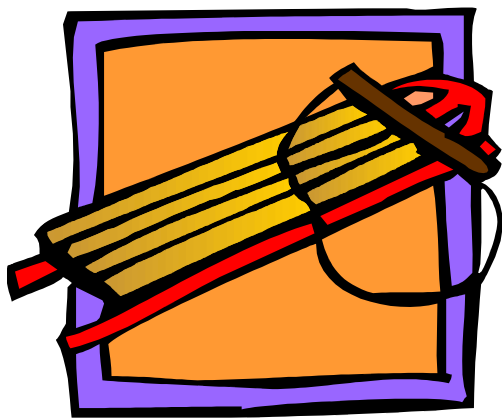


NASHUA PRESBYTERIAN FLYER

FEBRUARY 2009

1010 West Hollis Street Nashua, NH 03062
<http://www.nashuapresbyterian.com>



From the Pastor's Desk...

Dear Members and Friends,

"Ashes to ashes, dust to dust" are words that come near the end of a funeral service. They are often hard words to say and even harder for the family and friends of the loved one to hear. At the end of this month we will start Lent (the 40 days before Easter) with Ash Wednesday. Why do we start our preparation for the most joyful event of the Christian faith with such a somber event? Why do we associate ashes with joy?

On Ash Wednesday we take palms from the preceding Palm Sunday and we burn them to produce ashes which we then use to mark our foreheads. Sackcloth and ashes are a common way in the Bible to mark repentance. If we read the book of Jonah in the Bible we find that when the people of Nineveh are told by Jonah to repent or their city will be destroyed, the king covers himself with sackcloth, and sits in ashes to signify the people's repentance. For this act the city is spared. In times of great threat or in times of deep need people in the Bible have used ashes to mark their willingness to change.

In the Christian faith we firmly believe that we need to look deeply within ourselves to understand our strengths and the depths of our weaknesses to be fully prepared to understand and embrace the words of celebration that we shout on Easter Sunday morning. John Calvin (the theological founder of the Presbyterian Church) understood only too well the human tendency to do terrible things. If you simply read the newspaper or listen to the news it is too easy to find one example after another. It is part of the human condition.

If we are unaware of that part of us, it can easily overwhelm us. My seminary advisor, Dr. James Washington, used to say: "evil is like the tide of the ocean, it gradually comes in and if you were not careful, simply picks you up and sweeps you out to sea." I opened the paper this morning and saw the headline: "Man charged in Brockton killings and rape fueled by racism, officials say." The evils of racism and the anger at our first African American president had swept this young man out to a sea from whence he may never be able to return.

Though I find it highly doubtful that anyone reading this article would ever find themselves in such a place, I believe that this partially comes from knowing that the potential for such things are in each of us. And so in the Christian faith we use the 40 days of Lent to help us be aware of the human condition and to prepare ourselves for the truly miraculous event of Easter.

We also use ashes to signify our mortal nature. As Isaiah reminds us in chapter 40:6-8:

All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever.

We are like the grass of the field, here today and gone tomorrow. But we know that God's Word is eternal. Ashes remind of us of our utter dependence on God, the giver of all life. When we become aware of that dependence we also become deeply aware of the gift of eternal life that is offered to us through Jesus Christ and his death and resurrection on the cross.

Join us February 25 at 7:00 pm for the Ash Wednesday service, here at Nashua Presbyterian Church to begin Lent. And then join us for the next five Wednesday evenings starting at 7:00 pm as we take time for contemplation, study, and consideration of how we can change our lives so that come Easter Sunday Morning we can shout with joy: "He is Risen!" "He is risen, indeed!"

In Christ's undying love,

Pastor Eric

Meditation from Bill Odom...

This devotion was one that I read recently in the Upper Room; the author is unknown.

Psalm 42

As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God. I thirst for God, the living God. When can I go and stand before him? Day and night I have only tears for food, while my enemies continually taunt me, saying, "Where is this God of yours?"

My heart is breaking as I remember how it used to be: I walked among the crowds of worshipers, leading a great procession to the house of God, singing for joy and giving thanks amid the sound of a great celebration!

"O God my rock," I cry, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I wander around in grief, oppressed by my enemies?" Their taunts break my bones. They scoff, "Where is this God of yours?" Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise him again—my Savior and my God!

WHILE recovering from a heart attack, I discovered that I could no longer concentrate on a conversation, a book, or a television program for more than 15 minutes. Soon I became moody, sad, and tearful. Eventually the depression became a major concern. My main thought was: Christians aren't supposed to be depressed! Christians are supposed to have abundant life! In my desperation, I turned to the Bible.

I believe that Psalm 42 may have been written by someone who was experiencing depression. This psalm describes poetically the same emotions I was experiencing. The psalmist and I both were crying out to God because we felt that our hearts were empty, that we were living on our memories, that we wanted to sense the power of God in our lives again.

The psalmist concluded, "Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God." When I read that I thought: Is that all it takes? Is that the answer? Surely this was too simple. Still, I began to praise God again. And I learned that even when we think God has deserted us, God is still close by, loving and caring for us.



Notes from Session...

January 20, 2009

- There will be an ordination and installation of new and returning Elders and Deacons on Sunday January 25 during church.
- Session met with and examined nominees **Steve Fromer** for Elder, and **Bob Graybill** for Deacon. They were approved for service and welcomed to those offices.
- The Session offered thanks to **Bob Eachus** for his service as an Elder.
- **Stu Ramsay** told Session that the boiler for the older part of the church will need to be replaced after the cold season. The cost has been budgeted for in the proposed budget for 2009. He is still in the process of obtaining bids.
- Approved collecting money for the **Souper Bowl of Sharing**, a collection we have made for a number of years on Super Bowl Sunday. All monies collected are donated to a local organization.
- Approved giving Peacemaking funds of **\$143 to the Girls and Boys Clubs of Nashua**. This money must be used for activities or organizations that promote peace at a national or local level.
- Dates to remember are: **Jan. 24** meeting in Windham to review proposed changes to the constitution of the PC-USA. Rita Kirk and Janet Gaylord will go and anyone wishing to join them should let Rita know.
Ash Wednesday is **Feb. 25**, First Sunday in Lent is **March 1**, and Easter is **April 12**.
- Session approved the proposed budget for 2009.

Submitted by: Rita Kirk, Clerk of Session

And while you have your calendar out...

- Anne Marie House Training Sessions
 - Volunteer training workshop for **January** is the **26th** at Londonderry United Methodist Church **7-9 pm**.
 - February 9** at Messiah Lutheran Church in Amherst at **6:30-9 pm**.
- Rescheduled last session of the Advent Bible Study: the Great Art of the Birth Narrative at **7pm** at NPC on Wednesday, **January 28**.
- **WELLNESS SEMINAR ON WEIGHT MANAGEMENT**

Stu Ramsay will be doing a Wellness Seminar on Weight Management at the church on **Sunday, February 8, 2009** immediately after the church service at **11:30am**. There will be a short DVD presentation.

New research on the dangers of abdominal fat (belly fat) will be presented. January is the time of year we all tend to think about our weight. Come and find out how you can get it under control safely, and with medical research backing it.

This is also a **"fund raiser"** for the church.
DON'T MISS IT!!





Watch the Sunday Worship bulletin for news about a Special Valentine's Day Event in the planning stages.

This just in from the Inter-Faith Community:

“The Force of Eloquence”

presented in words and music on historical instruments by the International Baroque Ensemble

The Sprightly Companions

performing J.S. Bach, François Couperin,

Maran Marais and Antonio Vivaldi

Jeanine Krause, oboe, Rachel Cama-Lekx viola da gamba, and Hsuan Wen-Chen harpsichord

Featuring Timothy Keyl, tenor and Elizabeth Blood, soprano

Friday, February 13, 2009 at 7:30 pm

Christ the King Lutheran Church

3 Lutheran Drive at Broad Street, Nashua, NH

Tickets \$18 Adults and \$13 for Students

may be purchased at the door with proceeds

to benefit ELCA World Hunger

This program is sponsored in part by a grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. For further information or to reserve tickets, please call the church at 603-882-6142. For more information on The Sprightly Companions, please visit their website: www.sprightlycompanions.com



Notes from Presbyterian Women...

The Women's Friday Noon Circle has formed a committee which will act as a coordinating group when refreshments are needed by groups within the church. This group will **not** be responsible for Sunday refreshments, the Presbytery Meeting lunch, or any planned fellowship activities. However, it will be a contact committee when refreshments are needed for other church sponsored events. This year Sarah Puglisi will act as chair for the group. If you would like to help, or have a need for this service, see Sarah or contact her by e-mail at: sbpuglisi@verizon.net.

The Friday Noon Circle will meet for lunch, fellowship, study and/or conversation on one or two Fridays of each month at times to be announced from now until Summer vacation time. If the day is snowy the group will not meet. If you are unsure that there will be a meeting please contact Sarah Puglisi or Marilyn Burks. All women of the church will be welcomed at any time they can participate, and all suggestions for activities will be considered. The meetings schedules for February are on February 6 and 27. The group will participate in the Offering of the Least Coin.

If a desire is expressed by enough women for an Evening Circle a facilitator will be sought and a group formed. If you would be interested in such a group please speak to the Pastor or to Sarah or Marilyn.

Look for the Coffee Hour Sign up sheet



We have been blessed with many talented bakers in this church who are willing to share the fruit of their labors. A Sign-Up will sheet will be placed on the bulletin board to the left of the coffee table for those wishing to contribute goodies for the coffee hour. A quick look will tell you when your gifts would be most appreciated. **Hint: the Deacons provide a delicious Birthday Cake on the first Sunday of each month** in honor of all those who will celebrate a birthday during the month so you might want to consider making your donation on a different Sunday.

Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you!

- To **Doug Harrison** for being faithful in checking on the state of the furnace, the driveway, the parking lot and the side walk during the recent storms and cold weather.
- To **Doug and Bob Graybill** for the emergency repair of the heating system so that the pipes did not freeze and the building was warm enough to hold a worship service on the second Sunday in January.
- To Girl Scout Leader, **Violet Sharland** and her husband who moved the TV and put a bucket under the drip in the ceiling of the former Sunday School area, and alerted us to the potential for damage; and to Doug Harrison again for following up on that problem.
- To **Steve Fromer**, who arrived on Friday afternoon with the proper tool, freshly sharpened, and removed the thick accumulation of ice from the front side walk so that we might safely enter the church without fear of falling.
- And to all the unsung heroes whose labors go unwitnessed, but not unnoticed.

Persons named at bottom of a day are celebrating birthdays. A family named at the bottom of a day is celebrating an anniversary. If your dates are incorrect or missing please contact Marilyn Burks.

February 2009						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Communion Prep: J. Forster Serve: B. Andrews & S. Ramsay Lector: K. Calder Comm. Team Mtg.	2 Daisy Scouts 4-5:30	3	4 Girl Scouts 5:30-8	5 T.O.P.S. 9-11 Choir Practice 7-8:30	6 NOON CIRCLE 12:30-2 (Bag lunch)	7
8 Lector: A. Guptill Wellness Seminar- 11:30	9 <i>Anne Marie House Training Session at Messiah Lutheran Church, Amherst 6:30-9</i> Daisy Scouts 4-5:30	10 Carol Dube	11 Girl Scouts 5:30-8 Eric Kirchberger	12 T.O.P.S. 9-11 Choir Practice 7-8:30	13 Benefit Concert at Christ the King Lutheran Church 7:30 P.M.	14
15 Lector: Bobbie Knickerbocker	16 Daisy Scouts 4-5:30	17 SESSION 7-9 Chris Butrym	18 Girl Scouts 5:30-8	19 T.O.P.S. 9-11 Choir Practice 7-8:30 Michelle Dube	20 Marilyn Burks	21
22 Lector: R. Graybill Roberta Hibbard	23 Daisy Scouts 4-5:30	24	25 Girl Scouts 5:30-8 ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE 7:00 p.m.	26 T.O.P.S. 9-11 Choir Practice 7-8:30	27 NOON CIRCLE 12:30-2 (Bag lunch) Bill Honeywell	28
Date for Deacons to meet is undetermined at press time.	January 26- Training Session for Anne Marie House Volunteers at United Methodist Church, Londonderry 7-9		Session 3 Advent Bible Study: Great Art of the Birth Narratives Jan. 28, 7pm			