

March 3, 2010

Dear Friends in Christ,

Evidently a weekly newsletter is like going to church every Sunday – if you once get out of the habit, it can be hard to start again. So I'm back – and if any of you have gotten out of the Sunday habit, let's hold each other to every seven days! This is a basic, picture-less note just to get things moving again.

The big event in January was the **Annual Meeting**. In a break with precedent, we shared a potluck after church on January 31 and then held the Annual Meeting around the tables in Fellowship Hall. I got letters about the Meeting to almost all our Active Members ahead of time (and my apologies if I missed you), so many of you know about the proposed By-laws changes coming to the Meeting. The challenge was in getting a quorum under our old By-laws – 25 active members – in order to amend the By-laws to a new quorum of one-tenth of our membership. We managed it – or Janet Yohn managed it, bless her heart – by persuading one elder at home with a sick spouse to join us by speaker phone. Pricilla Hill, Pueblo Presbytery's Stated Clerk, has declared the meeting legal, so our new quorum is now 8 ½ people (well, okay, nine). We also reduced the number of people on Session, Deacons and Trustees and made some minor additional changes.

After the business portion of the Annual Meeting we spent some time identifying themes from the thanksgivings, excitements, and wishes about our congregation named in November and December (and published in previous newsletters). During February and early March Session has taken the congregation's work and grouped the themes into three or four overall themes, for which they are developing narrative descriptions. From these will come a draft of our **congregational mission statement** and portions of the **CIF** (the Church Information Form necessary for seeking a new pastor).

Session has agreed to meet twice a month this spring in order to work on this pastoral search process. They have already completed the first two pages of the CIF and will have those drafts just mentioned for the congregation to review in the next month or so. The goal is to have a congregational mission statement approved by the congregation by mid-May and to ask the Committee on Ministry, at its May 26 meeting, to approve the mission statement and approve election of a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC). If all goes according to schedule the congregation will **elect a PNC in early June** and the Session will be able to give the PNC a nearly complete CIF so that the CIF can be submitted for COM approval and begin circulation by the end of June.

Besides all that future-oriented work we've been busy in the present here at the church as well. The **Handbell Choir** is up and ringing. We played on Epiphany and February 7 and will play again on March 7. We're aiming for continued monthly appearances in worship. Our handbell table has a new cover on it and Nancy has almost completed the table pockets to hold supplies. There are seven members in the Handbell Choir and room for up to five more. Come and join us! Rehearsals have just been moved from Thursdays at 6:30 to Tuesdays at 6:30 for the next six weeks or so. No experience is necessary.

Our **bunk beds** are already getting a work-out. The La Puente volunteers held a sleep-over here in January to "field test" the beds and we're already on our third work group of the year staying here. We have twenty-three groups booked for 2010 so far totaling 144 days' stay, which means we're hoping to get the remaining mattresses purchased soon. As of today we still need \$750 to finish the job.

And...those of you here last Sunday had a chance to vote on the **urn** design for our new planters. The mold has been ordered. Once it comes, John will be pouring concrete and we can look forward to having the urns in place along our "cloister walk" probably by Easter. Flowers, of course, will have to wait for warmer weather.

**Lent** is underway as our Sunday scriptures focus on God's promises of land and a secure future. Our Christmas tree has been transformed into a Lenten cross and during children's time we're considering the cross and Jacob's Ladder. We've also had three sessions now of our **weekday Lenten study**, Seven Spiritual Gifts of Waiting, based on the book of the same name by Holly Whitcomb. Please come and join us Wednesdays at 6:00 pm in the church library – and on Sunday mornings, too, of course.

What have I forgotten or not included? Lots. Send me a paragraph of your own for next week!

In Christ, Katherine

PS The March calendar is attached with this newsletter.