

FEBRUARY, 2013



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The Call news

1ST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
RAPID CITY SOUTH DAKOTA
WWW.RCFIRSTUCC.ORG

Lent is a journey that leads toward recognizing the gift of Jesus Christ for others. It begins with Ash Wednesday and continues, with worship and study to the intensity of Holy Week.

Our Lenten Journey begins February 13

Resurrection is at the core of our faith. But the gift of resurrection does not come without an encounter with grief and loss. The journey of Lent is a journey of preparation. In this life, every human being will be confronted with unwanted loss and grief. Our faith calls us to practice in preparation for those moments of loss. Lent is a season of practicing our faith in relationship to grief.

On Wednesday, February 13, we will gather for a pancake supper

in the fellowship hall at 6 pm. A simple Ash Wednesday service offering the gifts of water, oil and ashes will follow at 7 pm in the sanctuary. For the next six weeks, we will share special Lenten worship each Sunday. Our adult Lenten study this year is titled "Five Wishes" and invites participants to think of end of life choices. There will be no study group on Feb. 17 to allow for participation in the all church birthday party, but classes will continue throughout



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EACH 1 FRIEND
BRING 1 RAISING
SUNDAY
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

BRING A FRIEND FEB. 24

When we say, "No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here," we really mean it. We have a warm and inviting congregation, but we aren't always practiced in the skills of inviting others to share our faith journey. A recent poll indicated that 85% of people who do not have a church home would consider visiting church if invited by a neighbor or friend. Throughout February, we will

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MAKE LENT COUNT

PRAY • ACT • GIVE

EACH 1 FRIEND
BRING RAISING
SUNDAY
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Information meetings for the congregation will be held on February 3 and 10 following worship to give members of the congregation an opportunity to ask questions and suggest additional projects for study.

Our Lenten Journey continued from page 1

Lent beginning on Sunday, Feb. 24.

Holy Week this year will offer an opportunity to practice the skills of grieving each day with a variety of unique offerings:

- The Liturgy of the Palms on Sunday, March 24, at 9:30 am will feature pomp and ceremony and joyous celebration.
- The Liturgy of the Passion on Monday, March 25 at 7 pm will feature the stripping of the altar and the reading of the passion narrative.
- A Christian Wake on Tuesday, March 26 at 6 pm is an evening of good food and storytelling.
- A Concert of Blues will feature local artists on Wednesday, March 27 at 7 pm.
- There will be a foot washing service on Maundy Thursday, March 28 at 6 pm, followed by a service of Holy Communion at 7 pm.
- Our Good Friday service begins at noon with a "Journey to the Cross."
- The Holy Vigil of Easter begins at 7 pm on Saturday,

March 30.

- Easter begins with a Sunrise service at Main Street Square and continues with special worship in our sanctuary at 9:30 am.

Additional details about our Holy Week events will be posted online, printed in the March issue of the Call and in worship bulletins.

Lent is an invitation to grow in faith and to prepare for a reality that cannot be escaped. Share the journey with your church family.

Bring A Friend continued from page 1

be offering resources and tips to assist members in making invitations. Printed invitations will be available to use.

Start thinking now about who you might invite to experience the joys of worship in our church. If each member of the congregation invites

one additional person to join us, no one will feel like they have been singled out. If we are inviting friends and neighbors, each person who comes will have someone that they already know to share their experience.

Our church grows when

our members practice their faith. Inviting others to participate is a practice that helps us to grow in faith. Bring a Friend to Church Sunday is an invitation for everyone to become involved. Make plans now to join the fun!

Capital Improvements Task Force Reports

The Capital Improvements Task Force was formed to identify, prioritize and secure cost estimates for needed major improvements to the church building and grounds. After a year of study and research, the Task Force made their report to the congregation at its annual meeting on Sunday, January 27.

Included in their report were major projects including:

- Air Conditioning
- New Heating and Controls
- Roof Repair
- Parking Lot Repair
- Sound System
- Floor Repair and Covering for Fellowship Hall
- Front Doors

- Concrete Repair and Replacement
 - Point of Use Water Heaters
- The report also covered two projects that were completed:

- Engineering Study
- West Entry Doors

There are also projects on the list where additional information is still needed, including:

- Boiler Replacement
- Street Sign
- Alarm System and Door Lock Replacement
- Fellowship Hall Sound Reduction
- Outside Storage Building

Information meetings for the congregation will be held

on February 3 and 10 following worship to give members of the congregation an opportunity to ask questions, suggest additional projects that should be investigated and offer input in regard to which projects have the highest priority for our church.

These meetings will be informational only, with the goal of listening and discussing the projects, rather than making decisions. Additional actions by the Church Board and the congregation will follow when research on all of the projects has been completed and a funding plan has been made.

Moderator's Comments by Becky Umenthum, Moderator

During the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 27th, participants gathered in groups to discuss the following two questions:

1. At the 175th anniversary of our church, what do you want the people to remember about our time in the church?
2. What are the first steps towards these goals?

While there is not room to share all the responses, here are the categories mentioned most often.

- Mission and Outreach - locally, nationally, and worldwide
- Children and Youth - education, youth programs, feeling part of church life and mission
- Music - in our church and as a community music facility
- Welcoming - "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." - multi-cultural, multi-economic level, multi-age, etc.
- Caring - acceptance of all, building relationships, saying "thank you."
- Building - upkeep and improvements

All Officers, Board and Department Members will be invited to attend our Church Leader's Retreat on Saturday, February 23. Participants will have time to review all the responses and consider them as they plan their work for the year.



From the Church Board by Mary Nelson Keithahn, clerk

February may be our shortest month but in 2013 it will be one of our busiest. The Church Board hopes you will circle these dates on your calendar:

February 3 and 10—Informational sessions in the parlor after worship on the Capital Improvement Task Force Project List. This is your chance to ask questions

and offer comments.

February 23—Church Leaders' Retreat from 8:00 a.m. to noon, with breakfast provided. All Department members are encouraged to attend.

February 24—"Bring A Friend Sunday" with worship full of music and inspiration, followed by a Sunday School

and Church Library open house and a special coffee hour.

Look for numerous other opportunities for worship, learning, fellowship, and service mentioned in The Call this month. First Congregational United Church of Christ is the place to be in February this year!



CHURCH LEADERS RETREAT SET FOR FEBRUARY 23

All members of Departments, congregational representatives and church officers are encouraged to attend the annual orientation and planning retreat set for Saturday, February 23. The event begins with breakfast at 8:00 a.m. There will be time for worship, review of the work ahead for the year, and planning. Information on responsibilities, communications and

scheduling will also be available.

The event will conclude with a meeting of the Church Board from 11am—noon. Departments will have selected Board Representatives by that time, but all are welcome to stay for the board meeting.

An additional function of the retreat is that it will take

the place of the monthly communications roundtable. All Departments are urged to be prepared to highlight items for communication within the congregation and the wider community.

For more information on the retreat, contact moderator Becky Umenthum or the church office.

The retreat will take the place of the monthly Communications Roundtable.

Generosity continues each week as our Church Response food card is laden with bags of food!



You may have noticed some changes in our worship services that are the direct result of the fruitful discussions of the Department of worship. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Department of Ministries

Generosity continues each week as our Church Response food cart is laden with bags of food! Thank you so much!

We will be serving our first meal of 2013 at the South Dakota School of Mines and

Technology for members and friends of the United Campus Ministries on Monday, February 11th.

A big thank you to the following members who have completed their term and are leaving our department:

Becky Fisher, Tish Wilkinson, Lois Moore, and Thom and Melanie Palm. We welcome our new members to the department: Jill Kundtz, Pat Sutliff, and Margaret Putnam! We look forward to another great year of serving those in need.

Congregational Connections

Our congregation is known for friendly welcomes, good meals, and coffee fellowship—and we hope to make our connections among members and friends even deeper and more frequent in 2013. Some of us are able to make visits; others of us want to stay connected even in times when we cannot attend

church regularly. Soon, we hope to have a team of church members who will make a plan and then begin regular calls and visits. If you fit in either group (those willing to make calls and/or visits OR those desiring to be visited in person or by phone), please contact me. Speak to pastor Kathleen at church; call the

church at 342-5787; call Rev. Kathleen Batchelder at home at 342-8720; or email her at kathleenucc@rushmore.com. Let's make 2013 a banner year for Congregational Connections!

The Department of Worship

The Department of Worship coordinates all activities relating to worship including the work of the Altar Guild, our Vocal Choir and Bell Choir, the communion servers, greeters, liturgists and others who participate in leading worship. In addition the group takes time for its own prayer, study and devotion.

You may have noticed some changes in our worship service that are the direct result of fruitful discussions of the group.

- In January, we celebrated communion by intinction instead of our usual method of serving in the pews. We will continue to serve in the pews, but are adding this new method of

serving on an occasional basis.

- We have started to use our pew Bibles in regular worship, assisting worshippers with finding the passages and encouraging them to read along with liturgists and pastors.
- During 2012 the group discussed the method of making announcements in the life of our community and changed the opening of our services.
- There have also been meaningful discussions about the use of the Gloria and the placement of the Passing of the Peace in our order of worship.

Worship is an expression of our relationship with God. Like any relationship, it is living and change is part of the way that we respond. In our congregation, we remain open to the input of our lay members and leaders as we carefully and prayerfully discern the most meaningful ways to worship together.

Please feel free to contact any member of the Department of Worship with your comments and suggestions. Members this year are: Jodi Burke, David Seaman, Laura Switzer, Rev. Jane Ireland, Kandee Snoozy and Cam Miller. Rev. Ted Huffman also meets with the Department.

Costa Rica Vacation Bible School 2013

Our mission partners Chuck and Sybil Rounds are currently in Costa Rica, where our sister church hosted Vacation Bible School January 21 through 25 with a Paseo on January 26 and a special celebration on January 27. They will have more detailed reports of their experiences upon their return. This is a preliminary report based on their regular e-mail reports.

Vacation Bible School went very well all week. We had the steadiest attendance of any year. 68 Monday, 77 Tuesday, and either 77 or 78 the other three days. Of course it was never exactly the same 77 or 78! 104 total kids were registered, which is a nice size. Teens and adults alike were good help, and the dancers were really exceptional.

The Paseo on Saturday was a real treat in spite of mostly cloudy, cool weather. It was at the Olimpico. The administration had cut prices in half for Pastor Dorotea and

our group. The people in charge had assigned us to the big "rancho" that had two work stations and drinkable water, and even an electrical outlet.

The church leaders were prepared for games. No swimming was allowed until after lunch, so they played some great team games. It was amazing how patient the kids were because as one or two teams were busy, the others had to sit and wait. Menu was the usual hot dog with cabbage and red sauce, chips, cookies, and a drink. We started serving at 11:30 and were done and cleaned up by 12:30.

Immediately after lunch they hit the pools. There's no way I would be in the water. It was cool enough that we gringos had our jackets on most of the day. The swimmers had chattering teeth and knocking knees but that didn't matter. It was just too much fun.

The Sunday afternoon pro-

gram started just a few minutes after 2. There was a nice time of honoring Ann and Bob on their wedding anniversary as well as the envelopes for the kids. There was some confusion over names. There were three or perhaps four Jeffersons. One Jefferson claimed the wrong Jefferson's envelope which created some confusion until it was finally sorted out.

We were delighted as just before the program Christian Mena walked into the room. His family left the church about 4 years ago, but he had seen the Jefferys at the bus stop just after we arrived, asked if we were here, and said he'd come to the church on Sunday. He is as tall as we are, handsome as a movie star, smart as a whip, and speaks the best English we have heard. He has one more year in high school and then hopes to come to the US for college. He has so much potential, and is the same wonderfully warm and kind person that he was as a kid.



Vacation Bible School went well all week. We had the steadiest attendance of any year. The Paseo on Saturday was a real treat!



Souper Bowl of Caring



Pick your team and add your canned goods to your team's castle.

The February Destination Unknown is February 27. A very special destination is lined up, so don't miss this opportunity.

SOUPER BOWL of CARING Sunday is February 3. This year, the "Canned Castle Contest" returns with

competing castles, one for the Ravens and one for the 49ers. Pick your team and add your canned goods to your team's castle. We'll see which team is really soup-er! No matter which team has the bigger

castle, everyone wins when we support the Souper Bowl of Caring.

The Souper Bowl of Caring started more than twenty years ago with a simple prayer in a single youth group:

"Lord, as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those without even a bowl of soup to eat." Since that day, more than \$81 million has been raised for local missions through the Souper Bowl of Caring. Super

Bowl weekend has come to be not only a time to watch football and eat, eat, eat, but also a time to help others eat. Sue Maynard serves on the board of Church Response. Recently, she visited the youth group and told them about the bare shelves at Church Response. Youth group members will be on hand Sunday to collect your donations of canned goods and add them to the castle of your choice. Funds will also be collected.

United Church Youth

Wednesday, February 6, 6:30 pm: Bookmarks Bible Study. Some of you remember Confirmation was "serious," but "fun." Bookmarks is a fun approach to Bible study, combining role-playing and games with time to think seriously about the Bible stories. Come, join us! Snacks included.

Wednesday, February 13, Ash Wednesday Youth will serve the Ash Wednesday Pancake Supper. Come and help! Arrive by

5:30 pm to flip flapjacks and prepare for the crowd. You'll get to eat, too!

Wednesday, February 20, 6:30 pm: A speaker will come to present our program. Come and support our youth group.

Wednesday, February 27, 6:00 pm: **Destination Unknown** returns. A very special destination is lined up, so don't miss this opportunity for yummy food and hands-on action! Want a hint? Look in the book of Jeremiah.

Wednesday, March 6, First Wednesday Family Night. Mark your family calendar and watch for details.

Wednesday, March 13, 6:30 pm: Big Brothers/Big Sisters Bowl for Kids' Sake. One of Casey's goals for our youth group is to be **#1 at something**. Here's a great opportunity. We've done it before; we can do it again! Come and learn more about Bowl for Kids' Sake and how we can reclaim our title as #1!

New Kerygma Study Begins

A new Kerygma Bible study will begin on **Wednesday, February 27** at 9:30 am in Room 24. This study, entitled "Parables: Stories for Life in God's World," will explore the parables of Jesus. Together, we'll consider how the parables apply to living a life of faith. If you would like to

discover a fresh perspective on these timeless tales, come join our discussions. The seven sessions include: Parables of Growth, Parables of Reversal, Parables of Preparedness, Parables of Decision and Parables of Treasure, as well as an opening introductory session and a concluding

session.

This spring study fits well into the seasons of Lent and Eastertide as we focus on the message of Jesus and its impact message on our lives. Try something new for Lent and join our Kerygma study. For more information, call Susan Huffman at 342-5787.

Mark Your Calendars for Ash Wednesday Pancake Supper

United Church Youth will serve the Ash Wednesday Pancake Supper on **Wednesday, February 13 at 6:00 pm**. Pancakes are traditionally served on Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday. In the time when fasting and sacrifice were a part of the discipline of Lent, pancakes were served to use up the fats before Lent began. Because of this association, Shrove Tuesday is often called “Fat Tuesday.” In our

time, we are blending some of the traditions of Shrove Tuesday with the observance of Ash Wednesday.

The Pancake Supper will be served by the youth in the Fellowship Hall. There will also be activities exploring the meaning of Lent in our Christian journey. The activities include making and dipping pretzels, decorating crosses and planting seeds and prayers. All ages are invited to participate and learn more

about the meaning of Lent. Lent means “to lengthen” and refers to the coming of spring and the lengthening of the days. But, it is also a time for us to “lengthen” our understanding of Christian discipleship and consider what it means to follow Jesus. Following the pancake supper there will be an Ash Wednesday worship service at 7 pm.

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend!



Lenten Study will Focus on Five Wishes

This year our Lenten journey includes several opportunities to think about death and grief in the context of our Christian faith. Most people have strong opinions about who should be making decisions regarding their care and the type of treatment they want when facing the end of their lives. But we don't often talk about such subjects. The adult discussion group offers five sessions that allow participants to think about key questions in regard to end of life decision making.

On Sunday, February 24,

the session will include a general overview and discussion of: “The Person I Want to Make Care Decisions for Me When I Can't.” The session will be held in the church parlor beginning at approximately 10:45 a.m. Grab a cup of coffee and bring it to the parlor for the discussion.

Discussions on other topics will be held for the first four weeks of March with the following topics:

March 3: The Kind of Medical Treatment I Want or Don't Want.

March 10: How Comfortable I Want to Be

March 17: How I Want People to Treat Me

March 24: What I Want My Loved Ones to Know.

Participants will receive a copy of the Five Wishes document, a legal document that can be executed to make your wishes clear. There will also be opportunities to schedule individual sessions with a pastor to make your wishes known to the church. For more information, contact Ted or Susan Huffman.

The adult discussion group offers five sessions that allow participants to think about key questions in regard to end of life decision making.

Sunday School Open House

On Sunday, February 24, an Open House in the Sunday School classrooms will be held in conjunction with Bring a Friend Sunday. Everyone is encouraged to wander down the halls and look in our Sunday School classrooms. Experience the inviting classrooms and the creative things that are happening down the halls. In Room 27,

you'll get to sample the favorite snacks of first, second and third graders. Come and taste these treats! In Room 24, you can read the lessons of the sixth, seventh and eighth graders. In the Fireside Room, you can see where the kids gather for music and where they hang out after worship. Don't forget to browse in the church library

(Room 22) and check out a book or peek in the nursery (Room 18) to see the additions from the memorials of Jonathan Crutcher and Doris Dull. Everyone is invited to share in this Open House—regular members, visitors, old and young. Come and see what's going on in the halls of learning at First Congregational Church.





A PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

For a few years during the early 1980's I worked part time for two small rural weekly newspapers. This was at the time when we were first adopting computers and the desktop publishing revolution was still ahead. In those days we were laying out our pages on blue-line paper with a waxer. Newspaper people these days don't even know what a waxer is. But there is a part of me that continues to enjoy the work of a journalist. Those who read my daily blogs sometimes comment that they are a bit like a column in a newspaper. That's probably true.

At any rate, I spend more time on our monthly newsletter than is typical for my colleagues. I care about page layout and appearance. I format every issue in full color for our web pages even though we frequently print in black and white. I care about font selection, sidebars, images and the overall appearance of our printed documents. You have probably noticed that I invested some time this month in re-formatting *The Call*. The general layout design reflects the themes that we chose for our annual report this year. The arrangement of articles and headlines has been re-formatted to make the document more accessible and easier to read.

Communications doesn't appear anywhere in the job descriptions of any of our church's employees. It isn't because that isn't important to us. It is because we assume communications in everything

we do. Our job is communicating the Gospel of Jesus Christ to our congregation and to the world. When we pastors were hired by the congregation, each of us was evaluated for our communications skills. I doubt that the search committee knew that I had a background in radio and newspaper when I was hired and I suspect that they hadn't been looking at the newsletter of the church I was then serving. But the committee did ask for sample sermons and did have me preach a trial sermon before the congregation voted on whether or not to call me. We all knew that the ability to communicate was an essential part of the job.

What we didn't know back then was how much communications would change. The Internet and social networking are increasingly the media for communications with our congregation and with the wider community. Each month the number of people who subscribe to *The Call* online increases. Increasingly, we need to think about the day, coming soon, when we need to re-format *The Call* for viewing on tablet computers and other mobile devices. As it is, our electronic version subscribers have to scroll up and down because our print page format is vertical while most computer monitors are horizontal. More changes are on the way.

In this rapidly changing environment, however, the most important communications of a congregation continue to be things that we can-

not hire others to do for us. The essential communications are the conversations that we have with our neighbors and friends.

A recent survey revealed that 85% of those who do not participate in a church would consider visiting if invited by a friend or neighbor. If we want to share our church in this community, it will not be done primarily by our web site or our newsletter or advertising or other media. It will be done the "old fashioned" way of individuals speaking to other individuals, members inviting their friends and acquaintances to participate.

I'm excited about our "Bring a Friend" Sunday at the end of this month. It is exciting not just because of the anticipation of a full house on that day. It is exciting because I know it offers the opportunity for each of us to practice that skill of inviting others to participate. I've already got a list of contacts that I plan to make for that day. I hope you are thinking of who you can invite.

Regardless of the technology we have available, regardless of the media at our hand, the bottom line is that the Good News of Jesus Christ is still communicated best in the way it was originally communicated—by people of faith telling the faith story to those they know best. Talking and listening are still essential and meaningful forms of communication, even in a fast-paced, media driven world. Let's keep talking!

"Communications doesn't appear anywhere in the job descriptions of any of our church employees. It isn't because that isn't important to us. It is because we assume communications in everything we do."

MEMBER NEWS AND NOTES

Happy Birthday!

Happy Birthday to the following members and friends with **February** birthdays:

- Feb 1:** Stephanie Nielsen
Feb 2: Henry Bradshaw
Feb 4: Clara Crutcher
Feb 5: Emilee Nickel
Feb 7: Kathleen Grigg
Feb 8: Sybil Rounds
Feb 10: Barbara Staton, Edith Pace, Randy Daughenbaugh
Feb 11: Marrelyce Seaman, Rob Burton
Feb 12: Chuck Lindly, Jay Davis
Feb 14: Alicia Sutliff-Benusis
Feb 15: Jim Webster, Marla Maynard
Feb 16: Alan Kelts
Feb 17: Mary Keithahn
Feb 18: Laura Boyd, David Ledford, Ben Redinius
Feb 20: Emily Eckholm, Buck Anderson
Feb 21: Frances Cox
Feb 23: Dorothy Ankrum, Bruce Wilkinson
Feb 24: Joan Arneson, Kalsy Brinkman
Feb 27: Nola Bentz-Reber, Isabel Bryant

Prayer Concerns

Please remember in our prayers Patsy Valandra and her family and friends. Her husband Ray Valandra died on January 4. His wake and funeral were held in our church on January 8-9.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Leighton Borin who died January 22. The service of celebration for Leighton's life was held January 27 with committal at Black Hills National Cemetery the next day.

Rev. Kathleen Batchelder officiated.

Also in our prayers are Fran Collins and other members of Keith Conrad's family. Keith died on January 22. Services for Keith were held Monday, January 28 at our church with committal at Black Hills National Cemetery. Rev. Ted Huffman officiated.

We also remember in our prayers Bertie Roberts, whose father passed away in December.

Prayers for healing are with Dick James who had additional procedures in January.

We also pray for a successful recovery for Ted McBride, who underwent surgery at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

At home: Ward Cheney, Carroll Nelson, Gladys Bitterman, Shary Crutcher, and Mae Louise Zeise.

At Golden Living Center, Bella Vista:
Stan Halla, Kay Wolff

At Canistota, SD:
Bill Dittmer

At Echo Ridge:
Ed Dull

At Westhills Health Care:
Joan Ebert

At Westhills South:
Bryce Smith

In Military Service:
Kyle Kloeckl (Ed and Ginny Ensz's grandson), John Nickel, Melanie Moore, Adam Johnson (Eunice Johnson's grandson), and **all** those serv-

ing our country.

Others in our prayers:
Paul Anderson, Don Gustin, George Bentz, Beth Blake, wife of Mike Lebrun and daughter-in-law of Gene & Pat Lebrun; Suzanne Schermernorea, daughter of Nola Reber; Cheryl Wathen, Gwyn Wathen's mother; Lois Herdon's daughter, Carol; Kathryn Kuhn; Tom Berry's daughter, Melissa Klein; Steve Chapin; Sherre Christensen; Marge Raabe.

If you know of others in need to prayer, please contact the church office.

Thank You!

Thanks to all who visited our new, revamped library. The wishing tree contains names of books and authors that would be welcome donations by our congregation. Financial donations are also appreciated.

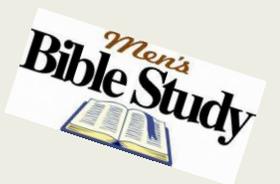
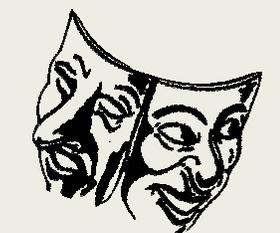
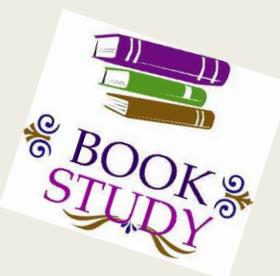
The next time you see Dick Wade, thank him for all the work he has done to make sure the bathroom doors close properly. Thank you, Dick.

Congratulations

Aubrie Marie Darrow was born January 18, 2013 to Mark and Monica Darrow and brother Asher. The very proud grandmother is Sharon Darrow. Ask her to see pictures!

Lindsey Martin graduated from BHSU with a B.S. in Business Administration Management and Salim Fisher graduated from Southeast Technical Institute in Sioux Falls with a diploma in Early Childhood support. Congratulations Lindsey and Salim!





CHURCH EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Church Chat

Join us for lunch (bring your own sack lunch), cookies, and coffee the first and third Tuesdays of each month. February meetings are Feb. 5 and 19, and we will discuss *People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks. Please contact Kathleen Batchelder if you need a book. We meet in the Fireside Room from noon to 1 p.m. for good programs, book discussions, and probing conversations on current issues.

Spiritual Practices

All are welcome to join our Spiritual Practices group in the church parlor each Tuesday from 1-2 p.m. We are beginning to study *Spiritual Classics: Selected Readings on the Twelve Spiritual Disciplines*, edited by Richard J. Foster and Emilie Griffin and also *In God's Presence: Theological Reflection on Prayer* by Marjorie Suchocki. We invite you to join us; for more information, contact Kathleen Batchelder.

Westhills Book and Bible Study

The first and third Mondays of each month (February 4 and 18) this lively discussion group meets in the Aspen Room from 1:30-3:00 p.m. We are discussing the Acts of the Apostles and the final chapters of C. S. Lewis's *Mere Christianity*. Next we will discuss Mark Galli's *Chaos and Grace* which focuses on the Holy Spirit. All are welcome to join us; for more information, contact Kathleen Batchelder.

4th Tuesday Ladies Lunch Group

On February 26 at 11:30 a.m. the Fourth Tuesday Ladies Lunch Group will meet at Minerva's Restaurant for lunch and conversation. No responsibilities; no program; just lunch and fellowship! For more information, contact Maureen Dymock.

Church Ladies on Stage

To all Church Ladies on Stage: We hope to put together a gig for some event this spring. Watch for details! If you have not already signed up to be one of the Church Ladies on Stage and want to be, please e-mail Doris Marie Strom at strom-mac@rap.midco.net or call her at (605) 343-8713. We need as many cast members as we can. There is more to come!

Craft and Chat Women's Retreat

Ladies of the church and friends, remember to put aside Feb. 1-2 and come to church to work on any project you want to bring. Visit, eat, work, have a good time together! We will start with supper on Fri. work and/or visit some, go home for a good night's sleep and come ready to start again on Sat morn. 8am or whenever you arrive we'll finish by 5 pm.

Contact Carol Boyles or Sue Maynard to say you can come or if you have questions.

There is no cost but if you'd like to bring something to share it will be welcomed.

Men's Bible Study

The Men's Bible Study is a small group of men who meet at the church at 9 am on the second Saturday of the month to study the scriptures and talk about the application of scriptures to our daily lives. The next meeting of the group will be Saturday, February 9. For more information, contact Mike Crutcher or Ted Huffman.

Big Brothers Big Sisters Looking for "Bigs"

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Black Hills has 40 children on their waiting list for mentors. What a great way to start the new year by making a difference in the life of a child. For more information visit www.bigmentors.com.

The Altar Guild

The Altar Guild has three Sundays available for putting flowers on the Altar in honor or memory of some one. Those dates are March 10, June 30 and September 8. Please contact Kandeé Snoozy, Ruth Ann Karlen or Joyce Tripp if you would be interested. Members of the Altar Guild would like to thank all of you who give so generously this way.

Good Morning Circle

The Good Morning Circle will meet at 9:30 am on Wednesday, February 20.

Good Evening Circle

The Good Evening Circle will meet at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 20 in the Church Parlor.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR OF CHURCH EVENTS

Sat Feb 2, 2013

8am Craft and Chat Retreat

Sun Feb 3, 2013

Souper Bowl of Caring
9:30am Worship/Church School
10:30am Fellowship & Refreshments
10:45am Capital Projects Discussion

Mon Feb 4, 2013

1:30pm Westhills Bible Study
2pm Westhills Book Study
6:30pm Women's Bible Study

Tue Feb 5, 2013

10:30am Staff Meeting
12pm Church Chat
1pm Craft Day
1pm Spiritual Practices
6pm Suicide Prevention/Support

Wed Feb 6, 2013

1pm WF Board Meeting
6pm Bell Choir Practice
6:30pm United Church Youth
7pm Adult Choir Practice

Fri Feb 8, 2013

1pm Black Hills Watercolor Group

Sat Feb 9, 2013

9am Men's Bible Study

Sun Feb 10, 2013

9:30am Worship/Church School
10:30am Fellowship & Refreshments—Bobby Staton Birthday Celebration
10:45am Capital Projects Discussion
10:45am Department of Education
2pm Worship at Westhills Health Care
2:45pm Worship at Westhills South
3:30pm Worship at Clark-

son Mt. View

Mon Feb 11, 2013

5pm United Campus Ministry Meal
6:30pm Women's Bible Study

Tue Feb 12, 2013

10:30am Staff Meeting
1pm Craft Day
1pm Spiritual Practices
5:15pm Dept. of Worship
7pm Dept. of Hospitality
7pm Survivors of Suicide

Wed Feb 13, 2013

5:30pm United Youth
6:00pm Ash Wednesday Pancake Supper
6pm Bell Choir Practice
7pm Ash Wednesday Worship
7:30pm Adult Choir Practice

Thu Feb 14, 2013

Happy Valentine's Day
10am Altar Guild Meeting

Fri Feb 15, 2013

1pm Black Hills Watercolor Group

Sun Feb 17, 2013

9:30am Worship and Church School
10:30am Fellowship, Refreshments

ALL CHURCH BIRTHDAY PARTY!

3:30pm Jail Ministry

Mon Feb 18, 2013

Happy Presidents Day
1:30pm Westhills Bible Study
2pm Westhills Book Study Group
6:30pm Women's Bible Study

Tue Feb 19, 2013

10:30am Staff Meeting
12pm Church Chat
1pm Craft Day
1pm Spiritual Practices
4:15pm 1st Congregational Trust Board

6pm Dept. of Stewardship & Budget

Wed Feb 20, 2013

9:30am Good Morning Circle
6pm Bell Choir Practice
6pm Good Evening Circle
6:30pm United Church Youth
7pm Adult Choir Practice

Fri Feb 22, 2013

1pm Black Hills Watercolor Group

Sat Feb 23, 2013

8am Church Leaders' Retreat

Sun Feb 24, 2013

BRING A FRIEND TO CHURCH SUNDAY

9am Dept. of Ministries
9:30am Worship and Church School
10:30am Fellowship & Refreshments
10:45am 5 Wishes Adult Discussion

Mon Feb 25, 2013

6:30pm Women's Bible Study

Tue Feb 26, 2013

10:30am Staff Meeting
11:30am Fourth Tues. Ladies Lunch Group
1pm Craft Day
1pm Spiritual Practices

Wed Feb 27, 2013

6pm Bell Choir Practice
6:00pm United Church Youth—Destination Unknown
7pm Adult Choir Practice

Thu Feb 28, 2013

1:30pm Memoir-Writing Group

Fri Mar 1, 2013

1pm Black Hills Watercolor Group

Sun Mar 3, 2013

9:30am Worship/Church School
10:30am Fellowship & Refreshments

Mark your calendars for the ALL CHURCH BIRTHDAY PARTY on Sunday, February 17!

February 24 is BRING A FRIEND TO CHURCH SUNDAY!



1st Congregational
United Church of Christ
1200 Clark Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

www.rcfirstucc.org

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Do you enjoy baking and decorating cakes? The Department of Hospitality is looking for a few bakers to prepare cakes for the Birthday celebration. If you'd like to get in on the action, contact Rev. Kathleen Batchelder at the church office or any member of the Department of Hospitality.

ALL CHURCH BIRTHDAY SUNDAY IS FEBRUARY 17

Everybody has a reason to celebrate! You may have more in common with others than you know!

In what has become an annual event, the Department of Hospitality invites everyone in the church to participate in an all church birthday party following worship on Sunday, February 17. There will be special cakes for each month of the year and tables designated for each month.

You may have noticed that we have a tendency to

sit with the same people during our coffee hour after worship each week.

This is natural because we have developed meaningful friendships. But Birthday Sunday gives us the opportunity to

meet some people that we might not know as well and form friendships with others within our church. Come and join the fun.

Everybody has a reason to celebrate!

Meeting new people is one of the joys of our congregation. We are an amazing group of people once you get to know us!

AN AWESOME CHOIR!

There is room for you!



A recent Facebook post said, "My, what an awesome choir we have! Just want to thank the choir for their amazing last two Sundays! We are truly blessed to have such a wonderful group of people to enlighten us every Sunday!"

It is true. We do have an awesome choir. And there is room for you to join. Contact Karen Nelson.