

Boulevard News

May 2009

Special points of interest:

- First Church of the Brethren was organized in 1922.
- We are an “open and affirming” congregation.
- Our faith emphasizes compassion, peace-making, and simplicity.
- Sunday School at 9:30 am.
Sunday Worship at 10:30 am.

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Upcoming Worship

The Gift of Resurrection. (May 3)

The gift of resurrection is not just about an empty tomb. It is about the living presence of Christ in our lives. This morning we go on a walk with Jesus and find ourselves sharing a meal. Our worship will include a bread and cup communion service.

Please read: Luke 24: 36b-48

It is Done For Love (May 10)

We’ll take a look at our sharing of God’s love with others. We may even use the word “*evangelism.*” A special offering will be taken to support the Blanket ministry of Church World Service

Please read: John 13: 31-35

Abiding in Jesus. (May 17)

Our worship will explore the unique

relationship that exists between ourselves and the One we are called to follow. *Please read: John 15: 1-8*

The Gift of God’s Word. (May 24)

Jesus says, “for the words that you[God] gave to me I have given to them.” Today’s message looks at a portion of Jesus’ final prayer/words prior to his death. Do we possess the gift of God’s word.

Pentecost Sunday. (May 31)

Come and celebrate the birthday of the church.

*Please read:
Acts 2: 1-21*



The cross, the wave, and the towel are symbols of our new life in Christ.

A Home Is Blessed

The congregation of First Church of the Brethren gathered for a special “home dedication” on April 19. The service of blessing was for Raelynn Costa who moved into her new home earlier this month. The dedication took place after morning worship. A lunch was provided by our local Project Return

Team*. Thanks for all the prayers and support in making Raelynn’s new home possible.

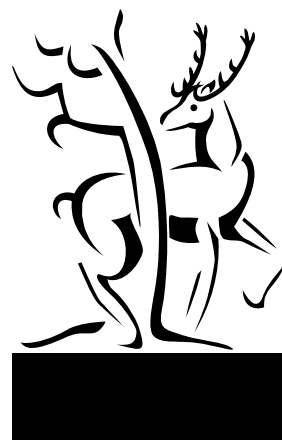
Project Return is a ministry of our congregation. The project return team provides mentoring and friendship for women and children who are re-establishing themselves in the community.

News from Camp Emmanuel

The 2009 Camp Emmanuel schedule is out. Camping programs for children from kindergarten through 12th grade are offered. A number of adult camping opportunities are available, as well. There will be a **Women's Retreat** on the weekend of June 5-7. The theme will be "Camp Flip Flop." Marcia Lewis will serve as director. The cost is \$60 (\$75 after May 22) and includes two

nights lodging and six meals. Activities include: Bible study, campfires, games, food, and fellowship.

A flyer and several registration forms are available at the church. Registration forms may be copied and used for any of the 2009 camps.



The Vine and the Branches

New life is celebrated during Easter. But how often do we look around and truly find ourselves celebrating new life? For me, the dedication of Raelynn's new home on April 19 was truly an Easter moment. I saw in her face and those who gathered with her the face of Jesus.

There is a book that is a combination of photos and written words entitled, *The Faces of Jesus*. One of my favorite authors, Fredrick Beuchner, supplies the text for the book. The

compelling point of the book is its invitation to see the face of Jesus in others. The various pictures in the book examine how people have tried to capture the face of Jesus in various art forms.

The Easter season surely invites us to look for resurrection and new life all around us. Our faith says we will see the living Christ today even as disciples saw the Risen Lord back then. I saw Jesus last week. Did you? -Pastor Kres

"The Easter season invites us to look for resurrection."

Blanket Sunday Appeal

A special *Blanket Sunday Offering* will be received on Sunday, May 10. Our donations help Church World Service provide especially designed blankets when a disaster strikes overseas or here at home. A \$10 dollar donation can provide two blankets to help provide warmth, comfort, and the feeling that someone cares.

Our Witness Commission is inviting us to share in this special offering by giving a donation in honor or memory of a loved one or friend. Just fill out the "in honor of" slip and pin it to the CWS blanket which is hanging up at the rear of the sanctuary.

Remember...A CWS blanket provides



Another Build for Habitat

Habitat for Humanity of Sangamon County will begin its 78th home this month. The Habitat house will be in our Harvard Park Neighborhood, 2431 S. 9th St. The homeowner will be Misty Smith and her family. Misty Smith is the Activity Director at the Mary Bryant Home for the Blind. The kick-off ceremony will be held at the Mary Bryant on May 6. Blitz build days are scheduled for May 7-9. The build schedule starts on May 19. Work will be done on Tuesdays/Thursdays from 4-8 pm and Saturdays from 8 am until 4 pm.

Our church has been approached about helping to prepare and serve some meals during the build days. To donate labor/materials volunteers are asked to contact Don Ecklund, Project Coordinator at 787-7810 or donecklund@sbcglobal.net.

If you are interested in helping with a meal (about 20) contact Patty Brockmeyer, Sonja Glad or Jan Stoller.

Book Discussion Begins

A spring book discussion is being offered for interested participants. The discussions will happen on May 12, 19, 26, and June 5. During the first three sessions we will be reading and discussing *The Shack* by Wm. Paul Young. The last session will be an open discussion about various books we have been or are reading. Meetings will be at the church at 7 pm unless announced

otherwise.

The Shack is a work of fiction which tackles a variety of complex issues. The back cover reads: "In a world where religion seems to grow increasingly irrelevant *The Shack* wrestles with the timeless question: 'Where is God in a world so filled with unspeakable pain?'"

"The Shack is an engaging novel that explores concepts like the Trinity, nature of evil, free will,..That's a partial list, by the way." -Frank Ramirez, 2009 April Messenger

International Day of Prayer for Peace

Families are hurting. Communities are in trouble. God wants us to know that peace is more than the absence of war. *On Earth Peace* (a ministry of the Church of the Brethren) invites us to pray for the peace of our community and the world on September 21, 2009.

Churches from coast to coast and around

the world will be praying for God's wisdom to help with problems close to home: unemployment, plant closures, home foreclosures, emerging local violence.

First Church of the Brethren has observed this "day of prayer for peace" in a variety of ways over the years. Mark your calendars now. More information is coming.



OEP provides resources at iodpp@onearthpeace.org

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Kreston R. Lipscomb, Pastor

Our Statement of Welcome

We, at First Church of the Brethren, welcome and affirm all members and congregational participants without exclusion. According to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we affirm all loving relationships and all family units, and we open our congregation to all who choose to embrace our community of believers regardless of sexual orientation, race, gender, abilities, or status in life. We strive to be a loving and inclusive community where all are eligible to participate in the rites, ordinances, and blessings of the church.

Toxic-Free Living



Did you know that many of the products we use in our homes, on our bodies, and in our congregation may contain chemicals that can harm children's health and God's creation? A number of products we use in our homes and churches including baby bottles, lotion and cleaning agents contain substances linked to infertility, asthma, cancer, obesity, and other health concerns. This is, in part, because current laws fail to protect public health. Young children are especially vulnerable to harmful chemicals.

Today, pick one or more actions to protect healthy bodies and healthy communities at church or home. For instance, we can use non-toxic cleaning products or make our

own all purpose cleaner with half old-fashioned vinegar and half water. We can help eliminate phthalates (thalates), by avoiding artificially scented personal care products such as lotions, perfume or hair spray. We can also use bottles that don't contain bisphenol-a such as glass or stainless steel.

We are all made in the image of God (Genesis 1: 26) and it is important to treat our bodies with care. Visit the National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Program at www.ncccojustice.org for more tips.