

Chip's Chatter



Following the first sermon I ever preached, my mentor came up to me and asked “How do you feel?” My response was that I felt exhausted and elated all at the same time. Her answer to me was “Welcome to the life of a Pastor!”

Each Sunday, after services, I usually go out for a good “sit-down” meal followed by a relaxing drive before going home. When I get to my home, I take the rest of the day off and try to do only things that are relaxing to me. I begin taking time to re-charge as everything starts over again on Monday.

Fatigue is a word often used to refer to an extreme tired condition. It can be mental or physical. It can also be used with material things. Flexing metal too many times, leads to metal fatigue. There are probably as many types and categories of fatigue as there are books written on the subject. For me, fatigue falls into these four categories: Physical, Mental, Emotional, and Spiritual. Fatigue is something we all face all the time.

Fatigue is a warning sign our bodies, and even our souls, give us. With regards to our bodies, we know fatigue can be caused by a medical condition. That is why it is important to see our physician if we are sensing fatigue. I once experienced extreme fatigue and went to the doctor. He immediately admitted me to the hospital for a problem with my blood. I was back to “normal” within 48 hrs. Glad I paid attention to that warning signal!

Mental, emotional, and spiritual fatigue may be a bit more elusive and the causes are even more so. They can be very subtle such as “I am fatigued by this long, snowy winter.” A bit more difficult: “I am fatigued by the pandemic and the emotional impact it is having on everyone.” Spiritual fatigue, however, may take on a different form. It happens when we just lack the energy or desire to go to church on Sunday. We let that get out of hand and the symp-

tom of spiritual fatigue rages on and on. But, the outcome of spiritual fatigue is what I call “spiritual dryness”. Have we entered a season of Spiritual Dryness as a result of some fatigue we are experiencing? Are we experiencing Spiritual Dryness resulting from the long battle with the pandemic?

We are not alone. Moses, Elijah, Jesus, Paul, David, Luther, Kierkegaard, Mother Teresa all had periods and battles with spiritual dryness. Luther had it for most of his life. In fact, one day Luther’s wife asked Luther is he thought God was dead. His response was a definite no. She then said to him, “then why are you acting as if he is.” Mother Teresa was once asked when the last time she had “heard from the Lord.” Her response: “Thirty years.

Henri J. M. Nouwen wrote a daily devotional entitled “Bread for the Journey.” The entry for July 29 addresses the subject of Spiritual Dryness.

“Sometimes we experience a terrible dryness in our spiritual lives. We feel no desire to pray, don’t experience God’s presence, get bored with worship services, and even think that everything we believed about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit is little more than a childhood fairy tale.

Then it is important to realize that most of these feelings and thoughts are just feelings and thoughts, and that the Spirit of God dwells beyond our feelings and thoughts. It is great grace to be able to experience God’s presence in our feelings and thoughts, but when we don’t, it does not mean that God is absent. It often means that God is calling us to greater faithfulness. It is precisely in times of spiritual dryness that we must hold on to our spiritual discipline so that we can grow into new intimacy with God.”

Spiritual dryness can be difficult to resolve since it really requires inward reflection. However, as we have just completed the Season of Lent, we should already be in the habit of inward reflection. Some of the causes of Spiritual Dryness come from sin, loss of balance in our lives, impatience and self-pity, burnout, overwhelming circumstances, and even the condition of one's emotional "heart."

Proverbs 4:23 states: "Above all else guard your heart for it is the wellspring of life" But there is something that goes along with that. We must listen to our hearts and what it is telling us. Benedict of Nursia wrote in the 5th century, that we must "listen with the ear of our heart" I believe this is a great starting point to address our fatigue of both the body and soul. Our bodies and souls are trying to tell us something. Listen!

There is a book entitled "Undivided" by Dr. Greg Boyd and Terri Churchil. It is a book where the simplest things in like loving God and loving others has become complicated due to our overstressed lives. Undivided, is about living a life that is whole and unfractured. It's about simplicity and love and how those two things are connected. Contained in the book is a poem by Terri Churchill. It provides us with a foundation for beginning the climb out of spiritual dryness:

The Children

"i've been neglecting all the children inside me

**this one wants to play and
this one is hungry and
this one is angry and**

**this one is coloring all over the wall in red magic
marker the words
"i am here"**

i try to ignore their round, unwashed faces

**i stay busy and keep shushing them,
but their cries grow louder
their arms are stretched out towards me**

**this one has a note crumpled inside a chubby fist
(he says it's from Jesus)
but I'm afraid to read it**

**what will he think about this noisy mess in me?
i get even busier humming a loud tune to drown
out the children's songs
plugging my ears**

i try to forget about that note

as the children all cry at once

**finally that little boy nudges me hard enough to
get my attention
and he smiles as I smooth out the paper and
read the words**

"let the children come"

**i gather the children and begin to listen to them
all
one
by
one**

**tucking them into their downy beds to
dream children's dreams
folded in heaven's arms**

(silence)"

There may be many cures to spiritual dryness. One way is to reacquire our discipline and responsibility to worship and be in communion with fellow believers. We can try religious fasting as we sometimes do during the season of Lent. Diet and exercise my help. While these may all be good, I think the simplest and easiest way is to ask God to identify any sin in your life you have failed to see. Then, we need to practice spiritual discipline...prayer...force it if you have to. We also need to remember what God has done in your life and know he is continuing to carry out his plan if you will let go and let Him. We stay in the Word to constantly remind ourselves of this.

But, the best way out is to remember what we celebrate this month of April! This month we once again celebrate the joy and beauty of Easter. We re-experience the joyful entrance into Jerusalem, the betrayal, the agony in the garden, the crucifixion, and Jesus triumphant conquering of death through his Resurrection. As believers, we are part of that. This translates into that fact our fatigue, whatever the cause, is recovered through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

Did you realize each and every Sunday worship service is structured to recall the glorious Easter Morning? If we keep that in the forefront of our minds and hearts, we have one of the best tools to overcome fatigue caused by the chaos of the time.

There is a word of caution here. Don't allow yourself too much time in discouragement. Discouragement can lead to depression. We need to get up and get moving. Sometimes, however, the toughest part is remembering how to get up. I am

Chips Chatter-continued

afraid we have experienced so much fatigue in the last couple of years, we too, must focus on remembering “how to get up.”

Our time has now arrived. It is time to get up. Let's all get up, once again, and start moving. We know with absolute certainty we walk in the Power of Easter. It's time to move forward again.

Here's a final word about discouragement. I once knew the longest living quadriplegic in the United States. He was a young, talented gymnast in college in the 1940s that got injured on the Parallel Bars. He became a quadriplegic as a result of the accident. A lengthy hospitalization ensued. He left a note on his hospital bed as he was leaving. If you are discouraged because of physical, mental, spiritual, or emotional fatigue think of what this man wrote for the next patient:

“Don't let anything discourage you because once defeat is admitted, it becomes inevitable. Quadriplegia hasn't ruined my life, just changed it.”

This gentleman went on to marry, raise two adopted children, obtained a PHD in mathematics, specializing in statistics. He also became the Dean of Men at the University of Minnesota. He would say that while his body no longer functioned, his brain was working just fine!

In closing, here is something I read many years ago while attending church in Pittsburgh, PA:

Think about it

“So friend, when your nights are filled with loneliness and your days are dark with discouragement----when you can't seem to read or pray or do anything else----just sit still and let God love you.”(Author unknown)

There is no greater place to recover from discouragement and fatigue than quietly resting in the lap of Jesus!

Chip

Ruth Andersen

I was born at the old Bemidji hospital and my parents ran a music store located on 3rd Street and then across from Central School on 8th Street. First Presbyterian has been a part of our family from the 1950's and I can remember our catechism with Rev. Smatla and marriage with Rev Witmer in the same sanctuary where we worship every Sunday.

I graduated BHS in 1969 and went to Macalester College in St Paul and met my husband Mark there. We worked in the Twin Cities before going on to grad school. I got an MBA from Northwestern U in Evanston and worked in Chicago for many years in computer science and commercial banking. Later I was in partnership with three other techies for 25 years doing seminars and projects around the US and Canada. Mark and I had three wonderful kids, now all married and living in Utah and Illinois. Unfortunately Mark passed away from brain cancer in 1996, but through all those years I kept coming back to Bemidji to see my parents and keep in touch with friends and our church.

I received a second degree from Wheaton Grad School in 2000 in Mission and English Bible. So I was blessed to serve in urban mission in the Midwest, and also on short mission trips in Eastern Europe and the Caribbean. Along the way, I remarried and now have step kids and two young men sponsored from Poland. All are now married, but I only have two wonderful grandkids to spoil from the crew (plus numerous cats and one dog).

I love music and playing piano and keyboard, gardening, kitties and dogs at Great River Rescue, the beautiful Mississippi, cooking, canoeing, nature trips, meeting friends at numerous gatherings around Bemidji, and all our different fellowships.

FINANCIAL REPORT—Month Ending 2-28-2022

Monthly requirement to meet our budget \$10,705.00

Total Income	\$ 13,714.09
Total Expenses	\$ 14,711.31
Net Income	\$ -997.22

Thank you for supporting our church

Sunday Worship Attendance

Feb 27	23
March 2	17
March 6	33
March 13	35



- 1 Richard Miller
- 10 Gloria Aylesworth
- 19 Ruth Andersen
- 20 Joan Forbes
- 20 Betty Hanson-Lehman
- 21 Cheryl Hiltz
- 24 Vera Weis
- 27 Norma Feay



If we have left off your birthday, please let the office know, 444-5016

April Head Usher:

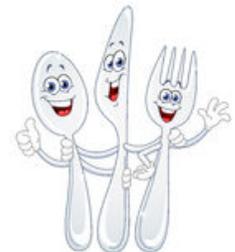
	Liturgist	Greeter
April 3	Bill Beck	Barb McGregor
April 10	Betty Hanson-Lehman	Ken Paulson
April 14	Betty Hanson-Lehman	Gini Sande
April 17	Dianne Roholt	Gini Sande
April 24	Donna Enfield	Carla Erickson

Supper Club



Town & Country Club

2425 Birchmont Rd NE



Supper Club will be meeting on Thursday, April 21 at 5:30

Please call Dianne Roholt directly at 444-2859 for your reservations!

This is an evening full of joy, laughter and good food.

All are welcome!

April Benevolence One Great Hour of Sharing

<https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/oghs/>

Our 4th Sunday benevolence for April will be One Great Hour of Sharing. A gift to One Great Hour of Sharing enables the church to share God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief to those affected by natural disasters, provide food to the hungry, and helping to empower the poor and oppressed.

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. Each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations. In fact, OGHS is the single, largest way that Presbyterians come together every year to work for a better world. One Great Hour of Sharing, received during the season of Lent, makes a difference in the world through three impactful programs: Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA)

****Our congregation's money will be designated to aid refugees from Ukraine.**

Works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters

Receives 32% of funds raised

Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP)

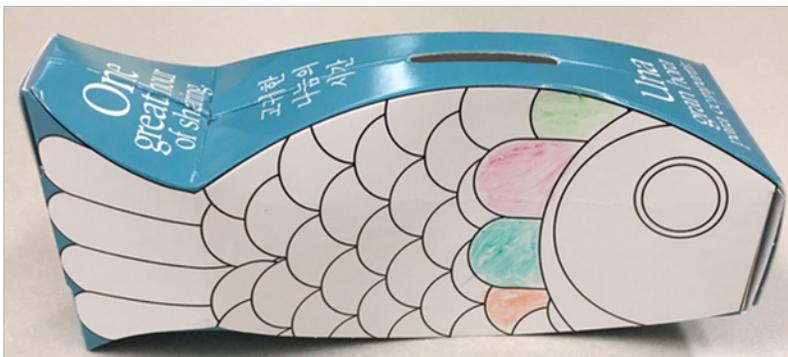
Takes action to alleviate hunger and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed

Receives 36% of funds raised

Self-Development of People (SDOP)

Invests in communities responding to their experiences of racism, oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the impact of these societal ills

Receives 32% of funds raised



Look for the fish banks in the back of the sanctuary for a fun way to support this mission. The bank would be a great place for all that loose change you might have. You can even color your fish! Please bring all banks to the church by **Sunday, April 24th**.

Your session at work

First Presbyterian Church

**Bemidji, MN
March 15, 2022**

The monthly stated meeting of the session of First Presbyterian Church was held in the conference room on March 15, 2022, at 1:00 pm. The meeting was opened with prayer by Moderator, Pastor Chip Holt.

ELDERS PRESENT CONSTITUTING A QUORUM: Terri Murray, Linnea Mostad, and Peter Nordquist

QUORUM DECLARED

ADOPTION OF AGENDA MSP to approve

MEETING MINUTES MSP to approve the minutes from the February Session meeting as corrected

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence

CLERK'S REPORT

First Presbyterian Church, Bemidji, MN, Clerk's Report March 15, 2022

Weddings: None

Baptisms: None

Deaths: None

New Members: None

Return to Active Membership: None

Request Transfer of Membership: None

Removed from Membership Roll: None

Communion: March 6, 2022: 33 served

Membership as of March 15, 2022: 71

Sunday Worship Attendance:

Feb. 20th: 29	Feb 27th: 23	March 6th: 33	March 13th: 35
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FINANCIAL REPORT Finances from February will be reviewed at the April meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Administration/Personnel Chairperson: Donna Dickinson; Chip reported that the Committee on Ministry approved his contract.

Buildings & Grounds Chairperson: Peter Nordquist; gave an update on the maintenance of the boiler. Will look into a more permanent solution for not having to have water run to keep the pipes from freezing during the winter

Finance & Stewardship Chairperson: Cheryl Hiltz; no report

Adult & Christian Education Chairperson: Linnea Mostad; reported that the next Seekers' class will be "Why We Trust the Bible".

Nominating: Chairperson: Cheryl Hiltz; No report

Outreach Chairperson: Terri Murray; reported that First Presbyterians served at the Bemidji Food Shelf the 4th Friday in February. The Shepherding Program was also discussed.

Worship & Music Chairperson: Gloria Phelps; Chip gave an update on the organist position

OTHER BUSINESS

Computer Committee: Chairperson: Cheryl Hiltz No report

Kitchen Fellowship Committee: Session Contact Person: Cheryl Hiltz No report

Annual Clerk's Report to Presbytery: **MSP** to approve this report

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance: Discussion was held regarding donations to Ukraine. The PCUSA website will be examined for options.

Financial help for people off the street: Chip shared a recent visit with someone off the street seeking fi

nancial help. Discussion was held regarding how best to help. Churches United will be contacted for guidance.



Next Meeting: April 19th at 1:00 pm. in the conference room. Chip will moderate.

MSP to adjourn with prayer at 2:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Libby Underhill
Clerk of Session

Meals on Wheels

We are looking for someone to take over the scheduling for Meals on Wheels. Currently Joan Forbes is scheduling as this was a rewarding opportunity for her and Joe. We do need someone to take over for Joan as she and Joe have done this over 15 years.

We also need volunteers to do the driving and delivering. It takes 3 cars with 2 people per car, 1 to drive and 1 to bring the meal into the home. We currently do have some wonderful volunteers who enjoy helping, but there are still openings that we need to fill. Bringing meals to the homebound gives great satisfaction to those who are able to volunteer.

SEEKERS ARE BACK

“Silencing the Devil” is the title of the Seekers subject that began February 9. The Seekers meet at 12:00pm in the conference room. The next subject will be “Trust the Bible” . Watch for dates. Following the Seekers is the 1:15 Lenten Service which is in the Chapel. Come and join us for the Seekers and stay for the Lenten Service

A New Year is here and we are thinking of ways to brighten our days. In 2021 many of you did just that by bringing flowers. Jan Kuleta and Donna Enfield shared flowers from their gardens. Terri Murray, Ray Hamblin, and Joan Forbes shared flowers in memory of a loved one. We thank them for sharing.

You will find a “Flower Bouquet” next to the sanctuary where you too may sign up to brighten our days. Flowers may come from your garden. They may be in memory of a loved one, in honor of someone, a special birthday, an anniversary, or special occasion. You might even want to share “incognito”!

Message to the congregation:

I would like to include all members of the congregation in this “**Peek into the congregation**” and I need and would love your co-operation. Those of you that have computers and email, if you would please write a short version of the history of yourselves and then email to me here in the office at presbji@paulbunyan.net, or call me at 218-444-5016, and we can do this over the phone, or better yet, stop into the office. If you do not wish to be included in this project, please let me know. Thanks to all who have participated so far.

I have heard how much this is being enjoyed so I am hoping for full participation.

Thank you in advance, Shirlee Harold, church office

Sundays
10:00 am
Worship
11:00am
Fellowship



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Pastor Chip/ Communion Fellowship/ Coffee	4 7pm-Scouts	5	6 12pm Seekers 1:15 Lenten Ser- vice 6:30-Calvary Chapel	7	8	9
10 Pastor Chip PALM SUNDAY	11 HOLY WEEK 7pm-Scouts	12 1pm-Session Meeting	13 12pm Seekers 6:30-Calvary Chapel	14 THURSDAY 	15 	16 GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER
17 Pastor Chip Fellowship/ Coffee EASTER	18 7pm-Scouts	19	20 12pm Seekers 6:30-Calvary Chapel	21 5:00-Supper Club	22	23
24 Pastor Bill Beyer	25 7pm-Scouts	26	27 12pm Seekers 6:30-Calvary Chapel	28 Holocaust Remem- brance Day	29	30



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