

# THE VALLEY BRIDGE



January 5, 2016

## JANUARY 10: BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

### Fellowship of Prayer: Zion Presbyterian Church of Ellsworth

Pastor: Rev. Paul Snyder

Session members: Cliff Schilling (Clerk of Session), Mary Boom, Brian Wiertzema, Delores Boomgaarden, Stacey Roemen, Twyla Schilling

Church Secretary: Darcey Groen

Financial Secretary: Sandy Sanders

Church Treasurer: Colette Smythe

Janitor: Tracy Schultz

Bible Study Teacher: Miles Birkett

Sunday School Teachers: Becca Dreesen, Daniela Essman, Angela Jonas

Youth Leaders: Craig & Twyla Schilling, Chad & Tracy Schultz

### Prayer concerns:

Pray for families who have lost loved ones during the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Pray for elderly members who have a hard time getting out in these cold winter months.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to lead Zion to new adventures in the coming year.

Pray for our sister church, Emmanuel Presbyterian Church, Rushmore.



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MN Valleys Presbytery  
4055 Abbott Drive  
Willmar MN 56201  
320-235-7910

[minnesotavalleys.org](http://minnesotavalleys.org)

Monday-Friday—8:00-4:30  
We're on Facebook, too!

## THE WORD FROM RICK

On Christmas Day, I got one of those telephone calls that no one wants to receive, but are unfortunately a part of our life experience. On the other end of the line was my brother, Pat, in Ohio, telling me that our father had passed away – four days short of his 89<sup>th</sup> birthday. At first, Patrick's words did not compute. In fact, I thought that he was talking about someone else. I asked him to start again, and when I heard the news, I was stunned, and my first response was to utter a few words that most preachers are not supposed to utter . . . at least in public.

For months, we have been planning to head to Milwaukee on the Sunday after Christmas so that we could celebrate dad's birthday. Instead, the plans quickly changed, and we would be heading there to celebrate what he meant to those of us who were family and friends, and say our final "good-byes." It was all so unreal; in fact, it still feels unreal. Dad had seen the doctor on Thursday, and was cleared for a knee replacement. His pastor was going to bring him to Minnesota in April to hear me preach at Litchfield. I had arranged with Gordy Pennertz to give him the Sunday after Easter off. Dad was excited and making plans. The doctor told him that his heart looked good, not only to withstand the surgery and recovery, but for another 10-12 years.

Our son flew into the Twin Cities and joined us for the trip home to Milwaukee. Our family is not huge, only sixteen of us over three generations, but what we lack in numbers, we make up for in energy and love for each other. While the sadness of the occasion was very present, we managed to find many opportunities to laugh together. The time together was precious, the stories were rich and we learned so much more about dad and each other. Last Monday night, in the midst of a blizzard, a family snowball fight broke out in the middle of the street, and Tuesday evening we gathered at the Hilton in downtown Milwaukee, playing Star Wars and holiday trivia. Dad would have loved it – he would have been sitting in his special spot, smiling and taking great pleasure in the scene of his kids, grandkids, and great-grandkids, making the most out of their time together.

The memorial service on Wednesday included Christmas carols and upbeat hymns. Two of the congregation's young people played prominent roles in the service. The pastor's message was perfect, and my brother and I did the eulogy. All in all, it was a fitting memorial to our dad.

While we gained much strength, comfort, and support from the family and friends who gathered around us last week, we also felt that love and care that comes from that great and ever present cloud of witnesses that surrounds us through all of life's circumstances. The plants and flowers, e-mails, cards, and phone calls that we received from you all here in Minnesota Valleys reminded all of us that I am blessed to live out this call to ministry among some wonderful people. When it comes to finding the right words to say, I am not sure that I can find them, so let the words "Thank You" suffice. Thank you for your concern for my entire family. We will not forget the kindnesses that you have extended to us.

Grace and Peace to you all,

*Rick*



**P.S.** – Dad was to have been installed to another term on the session of the Apostle Presbyterian Church, West Allis, Wisconsin on Sunday, January 3, 2016. He was a true servant of Christ!

## WORDS OF APPRECIATION

Pictured below are the plants and flowers that were sent by the Presbytery Staff, the Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys, and the Zion and Emmanuel Presbyterian Churches (Ellsworth and Rushmore) respectively. We thank you all for your kind thoughts and gestures of loving care in this our time of sadness and loss. Our dad, grandfather, and great-grandfather was special to us in so many way. He was greatly loved and will be greatly missed!

With love and deepest appreciation,  
The Family of Richard R. Carus, Jr.

Rick and Sue Carus (Willmar, MN)

C.J. Carus (Troy, NY)

John and Cheryl Kupfer (Wauwatosa, WI)

Dean, Cari, Abby, and Izzy Serio (Cottage Grove, WI)

Rob, Sara, and Prior Koenig (Wauwatosa, WI)

Patrick and Nancy Carus (Tipp City, OH)

Emily Carus (Tipp City, OH)

Evelyn Carus (Alma, MI)



## TRIENNIUM UPDATE

Registration began January 4 - local church contacts have received the information needed to start the process of getting participants registered. Please try to complete your congregation's registrations by February 1!! Questions can be directed to Rick Carus or Pam Prouty!



## ON THE ROAD WITH RICK

January 7: Pastors' Gathering at First Presbyterian Church of Edgerton

January 10: Communion and Ordination of Elders and Deacons at First Presbyterian Church of Osakis

January 24: Preach at First Presbyterian Church of Jackson

January 24: Ecumenical Worship Celebration for the "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" at First Presbyterian Church of Redwood Falls

January 26-27: Synod COM/CPM Retreat in Buffalo

January 27-31: Association of Presbyterian Church Educators Annual Gathering in Chicago

February 6: Presbytery Meeting at First Presbyterian Church of Willmar

February 7: Preach at Ebenezer Presbyterian Church of Renville

February 20: Orientation for Commission and Committee Members - First Presbyterian Church of Redwood Falls



## 2016 IRS MILEAGE RATE

The Internal Revenue Service issued the 2016 optional standard mileage rates used to calculate the deductible costs of operating an automobile for business, charitable, medical or moving purposes. Beginning on Jan. 1, 2016, the standard mileage rates for the use of a car (also vans, pickups or panel trucks) is 54 cents per mile for business miles driven, down from 57.5 cents for 2015

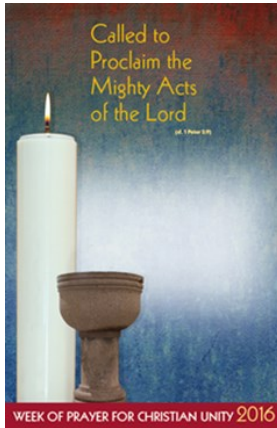
## 2016 PER CAPITA

\$ 7.12 General Assembly  
\$ 5.25 Synod of Lakes & Prairies  
\$21.63 Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys  
\$34.00 Total per member

## 2016 PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

10:00–3:00 Saturday, February 6, at First Presbyterian Church of Willmar  
10:00–3:00 Tuesday, May 10, at Ebenezer Presbyterian Church of Renville  
10:00–3:00 Tuesday, August 2, at United Methodist/Presbyterian Church of Browns Valley  
10:00–3:00 Saturday, October 29, at Union Presbyterian Church of Saint Peter

## OBSERVING THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY



In observance of The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which takes place January 18-25, 2016, all congregations within the Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys are invited to join together with other Christians across south-central Minnesota for a Service of Word and Prayer at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 24, 2016.

This year's service will be held at the First Presbyterian Church in Redwood Falls and will be led by pastors from the Redwood Falls community, along with representatives of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA, the Diocese of New Ulm, and the Presbytery of Minnesota Valleys. Elona Street Stewart, the Synod Executive for our Synod of Lakes and Prairies will be the preacher for this event.

There will be a time for fellowship following the afternoon's worship time. We encourage the participation of our congregations, especially those close to Redwood Falls. Please mark this date on your calendars and plan now to join us for this time of worship together.

## MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ASHBY & OUR SAVIOR'S-TEN MILE LAKE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH, DALTON

This shared ministry in two small towns just off of I-94, is beginning its formal search for a pastor. The Ministry Information Form (MIF) will be posted soon.

EBENEZER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, RENVILLE

This congregation just north of Renville is seeking a pastor to serve in a temporary relationship for at least three years, with the opportunity for that relationship to become called and installed at that time. A position description and modified MIF is available! Contact Rick Carus at the Presbytery Office for more details!

Greetings from FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ALLENTOWN, PA!

As we continue to look for a new Senior Pastor we would like to ask for your assistance in our search. We are a diverse congregation of 1900 members located in eastern Pennsylvania with 6 worship services each Sunday. Our variety of worship styles in English, Arabic and Chin (Burmese) range from traditional to alternative to contemplative. If you know of anyone who may be called to lead a church such as ours, please have them get in touch with us. Our MIF and Mission Study can be found on our website: <http://www.fpcallentown.org/category/pastor-nominating-committee-pnc/>. Contact Peter Dent, PNC Chair, at 610-349-5525 or [pdent@cdgenvironmental.com](mailto:pdent@cdgenvironmental.com)

# YOU ARE INVITED!

## WHO

Area churches (clusters 4 and 5 and any others who wish to attend!)

## WHAT

A chance to talk and fellowship (and of course, eat!) with other Presbyterians. Rick Carus will be there to talk with us about the possibilities of our Presbytery's new Mission Design and to answer questions. We will have an update on the Presbyterian Youth Triennium and discuss other topics of your choice. Bring ideas of something new or exciting that you are doing at your church. We hope the new pastoral leaders will be in attendance so we can get to know you better.

## WHEN

Thursday, January 7 at 7:00 p.m.  
(Snow date: Thursday, February 4)

## WHERE

First Presbyterian Church  
501 7th Avenue West  
Edgerton



## QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS

Contact Kathy Knips  
[kathyknips@hotmail.com](mailto:kathyknips@hotmail.com)  
507-360-1655



## CHOIR ROBE REQUEST

Elizabeth Tot, pastor in Saint Cloud to the South Sudan refugee community, is planning a visit to South Sudan in early 2017. She seeks choir robes for adults and preferably adult female robes, that she would carry as excess luggage to her village upon her visit. If any congregation is able to assist with this request, please get in touch with Peter Mann at [petermann63@gmail.com](mailto:petermann63@gmail.com).

## RETIREMENT: WHAT CAN BE SO HARD ABOUT NOT WORKING? YOU'D BE SURPRISED!

From *The Presbyterian Outlook*: A 90-minute on-demand webinar available starting Tuesday, January 19, featuring Ed Zinkiewicz.

**Retirement can be an adventure:** a path of fun and joy and engagement and meaning. But for many people, retirement can begin to feel interminable, lonely or disappointing. These feelings are warning signs of an unsuccessful retirement ahead.



**In this webinar we'll look at three of the major surprises that can detour any of us into these byways.** We'll talk about where these surprises come from. We'll learn how we might easily follow one of the less-desirable routes. And we'll learn to recognize the signs that we've left the successful retirement path.

**In this webinar, you will be prepared to:**

- Visit expectations that can waste our retirement years by heading us into the wrong direction.
- Understand three major surprises that can derail our dreams and hopes.
- Build a starter kit of steps that move toward a successful retirement.
- Explore several ways to evaluate our activities that can help us pick directions best suited to our individual needs.

**Who should attend?** Are you... nearly or newly retired? Energized by the possibility and potential of retirement? Awed by the task of filling the hole where work used to be? Overwhelmed by too many options? Concerned about making good choices? Working with the nearly or newly retired? Then this webinar is for you!

**Questions? Want to register a group?** Contact Jana Blazek at [jblazek@pres-outlook.org](mailto:jblazek@pres-outlook.org)

**ED ZINKIEWICZ** left a successful 40-year career as a software engineer to become an author, speaker, workshop facilitator and coach. Ed is the author of the "Retire To" series and a contributor to *Mature Years*, *Ministry Matters* and *S.A.G.E.*

Link to video of Ed's invitation to the seminar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfVoLtzU2ZU&feature=youtu.be>

**Click here to register for the on-demand webinar (\$29.95 for 1-6 participants) or pre-order a DVD (\$43.95 with free shipping).**




CALENDAR

Tuesday, January 5: 9:00 Next Pres Team meets at the presbytery office


Wednesday, January 6: 9:00 Staff attends workshop

Thursday, January 7–Friday, January 8: Karen out of the office

Tuesday, January 12: 10:00-2:30 Council meets at the presbytery office



Pray for the  
Next Pres Team



LUKE 3:15-17, 21-22

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, ‘I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.’

**The Baptism of Jesus**

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.’

