FROM THE PASTOR’S DESK

BELHAR CONFESSION

One of the things that makes us Presbyterian is our polity, the way we make decisions. We have a representational form of government where women and men are elected to serve. In addition to the way we make decisions, we are a confessional church. Our church constitution consists of the Book of Order and the Book of Confessions. Creeds, confessions, and catechisms have for centuries been tools to help the faithful learn more about the Christian faith, claiming God’s ways of being Christ’s disciples at particular moments in the church’s life. Our Book of Confession currently contains eleven works that cover centuries of church history. The “Apostles’ Creed” is among the early creeds to train disciples in preparation for the sacrament of baptism. The “Nicene Creed” is the most ecumenical of creeds, and we use it often when we celebrate our Lord’s Supper. The “Barmen Declaration” offers us a courageous glimpse into the era of church history where brave believers stood up to Hitler’s work in Germany, and many lost their lives for their courageous faith. Our confessions strengthen the foundation of our theology (what we believe about God), and few lines mean more to us than the opening words of the “Westminster Catechism:” Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy God forever.” is how that confession begins. Last year at the 219th General Assembly of the PC(USA), our denomination approved the “Belhar Confession” to be considered for inclusion in our BOC. If two-thirds of the presbyteries approve it, Belhar will be added in by 2012. Trinity Presbytery approved Belhar at its fall meeting. Belhar is about the importance of unity and reconciliation in the church, and the confession comes from the historical setting of apartheid in South Africa. Written in 1986 in the original language Afrikaans, Belhar was adopted by the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church in South Africa, and many New Testament texts are key references for the confession (Ephesians, John 17:20-23, 1 Corinthians, and Romans 6—to name a few). I hope you will take the time to learn more about this important confession, and if you wish to read more about it, go to: http://www.pcusa.org/resource/belhar-confession/ The confessions of church has many strong lines that I have enjoyed thinking about and think the church should be challenged by. One is, “We believe that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.” May God help us maintain the unity of the Holy Spirit in our congregation, and may God reveal to us ways to work toward sincere expressions of reconciliation and grace with our neighbors.

Pastor Wain
**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**February 13**

**Preschool Classes:** The Birds of the Air

**1st & 2nd Grades:** God Wants Us to Trust and Obey

**3rd & 4th Grades:** God Speaks to Us

**Junior High Class:** Saul, A New Believer

**Senior High Class:** The First Valentine

**Crossroads Class**

Lesson: Fruits of the Spirit: Faithfulness

**New Horizons Class and Faith & Friendship Class will meet together in Room 216.**

Lesson: A Life of Service

Leader: Doug Vaughan

**Covenant/Chapel Class**

Lesson: Revelation 12 - 17

Leader: Dr. Joe Gettys

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT LIVE**

**February 16**

**SUPPER:** 5:45, Fellowship Hall

- Pulled pork barbeque, broccoli salad, macaroni & cheese, roll, dessert from Steamers
- $6.50 ages 13 & up, $3.50 ages 3 – 12, free for ages 2 & under, $18 Family max.*

*Note: Family max. is immediate family in the same household.

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES (6:30 – 7:30):**

- Wednesday Night Live classes for children and youth
- Presbyterian Men Bible study – Room 216
- Presbyterian Women Bible study – Room 217
- Presbyterian Student Association – CLC Room 111

**CHRISTIAN SERVICE**

**Volunteer Receptionists, Feb. 14 - 16**

- Monday – Susan Henderson
- Tuesday – Janet Henley
- Wednesday – Teresa Ferguson

**Volunteers for labeling Steeple People, Feb. 17**

- Phyllis Marvin, Norma Riley, Joyce Templeton

**Extended Session Duty, Feb. 13**

- Crib/Toddlers – Anna Biggers
- 2½’s – 4’s – Anna & Jon Smith

**MEETINGS**

**Mon., Feb. 14, 9:30 a.m. – Member Care Team (Library)**

**Tues., Feb. 15, 5:30 p.m. – Commitment Committee (Library)**

**Tues., Feb. 15, 7:00 p.m. – International Missions Committee (Library)**

**PAPER PRODUCTS NEEDED**

The Community Outreach Committee is collecting paper products during the month of February for the Open Door. Please bring the paper products to the church office hallway. Thank you!

**WOW!** We doubled our goal. 609 cans and $883.71 in donations were given on Souper Bowl Sunday. Thank you so much for helping feed the hungry in our community.

**MEMBER CARE TEAM EXPANDS**

Our Member Care Team works faithfully and diligently extending the love of God to those in our church family who are sick, lonely, homebound, or bereaved. This ministry of visitation and friendship is rich and wonderful for all those involved. In an effort to expand this ministry within the church, an additional team will be formed, with the focus of offering encouragement and friendship to the wider church family. If you are interested in participating in this, please come to Wednesday Night Live supper at 5:45 on February 23, when we will sit together during supper to brainstorm ways of caring for each other within the congregation in intentional ways. Bring your ideas and bring a friend who also may be interested in this special ministry. If you have any questions, contact Wain or Tandy at 833-1062.

**KEEP IN PRAYER:**

Charles Cummins, Doris Darnell (Dottie Smith’s mother), Caleb Dutzorg (Mary Waldron’s nephew), Fay Grube, Carol Hay, Lewis Henderson (Lykes’ brother), Aleksandr Lemeshchenko (pastor at our sister church in Russia), Emilie Marchant, Bill May (Jenny Anderson’s brother), Dot McCain, Frances McSween, Jim Skinner, Pat Strano, Mary Sutherland, Georgia B. Thomason, Russell Warner, Maxcy Woods (Scott Woods’ father).

These families appreciate your expressions of support and care.

**MEETINGS**

**Feb. 15:** Hub City Bookshop followed by lunch at Cribb’s Kitchen in Spartanburg. Cost: $3 for gas plus the cost of meal (~ $8 - $10).

**Reservations by February 11.** Call Lykes Henderson (833-9648).

**April 7:** Flatrock Playhouse for a matinee performance of *The Music of the Night: A Tribute to Andrew Lloyd Webber.* Cost: $50 includes gas, ticket, and picnic lunch.

**Reservations by February 15.** Call Lykes Henderson (833-9648).