

November
2014

The Spirit

Of Ridgefield-Crystal Lake Presbyterian Church

Thank You Sunday

The practice of writing thank you notes has almost died out due to email and social media. While we might be tempted to dismiss handwritten thank you notes as an unnecessary exercise, we cannot deny the good feelings we get when we receive a note thanking us for something we have done. And when we write a thank you note, we find that it awakens a sense of gratitude in us.

In keeping with our celebration of 175 years of God's Grace and Generosity to RCLPC, Sunday, November 23rd will be designated "Thank You Sunday" where everyone in the congregation will have the opportunity to write short, from-the-heart notes of appreciation to a family member, friend, business associate, God, etc. for a material gift, the gift of kindness, the gift of friendship, our blessings, a smile, or anything that one feels grateful for.

There will be tables in the Connecting Link with blank note cards and pens for all to take a few minutes between services to write a thank you note. The children will have this opportunity in Sunday School that day. We encourage you to think "Do I have anything to be grateful for? Who would appreciate a thank you note?"

We look forward to seeing you at the tables!

From the Deacons and the Stewardship Team



Happy Birthday Dorothy!

Dorothy Fankhauser

*celebrated her 90th birthday
with friends on*

September 26th.

To MY Second Family at RCLPC -

The Family of Richard J. Brincks sincerely thanks you for your many expressions of love on his recent passing. Know that your presence has been a comforting and healing gift - whether in prayers, a call, a card, a held-hand, an embrace or an understanding glance. We will also always cherish the many "stories" and memories of Richard that have been shared. Our faith blesses us with the awareness that our loved one is forever near in Spirit and lives on also in the words, deeds and actions we choose every day. May the Presence of Love, Kindness and Generosity inspire us to live and work to make a difference in our world.

Please know that ...the role of your love and support is immeasurable - not only during this difficult time of our bereavement, but in the sad times that still lie ahead. You were there for us - willingly, unselfishly and intuitively. This gave us emotional and spiritual strength knowing others remembered and cared. We will always be grateful and your expression of sympathy will never be forgotten. We're finding healing in God's tender embrace.

Love and Blessings of Gratitude

Richard's Family, Cheryl and Sarah



Global Gift Shop Sunday, November 16 Fellowship Hall, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Come to our 9th annual Global Gift Shop! RCLPCer's have a long-standing passion for justice and dignity for all people in our world. By purchasing fair trade items in our shop your dollars are going to artisans and farmers enabling them to earn a fair income. With that income they are able to work their way out of poverty, send their children to school and develop vital community projects like water wells and medical clinics.

Global Hands will again provide fairly traded home decor, clothing and accessories, food products and gift items. We will also have products from Hands Along the Nile, fair trade coffee and olive oil from Palestine.

Payment at the gift shop can be made in cash or check. Global Hands also accepts credit and debit cards.



What's Up With Men's Group?

The RCLPC Men's Group is best known for the annual Easter Pancake Breakfast. Then every once in a while we are inspired to do other projects such as the end of summer picnic in 2013. Speaking of special projects, we are sponsoring a work party at Pastor John's house on November 8th to help get things ready for the winter season.

But what about the time in between projects? Those are some of the best times. We meet at 8:00 for breakfast at the Colonial Restaurant on Route 14. Sometimes we have a program, but most of the time one of the members will select a reading from a meditation book written specifically for men and then kick off a discussion. You would be surprised at the amount of conversation this simple exercise can generate. It's easy. No preparation time necessary. No stress about what to talk about. Just good conversation with good people over good food. Feed the soul, feed the mind, feed the body. Come join us.

Fall Work Party at the Dillon's

The RCLPC Men's Group is sponsoring a work party at John and Louise's house on Saturday, November 8th, at 8:00 a.m. We will be doing the fall chores such as racking leaves, trimming shrubs, etc. Please notify Rick Johnson or Fred Neuschel if you can be there. For Rick: storiesfromtheheart@comcast.net. For Fred: fredneuschel@att.net.



Cents-Ability Banks

Extra change in your pocket or waiting in a jar for a good purpose? The PC(USA) Cents-Ability program gives our children, and everyone else who'd like to participate, a chance to contribute a few cents at every meal, while remembering the needs of hungry people in prayer. Pick up an offering bank from the baskets at the ushers' tables and bring them back by Sunday, December 21. The funds raised go back to PC(USA) for local and world hunger ministries. We are thankful for our children and youth and the energy and enthusiasm they bring to RCLPC!

~ Stewardship Team

Elevator Reminders!

Dear Christian Friends: In order for the church elevator to operate properly both the inner gate and the outer door have to be closed. When exiting the elevator on either the sanctuary floor or the main floor, please make certain the inner gate and the outer door are shut tight. If not shut one cannot use the buttons on the wall outside the elevator to either move the elevator up or down. The last two Sundays I have had to use the stairs going up and going down. Maybe it was good exercise but it was tough going!

Thanks JTF





JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Why do people join a church? Most people join a church to be part of a community, to build relationships and share their lives with other people. This is why we worship together, participate in committees, go to classes, or sing in the choir. This investment in relationships really pays off when we have a need for other people to help us. Because our schedules are so busy, we need to create intentional opportunities for fellowship. Therefore, we are organizing a group to generate and implement ideas for fellowship activities for the church for the coming year. If you have any ideas or are interested in helping with some of these activities, please contact Kathy Rabe at kathyrabe3@gmail.com or call 815-455-6436.

Fall Fresh Food Giveaway Saturday, November 15 - 10:00-1:00

Due to the generosity of RCLPC's giving to the Food Fund, we will be hosting another Fresh Food and Food Card Giveaway. Volunteers are needed to help from 9:00-1:00 with parking, hospitality and the distribution of food. If you are able to help in an way that day or any part of that time please contact Joan Jensema. Thank you RCLPC for your great generosity in so many ways!

The Mission Outreach Team



Calling for Diapers, Diapers and MORE Diapers!!!

In conjunction with RCLPC's 175th anniversary celebration the Mission Outreach Team is calling upon our congregation's history of incredible generosity by supporting the local Diaper Bank. Please bring diapers of any size – though the most desperately needed sizes are 3-6, as well as adult diapers, or give a monetary donation that will be used to purchase diapers. The challenge: 1839 (RCLPC's founding year) diapers by the end of October.

Diapers and/or donations can be brought to the bin located outside the office. Thank you for your support of this mission that has a large need in our community! ~ The Mission Outreach Team



To support this year's Community Harvest, member churches of the Food Pantry are being asked to participate in this special food drive.

Donations benefit the Crystal Lake Food Pantry.

Please return your filled bag to your church on November 23rd.

ITEMS NEEDED:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1) Chili | 7) Canned Pasta |
| 2) Dinner Helpers | 8) Canned Beans – (Any kind) |
| 3) Paper Goods | 9) Baking Mix/Supplies |
| 4) Pasta | 10) Salad Dressing |
| 5) Ramen Noodles | 11) Rice |
| 6) Macaroni and Cheese | 12) Cleaning Products |

Monetary donations are tax deductible, and can be made online at clpantry.org.

Questions? Please MJ Towne. For event information, please visit clchamber.com or facebook.com/communityharvest.



RCLPC Choir Participates in the Festival of the Voice

The RCLPC adult choir is participating in the Festival of the Voice concerts, Sunday, November, 9, 2014, at the Raue Center for the Performing Arts, Crystal Lake, at 7:00 p.m. Ticket information is available at www.voices-in-harmony.org, Voices in Harmony Facebook page, or at



Don't Forget: Next Spirit Deadline is December 5th!



Children's & Youth Ministry

Whenever I pick up a book about youth ministry, the first thing that I do is check when it was published. Finding the year somewhere inside the front cover gives me a good idea of how helpful the book is going to be for me. Anything that was published 10 or

more years ago can often have outdated information and ideas. Now I am not saying that all of these books should be thrown into the trash and never seen again; they do have some use, but for the most part are difficult to use in today's youth ministry world. This is the case because of how quickly our the youth culture changes and how quickly youth ministry itself changes.

Let me show you what I mean. I graduated from high school in 2009, a mere five years ago. We all had cell phones in my youth group but few of us had smartphones. Fast forward to now. Most students have smartphones with instant access to any kind of information that they want. They are also constantly in contact with people through texting, Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites. The whole youth culture has gone under a massive change in the past five years.

Youth ministry has also gone under a huge change in the past five years. With the massive changes to the youth culture, youth ministry has no choice but to adapt. Youth ministry used to be about entertaining. Basically the goal was to get students in the door any way possible. This led to a lot of churches going all out for their youth ministries. Youth rooms were decorated with cool looking furniture and multi-media systems with the latest equipment. It was meant to just entertain. When the youth culture changed, students found that they could find other places to be entertained. Many youth ministries still continue to use this model and often find themselves stuck or with a group of students that know nothing about the Christian faith. What these ministries do not realize is that students actually want to have a place to learn more about Christianity.

This brings us to the here and now. At RCLPC, my main, number one, highest priority is to lay the foundations of Christianity in the lives of students. This does not mean that our youth ministries won't be fun. It does mean that my priorities will be different than that of a youth ministry of five years ago. Just as fashion and tastes in music change, youth ministry needs to take care of what the students desire. - Matt



23rd Annual RCLPC Cookie Walk

December 13, 2014

9 am to noon
or until cookies disappear

Why have a Cookie Walk?

- Support mission projects
- Outreach to community
- Cookies taste great!

Everyone is needed!

Be a part of something deliciously great

What if every family in church helped and most baked?

Lots of people in need would be happier because we'd have lots of cookies to sell to support good causes.

You don't bake? There are lots of jobs: set up (you can be an elf), weigh cookies, wash dishes J, donate cider and donuts, table cloths, etc.

You say YOU want to help?

- Bake one dozen or 20 or more & refrigerate or freeze them
- Make it a cookie party with friends & family
- Real men bake cookies
- Workers can eat broken cookies
- Decorate Fellowship Hall

Clean up – hmmm, maybe more broken cookies to eat.

Community people return each year looking for favorites, old fashioned cookies, candy, breads and other holiday specialties. Anyone want to make gingerbread men or gingerbread houses or your favorite cookie?

You've never been to a Cookie Walk? Well, you need to start now and make up for lost time.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL?

Children's Sunday school is off to a great start and we are already two months in! The teachers and children have been having fun together as they learn and share God's love with one another. With the attendance of Sunday school comes spiritual growth.

The Preschool/Kindergarten class is using the Cokesbury curriculum: Grow, Proclaim, Serve. They started out Unit 1 with the Creation story and the story of Noah. They are now on Unit 2 with the stories of the beginning of God's people: Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, the twin brothers and Jacob's ladder. Of course there is always time for play dough.

The first and second grade class is using the Crossings for Kids third grade curriculum. They have just finished Unit 1 which started with Adam and Eve and then went on to Cain and Abel, the story of Noah and the Tower of Babel. They will be starting Unit 2 on the families of Abraham and Isaac.

The Third, Fourth and Fifth grade class is also using the Crossings for Kids curriculum but is using the fourth grade curriculum. They have just finished Unit 1 on Exodus which included the Ten Commandments, the golden calf and Moses at Mount Nebo. They will be starting Unit 2 on Joshua, Judges and Ruth.

Preschool through fifth grade will be having a combined Christmas party on December 21st.

Middle school and high school are using the Spice Rack curriculum that involves very little lecturing but instead involves a fast-paced, interactive and discussion experience. They have started out the year learning about Mathew and Psalms. Rumor has it that middle school will be doing some finger painting soon!

There will be **no Sunday school** on November 30th for Thanksgiving; December 28th for Christmas and January 4th for New Years. Snacks are always an important part of class time. Donations of snacks (peanut free) and juice boxes are always welcome.

With Thanksgiving coming it brings thoughts of what we are thankful for. We are thankful for the children of RCLPC who come to Sunday school eager to learn more about God's love and thankful for our wonderful teachers for helping those children grow in God's love.

Blessings,

Christian Education Team

Greetings from the Middle East

As you read this, I have just returned from a three-week visit to the Middle East, led by our newly elected moderator, Heath Rada. Our travels took us to Lebanon and Iraq where we saw firsthand, the fear and anxiety that people across the region are facing as ISIS continues its reign of terror in Syria, Iraq and other neighboring countries. Christians, Ysedis, moderate Muslims and other minority groups are being targeted. Young men are recruited by force to join ISIS while women and young girls are being rounded up, raped and sold into servitude.

We heard stories from Christian refugees who told us they were given three choices: convert to Islam, leave their homes or die. Many were given less than an hour to leave with nothing more than the clothes on their backs. As one Christian leader said to us, "How could I deny Jesus? I had to leave or face death."

As we met with displaced families and the church leaders in Lebanon and Iraq they expressed their concerns for the coming winter. As cold weather approaches, many fear there will not be enough food, blankets and other necessities for families to survive. They want to go home but know that death awaits them if they return.

Church leaders expressed concern that as the crisis rages on, more and more Christians will leave the Middle East and never return. As we left Iraq, we encountered several Christian families that had decided to leave. They had packed everything they could and were headed to Jordan to seek refuge from the violence. I was overwhelmed by the grief and sadness evident in the eyes of a young mother who was taking her children to a safer place.

There are many challenges facing our church partners in the Middle East. The continued threats from ISIS, the coming winter and economies slowed by conflict and oppression have made life very difficult. Everywhere we visited, our partners asked us to send a message to the church in the United States, "Don't forget about us." Their faces, stories and faith are a constant presence and reminder to me.

As a church deeply committed to mission in partnership, we cannot forget our sisters and brothers in the region. There are several things you can do:

[Hold the people of the Middle East in your prayers.](#)

[Read stories about the Moderator's visit](#)

- Learn more about the ministry and witness of our church partners in the region:

[Iraq Lebanon Syria The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon Facebook page](#)

- Provide financial support to meet the immediate humanitarian needs facing partners in the region.

<http://pda.pcusa.org/situation/syria/>

<http://pda.pcusa.org/situation/iraq-violence/>

Our trip concluded with a visit to Israel/Palestine, where we hoped to visit Gaza to assess the humanitarian situation. Unfortunately, we were unable to secure the necessary travel documents.

The whole region groans under the weight of conflict. In the midst of it, the light of Christ still shines boldly in the faces of those whose steadfast hope and faith is a reminder to us all that the evils of war and oppression are not the final answer. One day, the Peace of Christ will reign.

Faithfully in Christ,

Sara P. Lisherness