

# FIRST PRESS

*Inviting all to know Christ, grow in Christ, and share Christ's love.*

200 E. BEARDSLEY AVENUE ELKHART IN 46514

February 15—March 14, 2009

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## Congregational Dinner & Meeting: ROUND-UP AT THE TRIPLE BAR RANCH! SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22

Howdy, Presbyterian partners! The Congregational Dinner will take on a decidedly western theme as we gather together at the Triple Bar Ranch. This year, the Congregational Dinner will also serve as a fundraiser for our youth's mission trip, who are helping prepare and assist at the three bars: salad bar, potato bar, and ice cream bar. Come at 5:00 p.m. to enjoy the meal and contribute to a good cause!

Following the dinner, at 6:00 p.m., will be the annual Congregational Meeting, complete with reports of the past year, election of new officers, and discussion of plans for the future. This meeting is important as a forum for sharing information and gathering input.

Child care will be provided in the nursery and activities for children are being planned during the meeting time.

It will greatly help with the planning for the meal and for child care/children's activities if those planning to attend will sign up at the sheets located throughout the church. You may also call the church office to make a reservation.

## Worship Schedule

- 8:30 Chapel Service
- 9:15 1st Bridge Service  
(Lower Level)
- 11:00 Sanctuary Service
- 11:00 2nd Bridge Service  
(Lower Level)

## Church School

- Children & Youth Classes  
10:00 a.m.
- Adult Classes  
9:30 a.m. Room 101



Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 25. Our church will offer a variety of special services and events, including Wednesday evening Taizé-style worship services, special worship services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, and the Walk to the Cross. For details on these services, see page 7.

Beyond our special services, however, we are entering a church-wide time of deepening our spiritual journeys. We are inviting everyone to participate in a small group study of "Companions in Christ: Embracing the Journey." See page 5 for further details.



from the Pastor's desk

Are you feeling disoriented? Many people are; this is a disorienting time. The economic downturn has caused many losses: jobs, income, assets, homes, plans for retirement, belongings that have been sold, visions of the future, dreams for our community. Each of these losses is cause for grieving; each is unsettling. Even for those of us who have not had major personal losses, we know people who have, and that is disorienting.

Several weeks ago, in preaching on Psalm 42, I mentioned Walter Brueggemann's distinction among "psalms of orientation, psalms of disorientation, and psalms of reorientation." Our Lenten study book, "Embracing the Journey," picks up the same analysis:

*Hebrew Bible scholar Walter Brueggemann suggests that the life of faith is a journey with God characterized by three basic movements: (1) being oriented, (2) becoming disoriented, and (3) being surprisingly reoriented. The psalms give consistent evidence of movement through such phases. I suspect these movements are familiar experiences to most of us who have embarked on an intentional spiritual journey. There are times when our certainties about life seem seriously undermined, if not completely shattered. There are other times when, through conscious effort or quite apart from it, we move from disorientation to a new constellation of meaning and wholeness. Life is not a stationary experience. New insights and developments continually challenge our understanding of life and our experience of God. Yet if we see the spiritual life as a journey, these cycles of change will not alarm us or turn us aside from our primary goal — to know and love God.*

Periods of disorientation are uncomfortable, unsettling, and usually unwanted. This is certainly true of the present circumstance. Yet there may be a greater joy hidden in the clouds of uncertainty and stress. Time and time again, in both scripture and our experience, we see that periods of disorientation can be stepping-stones for greater faith and understanding. This doesn't happen automatically: for disorientation to lead to reorientation, usually at a broader and deeper level of faith, we must intentionally seek such growth. Not just want it, but actively work to "prepare the way" for paths of truth to emerge in the desert of our souls.

This is "soul work," involving prayer, Bible study, reflection, and holy conversation. It cannot be done quickly or alone; it takes sustained work over time, and it takes a community of faithful people to share the journey.

This Lent, we are inviting everyone to participate in a small group to study "Embracing the Journey" and become intentional about gaining new depth of faith and understanding. To accommodate busy schedules, we are offering groups at a variety of times and places, including some at the church (Sunday mornings, Wednesday evenings, and possibly other times). Cards have been distributed to seek input as to the times desired. These cards are still available. If you haven't yet completed and turned in one, we encourage you to do so ASAP, so we can schedule the groups.

I hope you will "embrace the journey" of faith by participating in one of the groups. Wherever you are in your faith journey, or in your "orientation," this process may lead you to a deeper and more sustaining faith.



## Youth Updates

Fresh 180 has been on the move the last couple of months. We started it off with an all nighter! We had 20 teens and 5 adults show up that night. We went ice skating and played some real wacky games. The teens barely made it to breakfast that morning, they were exhausted! We saw a lot of new faces come through our doors.

The mystery date we had last month landed us in Baugo Park for some all out fun. We had a great time and work out climbing up that hill, but the best part was sliding down. The kids and I had fun going down the hill in groups. When we started to get cold we warmed up at the cozy fireplace at the recreation center.

The upcoming mystery date will involve food and fellowship. This will be a time to hang out at a place with great food and good friends.

This month we are discussing the importance of loving our neighbors and friends. I believe there is a deep need to live out your faith in everyday life.

YP Coop (aka Shannon Cooper)



### Other activities & events....

**Congregational Dinner...**Our youth are hosting the Round Up at the Triple Bar Ranch congregational dinner on February 22 as a fund-raiser for their summer mission trip.

**Wednesday night small group?** We will be exploring the possibility of having a Wednesday night small group for youth with the *Embracing the Journey* theme.

**Parents Meeting March 1:** Parents are invited to meet on Sunday, March 1, during youth group time to discuss the mission trip and future plans.



## Souper Bowl of Caring

Our youth collected \$1 donations after each service on **February 1**. There were two soup pots — one for each team. The members of the congregation placed \$1 vote in either soup pot to support whichever team they thought would win the Superbowl! We didn't predict the game-winner, but our community will win. The Cardinal's pot had \$120.08, with the Pittsburg Steelers at \$94.00. The money received will be donated to Church Community Services. Together, we will make a difference. Everyone WINS in the "Souper Bowl!" Thank you for caring!

## **LENTEN WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN**

Starting on March 4 and through the entire month, we will be having activities for children ages Kindergarten through 6th grade. For the schedule, please see page 6. Bible games will usually be divided into two teams and adults are encourage to participate with their children. We will be trying to divide the teams as equally as possible with thought given to age and education level. We plan on having a really good time. Younger children may be in the nursery. If you would like to volunteer please call Brigitte at 574-273-239.



### **MARCH FUNDRAISER FOR HEIFER PROJECT**



March 8 - 22 the Children's Ministry department will be hosting a fundraiser for the Heifer Project. For a \$1 donation you may enter your "Guess Your Church Staff's Baby Pictures!" All ages are welcome to guess. Photos will be on the education bulletin board at the north entrance and entry sheets will be available. One prize only to be given out with a tie breaker to decide the winner. The prize will be a \$25 gift card to Target. So, if you think you know the church staff try your luck and see if you can match all the photos to grown up staff members!

### **H2O Game Night "Him to Others" Young Adult Fellowship Saturday, February 21 at 6:30 p.m.**



Young Adults – join us in Fellowship Hall on Saturday night for an evening of games and laughter. Bring your favorite board games – we'll have a bunch as well. Child care is available. Bring a snack to share!



### **Sunday, March 8 Parables**

**Guest worship leaders at the Bridge  
9:15 and 11:00 a.m.**

We are very excited to welcome back this Goshen College student-led worship team. Parables will use music and drama to lead us in a special worship gathering at the Bridge on **March 8**.

# COMPANIONS *in Christ*

**Lenten Small Groups...** We invite you to participate in a six-week Small Group experience, based on the Upper Room's *Companions in Christ: Embracing the Journey*. Each week, participants will have a short reading to introduce the theme for the week, followed by five daily "practices" to reflect on the theme. Then the small groups meet to share thoughts and experiences. Some groups will meet in homes; others will meet at church. People from all ages and worship services will be reading, reflecting, and praying together on the same theme as we journey toward holiness and wholeness, through the grace of God.

We hope you will prayerfully consider a commitment to participate. This is a wonderful opportunity to grow in faith - as individuals and as a congregation. The small groups will begin meeting the week of February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Each meeting will be an hour and a half to two hours in length, depending on the group. Please sign up by Wednesday, February 18. You'll be notified as soon as you're in a confirmed group. Study books will be available at that time. The books cost \$7.50 (one per couple is fine). If the cost is burdensome, speak to one of the pastors, and we'll get you a book.

There will be a Sunday morning class led by Mike Stoll for those who miss their group meeting or cannot participate in a mid-week group. As you will see on page 6, Brigitte Evens is offering some special children's activities and crafts on Wednesday evenings from 5:00 – 7:00, so parents can meet on Wednesday evenings at the church. If you want to be in a group at that time, just indicate it on the response card below!

If you have any questions, please contact Kathleen O'Connell. If you have not already completed and returned an information card about the small groups, please use the form below and mail or bring it to the church office. Thank you!

Growing in Christ: Adult Ministry



During Lent, we are inviting youth and adults to participate in a small group study of the book *Companions in Christ: Embracing the Journey*. Together let's make Lent a time for shared spiritual growth and discovery throughout the church.

Yes, I/We would like to participate!

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

The groups will meet for 6 weeks, beginning the week of February 22. Circle all times that you would be available. Please put a \* next to your preferred meeting time(s):

Day time/morning:	M	T	W	TH	F
Day time/afternoon:	M	T	W	TH	F
Evening:	M	T	W	TH	F
Sunday:		noon		evening	

Will you need childcare?

Would you consider hosting a group in your home?

# Lenten Activities for Children

## Wednesday Nights!

Children's Ministry coordinator Brigitte Evens invites all children to enjoy Lenten Wednesday nights, filled with crafts, games, and activities! Along the way, the children will have their own times to learn more about the season of Lent and Easter. The fun begins Wednesday, March 4.

### 5:00—6:00 p.m. Crafts

Projects will be flexible so children can come when they aren't in choir, or stay for the whole hour.

### 6:00 p.m. Dinner

Join the adults in Room 100 for a simple Soup Supper.

### 6:30 p.m. Games

Activities and Games while the adults enjoy Taizé worship in the chapel.

*Parents are invited to use this time to participate in one of the Lenten small groups!*



## Maundy Thursday

### Bread Baking And

### Communion Exploration

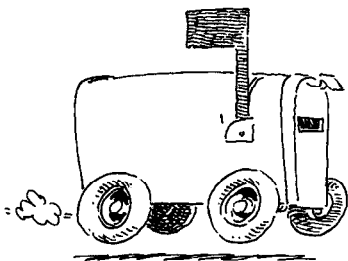
9:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

All elementary age youth are invited to gather in the downstairs kitchen at 9:30 am on Thursday, April 9. (it's Spring Break week in Elkhart). We'll bake the bread for that evening's Maundy Thursday worship and spend time exploring the meaning of the sacrament of Communion.

Parents: this is a great time to help your children grow in understanding one of the central acts of our worship. While the bread is rising and baking the children will enjoy the *Walk to the Cross* prayer walk, as well as other activities with Pastor Kathleen designed to learn more about Jesus' last supper and its meaning for us today. And, we'll enjoy some of the fresh baked bread with our lunch! YUM!!

## Newsletter Deadline

The next newsletter  
will be inserted in the bulletin on March 15  
and mailed the following week to those who are not in worship.  
Please submit articles for that newsletter by March 6.



# LENTEN SERVICES



## Ash Wednesday Service

We begin our Lenten journey with our Ash Wednesday service, a time of quiet and prayer when we are invited to receive the traditional "imposition of ashes." Come and join us in the Chapel on Wednesday, February 25, at 6:30 p.m.

## Wednesday Nights Soup & Taizé Worship March 4 – April 1



Join us Wednesday evenings in Lent for a simple meal and quiet, Taizé-style worship. From March 4 through April 1 (the week before Palm Sunday), we will share bread and soup in Room 100 at 6:00 p.m., and then move to the Chapel for a gentle worship service of prayer, singing, and reflection. Come and reflect, come and pray, come and find the "quiet center" where you may reconnect with God.

## Lenten Sermon Series

**The Story in Which We Find Ourselves...**How does the grand sweep of the Biblical story — the story of God's relationship with God's people and with the world — speak to us today? What binds the stories of Cain & Abel, Abraham & Sarah, Moses, the prophets, and Jesus together? What comfort and challenge do these stories offer us in 2009?

During Lent, Steve Braden & Kathleen O'Connell will explore these themes at Chapel, Bridge, and Sanctuary services. Join the journey of exploration!

## A Walk to the Cross



**A Walk to the Cross...**If you've enjoyed any of our past Lenten or Advent prayer walks, here is your opportunity to get involved. The prayer walk, **A Walk to the Cross** will be Thursday, April 9, and Good Friday, April 10. We will need people to help design each of the 12 stations. We'll also need people to help set up the room dividers on Sunday, April 5 after worship, to help clean up the room on Saturday, April 11, and to act as greeters on Thursday and Friday during the prayer walk. If you would like to help in any of these ways, please talk with Kathleen O'Connell.

# Presbyterian Women



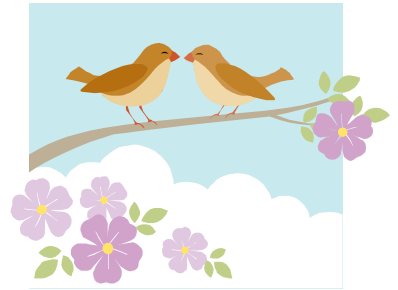
The March BIBLE STUDY with Kathleen O'Connell will be February 26 instead of March 5. She will review lesson 7 of *Jubilee! Luke's Gospel to the Poor*. All Presbyterian Women are invited to come at 11:00.

CHURCHWIDE GATHERING OF PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN will be July 11-15 in Louisville, Kentucky. *God Will do Wonders Among You* is the 2009 theme. Registration is encouraged by May 15. For further information contact Harriet Sloop.

LET'S LEARN TOGETHER! -- You are invited to join Presbyterian Women at Geneva Center on Friday and Saturday, March 13 and 14. Reservations are due by February 21. For further information, contact Alice Morris.

SPRING GATHERING of Presbyterian Women of Wabash Valley will be Saturday, April 25, 2009. It will be at the Geneva Center and registrations are due April 15. Contact Harriet Sloop for more information.

**Women's Spring Retreat...** Women – mark your calendars now for our Spring retreat, Saturday, April 25 at Fernwood Botanical Gardens. Set aside this day to give yourself the gift of rest, renewal, and friendship in this beautiful setting. Enjoy God's creation and presence during this day-long retreat.



## Volunteer Recognition

We continue our series recognizing one of our many, many regular volunteers that help around the church without acknowledgement or praise. We would like to thank these members! Watch for future issues and recognitions!



We have selected as Volunteer of the Month for February— Mary Ann Graves. With Mary Ann it is very hard to know where to begin. She is a bright light on a dreary day! She comes into the church with a smiling face even when the tasks are many. She has for many, many years taken care of the beautiful memorial garden along with many other volunteers. She was the brains behind ADOPT-A-SPOT, which you can read more about on page 9. Mary Ann has been one of our ever-faithful banner makers. She helps decorate the building inside and out. We are very thankful for her! Thank you for the many services to your church!



## capital campaign Update

As of January 1, we have received \$526,536 of the \$1,092,344 that has been pledged. We have spent \$825,906 and borrowed \$370,100. Most of the Havel Bros. work has been completed, but the HVAC system has not yet been hooked up to its network computer control system. Please keep the payments on your pledges coming, as we have a long way to go to fulfill our campaign!

## CHURCH FINANCE UPDATE

We finished 2008 ahead of our deficit budget, but still \$12,000 in the red. Some late 2008 gifts have effectively cut this deficit in half, but it is still a deficit. Please keep up your 2009 gifts. Because we are changing our fiscal year to June-May, our pledge campaign will be after Easter. We are hoping our members & friends can maintain current giving through May. If you cannot, please let Cinda Olinger in the church office know. Thank you.

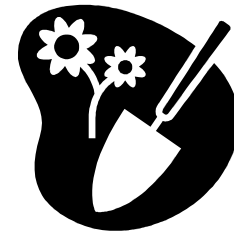


## Homebound Communion

Elders and Deacons – current and ‘retired’: We will be visiting homebound and nursing home residents on **Sunday, March 1** following each of the morning worship services. If you are available, would you share an hour of your time to enable our members to receive the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. If you’ve never served homebound communion, you’ll be paired with an experienced server. Contact Kathleen O’Connell if you can help ([kathleenoc@verizon.net](mailto:kathleenoc@verizon.net)).

## Looking Forward to Spring

Spring is a time for renewal. Not only for people after our long and difficult winter, but for the natural things around us. Trees will leaf out and put on new growth, plants will bloom and also grow and some plants will only grow.



The Church property has a lot of plantings of all kinds. How are these taken care of? One member takes care of the grass cutting and other members help with other necessary jobs. There are other areas of landscaping needs where you can help.

About 12 years ago Mary Ann Graves came up with an idea to accomplish this task. She called it ADOPT-A-SPOT. Mary Ann plotted the different landscaped areas and came up with 30 of them. Then members of the congregation selected areas they would like to maintain. A map of the ADOPT-A-SPOT areas is on the hallway wall just north of the south entrance to the sanctuary. Mary Ann has continued to guide this program over the years and members have continued to maintain the areas.

Now Mary Ann would like to be relieved of this responsibility. Therefore, the Trustees are looking for someone to take over the project. Any one interested can contact the church office or Trustee Walt Wagner at 848-9429. In addition, the Trustees are willing to accept suggestions from third parties of people that would be good for this project but unwilling to volunteer themselves.

Sharing Christ's Love in the Church

**The sympathy of the church is extended to:**

- \* Agnes Grahmbeek and Nicoline Valentijn on the death of their sister Greta Buttursruben on January 21.
- \* Delbert Schrock on the death of his mother on January 22.
- \* Beth Cooper (Shannon Cooper's wife) on the death of her father on January 22.
- \* Harriet Sloop on the death of her mother, Annetta Johnson, on January 29.
- \* Milcah Kinyua on the death mother, Elizabeth Karaba, who died February 10 in Africa.



*Many thanks to the prayer chain, the wonderful members of our congregation and to Steve for his visits and for the cards and flowers. They really helped a lot and I am on the road to recovery. Peace to you all.* Dottie Arnold

*A Big Thank You to all who sent food, cards, calls, and prayers. The food was delicious. And the cards and calls appreciated so much. Prayers always mean you are thinking of us. It looks like we have turned the corner and pray that we will see all of you again soon. Thank You, Again.* Mary and Bob Decker

*Dear Church family, Thank you for your kindness and care of my family during this difficult time. The meals have been such a blessing and the transportation for the children has been extremely helpful. You all have been wonderful! Each of you have touched our lives in so many ways. You are angels sent by God.*

*In Christ,*  
Leslie Greising & family

**New for the Church's website: [www.presby.net](http://www.presby.net)...**The music of the sanctuary worship services for this (school) year is available for listening or downloading. Just click the Sanctuary Music link. Email [dick@presby.net](mailto:dick@presby.net) if you have trouble with this link.

**The Book Bunch** will meet on March 3, at 11:00 a.m. in the Gathering Place. Please join us!

**Softball Roundup...**It may be cold outside but Spring Training is just around the corner. Pitchers and catchers have reported for duty. Shouldn't you?



If you might be interested in playing on this year's Men's Softball team, please contact Kip Lytle ([macaddis@verizon.net](mailto:macaddis@verizon.net) or 262-1928). We'll let you know when practices will begin in March! Games begin in May and we play one night a week through August.

**Church Women United**

The Lenten Series this year will be held on Monday mornings at 9:00 a.m., Elkhart First Brethren Church, 24197 County Road 16E as follows:

- March 2—RETA (Reason Enough to Act)
- March 9—World Day of Prayer program
- March 16—Deb Lang, Gideon Auxiliary (Women's Prison Ministry)
- March 23—The Rev. Cora Brown "Women and Children"

The programs will be preceded by coffee and rolls or doughnuts. Everyone is welcome to attend any or all of the programs.

# Upcoming Weekly Worship Schedule

Date	February 22	March 1	March 8	March 15
<b>Preacher Upstairs</b>	Steve Braden	Rudy Gourdine	Steve Braden	Steve Braden
<b>Bridge Preacher</b>	Kathleen O'Connell	Steve Braden	Parables	Kathleen O'Connell
<b>Chapel Liturgist</b>	Stu Barb		Dick Griffen	Jackie McCoy
<b>Sanctuary Liturgist</b>				
<b>Special</b>	Congregational Dinner & Meeting	Communion/Homebound Communion	Musical Group "Parables" at Bridge	Newsletter
<b>Greeters</b>	Paula Barb	Dick Griffen Linda Schrock	Jill Stoll	Carol Eldridge
<b>8:30 a.m. Chapel Ushers</b>	Jane & Bruce Klonowski	Dottie Arnold Connie Minzey	Dottie Arnold Connie Minzey	Lori Eber Lou Putnam
<b>9:15 a.m. Bridge Ushers</b>				
<b>11:00 Sanctuary Ushers</b>	Diane & Doug Evans Betty Kegerreis Mary Wagner	Alex Eraybar Will Evens Helen Free Jake Free	Sean O'Neill Chris Seddon Susie & Wen Wu	Tim Good Terry & Andy McCaskey Julaine Yoder
<b>11:00 a.m. Bridge Ushers</b>				
<b>11:00 a.m. Music (Sanctuary)</b>	Melodia, Jr. Chorale, Westminster, & Chancel Choirs	Chancel Choir	Chancel Choir	Chancel Choir
<b>Hospitality Host</b>	Richard Fair & Kathy Ritchie Fair	Jane & Bruce Klonowski	Jackie McCoy	Pat & Dick Brotherson
<b>Counters</b>	Doug Evans Hans Disch Dick Whitcraft	Marsha Brownell Bill Loftus Kirk Linton	Marsha Brownell Bill Loftus Kirk Linton	Marsha Brownell Bill Loftus Kirk Linton

## Daily Prayer Listings

### the week of February 22, 2009

Sunday – Ferne & Bob Huber  
 Monday – Debbie Wright Hughes, Chris Hughes, Katie & Andy Wright  
 Tuesday – Nancy, John, & Molly Hutchings  
 Wednesday – Cathy & Burton Johnston  
 Thursday – Artha & William Juntunen  
 Friday – Judith & Keith Kankel  
 Saturday – Luella Karay  
 And at Eastlake Terrace – Isabelle Kauffman, Yi Kintner, & Dorothy Hemphill, & Gladys Deless

### the week of March 1, 2009

Sunday – Debra & Jeff, Jeffery, & Jane Kaufmann  
 Monday – Betty Kegerreis  
 Tuesday – Mary Helen Kendell  
 Wednesday – Susan Kendell  
 Thursday – Lynn Kirchner  
 Friday – Jane & Bruce Klonowski  
 Saturday – Jean Knapp  
 And at Brentwood Retirement – Irene March

### the week of March 8, 2009

Sunday – Pat & Larry Knight  
 Monday – Diane Kolodziej  
 Tuesday – Gerry Knipfel  
 Wednesday – Vicki, Eric, Kaitlyn, & Carson Kronemeyer  
 Thursday – Bob Kurtz  
 Friday – Joyce & John Kurtze  
 Saturday – Cheri, Brent, Christopher, & Michael Lea  
 And at Riverside Village – Elizabeth Wood

### the week of March 15, 2009

Sunday – Susie & Dave Lehman  
 Monday – Heidi Linder  
 Tuesday – Ruth & Jack Linton  
 Wednesday – Mary, Kirk, Scott, Ross, & Derek Linton  
 Thursday – Linda & Bill Loftus  
 Friday – Thelma Luefling  
 Saturday – Kathleen O'Connell & Kip Lytle  
 And at Hubbard Hill – Avia Baker, Helen Hovey, Sy Pell, & Isabelle Freeman



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Web: [www.presby.net](http://www.presby.net)

**Staff**

Stephen B. Braden, Pastor  
Kathleen W. O'Connell, Associate Pastor  
Celia S. Weiss, Director of Music & Organist  
Brigitte Evens, Coordinator of Children  
Shannon Cooper, Coordinator of Youth  
Frank Cassella, Coordinator of Contemporary Worship  
Todd Miller, Bridge Media & Technology Coordinator  
Cinda Olinger, Executive & Financial Secretary  
Terry Bishop, Sexton  
Jim Davis, Patti Davis, & Steve Seward, Custodians  
Mary Freed, Nursery Coordinator  
Ashley Borders & Beth Ann Hoffer, Nursery Attendants  
Walt Davis, George Frey, & Rudy Gourdine Parish Associates



## Sharing Resources, Changing Lives

As we begin our preparation for Lent, we begin thinking of the traditional One Great Hour of Sharing ministry, which began in 1949. Through this special offering, Presbyterians join with millions of worldwide Christians to share God's love through:

- \* Presbyterian Disaster Assistance: providing responses to immediate needs and disasters
- \* Presbyterian Hunger Program: teaching land management and agriculture
- \* Self-Development of People: strengthening families and communities.

Beginning March 1, a guide for Lenten prayers in your home, the fish boxes, and the Sharing Calendar will be on the materials table by each worship area and One Great Hour of Sharing offering envelopes will be in the pews. The offering will be received throughout Lent and will be dedicated on Palm Sunday, April 5.

***It's Remarkable What Your Gift Will Do.***