for the rest of the year; and how to make PCWS UPYs and JUPYs the best it has ever been!

If you haven’t had time to introduce yourself to me or taken a moment to get to know me better, I am still waiting and very much looking forward to a few moments of your time.

Candice Mares
Presbyterian Women
February 1, 12:30  p.m.

Meet for the annual book reviews! This special meeting will be held in the Skyline Lounge on the 8th floor at Plymouth Place. Our guests will be the ladies from our congregations who live at Plymouth Place and find it difficult to attend meetings held at the church. Please RSVP by calling the church office at 708-246-5220 to let us know you will be coming. If you wish to carpool (and be dropped off at the door) meet at the church at 12:00. This will be dessert only and hosted by First Presbyterian Church of LaGrange.

If you wish to review a book, please email Betty McGinnes (bettymcginnes@earthlik.net) from LaGrange and copy Judy McAtee. Please email her with your name, phone and email address, along with title, author and a brief summary. Betty will prepare a sheet listing all of the books reviewed.

Afternoon Circle meets February 20, 1:00 p.m. in the Graham Charter Room. Lesson 6 “In Community with the Reality of the Present” from Cloud of Witnesses: The Community of Christ in Hebrews by Melissa Bane Sevier. Discussion will be led by Rev. Tia Zimmerman Cole.

Evening Circle will meet February 27 at 1:00 p.m. in the Graham Charter Room. Dessert will be furnished. We will be discussing Tears We Cannot Stop by Michael Dyson.

March 1 Program: Should I Stay, or Should I Go?
Many people struggle to make decisions about the best living situation for themselves or their aging parent. Most seniors, if given the choice, would choose to remain in their own home for as long as possible, and most families want to respect that choice. What is it that makes staying home possible?

Mark you calendar and plan to attend when we meet at First Presbyterian Church of LaGrange.

Musical Happenings in February:

Chancel Choir: We’re always looking for new members to join the choir and we can always use more voices. If you’re not in the choir, what can I do to get you in the choir? Do you enjoy singing but are afraid because you don’t read music, DON’T BE! You don’t have to read music to be in the choir, so why aren’t YOU in the choir?

Chancel Choir is open to anyone, age 14 and up and does not require the ability to read music - just a desire to sing. The choir rehearses on select Thursday evenings from 6:30-7:30 p.m. and please, if Thursday evenings are not a viable option, contact me and we will work out an alternative plan.

Chancel Choir Rehearsals: Please check the online church calendar as well as the Sunday Bulletin for specific rehearsal dates. Please note: rehearsal times have changed and now are 6:30-7:30 p.m. on the nights the choir rehearses.

Please consider joining us! Feel free to email me, stefcoates@gmail.com, or text/call anytime, 630-697-4028.

Handbell Choir Ensembles: Interested in trying out the bells on a small scale? Please contact stefcoates@gmail.com. We are hoping to have a few small groups play during the next few months and this is the perfect time to give the bells a try.

No-Name Band: The band will be getting together again soon. Please contact Kami Booth if interested in singing or playing with the band.
African-American Spirituals

As February is Black History month, Pastor Bill and I have included some African-American Spirituals into our hymn selections for the month and I have chosen my Preludes, from well-known African-American Spirituals.

For those of you who don’t know the history and or the importance of these songs, I have included a very brief synopsis of the spirituals. (The following is a condensed version of an article by Pamela Crosby on the United Methodist Church’s webpage.)

African-American spirituals, also known as Negro spirituals, are a familiar, precious part of American history. Today their melodies are an integral part of worship services. While these songs have strong connections to historical and personal experiences, the entire function of the spirituals may not be obvious. Songs originating during the slavery years in the United States, 1600 through 1870, are generally categorized as plantation, sorrow and jubilee songs; however, the use of these melodies goes beyond those labels. African-American spirituals emerged from a mix of the brutal institution of slavery, Christian influences and African culture. These songs are a historical record that expressed a yearning for a better life, claimed identification with the children of Israel, underscored the need for a closer walk with God, and emphasized the slave's hope for freedom and the future. Love, grace, mercy, judgment, death and eternal life are among the themes enfolded in these songs.

The slave's acceptance of Christianity, while experiencing the conflicting behavior of slave owners, is a testament to the power of the gospel. Often slaves believed that the salvation and new life of which they learned when "worshipping" with their owners would happen not on earth, but, rather, when they went to heaven. In their songs, the slaves named issues and fears they could not express publicly. Meeting in the woods or arbors, out of the sight and hearing of slave owners and overseers, the slaves were free to worship and praise, to express their true feelings and to offer unbridled prayers and requests to God. They could lay their burdens down and find strength to face another day.

Many of the spirituals carried dual meanings and symbolic messages unknown to slave owners. The lyrics of "Steal Away" alerted slaves that a religious meeting would occur that night; slaves sang the song all day until they notified everyone. Underground Railroad conductor Harriet Tubman used the spirituals "Wade in the Water" and "Deep River" to warn slaves to travel in the water to throw off their scent from the bloodhounds. The text of many spirituals, such as "Ezekiel Saw the Wheel" and "There Is a Balm in Gilead," came directly from the Old Testament. As he grieved over the sin of the Israelites who had turned their backs on God, the prophet Jeremiah posed the question, "Is there no balm in Gilead?" In their new religion, enslaved Africans found the answer in Jesus Christ.

Just as the text of this soothing spiritual captures a timeless message, the strength and power of African-American spirituals speaks to the continual relevance of these songs and the reason they still heal souls today.

*Pamela Crosby, a freelance writer and producer, is executive director of Black Methodists for Church Renewal, Nashville, Tenn. This article was first published in the Jan.-Feb. 2014 issue of Interpreter.*
Oftentimes those who are grieving feel like they are alone in their grief or they don’t have a space where they are comfortable talking about their loved one or their emotions. While it is true that grief cannot only be claimed by one age group, children are often forgotten grievers. Some feel they are not old enough to feel loss. But if a person is old enough to love, then that person is also old enough to mourn and to grieve. Grief is actually felt by a large percentage of children. In fact, 1 in 20 children will experience the death of someone significant in their lives before graduating high school.

Buddy’s Place, a program of Pillars Community Health, provides support groups and activities for children, teens, and their families who have experienced the death of someone significant in their lives. Our community includes grieving children, teens, parents, and caregivers—as well as those who support the program. Buddy’s Place has been meeting at the Presbyterian Church of Western Springs for over seven years, and the church is very much a part of the Buddy’s Place community. The church provides us space for our Monthly Gatherings as well as our 8-Week Session (curriculum-based support groups in the spring and fall).

When families first walk down the hall to come to one of our support groups, I can only imagine that walk is filled with a variety of emotions. But when they open the doors to the Jones Room, they are greeted with the sounds of children buzzing around and adults connecting with one another. They enter a room with others who “get it.” While the stories and experiences are unique to each person, they all have experienced the death of someone significant in their lives. These experiences bond us together and create a community. Over the past seven years, the many families who have come through the program have found support during their grief journey. As a program, we have felt supported by your church through the outreach you provide and, in our case, the space you make available to us.

Buddy’s Place services are free of charge thanks to the support of the Lyons Township Mental Health Commission and gifts from individuals, churches, foundations, clubs, organizations, and businesses. In addition to our support groups, we also provide programming to specifically address the grief of these families, while also providing presentations to schools and organizations that work with children. To read our latest newsletter, please click here or visit the Buddy’s Place Web page.

Pillars Community Health is an innovative health and social services agency, among the first in the state of Illinois to integrate primary medical and dental care with mental health and social services. The organization is the result of a merger in January 2018 between Pillars and Community Nurse Health Center. Learn more at www.PillarsCommunityHealth.org.
Living Waters for Cuba

Mark your calendars! The Living Waters for the World system is scheduled to be installed in Nueva Paz during the week of April 3-10. Preliminary work at the church has already begun, photos of which you can see on the Mission bulletin board. Our team leaders in Mississippi are beginning to finalize logistics so stay tuned for a more detailed update in March!

Nueva Paz Breakfast Club

“We want to continue informing you and keep you updated on the development of the breakfast project at Nueva Paz. This week, we were joined by all the elders who could not start because of the low morning temperature, achieving 100% capacity taking into account that five of them cannot walk and their relatives came to pick it up for the three days agreed. We started at 8:30 a.m. They feel very well; we share devotionals.

On Monday 25th we are going to have a talk with Rogelio, psychologist, about the adults of the third age and the need to feel useful. We pray, blessing the aliments and for the satisfaction that gives us power to carry out this project, and for the presence of each one of them. We thank God for allowing us to live this new experience of community service. You remain in our prayers, we wish you a happy Christmas and New Year.

We appreciate your support and solidarity to achieve such a noble community service; thank you for your help.

Many blessings for you and your community.

God bless you all.”

Translated from a letter received by Jane Boxell late December, 2017.
Thank you for your service at PCWS in January! We can’t do it without you.

Helped in the office, helped with bulletins and with database updates: Carol Ulreich, Michelle Hennessy, Donna Strunk, Laura Fruit, Mindy McMahon, Judy McAtee, Kay Kelly

Second Baptist Food Pantry run: David and Jane Boxell, Kathy Wennerstrum

Crushed cans: David and Jane Boxell, Mary Jo and Ron Blough, Mindy McMahon and Davis McMahon

Prepared Glad Tidings for mailing: Dorothy Andersen, Ruth Riordan, Joyce Habermann and Mary Kae Headland

Flowers in February: Laurie Merrifield, Nancy Glickman

Member notes:

Dear PCWS family,

Thanks you so much for the care package. I am so lucky to have a church family like you! The goodies will definitely come in handy when I study for finals. I cannot wait to see you all soon. Thank you for all your love and support.

Sincerely, Mary Smyers

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for all the get well and Christmas cards and notes and phone calls. They all mean so much. I’m so happy to be a part of PCWS – such a caring congregation. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and the happiest of new years. Hope to see you before too long.
The flowers for Dick, once again, were so beautiful and I want to thank all the ladies who always make the church look so nice.

With love, Shirley Pine

To our church family,

Have a wonderful Christmas, everyone.

Love, Larry and Becky Glasscock

PCWS,

Thank you so much for the yummy care package this semester! It’s so great knowing that my church family back home cares so much for me and the other college students while we are away from home! It was a great treat that I shared with my roommates and friends down at the University of South Carolina and we thank you all tons!

Love, Paige McMahon

We Extend Sympathy to:

The family of Chad Sellman family on the death of his grandfather, Norm Erickson in December.

The family of Bill Dougherty, who died on Wednesday, December 27th.

The family of Pat Petros, founding member, who died on Thursday, December 28th.

The family of Mae Love, who died on Friday, December 29th.

Diane & Pat Ravanesi on the death of her mother, Doris Irene Boothe-Wanty, who died on January 6th.

The family of Tom Allen, husband of Judy Allen, who passed away January 7th in Texas.

The family of Raymond Sievers, Marilyn Hanson’s brother who died on Friday, January 12th. Raymond was husband of Adell and uncle to Peter and Cheryl Hanson and Andy and Asia Hanson.
February 19, 2018
Church and Offices Will be Closed.

We’re Social! Are You?
Follow us, share our information with your friends and family!

News Deadlines

Bulletin: Submit announcements to the church office by 9:00 a.m. Wednesday morning. Email to pcws@presbyws.org.

Weekly Connection: Submit information by 5:00 p.m. Tuesday for inclusion in the Thursday email.

Glad Tidings Deadline

Articles for the next month’s Glad Tidings are due by the 10th of each month.
To ensure your submission is received, please email articles and pictures to:

GT@presbyws.org

Help prepare the March Glad Tidings for mailing—Meet February 23, 10:30 a.m. in the Upper Room.

Remember in Prayer

❖ The Ahmeti Family
❖ Kimberly Bone
❖ Diane Markley Bruser
❖ George Bruser
❖ Phyllis Cordell
❖ Billye Dvorak
❖ Norm Erickson
❖ Paulette Erickson
❖ Becky Glasscock
❖ Elaine Greco
❖ Joshua Haberkorn
❖ Ronald Halla
❖ Jim Hiepler-Hartwig
❖ Rich Kanak
❖ Ruth Kaduke
❖ Phil Kasik
❖ Julie Kelly
❖ Kathleen Kircher
❖ John Kregg
❖ Barbara Lennie
❖ Deborah Matthews
❖ Evie Meyer
❖ Debi Mirlenbrink
❖ Norb Mirlenbrink
❖ Peggy Mirlenbrink
❖ Mary Myers
❖ Holly Oliver
❖ Ginger Oswald
❖ Sharon Pederson
❖ Joyce Rodos
❖ Marge Sandrik
❖ Beata B. Sak
❖ Mike Slesicki
❖ Betty Staab
❖ Carol Stoub
❖ Brooks Tonn
❖ Gloria Torres
❖ Betty Toft
❖ Norman Toft
❖ Teri Tuffner
❖ Cheryl, Deb Mathews mother
❖ Dorothy Wilson
❖ Brian, friend of the Smyers family
❖ Our men and women serving our country in the Armed Services
❖ Donna
   (Friend of Joyce Smyers)
❖ Michael
   (friend of Jane Norman)
❖ Presbyterian Church Congregation in Nueva Paz, Cuba
❖ The people of Syria, especially family members of PCWS Interfaith Women’s Book Group
Upcoming Events in February

Feb. 1  Presbyterian Women
Feb. 4  Souper Bowl of Caring/ Chili Cook-Off
Feb. 6  Deacons
Feb. 10 JUPYs & Confirmation Mission Project (FMSC) 
   Glad Tidings Article Deadline
Feb. 11 Balloon-A-Gram Deliveries
Feb. 14 ASH Wednesday
Feb. 19 President’s Day  
   Church & Offices Closed
Feb. 21 Session
Feb. 23 Prepare Glad Tidings for mailing
Feb. 26 Book Group

Upcoming Events in March

Mar. 1  Presbyterian Women
Mar. 2  World Day of Prayer
Mar. 6  Deacons
Mar. 10 Glad Tidings Article Deadline  
   Spaghetti Dinner
Mar. 11 Daylight Savings Time Begins
Mar. 17 St. Patrick’s Day
Mar. 21 Session
Mar. 25 Palm Sunday
Mar. 26 Book Group
Mar. 27 Prepare Glad Tidings for mailing

To view a full calendar of events, please visit our webpage: www.presbyws.org 
and click on the “Calendar” link at the top of the page.