

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF QUINCY
THE STEEPLE**

2024



INSIDE

Page 2

*Pastor Becca's
message continued*

Page 3

*Birthdays
Coming Soon
Per Capita Reminder
From the Office
March Thought
Daylight Savings reminder*

Page 4

*Mar Lectionary
Session*

Page 5

Mar Calendar

A Message from Pastor Becca Niemeyer

Dear Church Family,

I often find good music to be transformative - I realize 'good' is subjective, but I mean music that opens you up, invites you to see differently, challenges your mind and heart, maybe makes you feel something worth exploring. Bad music has its own effects... but likely doesn't invite the same kind of introspection. It seems like such a gift to me that God uses many different avenues to engage our spiritual realities, music being a way that can stop me in my tracks. Music is also a fluid connection with the saints that go before us - we read of sacred song from the time of Moses, we have the book of Psalms which were often chanted or sung (and in many traditions are done the same way today), and it is such a joy to join in gathered worship and sing songs that connect us together.

The Porter's Gate is a group I discovered a while back and is known as a music collaborative - meaning a group of individual artists who come together to write songs around a theme. This group is one that writes from a Christian perspective, and they have explored a variety of topics about God's action and presence when it comes to issues of justice, lament, mental health, even neighbor songs! One of their most recent albums, *Worship for Workers*, includes the song below. I encourage you to find it online (youtube has it) and give it a listen if you can. The lyrics are as follows:

Open Hands (Song by The Porter's Gate)

The earth you made and blest in days, your Spirit breathing into clay,
Lord, I receive with open hands, open hands.
The breath that fails, the light that fades, while earth and heaven pass away,
I let them go with open hands, open hands.

In desert days a feast you spread, and with your manna I am fed,
Lord, I receive with open hands, open hands.
And when another needs this bread, they ask as Christ, who broke and blessed
I let it go with open hands, open hands.

The work that waits for me today, the joys and sorrows on the way,
Lord, I receive with open hands, open hands.
And just as earth you freely gave, so any goodness I have made
I let it go with open hands, open hands.

(continued on page 2)

(Pastor Becca's message continued from page 1)

The melody itself is beautiful and makes me stop every time it comes on, but the lyrics are their own invitation to rest, receive, and release. I am reminded of all that I have been given, and all that is fleeting in this life. I'm reminded that often grief from loss is also due to the joys we've experienced in life. I'm reminded that to receive blessing is also about being generous in sharing the blessing and/or passing it along. I'm reminded that life happens to us, and we get to figure out what to do with it. Recently a friend was diagnosed with an aggressive breast cancer at age 38 - not something she had any 'control' in, and she has the choice to enter into this news with open hands or closed ones. Closed hands is a closed posture, and seems to echo feelings of 'why me' and 'this isn't fair' or 'what did I do to deserve this?' feelings we all likely resonate with, but stewing in them doesn't change the outcome. Open hands is a posture that lifts the situation up to God, echoing sentiments of 'take this cup from me' and 'Thy will be done' and perhaps 'bring healing and restoration'. I think the human reality is one of fluctuating between closed and open - open hands is always an invitation because we are likely always gripping something hard to give us a sense of stability and control.

In the midst of this terrible and devastating diagnosis (please pray for Annie!), there are also blessings in the surgeries and medical care she is receiving, blessings in the community that has surrounded her and her family, reminders at every corner of God's love in the midst of suffering. We will likely always be gripping one thing or another tightly, but when our hands are closed we also miss the opportunity to receive other things. Micah is 15mo old now, and likes to have crackers in each hand while walking around - perhaps as an assurance of a snack wherever he goes. But it keeps him from being able to hold on to a rail or a hand, to grab and explore something new, or to catch himself when he falls (it also meant at the beach his crackers often got covered in sand since he couldn't decide what he wanted his fingers to be doing!). May God's Spirit pry your fingers from whatever is holding your attention too tightly so that you might open up and experience God more fully.

Blessings,

Pastor Becca

P.S. Here's a picture of Micah, enjoying the beach - may it conjure fond memories of warm breezes for you as we power through the end of winter and begin to welcome spring!



Happy March Birthday !!

Norma Petersen 3/10



Coming Soon!

Lenten Soup Lunches in place of coffee hour:

- Sunday, Mar 3rd
- Sunday, Mar 10th
- Sunday, Mar 17th
- Sunday, Mar 24th

Per Capita for 2024 is \$55.05



begins on Sunday, March 10th.
Please remember to set your clocks ahead one hour.

The updated Church Directory will be available by the middle of the month.
If you wish to receive a copy by mail, please contact the office @:
qcysecty@nwi.net

Thank You!
Denise



From the Office

Two very important dates to note:
March 19th — First day of Spring
June 20th — First day of Summer

Warmer weather will be here soon!!!!

Denise 


March Thought

NEVER  IRON
A 4-LEAF CLOVER, BECAUSE
YOU DON'T WANT TO
PRESS YOUR LUCK

MARCH 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31



Mar LECTONARY

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Mar 3rd</p> <p>Psalm 19</p> <p>Exodus 20:1-17</p> <p>1 Corinthians 1:18-25</p> <p>Luke 19:1-10</p> | <p>Mar 10th</p> <p>Psalm 107</p> <p>Numbers 21:4-9</p> <p>John 3:14-21</p> <p>Romans 14:13-19</p> |
| <p> Mar 17th</p> <p>Psalm 51</p> <p>John 12:2-33</p> <p>Hebrews 5:5-10</p> <p>Exodus 1:6-21</p> | <p>Mar 24th Palm Sunday</p> <p>Psalm 118</p> <p>Isaiah 50:4-9a</p> <p>Philippians 2:5-11</p> <p>Luke 13:10-17</p> |
| <p>Mar 31st - Easter</p> | |
| <p>Psalm 103</p> <p>1 Corinthians 15:1-11</p> | <p>Isaiah 52:2-5</p> <p>John 20:1-18</p> |

SESSION



Session met on Sunday, February 4th.
Moderator: Pastor Becca Niemeyer.

Christian Ed: Sunday Nursery/Church School will be staffed on a rotation by Rhonda Rosenberger & Chanin Street.

Mission & Outreach: Mission Development has a loan opportunity for small projects.

Counselor at Quincy Middle School sent a request to donate items for a Comfort Closet for students in need. This will be a Lenten project.

Pastor Becca shared information about the Transforming Communities Group. The five persons from QFPC will be commissioned during worship on Feb. 25th.

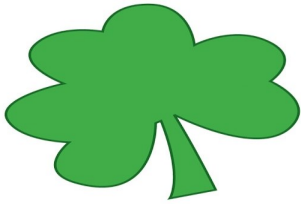
Building: In January the church had frozen pipes and water heaters. Gene Rosenberger and Rod Wurl took care of the problem. Quincy Heating will be asked to add heaters to the two restrooms. The cost is expected to be \$1100. B&F moved and Nancy seconded expense.

Reports were received and approved.

Session voted on the 2024 Officers.

The next regular stated business meeting is scheduled for April 14, 2024.

Session Meeting Minutes are posted in the Fireside room.



well hello, march

2024

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---------|-----------|----------|--------|---|
|  Be sure to wear green on March 17th | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 Growing Your Faith 9:15am Worship 10:30 Lenten Soup Lunch | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 Daylight Savings Begins Growing Your Faith 9:15am Worship 10:30 Communion Lenten Soup Lunch | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17  Growing Your Faith 9:15am Worship 10:30 Lenten Soup Lunch | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 Growing Your Faith 9:15am Worship 10:30 Lenten Soup Lunch | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 Coffee Hour Backup for March M&O |
| 31 Easter Sunday Growing Your Faith 9:15am Worship 10:30 Coffee Hour |  Everyone's Irish On March 17th. | | | | |  <small>© Chris Stock Photo</small> |

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Pastor Email: qpcpastr@nwi.net
<https://www.qfpc.org/>.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Our Church:

Pastor: Becca Niemeyer
Clerk of Session: Judy Bryant
Secretary: Denise McMartin
and office helpers
Treasurer: Jean Lindberg
Organist: Nancy Street
Technician: Jean Lindberg

Faithful Members

Session:

Judy Bryant
Jean Lindberg
Rhonda Rosenberger
Carol Smith
Dave Street
Nancy Street
Donna Sunseri
Bill Wurl