

The Spirit

February 2016

of Ridgefield-Crystal Lake Presbyterian Church



Lent: A Season of Disruption

Lent is six weeks of preparation to help us to fully appreciate the drama, fear and horror of Holy Week and the shock and glory of Easter .

Lent is a Season of Disruption when many preconceived ideas and expectations of the Messiah and the Kingdom are thrown aside for the disciples, the crowds and also for us. It is THE time of the year to stop and deepen our faith and consider the sheer magnitude of Jesus's saving grace, example and sacrifice.

Lent is a Season of Disruption when I am asking you to disrupt your all too busy schedule for an hour or two once a week. Rather than “give something up” for Lent, instead do something. An interlude, a time to slow our pace, pay attention and consider our relationship with Jesus, immersing ourselves in the stories.

We begin our journey through Lent on Feb 10th at 7:00 pm with a Prayer Through Music Taize service.

Each Lenten Wednesday after that, we will gather at 5:45-6:15pm for soup and fellowship (a child friendly alternative will be available and the nursery will be open). This is being organized and prepared by Kathy Rabe and our Deacons. To help Kathy with planning, a sign up sheet will be available in the Welcoming Area, outside the office.

Then, from 6:15-7:00 we will enter into a time of Prayer Through Guided Meditation. This is a “time-honored prayer form” which allows us to use our imagination to “encounter the plots and characters of the biblical narratives. It allows us to weave together the divine and the human stories in ways unmatched by other prayer forms. The threads in the weave help us discover who we are, to whom we belong and how we are to live. New images of world, church, community and hope emerge. So do new images of Jesus. It is human nature to share stories and linger over their meaning, it shapes our sense of belonging and enlivens our faith” (from “Praying Our Way Through Lent with Guided Meditation” by Diane Stephens Hogue)

Adult coloring books are very popular and were recently described as “almost a prayer-like spiritual practice”. So, for those who would prefer to keep their hands busy while freeing their minds to listen to Jesus's stories, we will have some very beautiful Lenten Posters to color and contemplate. These will also be available on Sunday morning for anyone to take a few silent moments and participate.

Lent a Season of Disruption. So please, I personally extend an invitation to you to join us each Wednesday evening as we explore our faith through story and art and prepare ourselves for the glory that is Easter. - Pastor John

“Best Congregational meeting, ever!”

Well perhaps that is a little much, however, I do want to thank Lee and all the teams for preparing our Annual Report. Thank you, one and all. The spirit of hope, determination and faith was evident. I especially wanted to thank everyone who took the time to participate so attentively and positively.



WHO'S YOUR DEACON? WE'LL BE CALLING YOU!

Using the words of comedienne Joan Rivers, "Can we talk?" During the week of February 21-27, the Deacons are going to be holding a phone-a-thon. We'll be contacting each of the families in our care groups to check in, say hi, and acquaint you with your family group number and ...US! This will be a wonderful opportunity for you to ask us questions about what we do as Deacons, or to share any joys or concerns that you may have at this time. Perhaps you have prayer requests. Maybe there's been a birth in your family. It's possible you have a suggestion for us or that we can pass along. Even if everything in your life is pretty much "status quo", we look forward to talking with you!

2016 RCLPC RUMMAGE-SALE JUNE 3 & 4

As you begin your Spring cleaning please consider donating your clean and usable items to this worthy cause. Just like last time, we are looking for clothing, toys, books, housewares, linens, antiques, furniture and sports equipment. Please remember, no TVs, computers, phones, or printers. Donations can be brought to Fellowship Hall from Sunday, May 22 through May 30. Amy Bernardi Connell has graciously offered to help get you started. Please read on!



Have you been trying to declutter your home but just can't seem to get started? Are you hoping to donate your unused items to the upcoming rummage sale but lack the motivation to take that first step? Well, let me help by sharing my own experiences decluttering successfully and joyfully using the KonMari method. Marie Kondo is a professional organizer who has published several books and organizational tools that have become very popular because her approach is very user-friendly, satisfying and cost-free!

I would be happy to share those tips and helpful hints with you. Join me for a mini-workshop at church on Sunday, February 21st at noon. I will be introducing the KonMari method of decluttering. Feel the joy of having a clutter-free home and life! Sign up now, and be one of the first five people to receive a copy of a Marie Kondo book free! Please feel free to invite your friends. You can contact me by e-mail at bcdfamily@gmail.com.

Green Living Tips



Check the Earth Care Team button of the rclpc.org website for green living tips, courtesy of Environmental Defenders of McHenry County. This month look for easy ways to be green in 2016, ways to save on heating bills, and what the general rule is for avoiding unnecessary engine idling. ~ Earth Care Team



Change for Children's Choir - Forward and Forte From February!

After much prayerful consideration, it has been decided to move Children's Choir practice to Sunday mornings from 9:30 AM to 10:00 AM. This change will begin in February, so the first rehearsal we will have on a Sunday will be February 7th. There are several advantages to this:

It's one less place to have to go on a weeknight in-between piano lessons, karate, gymnastics, swimming, homework, and actual free time for the kids.

The children can flow right from choir and singing time into Sunday School.

You won't have to worry about getting around in the ice and snow in the dark during this cold and yucky weather time.

More children will be able to participate.

You will probably already be there because of Sunday School.

It's a wonderful way to give glory to God and pray twice (no matter what day it's on!).

We will be continuing our exploration of our hymnbook, "Glory to God", where we deeply explore the origins of the hymns and the spiritual meanings behind the lyrics as well as learning to sing them.

Did you know that the word "forte", though traditionally used in music to mean "to sing loudly" has another meaning and translation? It means "strong." I have a feeling that this move will make our children's choir even stronger (and potentially louder!) than ever! I hope to see you there on Sundays at 9:30 AM starting in February!

Elizabeth Novak
Director of Children's Choirs



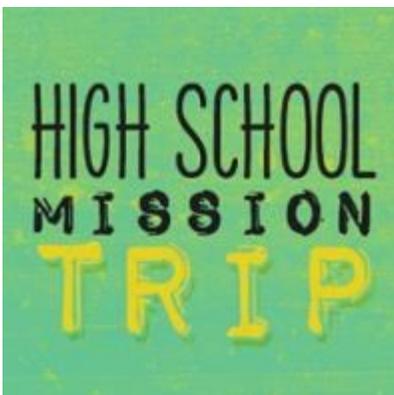
Souper Bowl Sunday!

It's time for the Super Bowl...which means it's also time for the Souper Bowl! On this fun day, we also remember that as we have our parties, stuff ourselves with junk food and watch a game that costs millions of dollars to put on, there are people who have nowhere to go, little or nothing to eat and need our help.

Our youth will collect donations of financial support, as well as non-perishable food items on February 7th, during worship. We hope to help feed 100 hungry families in our area. Don't know what to bring? Here is a list of the Food Pantry's 20 most needed items:

- Canned fish, such as salmon, tuna and sardines
- Canned meats, such as chicken and turkey
- Whole grains, such as quinoa and spelt
- Rice
- Oatmeal
- Whole grain dry cereals with at least 5 grams fiber/serving
- Whole grain pastas, such as whole wheat, brown rice flour or quinoa
- Fruits in natural juice with no sugar added
- Canned vegetables, low salt or no added salt
- Canned fruit packed in water versus syrup
- Canned or boxed low-sodium soups and stews
- Dried or canned legumes, such as peas, lentils, peanuts and beans
- Pureed foods, such as sweet potato, pumpkin and applesauce
- Low-fat dry or shelf-stable milk
- Peanut butter

High School Youth



In just four months, our high school students will be taking a Mission Trip to Grand Rapids, MI. We are looking forward to serving the people of that community and learning more about God throughout the week. Begin praying for our students as we prepare to go on this trip. If you would like to donate to the trip, please talk to Matthew Brown.



TURNING POINT



During the month of February, RCLPC will host the Turning Point T-Shirt Collection, created by members of their domestic violence program. Please take a few moments during the month to reflect and meditate on these heartfelt thoughts and words. Please also join Dawn Koch from Turning Point and other members of RCLPC in Fellowship Hall between services on Sunday, February 28th. - CPJ Team

Great Lakes Bioneers Speaker Series in February 2016

<http://www.mchenry.edu/bioneers/>

In February 2016 the MCC Sustainability Center will host the Great Lakes Bioneers speakers series as a vehicle for connecting the public and MCC employees and students to cutting edge environmental topics and their impact on our local economy and our community. The series is an opportunity to learn about ways to be better stewards of our earth.

The speaker series is free and open to the public. No registration required. All sessions are at 7pm in MCC's Luecht Conference Center in Building B located on Main Campus in Crystal Lake. Call MCC Sustainability Center for more information (815) 479-7765.

February 9, 2016: The Great Lakes Water Diversion Controversy

Peter Annin is a veteran conflict and environmental journalist. He authored the definitive work on the Great Lakes water diversion controversy, titled [The Great Lakes Water Wars](#). Mr. Annin will speak to the diversion of water from the Great Lakes and why it is not a valid alternative to groundwater in McHenry County.

February 16, 2016: The Recipe for a Better Food System

Danielle Nierenberg is president of [Food Tank](#), an organization focused on building a global community for safe, healthy, nourished eaters. Ms. Nierenberg will speak about the recipe for a better food system including preventing food loss and waste, building soil, empowering women, and cultivating the next generation of agricultural leaders.

February 23, 2016: Beyond Milkweed: Pollinators, Pollution and Purpose

Robert Michael Pyle is the author of 17 books, including *Wintergreen*, which won the John Burroughs Medal. A Yale-trained ecologist and a Guggenheim fellow, Dr. Pyle will take us beyond planting milkweed and bring his unique level of expertise and offer practical solutions to the most critical ecological issue of our time.

~ Earth Care Team



Living Waters for the World Update

Lois and Rick Johnson and Sarah and Jac Kelewae went to Guatemala over the weekend of January 15-19th. We made our way to the city of Retalhuleu or Reu, which is the nearest place to stay on our way to Jerez, about 30 minutes away. The village of Jerez is in the midst of a large rubber plantation. The one road through the plantation is the only street in the village and it was busy with trucks and buses and motorcycles all day.

The people of the Belén Presbyterian Church are the most kind and thoughtful people one would ever want to meet. The men work as day laborers in the rubber plantation and the women tend the families. The average monthly income for families is about \$160. There are around 100 children in the church who will be helped by this system and possibly another 600-700 children in the school next door.

The church delegation of men and women were composed of Elders and Deacons, Pastor, Youth Pastor, Music Minister, numbering around 15 people. They spent all day with us on Sunday and half the day on Monday, meeting under two mango trees. They have their worship services at 6:30-8:00 in the evening, because it is too hot during the day to be in the building. Plus, most people work seven days a week. So, when they set aside most of two days to meet with us, it was quite a sacrifice.

We had the most wonderful and helpful in-country coordinator who served as our translator, and he really educated the people and negotiated for us. The folks from the church were natural partners right from the beginning, listening carefully through hours of explanation and patiently asking thoughtful questions. They did not come to the decision to enter into an agreement with us easily, but they did agree and did so with deep faith and commitment. They will be building a building for the water system on the foundation of the old church building, between the church and the Pastor's house. We visited a neighboring water installation and saw it in operation, so they now have a much better idea of what we will be building together.

We will be supplying the filtration system, the piping and plumbing supplies, the sink, the tanks, the tools for building and maintaining the system, spare filters, the curriculum and supplies for teaching safe water usage and hygiene. We are well on our way to funding these needed items but more is still needed. As well, we will be seeking to add people to our team: educators and hands-on builders. We are hoping to have another 4-6 people join us as we travel back to Guatemala July 9-16, 2016.

We will be having more to share about our experiences on February 7th during worship and during the educational hour. And we will be having an informational meeting for those interested in going on the installation trip on Thursday, February 18th at 7:00 PM in the Lounge. We hope to get the whole congregation involved in one way or another, either directly, through continued prayer and financial support, or through helping us with our various fund raisers. Again, we thank you for your interest in helping bring clean and safe water to the children in Guatemala.

