

A JOYFUL NOISE!

April 2011

As we enter the season of Spring, turn our clocks forward an hour, prepare for warmer weather, the return of our snowbirds and tourists; in the midst of these natural preparations, we continue to move forward through the season of Lent as well: preparing ourselves for Holy Week. Lent, in popular culture, has become an occasion for us to give something up for a while, most often, only to take it back up for the rest of the year at the end of our trial period. I would hope that this experiment sheds some light on what such a sacrifice really means, but I do wonder.

Lent is not popular even in the church. It is a tough decision to intentionally be penitential, to focus our attention and spend some time thinking and praying about our own faith. Asking ourselves questions such as: what does Jesus' death mean for me? Where do I need resurrection in my life? How can I grow closer to God?

In the season of Lent, we prepare ourselves for the tremendous loss of Jesus who was put to death at the hands of those who did not understand him or feared him; we prepare for the time afterward when we did not know where to turn or how to be who Jesus asked us to be after his death; and we prepare for the joy of resurrection on Easter. These are significant emotional changes that most of society would rather avoid, and do so. The special worship services where we get in touch with these feelings are traditionally lightly attended, while the relief, the joy, the celebration of Easter is quite popular.

I would invite you to arrange your schedule this month to attend either the Maundy Thursday worship service on April 21 or the Good Friday worship on April 22 both at 7pm. Each service is a powerful reminder of why we recognize the events of Holy Week. After we spend some time identifying with the disciples, Jesus' mother, and the countless followers from Palm Sunday that were in hiding after the crucifixion, we will then join the women who went to the tomb seeking to honor Jesus as we attend either our outdoor Easter sunrise service at 8am or our traditional 10:30 Easter worship. May the peace of Christ be with you.

Pastor Dan

Holy Week

Join us for an evening recognition of Jesus' Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, April 21 at 7pm. You are also invited to an ecumenical Good Friday worship service at noon on April 22 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian church in Beulah. We then will have our own powerful and moving reflection of Jesus' crucifixion at our church at 7pm. Easter morning we will gather for outside worship at 8am and for traditional worship at 10:30am on April 24. We will have a pancake breakfast Easter morning from 8:30 to 10am. Please note that the church office will be closed and staff will have Monday, April 25 off in recognition of the extra work of Holy Week.

Special Offering to Strengthen the Church

On BIG Sunday, April 3, in addition to Bringing In Groceries that will be donated to Benzie Area Christian Neighbors, in addition to celebrating communion, and in addition to celebrating the April birthdays and anniversaries of our members and friends, we will also collect a special offering called "Strengthen the Church." This is a special offering of the United Church of Christ that supports new churches.

When we think of church budgets, we most often think about building upkeep, personnel, and program spending, but if you belong to a church that has only been in existence for a few years, you probably do not have your own building, you may not be able to afford a pastor, and programs must be led by volunteers and donations. Worship in new churches tend to use recorded music rather than live musicians. All of these circumstances make it difficult for new churches to get off the ground or even build a strong foundation. And so, on BIG Sunday in April we will collect a special offering to support new church starts locally and across the nation, to help others discover that God is Still Speaking.

Women's Fellowship News

Last month we met with Doug Rodriguez, Mark Weaver and Ken Nye to help us draw up a plan to make the kitchen more efficient as funds are available. The food pantry closet and storage closet have been painted and there are plans for some new shelving.

Our next meeting will be at 1:00 on Wednesday, April 6. Cath Kelder will tell us about her trip to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Our Spring Thank Offering will be received, and the first \$1,000 will go to Pine Ridge. We will have another Junque Sale on July 8th and 9th.

All women of the church are invited to come to the Women's Fellowship meeting.

Circle Meetings

Circle I will meet at 1:00 on Wednesday, April 13, at Chris Gehring's home. Lunch will be served so please let Chris know if you are planning to attend. (882-4653)

Sarah Circle will meet at noon on Wednesday, April 20, at the church. Bring a sandwich and be prepared to tell us about your mother. Think of one word that describes something about her. For instance, My mother was brave, and I'll tell you why I say that.

Circle IV will meet at 10:30 on Wednesday, April 20, and go out to lunch after

CLASSIC JUNQUE SALE



It's spring and thoughts go to cleaning out that junk in your garage, spare room and basement. As you do, look at the items and see if they would be appropriate for the Classic Junque Sale that will be held July 8-9. What is appropriate? Gently used linens, pots, pans, kitchen utensils, jewelry, knick-knacks, household items, toys, furniture and the like are all items that sell. We do not want clothing, electrical appliances, computers or computer accessories or books. Remember that we ask you to price the item before bringing them in, so to make it easier on yourself and do it now while you are doing your cleaning. Items will not be accepted at the church until the week of the sale, so please find a place you can keep them. All of the proceeds for this sale go the mission works of the Women's Fellowship so your help in making this sale successful is appreciated. If you have questions, please feel free to call Penelope Olson at 383-0488.

News from the Deacons

As we continue our journey through Lent, we hope you will join us in some very meaningful services.

Maundy Thursday service is on April 21st at 7:00 p.m. with communion.

Good Friday community service is at St. Andrews at noon.

Good Friday evening service in our sanctuary is at 7:00 p.m.

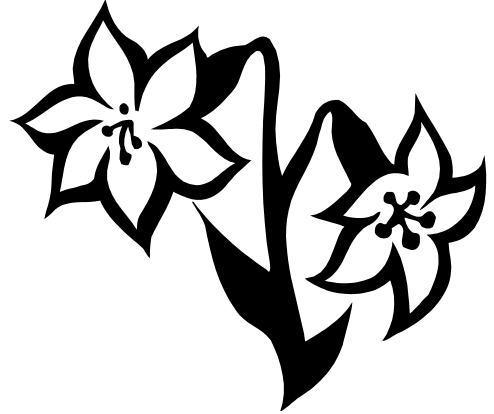
Easter Sunrise service is at 8:00 a.m. in our Memorial Garden with a pancake breakfast served in fellowship hall from 8:30 a.m. until 10:00 a.m.

Easter service is at 10:30 a.m.

Please join us to help celebrate this important time in our Christian faith.

The Tuesday morning Bible Study is learning more about the Ten Commandments. What an interesting group this has turned out to be. If you are interested in learning more about the commandments, please join us on Tuesday at 10 am.

Looking ahead, we will be having our annual "Spring Pops and Pizza" on May 23rd. We will meet at the church at 5:30 for pizza and salad and then car pool up to Benzie Central to hear our youth sing. What a fun evening this is, please plan to join us.



Christian Education News

Sunday School and Youth Group have been busy and we continue to study the Bible and the season of Lent.

The little ones had lots of fun at our Mardi Gras celebration on March 6th and the following week with our St Patrick's Day celebration. Penelope Olson came one Sunday and taught some songs with the Chimes. We are looking forward to having her come back again.

A big highlight on Sunday the 27th was a presentation by Rob Sellers. His program was about reptiles complete with artifacts such as a 6 ft long Diamond Back Snake skin (that had been shed by its owner) and alligator teeth and jaws. We had a captive audience.

This Sunday, on April 3rd, everyone is invited to join us at the Best Western on US31 Beulah for a pool party. Bring parents and friends.

If you know of any Sunday School age or Youth – please encourage them to come. We love to see everyone!!

What's New in the Library

Between Friends...Debbie Macomber traces the lives and friendship of Jillian and Lesley through their letters, diaries, newspaper clippings, even school essays. Born in 1948 in the same Washington state town, the girls become fast friends in spite of their vastly different backgrounds. This friendship is to span 50 years. Because of its scrapbook-style, this story doesn't read as smoothly as other Macomber works, but if you're a fan, you will give it a chance.

Help, Lord! I'm Having a Senior Moment...Again! Seniors (and even seniors-to-be) needing a laugh will enjoy this book which is written as a collection of prayers to God about a person's senior moments...the take-out lunch that can't be found only to be found later in the closet on the hook with the car keys! Dumb things that happen to all of us, but seem to grow more numerous with age. Could be read in a day, but better to read a bit at a time.

The Way of Jesus: Re-forming Spiritual Communities in a Post-Church Age...quoting from a review: "If you want to see how faith communities outside of "organized religion" are transforming lives through the way of Jesus, read this book." Author Toby Jones documents ten new Christian spiritual communities who do just that. These communities offer ideas as to how current church goers can remove the "steeple" to see the "people".

from the back of the book: "*The Way of Jesus*" offers a clear path to struggling, shrinking congregations who desire to re-form themselves in a way that is both more faithful to the Gospel and compelling to post-modern generations, who have long since abandoned the institutional church."

The Rev. Toby Jones is a northern Michigan Presbyterian Pastor and will be the Guest Speaker at the Spring Association Meeting to be held April 30. If you think you read this before, you did, in the United Northern Association's latest newsletter.

Newsletter Email

In an effort to save time and money, we are now offering our newsletter via email. If you use email and have an email address, please contact the church at: secretary@benzoniacongregational.org and let Nancy know that you'd like to receive the Joyful Noise via email.

We are also sending out weekly updates every Friday with prayer requests and upcoming events. To receive this email, simply send our church secretary, Nancy, a note using the above email address.

Help Us Recycle Our Bulletin Covers

We always receive many more bulletins than we use. We have put extras in a box near the main entryway of the church. They work great for printing off emails or such and for scratch paper too. Help yourself to a stack next time your in church.

APRIL
SPECIAL DAYS...

April Birthdays

Happy birthday to the following members of the church family!

5	Anna Nordbeck
5	Maridee Cutler
6	Scott Neveu
12	Shirley Wolfe
13	Steve Davidson
15	Barbara Brian
16	Amanda Case
16	Ken Miner
18	Mary Bruning
23	Gertrude Saffron
24	Betty Henry
24	Dave Neiger
25	Jean Edwards
29	Joan Richardson

April Anniversaries

1	Ken and Roxane Miner
5	Harold and Mary Bruning
23	David and Phyllis Van Hammen
28	Keith and Judy Westphal

THANK YOU

Thanks to Jean Edwards, Ruth Catton, and Susan Lutes for all their work folding and labeling and stamping the March issue of The Joyful Noise.

A BIG THANK YOU

TO OUR MARCH VOLUNTEERS -

COFFEE HOUR

Apr 3	Jo Danford
Apr 10	Oriental Dinner
Apr 17	Jean Bowers
Apr 24	Coffee Hour Fund

NURSERY

Apr 3	Kay Bos
Apr 10	Agnes Slater
Apr 17	Mercedes Smith
Apr 24	Chris Stone

GREETERS

Apr 3	Jean Voight and Ethan Webb
Apr 10	Roxane Miner
Apr 17	Joan and Jerry Richardson
Apr 24	Dennis, Kristin and Lucas Richards

HEAD USHER

Sonny Rodriguez

Church Family Update

Former member Adele Schaubert died on February 13. A memorial service will be on April 30 at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in Beulah.

We have received word that Robert Brewer died on March 22 in Tucson, Arizona. The Brewers have been members since 2003. Cards may be sent to

Barbara Brewer
1721 South Skyview Place
Tucson, AZ 85748

Please remember the Schaubert and Brewer families in your prayers.

Japan Relief

It seems that when immense natural disasters take place, we normally see pictures of the aftermath, but the massive earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan in the middle of the afternoon, with live streaming video left the world stunned. If you would like to make a financial contribution of support, please use the envelope provided, and make your check out to "First Congregational UCC" and in the memo section write "Japan Relief". Your donation will be immediately forwarded through our denomination to our partners in Japan. We currently have three UCC missionaries in Japan who survived and are continuing their ministry. As you remember Japan in your prayers, please also pray for the 35 UCC churches in Japan that suffered damage to their church buildings.

Reminder

If you, a loved one, or a church member you know is in the hospital, please let the church office know so that Pastor Dan may visit. Due to privacy laws, hospitals no longer contact the churches to let them know church members are hospitalized. The church wants to know so that we can support you during this time of need.

Flowers

There is a sign-up sheet outside the church office for altar flowers for 2011. If you are interested in supplying flowers, please sign up for a certain date (or if you are unable to be in worship call the church office to make arrangements). You may then bring in your own flowers or donate \$25 to the church to make the arrangements with a local florist. If you would like the bulletin to reflect your donation, please let the church office know who the flowers honor or memorialize as well as identifying yourself as the donor.

UCC Sister Church of the Month

For the past year, in worship we have been praying for UCC churches in our United Northern Association. You are invited in April to pray for the ongoing mission and ministries of Atlanta Congregational UCC. This church is located in one of the poorest counties in northern Michigan. They have an active food and clothing bank and bring hope to their community. Please remember our friends at Atlanta Congregational UCC throughout the month of April

GoodSearch.com

Remember that if you use the Internet, you can earn money for the church using www.goodsearch.com. One penny per search, or more for internet shopping, is donated directly from the website to our church. So far, the church has earned \$40 just from Internet searches and shopping. Designate us by entering our church name as the charity of your choice.

APRIL 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT
					1	2
3 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship 2:00 Pool Party at Best Western	4 10:00 CMH - Barn 7:00 AA - Barn	5 10:00 Bible Study 10:00 Yoga-Barn 1:30 CWS 5:30 Friends of the Benzie Bus 6:30 Christian Ed 6:30 - Kiwanis 7:00 WAA - Barn	6 12 Noon - AA 1:00 Women's Fellowship 2:00 MS Support Barn 6:00 Bell Choir	7 9:00 - BASO Committee 10 CMH Exercise Barn 5:30 NA - Barn	8 12 N - LOWV Library	9
10 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	11 10:00 CMH - Barn 11:00 Commodities Distribution 7:00 AA - Barn	12 10:00 Bible Study 10:00 Yoga -Barn 5:30 Friends of the Benzie Bus 7:00 Council 7:00 WAA - Barn	13 12 Noon - AA 1:00 - Circle I Lunch at Chris Gehring's 2:30 Knitting - Barn 6:00 Bell Choir 6:00 Deacons	14 10 CMH Exercise Barn 5:30 NA - Barn	15 12 N - LOWV Library	16
17 PALM SUNDAY 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	18 10:00 CMH - Barn 7:00 AA - Barn	19 10:00 Yoga -Barn 5:00 Trustees 5:30 Friends of the Benzie Bus 6:30 Kiwanis 7:00 WAA - Barn	20 12 Noon - AA 10:30 Circle IV Noon Sarah Circle 2:30 Knitting - Barn 6:00 Bell Choir	21 MAUNDY THURSDAY 10 CMH Exercise Barn 5:30 NA - Barn 7:00 - Worship Service	22 GOOD FRIDAY 12 N - LOWV Library 12N - Service at St. Andrews 7:00 - Worship Service	23
24 EASTER 8 Outside Service 8:30 Pancakes 10:15 Church School 10:30 Worship	OFFICE CLOSED 10:00 CMH - Barn 7:00 AA - Barn	26 10:00 Yoga -Barn 5:30 Friends of the Benzie Bus 7 WAA - Barn	27 12 Noon - AA 2:30 Knitting - Barn 6:00 Bell Choir	28 10 CMH Exercise Barn 5:30 NA - Barn	29 12 N - LOWV Library	30

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Chris Stone	Treasurer
Mary Rodriguez..	Financial Secretary
James Sheets.....	Church Moderator
Christy Case	Choir Director
Rosemary Miller	Assistant Choir Director
Gillian Soholt.....	Youth Coordinator
Jean Edwards.....	Newsletter Editor
Carol Dye & Katrina Smith.....	Christian Ed Coordinators
Pat Kinske	Custodian
Nancy Eggleston	Secretary

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