



Preparing for Worship

February 3: Transfiguration Sunday

Text(s): Exodus 24: 12-18
2 Peter 1: 16-21
Matthew 17: 1-9

Message: "Coming Down from the Mountain"

Today is a time to think about the peaks, the valleys, and the level places where we experience God at work.

February 10: 1st Sunday in Lent

Text(s): Matthew 4: 1-11
Message: "These Temptations are Real"
We begin the season of Lent by following Jesus into the wilderness of our lives and looking, again, at the temptations confronting us.

February 17: 2nd Sunday in Lent

Text(s) Genesis 12: 1-4a and John 3: 1-17
Message: Under Cover of Darkness

February 24: 3rd Sunday in Lent

Pastor Kres on vacation
Sermon by Joe Dunn

March 2: 4th Sunday in Lent

Text: John 9: 1-41
Message: "Open Our Eyes"
The rather long story about the man born blind and healed by Jesus will be our focus. In fact, "focusing our faith" will be a key to this message.

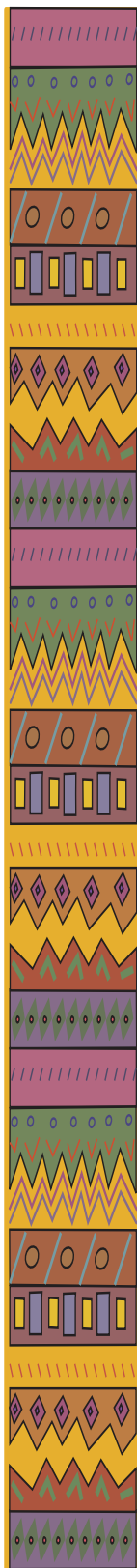
Cross Cultural Celebration in April

We are invited to attend the 10th consecutive Cross Cultural Consultation and Celebration in Elgin, IL., April 24-27. During the 300th anniversary year it was decided to meet in Elgin, the home of the General Offices. Participants will have an opportunity to visit the offices of several Brethren agencies and to meet denominational staff. We will also visit congregations in the greater Chicago area as they host for meals and worship. The gatherings for prayer and worship will be in the spirit of the Kingdom's vision expressed in Revelation 7: 9, which reads: "After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands."

There will be no set fee for meals or registration cost. It is hoped that participants will contribute through free will offerings and offerings collected during the worship service each evening. Go to www.brethren.org for more information about this event. The registration deadline is March 31.

The Mission Statement of the Cross Cultural Ministry Team is: "We are called to enrich and strengthen the Church of the Brethren by our unity as people of color, modeling for the larger church the blessings of being one as God's people."

Link:
<http://www.brethren.org/genbd/clm/ct/CrossCultural.html>



2008 Church Board Organizes

The 2008 new church board held a reorganization meeting last month. At that meeting, Terry Link was chosen to serve as chair of the church board in 2008.

Commissions were formed for the coming year. The Witness Commission includes Roger Ruth and Patty Brockmeyer. The Stewards are Diana Rokosz and Susan Thurman. Grace Sweatt and Karen Everingham will serve on the Nurture Commission.

The first meeting of 2008 was held on January 17. Commissions met at 6:30 p.m. The board meeting was at 7:30 pm. The February meeting is scheduled for February 21. Members and friends of the congregation are invited to

Invitation to a Men's Retreat

Men of First Church, Springfield, have been invited to join men from the York Center and Highland Avenue congregations for a winter retreat. The retreat is scheduled for February 29-March 2. It will be held at Camp Emmaus, near Mt. Morris, IL. This is about the 10th year that York Center men have held such a retreat.

There will be ample time for enjoying the outdoors, sharing fellowship and getting to know others from our district. Some planned discussions will take place on the general topic of "what is the importance of scripture in your faith journey." Contact Pastor Kres for more information about this opportunity.

SOS Season Drawing to a Close

<http://springfieldhomeless.org/sos/index.html>

There is just a little more than two months remaining for the Springfield Overflow Shelter to be in operation at the Salvation Army. More specifically, our congregation has two more Thursdays to provide meals and staff. We are scheduled for February 7 and March 8.

Volunteer support on-site and preparing a meal for the 50 clients at the Shelter is appreciated. Sign-up opportunities and announcements will be shared during the worship hour.

Anniversary Study Begins in January

A six-week small group study celebrating the 300 Years of the Church of the Brethren will begin in January. The study borrows on the 300th anniversary theme: "Surrendered to God, Transformed in Christ, and Empowered by the Spirit," with the first of the six sessions beginning on Thursday, January 24. Two sessions are devoted to each of the three themes. The first session in the pair emphasizes personal discipleship. The second in the pair builds on that emphasis and encourages discussion of discipleship in community.

The 300th Anniversary study is designed to celebrate our Church's history by looking backward while renewing ourselves by looking ahead. Participants will use a method of prayer called "lectio divina" or "holy reading". Each session includes not only the reading of scriptures, but the praying of the scriptures.

Stewards Invite Pledges/Donations

The Stewardship Commission is inviting donations and pledges for the remodeling of the upstairs bathroom. The plan is to enlarge the bathroom and make it more accessible for all. The total cost is estimated at \$23,000. A grant has been applied for from the Illinois and Wisconsin District. We are hoping to raise \$18,000 through donations. The goal is to complete the project by the end of the year.

Pancake & Sausage Date

The Stewardship Commission has scheduled our annual Pancake & Sausage Breakfast for Saturday, March 8. The hours for the all-vo-can-eat breakfast will be 7 am until 11 am. The cost is \$5 for adults and \$2 for children. A designation for the funds has yet to be made. An announcement will be shared in the next few weeks.

