



First Presbyterian Church of Richfield

A growing, giving family, relevant to the community where all are welcome to come and worship God.

February 2025
Volume 8, Issue 2

In Touch with FPCR



February 2025

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

The Longest Shortest Month of the Year

There isn't much in February to celebrate. For most of us, by the time February rolls around we're tired of winter and ready for spring, and that makes the shortest month of the year feel all that much longer. Of course, sports fans get the Super Bowl and Daytona 500, and baseball fans start to get excited because pitchers and catchers report to spring training. Outside of that, though, pretty much all there is to look forward to in February is Valentine's Day. This is a day we celebrate romantic love, named after a third century saint who was martyred for his care of the faithful during times of persecution. How a 'holy day' commemorating him became associated with romantic love is something of a historical question, but nevertheless, that's what's happened.

It All Boils Down To . . .

As I've been thinking about Saint Valentine, and Valentine's Day, and all that's going on around us this year, I'm reminded of what Jesus said when asked what the greatest commandment is: "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is

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Remember to love always and all ways.

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

Mark your calendars to attend FPCR's services weekly during January: **February 2 (Communion), 9, 16, and 23.**

The **FPCR website** contains up-to-date announcements. Check it if you have questions about a service or deadline.
www.FirstPresbyofRichfield.com

UPCOMING SERVICES

All are welcome for 10 am
Sunday Services with
Pastor Cathy Manthei.

FEBRUARY 2

Communion Service
Message:
Growing Pains

FEBRUARY 9

Message:
**Of Seeds and Nests and
Shade**
by Ann Gibbs, Presbytery of
Milwaukee

FEBRUARY 16

Bible Study—No Service
All are Welcome!

FEBRUARY 23

Message: **Is Anything That
Simple?**

*Additional and updated
information is posted
on the website:
www.FirstPresbyofRichfield.com*

ELDERS AND BOARD OF DEACONS

Elders

Debbie Heppe
Jackson Kujawa
Melissa Kujawa
Ken Schmidt
Cheryl Weber

Clerk of Session

Elaine Schmidt

Deacons

Cathy Romanski
Rick Romanski

YOU DONATED 2,295 ITEMS IN 2024



After the annual meeting on January 26, **Cathy Romanski** added up the number of items donated to the Slinger Food Pantry during 2024. It came to **2,295**. Wow! Looking at that another way, there were 46 services during 2024 which means approximately **50** items were donated EACH week! Plus, a few members dropped off bags of food on their own. In addition, quarterly checks totaling **\$2,325** (\$100 from the Peace/Global Witness Special Collection) were sent to the Pantry from you! Look at the impact FPCR has had for all of those SFP clients!

You are a generous group and the Pantry is extremely thankful for your generosity. Cathy Romanski continues to report the Pantry communicates that the FPCR family is the “best in the area” as far as sharing through donations!

As far as need . . . nothing has changed during the first month of 2025. There continues to be great need as families are lined along the sidewalk waiting their turn to make choices each time the Romanskis drop off your donations.

SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY IS ALMOST HERE!

Are you ready? Once again, FPCR will participate in the **Souper** Bowl! On **February 2** and **February 9**, please bring cans of soup (as many as you wish) to ultimately be donated to the Slinger Food Pantry. Last year, FPCR collected 149 cans of soup. Let’s see if we can top that number!

To make it even more interesting, there will be two boxes in the front of the church— one for the Kansas City Chiefs and one for the Philadelphia Eagles! Choose the team you want to win by putting your can/s of soup in one of the boxes—Kansas City Chiefs or Philadelphia Eagles!

Tough decision . . . do you want Kansas City to match our beloved Packers by “owning” three Super Bowl trophies? Are you a bit unhappy with the Philadelphia Eagles for winning over our Packers? Who to pick, who to pick?

Remember each can of soup counts as one vote. Put in multiples! Can’t

decide? What about purchasing an even number and splitting them? Oh, wait, that’s not a decision! You have a few days before you need to make the FINAL decision. But, please, fill those boxes by Sunday, February 9, so we can announce an FPCR winner for the Slinger Food Pantry!!



**SLINGER FOOD PANTRY’S
GREATEST NEEDS
Cereal
Chunky Soup**

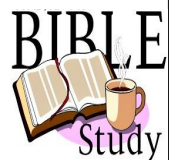
NOISY BUCKET COLLECTION SUNDAY, MARCH 2

**Benefits Presbyterian Missions
for recent U.S. hurricane and
fire disasters.**

Save your change to make some noise!
Currency and checks also accepted!
Checks payable to FPCR with PMA noted in
the memo section or use the special envelope
found on the narthex table.

BIBLE STUDY . . . GIVE IT A TRY!

On February 16, **Elaine Schmidt** will meet all who wish to discuss Luke 14:7-24 in a lesson titled, “Welcome to the Party!” This lesson will take place **at FPCR at 10 am** (in lieu of a Sunday Service as Pastor Cathy and Mark are on vacation.) Lesson materials will be provided. Bring your Bible and a pen/pencil!



Thank God for graciously inviting you into His kingdom!



THANK YOU, ELAINE

On Sunday, January 26, we celebrated and thanked **Elaine Schmidt** for her years (since 1988) of service at FPCR as the Clerk of Session. It is difficult to describe the love, time, and energy she poured into this volunteer position and to FPCR and its family!

The Clerk's job description includes tasks such as attending meetings, recording minutes, and reporting at the annual meetings. Elaine did so much more! She lovingly cared for the FPCR family. She made sure every Sunday service was the best it could be. She found supply pastors, coordinated children's programs, opened the church, made sure music was supplied, tidied, welcomed, oversaw repairs, organized picnics, and more.

Elaine: We celebrate you, thank you, appreciate you, and love you!

Carol Frank says it best in the following poem created for Elaine on this occasion:

God bless you for the many years you've served as Clerk of Session.

You've served us well and things you've said have made a big impression.

Always keeping us informed of all that's going on. Birthdays, anniversaries, sickness, things gone wrong.

Bad weather, Covid, slippery roads, you've never made a fuss.

No matter what was happening, you were always there for us.

So enjoy your days of sitting back as others take your place.

Knowing we all love you, May the good Lord, give you grace. Thank you, Elaine.



More pictures may be found at:

<https://www.firstpresbyofrichfield.com/picture-galleries>

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the following individuals with birthdays in **February**. We wish you many years of God's blessings.

4 - Joyce Koehn
11 - Brenda Schmidt
20 - Daryl Schmidt
23 - Mike Heppe

WATCH THE 2024 FPCR YEAR IN REVIEW VIDEO

Click here:
bit.ly/2024atFPCR
 (8 minutes long—includes audio reading of the text on the slides.)

OR

Click here:
bit.ly/2024atFPCROuiet
 (approximately 4 minutes long—no audio.)

Or, find the links on the [FPCR website](https://www.firstpresbyofrichfield.com).

Happy Anniversary to **Daryl and Brenda Schmidt** who will be celebrating their wedding anniversary on **February 12**. May the Lord bless you and keep you for many years to come!

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS APPROVED

After several meetings, prayers, discussions, and thought, the **Vision Committee** presented the Vision and Mission Statements to the session on January 12. The session approved the work, so now it is time for the FPCR family to “roll up their sleeves” and begin some action plans!

After the service on February 2, exactly that will happen. The committees (see Keith if you did not have an opportunity to sign up for one) will meet in the Fellowship Hall for explanation, training, and the beginning stages of ideas and work.



HELP THE ENVIRONMENT AND FPCR'S BUDGET . . .

REQUEST AN ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

Please email **FirstPresbyofRichfield@gmail.com** with your preferred email address so we are able to send you an electronic copy of this newsletter rather than a paper copy.

DIRECTORY CHANGE?

Email
FirstPresbyofRichfield@gmail.com
or
communicate your change to
Alice Schmitz

First Presbyterian Church of Richfield

Location:
2281 Highway 164
Richfield, WI 53076

Mailing Address:
PO Box 22
Richfield, WI 53076

Website:
<https://www.FirstPresbyofRichfield.com>

Email:
FirstPresbyofRichfield@gmail.com

2024 ANNUAL MEETING IS A WRAP!

On January 26 after our service to recognize Elaine Schmidt and a luncheon in her honor, we held the annual congregational meeting. What happened at the meeting?

- Cathy Romanski reviewed 2024 with a slide show. If you wish to watch it from your laptop or other device, please see the links on page 3 (right column).
- Membership statistics were reviewed: The year started with 32, we gained 2 and lost 2, so we ended at the year with 32 members.
- We had a strong ending to the financial year. The net income for 2024 was \$18,486.21. Thank you to those who gifted memorial money as well as a bequest. Benevolence giving totaled \$5,483.85.
- The motion to amend the bylaws from five to three elders passed. The plan is to go to four elders next year and then three the following through attrition.
- Cathy Romanski was elected as an Elder and will be ordained in March. She will replace Elaine Schmidt as Clerk of Session. Jean Schoeni was elected a Deacon. She replaces Cathy Romanski who will be an Elder. The Nominating Committee elected Debbie Hepe (chairwoman), Melissa Kujawa, Kate Kujawa, Allen Schoeni, Carol Frank, Elaine Schmidt. Elaine Schoeni and Mark Manthei are the alternates.
- The Deacon's report summarized the year with statistics: 46 services, 22 people in attendance on average, 12 Sundays with communion, 9 events with food, 7 Bible studies, 5 Picnics with the Pastor, and 4 Lunch Bunch gatherings.

WE LOVE BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US

(Continued from page 1)

this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these.'" Love. That's what it all boils down to for us. Many of us have grown up singing the hymn, *They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love*. Unfortunately, that doesn't seem to be what Christians are known for these days. Mostly we seem to either be known for what we fear or what makes us angry. Maybe this Valentine's Day (and month) we would do well to get back to the way of love.

"Full Of Sound and Fury, Signifying Nothing" — Macbeth

As Paul writes in the passage quoted at the start of this article, if we don't have love, we're just making noise, having nothing, gaining nothing. The way to truly experience and share the love of God in our homes, neighborhoods, and world is through love. Loving God, loving one another, loving our neighbors. "Who is my neighbor?" . . . even loving our enemies. Pretty sure that covers most everyone in our lives . . . at least, I can't find any exceptions in there. Loving others day in and day out is hard . . . but the path of love is relatively straightforward. Simply ask yourself, in each conversation and action, "Is this word or deed a way to show the love of Christ to this person?" Again, it's an easy thing to think and ask ourselves. It's in the doing that it becomes more difficult. But wouldn't it be nice if we were known for our love rather than our anger and fear? That might just be enough to change the world.

We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.

Love,
Cathy