

SAINT TO SAINT... A SEASON TO REMEMBER

It's February and the Hallmark stores are full of the red and pink hues of Valentine's Day. There seem to be cards with loving thoughts directed to every kind of relationship including family, friends, acquaintances and even our pets! And soon the store shelves will be transformed to display the greens, golds and whites of the joyous Easter holiday when we will be celebrating, *He has risen indeed!*

But there's one special time of year for which I never seem to find a card, and that's the season of *Lent*. One somehow doesn't see any gushy verses for Ash Wednesday or Maundy Thursday or Good Friday causing me to wonder like this hymnist... *Ah, holy Jesus, how have you offended that mortal judgment on you has offended?* (Hymn #262) Maybe Lent's solemn inquiry into human failing and divine sacrifice, and its somber purple color don't seem to catch the imagination of sentimental rhymes. Perhaps the greeting card industry well understands that unlike Easter, Lent is more a season to be *observed* than celebrated.

But it is important that those 40 days before Easter be observed! For what is the joy of resurrection without the tears that mourn a death, the Good News of Life Eternal without remembering that Jesus was a human – like us – who could suffer pain and even death. Lent is also a season when we recall Jesus' teachings, his miracles and his ultimate sacrifice for us and ponder yet again upon a *love so amazing, so divine* [that it] *demands my soul, my life, my all.* (*When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.*)

At Gregory, we once again invite you to join us in observing this holy season of Lent. We begin on February 22, Ash Wednesday, in the sanctuary at 6:30 pm in a brief service with our choir when we receive ashes as a reminder that life is frail. On Sundays in Lent we will lift up important events in the life of our Savior culminating with the triumph of Palm Sunday and the reversal of Holy Week.

This year on Maundy Thursday, April 5, we will celebrate a Passover Seder emphasizing the links between the Old and New Testaments and the loving/powerful God revealed there (and you'll have a chance to make some kosher food!) We will also make available devotional guides to lead you on a journey of spiritual self-discovery of the season that's more observed than celebrated.

Maybe it's time we create our own greeting cards for the season of Lent... and send them to ourselves as our own spiritual sticky note... *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me!* (Psalm 51)

Together with you in ministry,

Mark S.



CLERK'S CORNER FEBRUARY 2012

The Session had their regular scheduled monthly meeting on January 17, 2012. The following action items were approved:

- Annual Statistical Report to Presbytery was approved.
- Robert and Ann Hartsell were approved as new members of the church.
- Session Retreat to be held on February 3rd and 4th.
- Approved transfer of \$333.03 from Benevolences to Undesignated Gifts Fund.
- Approved proposed 2012 budget with a deficit of \$3,950.00.
- Approved communion dates for 2012.
- Approved having a "Passover Seder" service for Maundy Thursday (April 5, 2012).
- Approved changing the time of the February 22, Ash Wednesday service from 7:00 pm to 6:30 pm.
- Approved the spaghetti dinner to be held by the youth to raise money for Work Camp.
- Approved a beach retreat for the youth.
- Stairwell leak problem will be addressed the week of April 9th.
- Approved all special offerings for 2012.

- David Johnson, Clerk of Session



GREGORY HOLDS ANNUAL MEETING

Gregory held its Annual Meeting of the congregation on Sunday, January 22 following worship. At the meeting, the congregation elected Richard Harsh, Jennifer Smyth, and Evelyn Foster to become congregational members of the Congregational Nominating Committee joining Verne Smith and Donald Hunter, moderator, who are elders appointed by the Session. The Congregational Nominating Committee suggests nominees annually for the office of elder and trustee.

During our time together, we also shared a delicious potluck meal and heard reports from our church committees and the Presbyterian Women about the many activities of the past year. The Pastor Nominating Committee reported that they've received 69 resumes from pastoral candidates and are beginning phone interviews. Treasurer Kevin Foster presented a financial report of 2011 and the budget that the Session has approved for 2012 (see related budget article in *The Herald*), suggesting that in order to keep our facilities in top condition and our ministry vital we need to grow our membership. The meeting culminated with a delightful video slideshow of activities of the past couple years prepared by Larry Johnson.

Special thanks to members of the Congregational Care Committee and our great Gregory cooks for a hearty winter's meal!



TO THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT...

Two of our members of the Gregory Church family passed from this life to the next in January

DICK MANN **January 2**

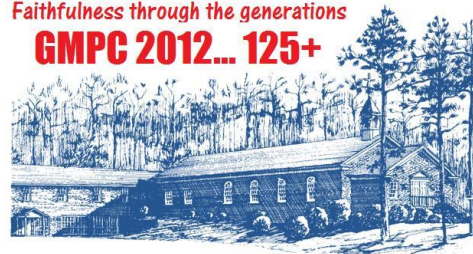
GLADYS VTIPIIL **January 9**

Our prayers are with their families and loved ones.

SESSION APPROVES 2012 BUDGET

Faithfulness through the generations

GMPC 2012... 125+



At its January meeting, the Session approved a 2012 budget of \$137,754. This is \$3,752 less than the 2011 budget, however, with revenues projected in the coming year to be \$133,804, we anticipate a budget deficit of \$3,950. It is hoped that with further economies in spending and growth in membership the financial picture may be in balance by year end.

The Session held a special budget meeting in January to discuss budget priorities. They succeeded in whittling down a deficit of \$19,000 from a proposed 2012 budget to about \$4,000. The deficit could have been erased in its entirety by severely decreasing Gregory's giving to mission, but the Session believed it was important for the church to preserve its tradition of giving one tenth of its pledge and regular giving income to benevolences following the biblical model. Major areas of expense include:

Personnel	\$89,564
Facilities	\$28,005
Missions	\$12,500
Christian Education	\$3,300
Outreach	\$1,700
Stewardship & Finance	\$900
Worship	\$885
Congregational Care	\$700
Session	\$200

It was also reported that 2011 income was \$132,470 with expenses of \$137,449. With an adjustment for mission expenses for 2010 paid in 2011 of \$1,523, that left a deficit of \$3,506 for 2011. The 2011 budget was approved at \$141,506 and designed to be balanced. While expenses were under that projected amount, so was our income resulting in the deficit. Copies of the approved budget with expenses for 2011 are available at the church office or online at the church website under "News" in an Adobe Acrobat file. – Mark Sprowl

“LOVE WINS” TO BE FOCUS OF ADULT CLASS

Pastor Mark will lead a 4-session class on the bestselling Christian book, *Love Wins: A Book about Heaven, Hell and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived*. The class will meet on Sundays at 9:45 am in the parlor, March 4-25. Here's a brief description of the book at "amazon.com"...



Millions of Christians have struggled with how to reconcile God's love and God's judgment: Has God created billions of people over thousands of years only to select a few to go to heaven and everyone else to suffer forever in hell? Is this acceptable to God? How is this "good news?"

What if the story of heaven and hell we have been taught is not, in fact, what the Bible teaches? What if what Jesus meant by "heaven," "hell," and salvation" are very different from how we have come to understand them?

Mark notes, "Rob Bell, a pastor with a heart for the unchurched and new Christians, bravely attempts to ask and answer these important questions in his controversial new book. If dealing with such issues is important to your faith journey, join us." Although it's not necessary to purchase or read the book to participate in the class, copies may be ordered through the church at our cost of \$12.00 each (retail \$23.00). To order, e-mail Mark or the church office or sign up on the sheets on Sunday mornings this month.

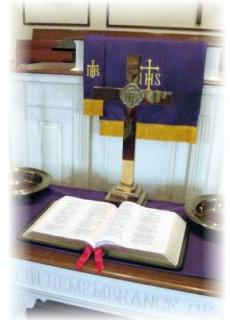
NEW MEMBERS JOIN GREGORY

Robert and Ann Hartsell joined Gregory on Sunday, January 22 during worship. For several months, they've been active in worship and ministry at the church even signing up as volunteer janitors. Of course, they have had a previous relationship with us... Their son and daughter-in-law are Ronnie and Lisa Hartsell and grandparents of Kaitlyn and Carter. Please welcome them into our fellowship!

Robert and Ann Hartsell
6032 Mill Creek Road
Prince George 23875
804-541-0281

SUNDAY WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY...

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5 – Have you ever imagined that your life represents some grand experiment where you're being seen and tested by unseen observers? If so, Pastor Mark claims you just might be right in his message, *The Jesus Experiment*, where he suggests that the Christian faith is none other than an equation where JESUS + ME = ? The astonishing result... is up to us, with God's help. Read 2 Corinthians 5:6-17 to prepare. We will receive the Souper Bowl of Caring offering.



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12 – SCOUT SUNDAY – Once again our Boy and Cub Scouts will help to lead us in worship in this annual worship service. Join the Scouts for a reception in the Temple Building following worship.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19 – For the disciples Peter, James and John their journey with Jesus in the event we call *The Transfiguration* revealed who Jesus was like at no other time. What events reveal Jesus for you today? Pastor Mark explores this question in his message, *Another Mountaintop Experience*, based upon Mark 9:2-9.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26 – 1ST SUNDAY IN LENT – We've all heard about how the Devil tempted Jesus in the wilderness, but what difference does that make for our faith today? Pastor Mark suggests, "a lot of difference" in his message, *The God Who Can Honestly Say, "I Know How You Feel."* Read Mark 1:9-15 and Hebrews 4:14-16.



NOW HEAR THIS! SOUNDS GOOD!

Do you hear it? There's a new sound... coming from a new sound system in our sanctuary on Sunday mornings! It's loud and clear and crisp. After much planning and waiting, a new sound system has been installed in our sanctuary. It is totally new with a new amplifier and mixing board and microphones and speakers (well, one speaker was in use previously.)

This could not have been done without generous gifts from several members of the congregation and the team of Bobby Allen, Jerry Bond, Doug Holc and Donald Hunter to get it underway and oversee its installation. Special thanks too to Keith Spain for installing the electrical connections. The easy-to-use but sophisticated system requires an operator at most times of use. If you would like to volunteer to help at this task on an occasional Sunday morning, please see Doug Holc, Bobby Allen or Jerry Bond, and we will give you the training. As the Psalmist could have said, "Praise the Lord with trumpet and lyre and tambourine and a super sound system!"

THANKS...

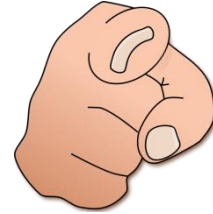
The family of **Marie Allen**; Dennis and Peggy Allen, Morgan and Josh Ingram would like to thank everyone for their prayers, calls, cards, food, visits and thoughts during this difficult time. Dennis has lost his brother and mother during this year. The support of our Church family has meant so very much to our family.

CHURCH SECRETARY RETURNS

Our Church Secretary **Julie Jacobs** who has been away on maternity leave since the birth of her son Conner will return Tuesday, February 7. We are very thankful for the help that **Carolyn Gentry** has given us during Julie's absence. Please stop by and show her our appreciation!

GREGORY NEEDS YOU!

*Called as partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace,
We respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,
Equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end. (Hymn # 581)*



With these inspiring words, Presbyterian hymnist Jane Parker Huber reminds us that each of us is called to ministry whether it be preaching or cooking, handing out worship bulletins or lending a hand to build a Habitat for Humanity home. At our recent congregational meeting, many of us saw a delightful video montage of activities from the last couple years at Gregory... and we were reminded that it takes a church-full of people to offer these diverse opportunities for ministry.

In February, you will have a chance to sign up for one or more of a myriad ways to help at Gregory. Just check off the box/es on the Sunday morning insert, and your church leaders will be in touch!



ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP – FEBRUARY 22

Join us for a special time of worship on Wednesday, February 22 at 6:30 pm when we usher in the season of Lent with Ash Wednesday worship. During the brief service, we will begin our Lenten time of reflection upon the deep love of God that culminated with the Cross. Our choir will sing and for those who desire the sign of ashes will be imposed upon the forehead. Choir practice will be held immediately following the conclusion of the service.

ACROSS-THE-STREET CELEBRATION!

Our neighbor church across Courthouse Road, The Sanctuary of God Apostolic Church, invites you to attend their "Mortgage Burning and Rededication Ceremony" on Sunday, February 5. The festivities begin with a reception at 2:00 pm and continue with worship at 3:00 pm and guest speaker Dr. Lona T. Rogers of All Saints Apostolic Church – Richmond at 4:00 pm.



FACILITIES... We continue to need new members on our committee to help in keeping our facilities up to date. We have a number of projects to do this year. Remember we need your prayers and help.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Ruby Hasky	Ed Smiley (<i>Friend of Doug Holc</i>)
Christine Belsches	Katherine Tompkins
Aida Faries	Gloria Singletary
June Hawks	Mary Chadwick (<i>Dink Armstrong's sister</i>)
Marian McDonald	Virginia Mika (<i>sister of Grace and Helen Cibula</i>)
Peggy Surfield	Matt Mauger
Helen Cibula	Amy Harte (<i>David Johnson's cousin</i>)
Harry Johns	



THOSE WHO SERVE IN

February

CHILDRENS MINISTRIES

“Teaching Christian Values for Life”

Date	Nursery	Junior Sermon	Junior Church
Feb 5	Glenda Mayhew	Mary Kay Schroeter	Jennifer Smyth Jared Smyth
Feb 12	Debra Bailey	Mark Sprowl	Patsy Johnson Madison Foster
Feb 19	Ruby Spain	Lisa Hartsell	Kris Holiday Max Holiday
Feb 26	Robbi Foster	Valerie Harsh	Susan Walker Jamie Meurer

OTHER WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Sunday Servants	February 5	February 12	February 19	February 26
USHERS	Sheila Fields Janet Swinton Rose Scott Wayne Powers	Valerie Harsh Pamela Harsh Jerry Bond Debbie Smith	Wayne Powers Glenda Mayhew Marguerite Bishop Dianne Overstreet	Keith Spain Ruby Spain Jacob Spain Herb Schroeter
ANNOUNCEMENTS	Dianne Overstreet	Pat Hunter	Mary Kay Schroeter	Rose Scott
COUNTING	Donald Hunter Rose Scott	Sandy Hunter Verne Smith	Morgan Ingram Ron Recher	David Johnson Evelyn Lichvar

FLOWERS

- 5-
- 12- Sandra Perkins
- 19-
- 26-



FEBRUARY
GATEKEEPER
H. F. Scott 804-732-5559



FEBRUARY ~ 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7:00pm Choir	2 2-8:00pm Volunteer Cleaning	3 6:00pm Session Retreat	4 9:00am Session Retreat
5 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship	6 2:00pm Line Dancing 6:30pm Missions & Outreach	7 12:30pm Day Circle 6:00pm S & F 7:00pm Facilities & Worship	8 7:00pm Choir	9	10	11
12 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship	13 Noon Widows 2:00pm Line Dancing 6:00pm Christian Ed	14 Pre-School Valentine's Party 6:30pm P&O 7:30pm Evening Circle	15 Committee Reports Due 7:00pm Choir	16 2-8:00pm Volunteer Cleaning	17	18 9:15am Presbytery Meeting
19 Scout Sunday 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship	20 2:00pm Line Dancing 6-9:00pm Women's Club (fellowship hall)	21 7:00pm Session Meeting	22 Ash Wednesday Newsletter Articles Due 6:30pm Ash Wednesday Service 7:30pm Choir	23	24	25
26 1 st Sunday Lent 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Worship -5-Cents-A- Meal	27 2:00pm Line Dancing	28	29 7:00pm Choir			

Ash Wednesday Feb. 22

Scout Sunday Feb. 12

Join us for...

Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church
6300 Courthouse Road ~ PO Box 182
Prince George, VA 23875-0182



COME JOIN US!!