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Boulevard News

March 2010
Kreston Lipscomb, Pastor

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Rockford, IL Mission Point Prayer Needs

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Rockford, Illinois, has been selected for establishing a new congregation in our district. Samuel Sarpiya has been called as the church planter in Rockford and has been hard at work establishing a ministry in that community.

Recently, the New Church Development Team (NCDT) in our district sent out a request for prayers for this mission point. The NCDT wrote: "Prayer is the fertilizer of church planting. Prayer nourishes our planters, their families, the individuals they serve and the communities they bless."

Our church has been asked to pray for the success of this endeavor. Please remember Samuel Sarpiya and his family, the city of Rockford, which has experienced some difficult times in the past year with violence and police and community issues, and the mission point itself as it reaches out with the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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Congregational Review

"The survey is designed to help people focus on well ministry is happening in and on behalf of the congregation."

-Kevin Kessler, District Minister

At its February meeting the church board approved plans to proceed with a congregational evaluation this spring. Coordinated through the Illinois-Wisconsin District office, a congregational evaluation serves to assess the ministries and activities of the congregation with the goal of refining and strengthening the ministries of the congregation.

The evaluation will consist of a written survey distributed to members and participants. In the interest of accountability, surveys are requested to be signed and returned to the District office for confidential compilation. Our District Minister, Kevin Kessler, will be with us May 16 to review compiled survey results the board and congregation. The District Minister also serves to facilitate discussion of issues raised in the evaluation process. A timeline for this process is outlined on page 4 of this newsletter.

Up-Coming Activities & Events

These are a sampling of activities offered for your participation. Your support is appreciated

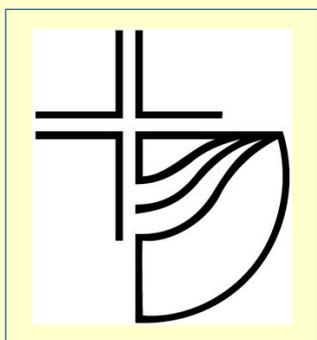
Pancake & Sausage Breakfast. Our annual Pancake and Sausage Breakfast will be March 6 from 7 am until 11 am. It is all-you-can eat. Tickets cost \$5 per adult and \$2 for children. This event is sponsored by our Steward Commission. Proceeds from the breakfast benefit our general budget. The Breakfast will be followed by a **silent auction** to help our youth raise funds for this year's National Youth Conference. Come to the meetinghouse to support our youth starting at 11 am.

Lenten Conversations. There are four Lenten conversations remaining. They are March 9, 16, 30, and April 6. The four themes we will talk about are *earth, rock, tree, and Easter*. Inserts with scripture readings and questions are distributed each Sunday prior to the Tuesday gathering. Lenten conversations begin at 7 pm and are held at the church meetinghouse.

One Great Hour of Sharing. A special offering will be received on Sunday, March 14th (see page 4).

District Potluck. The Illinois and Wisconsin District CoB is hosting a potluck and a series of workshops on Saturday, May 1 at the Peoria Church of the Brethren. The time is 9 am until 3:20 pm. Registration will be from 8-9 am. The cost for the day is \$5 but no one will be turned away. Workshop topics include music and worship, computer safety and networking, deacon training and multicultural ministry. Participants are asked to bring a covered

Please see *Activities* on page 4



Rockford from page 1

This mission point is supported by the resources and interest of members in the Illinois-Wisconsin District. During last fall's District Conference **Samuel Sarpiya** shared this idea with several of members from First Church, Springfield.

Our Witness Commission, in an effort to provide more detail about this mission point, has invited Samuel to come and share with us and others on April 11, 2010. Specifics of his visit will be shared over the coming weeks.

Worship at *First Church*

Sunday, March 7: Third Sunday in Lent

“What Is Your Legacy” Please read Luke 13: 1-9
Bread and cup communion is shared.

Sunday, March 14: Fourth Sunday in Lent

“Is There Enough?” Please read Luke 5: 1-11

We will re-tell the story of the fishermen letting down their nets, as instructed by Jesus, in light of our fear of scarcity.

Sunday, March 21: Fifth Sunday in Lent

“Connection Not Competition” Please read Mark 9: 30-37

Are we guilty of competing with others in the same way the disciples argued about who was the greatest? We may not be as blatant, but there may be times when we say, “we really know who is best.”

Sunday, March 28: Sixth Sunday in Lent

We begin Holy Week with a service that includes baptism and the receiving of two people into the membership of our congregation. Come and celebrate as Jodie and Doug Brubaker share their commitment to Christ and to Christ’s church.

Thursday, April 1: Holy Thursday Love Feast 7 pm.



Spring Retreat

The Illinois-Wisconsin District youth spring retreat is scheduled to be hosted by our congregation March 19-21. All youth currently in 9th-12th grades and advisors are welcome to attend.

The theme for the weekend is ***Christ in the City***. Guest leadership will be provided by Fletcher Farrar, Pastor Kres, and others.

The schedule begins with registration on Friday evening at 8 pm. The retreat concludes with worship on Sunday morning.

In addition to youth sessions there will be a city walking tour, times of worship, recreation and games, service opportunities, and more.

The cost is \$30 for youth. Advisors accompanying youth attend at no charge.

Members of First Church who are able to provide shower facilities should contact Pastor Kres. The youth and advisors will be lodging at the church meetinghouse.

The registration deadline is March 12. The District Youth Cabinet has indicated that 12 registrations are needed by that date or the retreat will be cancelled. Visit www.cobyouth.org for more news on our youth.

“We are able to do more than we ever expected because the presence of the living God made flesh in Jesus Christ moves in us and does great works through us.” (NYC Flyer)

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dish and drinks. Delegation from Springfield to attend. Registration materials are available through the church office.

Vacation Bible School. Plans have just begun to offer a Vacation Bible School from June 27-July 1. The VBS will be held in the evenings beginning at 6 pm and will conclude at 7:30 pm. Please watch for ways that you can take part in this new endeavor.

Interfaith Conversation on Compassion

Springfield Grassroots InterFaith Team (GIFT) will hold a prayer service discussion, **Weaving Golden Threads: An Interfaith Conversation**, on Thursday, March 18 from 5:30 pm to 7 pm at First Presbyterian Church, 321 South Seventh Street (enter through the red doors on Seventh Street).

The focus of the evening is the recently released *Charter for Compassion*, written by a group of theologians from a wide range of faith traditions who gathered together to expand upon the common thread of compassion found in all faiths.

The public is welcome and refreshments will be available during the discussion.

Congregational Review from page 1

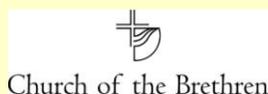
The congregational timeline is as follows:

1. **March 7, 14** announcement during worship
2. **March 14-21** survey distribution
3. **April 15** surveys due at District Office
4. **May 16** District Minister here: board meets at 9 am; 10:30 worship; and 12:00 potluck lunch, evaluation results reviewed with congregation

Feed My Sheep: OGHS

In his last conversation with the disciples after his resurrection, Jesus repeated the same message three times: If you love me, take care of the people I love.

Your gift to One Great Hour of Sharing on **March 14** will help take care of some of the people facing natural and human disasters. Can we feed Jesus' sheep with a generous, even sacrificial gift to One Great Hour of Sharing?



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