

*Van Buren Presbyterian Church*  
*February 2012*

207 W. Market St  
P. O. Box 35  
Van Buren, OH 45889

Rev. James E. Friedmeyer  
(419) 299-3097  
[www.vbpres.org](http://www.vbpres.org)

Sunday School 9:15 am

Worship 10:30 a.m.

**PASTOR'S NOTES**

February is the month of love! The fourteenth day of every February florists are frantic as they deliver flowers to homes and offices. Only God knows how many freight cars of chocolate is sold that week. Cards flow freely as greetings of love are passed between spouses, between lovers, and between parents and their children. It is a month in which love is celebrated.

It seems appropriate that as followers of Jesus Christ that we focus on love, not only in February but through out the year. Jesus told us that if we love him, it will affect the way we live our lives (If you love me, keep my commandments). He gave us a new command: Love each other as I have loved you" (John 15:12) and "This is my command: Love each other" (John 15:17). When the rich young man asked Jesus about what he must do to get eternal life, Jesus mentioned a number of the commandments and finishes with "love your neighbor as yourself." (Mat. 19:19) When asked the greatest commandment, Jesus said we are to love the Lord our God with everything we have, and the second greatest commandment is to love our neighbor as ourselves. If you read the third chapter of 1 John you hear a lot about love. John tells us that we know what love is by looking at Jesus: he laid down his life for us! And in chapter four John tells us that we do not love God if we do not love our brothers and sisters. In 3:18 we read: "Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth." Reminds me of the words of James when we are told that faith without deeds is dead (2:26).

In Matthew 25 Jesus tells the parable of the sheep and the goats. The King returns, separates his people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. The sheep are complimented because they have taken care of the king when he was in need. The goats are condemned because they ignored the needs of the king. Both groups question when they served or not served the king. The king replies "Whenever you did this (or not do this) to one of the least of my children, you did them (or didn't) for me.

In February we celebrate love and we share love with our families and loved ones. But as Christ followers our love must move beyond our families - both biological and church. Our love needs to be extended to everyone around us, including those we may not like. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus taught:

You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (Mat 5:43-48)

We are called to love all of our neighbors - those we like and those we hate, those close and those far away. In January we hosted our second Mobile Food Pantry. With a lot of help from fellow sisters and brothers in Christ we were able to distribute a lot of food to many families on perhaps the coldest day of the year. That one way in which we put feet on our love, by being physically involved helping the least of these. Another way in which we put our love into action is by our support of those in mission. We support Youth for Christ and the Black Knight Breakfast Club, Presbyterian global mission, Operation Christmas Child, and this year we also supported the work of the Presbyterian Outreach Foundation. The Outreach Foundation is made up of Presbyterians but is not an official part of the Presbyterian Church. It is a separate Presbyterian organization which helps to support Christian mission around the globe. This year we received two special gifts totaling \$15,000.00. The Session tithed those gifts to mission. A part of that tithe was sent to the Outreach Foundation to help with their work to bring the message and love of Jesus Christ to those who need him.

The Outreach Foundation's Winter 2012 Newsletter is hanging on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall. I hope you will take a moment and read the front article written by Marilyn Borst entitled "Iraq Without a Flak Jacket". She speaks about a recent trip of church leaders she led to Basrah, Iraq. There they met with the only Presbyterian pastor left in Iraq. With the help of elders this pastor is responsible for three Presbyterian communities (two have been closed because of fear, danger and intimidation have driven away their congregations). She tells the story of a faithful elder who was kidnapped and martyred because of his faith.

Talk about Christians who have put feet on their love! And we can put feet on our love as we help to support our brothers and sisters through our prayers and through our gifts. Put your love into action this Valentine's Day!

To God be the glory,  
Pastor Jim

**Prayer Service**  
February 2, 2012  
7 pm.

**Sixth Annual Groundhog Pancake Breakfast**  
Presbyterian Pete is starting to stir and the griddles are being warmed up for the Annual Groundhog Pancake Breakfast here at the Van Buren Presbyterian Church. Invite some friends to come and be our guests for breakfast on Saturday, February 4, 8-11 am. A free will offering will be received.

**Annual Congregational Meeting**  
**Sunday, February 5, 2010**  
**following worship**  
The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held following worship on Sunday, February 5, 2012. Business will include the annual reports, the 2012 Budget, and the remembrance of all members who have died in the past year. All members are encouraged to attend.

## WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

This group will meet again on February 14, Valentine's Day. A sweet day to get together. We will study chapter 11 of our book. This is titled "A Different Kind of Hero". The God knows your name. These lessons have so much to think about and discuss. Be sure to join us.

We will be participating with the Methodist women to serve the Salvation Army Soup Kitchen on March 26. We need some cookie bakers for that. Please come and be a part of this vital fellowship.

## FROM THE SESSION

The first meeting of the new year was a busy one. We finalized the 2012 budget, and reviewed the church by-laws. Both of these will be prepared and presented to the congregation at the annual meeting. We set February 12 and 26 as the dates for the next two New Beginnings meetings. They will be at 7:00 pm each evening. We will share Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday services with the Faith congregation again. Ash Wednesday at Van Buren and Maundy Thursday at Faith Church. Ash Wednesday is February 22 and Maundy Thursday is April 5.

March 24 will be a cleaning day at the church. We need people to turn out from 9:00 am to 12 noon to do various cleaning jobs at the church. Many hands will make light work so plan on being here if you can.

GROUND HOG DAY is coming. The big breakfast will be served again and we need you to help on February 4. We will be serving from 8am to 11 am. We need helpers and eaters!

We had a great turnout of volunteers at the Food Pantry and we appreciate so much all of the willing hands. In a church of our size it takes all those who are able to help with these projects.

Be sure to take advantage of a great adult Sunday School class every Sunday at 9:15 and the Bible Study on Thursday nights. Study of the scriptures needs to be an important part of our lives.

## IN CASE OF BAD WEATHER

If the winter storms roll in and you are wondering if a service or activity is cancelled, listen to WKXA 101.5 FM or WFIN 1610 AM, or check out the Courier - WKXA - WFIN website for a cancellation.

### SESSION MEETING

The Session will meet on Tuesday, February 21, at 7:00 pm.

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## February Birthdays

- 3 Linda Wilkinson
- 11 Ralph Middleton

## February Anniversaries

- 22 David and Dixie Stump
- 26 Mike and Sherry Harris

**\*If your birthday or anniversary was missed, please let the church office know so that we can get our records straight. Thank you.**

## February Worship Helpers

Deacon of the Month - Dixie Stump

### Greeters

- 5 Dixie Stump
- 12 John and Bonnie Waller
- 19 Jenni Friedmeyer
- 26 Ralph and Donny Middleton

### Lay Readers

- 5 Rosine Harris
- 12 \_\_\_\_\_
- 19 Rex Fishbaugh
- 26 \_\_\_\_\_

## SUPERBOWL OF CARING FEBRUARY 5!

## INVITE A FRIEND TO WORSHIP

Churches that grow do so because the members invite their unchurched friends to come worship with them. Do you have a friend who is searching? Why not invite that friend to come worship with you?

## OHIO NORTHERN UNIVERSITY'S NORTHERN CHIMES

Ohio Northern University's Northern Chimes will be sharing their wonderful talents and love of Christ with us at 7:00 PM on Sunday, March 25<sup>th</sup>. Northern Chimes is a three-octave hand bell choir that plays music from hymns to children's renditions of favorite Bible stories. This student-run outreach team shares God's word through music and scripture verses.

We will be having a soup and sandwich supper before Northern Chimes performance. We will begin serving at 5:00 PM and a free-will donation will be accepted to defray the costs of the meal.

Please be sure to join us for an evening of fellowship and music.

### Ash Wednesday Worship

Wednesday, February 22  
7:00 pm

@ Van Buren Presbyterian Church