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## PASTOR'S MESSAGE

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Every now and again the opportunity to encounter greatness presents itself and if we're lucky, we sign up for the experience. This past week at Chicago Theological Seminary, one such invitation came to pass, but like the disciple Peter, I denied the opportunity three times. I was too busy, having just gotten back from Atlanta. I was too tired and there was too much catching up to do to make an extra trip into Chicago. I had a long list of excuses, until the events of Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> happened, then finally all of my reasons for not going fell away. In light of the tragedy at Virginia Tech, I knew I needed to hear what other pastors were thinking. I needed to be ministered to in order to wrap my mind around how I might minister to others.

This conference was called "Reclaiming the Dream," it was designed to honor the work and ministry of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who received his first honorary PhD from CTS fifty years ago. And it wasn't until after we arrived that I realized what this conference and the events at Virginia Tech had in common. As I listened to the presenters share their experiences of life with Dr. King, it was impossible to ignore the very present sense of sorrow and loss that was profoundly present in their words.

I realized then that both the assassination of MLK and the murderous spree in Virginia share unfortunate, yet indisputable links; both seem as though they ought to have been preventable although few can figure out how, both seem to provide a gruesome punctuation mark of sorts to mounting tensions regarding unjust wars, and both have left an inexplicably tragic legacy rooted in violence, the results of which are irresolvable grief and heartache for an entire nation.

The Rev. Dr. Otis Moss, Jr. was an "insider's insider" in the Civil Rights campaign of the 1950s and 1960s. A close personal friend of

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. Moss is now senior minister of Greater Institutional Baptist Church of Cleveland, Ohio and father to one of my fellow D. Min. classmates. Dr. Moss shared personal stories about his relationship with the King family and with Martin in particular. In my lifetime, I had never met anyone who knew Dr. King personally, nor was I aware that he was only 39 years old when he died in 1968. That was the year I was born, 39 years ago. I had never given much thought to his life as a pastor, husband and father. Listening to Dr. Moss, it was touching to hear such human stories about the man who for most of us, has been defined by a few famous speeches. I learned that he graduated college at 19, and by the time he reached 29 held three honorary PhD's. I also heard it said that by the time Dr. King died he was the most hated black man in America- "whites hated him and blacks were afraid of him." (Dr. Moss) Those who knew him well and who lived through the first stabbing that brought him to the edge of death understood there was a bounty on his life. To hear Dr. Moss speak of it, some didn't expect him to survive the march in Selma, but just like the disciples of Jesus they did not want to face the truth.

Dr. Moss spoke about a generation of people who wanted to be on the right side of justice, and who with King's assassination entered into a generation of bereavement that has not yet reached an end. "These were people," he explained, "who longed for another way, a more peaceful, integrated, equal, way. They felt they had been given another Moses in Martin Luther King, Jr. They saw in him someone who, not by his own choosing, was willing to stand in the center of the fire to balance the scales of justice in a hurting and segregated world. It is up to us to live that prophesy."

Dr. Moss closed his presentation by sharing a metaphor he hoped would motivate people to continue the work that King had begun; he said, "We live on the dash between two dates. With no control of the first and little control over

the last, but perhaps in relationship with each other, inspired by the work of Dr. King and by God's grace, we can make a difference in the time we have been given."

The best way I can think of to honor the legacy of Dr. King is to stop waiting for someone or several someone's to take his place. The best we can do to live into the legacy left to us by King's ministry and the ministry of Jesus of Nazareth is to live our lives to the fullest most authentic capacity.

We are called as people of faith to speak a word of comfort to those who are afflicted, and to speak the truth to those who inflict injustice. Our lives are a gift from God, now is the time to decide how will we live and love in the name of the risen Christ.

Blessings of peace in troubled times,

*Rev. Curran Reichert*

## **MISSION TEAM**

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*Greetings from the Mission Team,*

We wish to thank everyone who has bought the equal exchange fairly traded coffee, tea, cocoa, and chocolate. It truly is a wonderful way that we in Princeton, IL. can reach out and help farmers in Latin America, Africa, and Asia stay on their land and support their families and the environment. Susan Hale has spearheaded this mission and has done a wonderful job. Give her a big pat on the back when you see her. Then drink more coffee.

We had a wonderful time at our screening of the award winning documentary, "Nobelity". Those who attended were deeply moved by the stories shown in the film and afterwards we stayed to share our thoughts and feelings. If you missed this screening a copy of the film may be signed out at the table at the back of the sanctuary. We are proud of our collection of films and encourage everybody to give them a look. Our next film will be on May 20th.

April 29th will be a Jubilee Sunday! We will meet at the church for a time of gathering and worship before heading out to Pilgrim Park to offer our help to them. We will be scraping and painting the hanging bridge so please dress for mess and bring scrapers, paintbrushes, and

small pails. These Jubilee Sundays are special times with much fellowship and joy. Come join us .

Summer is coming! Yippee! Fresh vegetables! YUM! Dennis Zehr from Coneflower Farms has requested that those who are signing up to receive a weekly box of organic produce please send their forms back to him promptly.

Speaking of summer, this July the new Harry Potter book and a new movie will be released. Princeton will once again host Festival 9 3/4 and this year we are expecting more people than usual. There have been predictions that upwards of 10,000 people will come which I admit sounds crazy. However, we are already receiving letters, phone calls, and e-mails requesting information from people in Kentucky, Alabama, Florida, and Indiana. The Harry Potter festival is Open Prairie Mission Team's biggest fund raiser and we will need help. If you fancy working in Honeydukes Sweet Shop surrounded by succulent chocolate frogs, or would like to bake wizard treats, or would like to play a character in one of the amazing settings please let me know. The date of the festival is July 20th.

The Food Pantry would like us to collect **Fruit Juice** during the month of May. **Let's try to fill the basket this month!** Thank you for all of your help during the year in providing food for the pantry. They need us.

Peace to you all,

Kelly



## **A CUP OF JUSTICE**

Open Prairie's Mission Team is ordering **Equal Exchange, Fairly Traded** organic coffees and teas the first Sunday of every month. This is a delicious way for all coffee and tea drinkers to partake in a mission project by supporting small farmers in Africa, South America and Asia. The United Church of Christ Coffee Fund project also donates money to the small farmer cooperatives for each purchase that we make. Please know that \$2 per bag of coffee goes toward our own local mission and outreach projects. All the coffees, teas and chocolates are very reasonably priced! Please see Susan Hale for an order form. You may also e-mail

her at [susanhale@insightbb.com](mailto:susanhale@insightbb.com) for more information. Thanks for all of your support! Spread the word (flavor and aroma) to your friends, neighbors and co-workers! Your OPUCC coffee lady, Susan Hale

*Find out how much God has given you and from it take what you need; the remainder is needed by others.  
~Saint Augustine*

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## CHRISTIAN ED

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### Sunday School Teacher Schedule for May:

May 6<sup>th</sup>: Becky  
May 13<sup>th</sup>: Wendy  
May 20<sup>th</sup>: No SS Childcare will be provided  
May 27<sup>th</sup>: Dawn

### Senior Sunday and Sunday School Teacher Appreciation Sunday

Please plan to attend worship on May 20<sup>th</sup> as we will be honoring our two graduating seniors Tara Jagers and Emily Kauffman. Tara has been a very active member of the Senior High Youth Group all four years of her high school career and will be greatly missed next year as she heads off to college. Emily has been active this year and her calm level-headed approach to solving problems will certainly be missed next year. Both plan to attend the Mission Trip to West Virginia this summer.

Also on May 20<sup>th</sup> during the worship service Christian Education will be honoring the Sunday School Teachers who have worked hard throughout the year to help our young people to understand the stories and the lessons to be learned. Those being honored are Becky Perkins, Kathy Hornbaker, Dawn Rudolph, Terri Zearing, and Patricia Wilson. Angie Hughes will also be honored as the Youth Choir Director.

There will be special music provided during the worship as well as cake and coffee afterwards to top off the celebration. We hope to see you there.

**Senior High Youth Group:** Just a reminder there will not be any regularly scheduled meetings during the month of May as we hope you will take time to prepare for prom and finals. Watch for more information as we will

plan to meet in early June to finalize the Mission Trip to West Virginia.

**Camp brochures** are available in the entry area for anyone who would still like to sign-up for Summer Camp. There are camps for all ages including adults. I would encourage you to look through the brochure. You never know what you might find of interest to do at camp.

### Personal Reflections....

*Where is God? Do you hear the crashing waves against the rock you're sitting on? Do you see the snowflakes as they fall around you? Do you see the bear and deer and footprints all on the same trail next to each other? Do you breathe in that crisp cold spring air? Do you feel the warm sun on your face? Yet you continue to ask yourself, where is God. Look around you. Don't be so naive to think that God is not there. God is in every single thing in life. God is that rock you were sitting on. God is that breath of cold air. God is the lake and the bears and the deer. God is everywhere but most importantly God is standing right beside you. Fear not because even in the toughest times God is right there. You don't get to pick and choose when God is or is not in your life. It is what it is and God is always there.*

*~Wendy*

### INKJET RECYCLING PROGRAM!!!

The OPUCC Sunday School Youth are now collecting empty inkjet cartridges for recycling. We receive up to \$4.00 for each cartridge recycled. Cartridges can be deposited in our collection bin located underneath the bench in the lobby area.

Simply place your old cartridge in a plastic sandwich bag and deposit it in our collection bin. Most businesses simply throw their empty cartridges in the garbage so check at work to see if they would donate their would be garbage. The acceptable cartridges are listed below. Please note that no large laser cartridges are accepted with this program.

**In addition to raising money for our camper scholarship program, recycling inkjet cartridges has a positive impact on the environment. Consider the following: Nearly 1 million inkjets are thrown into our landfills every day. Less than 5% of the cartridges produced are recycled. It takes 1000 years for the plastic to decompose.**

Questions about the program can be directed to Wendy. Thanks for your support and for taking time to make your world a better place.

Types of Cartridges to recycle:

HP 21 (C9351AN)	Canon BC01	Lexmark 12A1970/5
HP 22 (C9352AN)	Canon BC02	Lexmark 12A1980/5
HP 93 (C9361W)	Canon BC05	Lexmark 15M0120
HP 92 (C9362W)	Canon BC20	Lexmark 17G0050
	Canon BC23	Lexmark 17G0060
HP 98 (C9364W)	Canon BX3	Lexmark 138400H/C
HP 51625A/G	Canon PG40	Lexmark 1380619
HP 51626A/G	Canon PG41	Lexmark 1380620
HP 51629A/G	Canon PG50	Lexmark 10N0016
(16,17)		
HP 51633M	Canon PG5	Lexmark 10N0026 (26,27)
HP 51640A	Lexmark 18L0032	(82)
HP 51645A/G	Okidata 52109301	Lexmark 18L0042
(83)		
HP 51649A/G	Okidata 52109302	Lexmark 31 Photo
HP C1816A		Lexmark 32 Black
HP C1823D	OnlyCompaq 337709	Lexmark 33 Color
HP C6578A/D	Compaq 337710	Lexmark 34 Black
HP C6614A/D/N	Compaq 337711	Lexmark 35 Color
HP C6615A/D	Compaq 337714	Lexmark 71 Black
HP C6625A	Compaq 337715	Lexmark 1990/5
HP C8765WN		Lexmark #1
HP C8766WN	(95,135,343,855)	Sharp UX-C70 Black
HP C8767WN	(96,130,853)	Dell 7Y743
HP C9363W	(97,134,344,857)	Xerox 8R7880/Dell 7Y745
HP C9368AN	Xerox 8R7881	Dell J740 Color
HP C9369WN	(99,138,348,858)	Xerox 8R7883/Dell J740
Black		
HP C6628HP	C6656 Xerox 8R712591/Dell A920	Black
HP C6657AN	Dell A920 Color	Apple M8041G/C
HP C6658AN	Dell J4844 Photo	Apple M3240G/C
HP C8727A	Dell M4640	
HP C8728AN	Dell M4646	

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

May 1	6:00 pm	Prairie Circle
May 2	8:00 am	Prayer Group at Autrey's
May 3	6:30 pm	Choir at Webber's
May 9	8:00 am	Prayer Group at Autrey's
May 10	6:30 pm	Choir at Webber's
May 11		<i>Mother's Day</i>
May 16	8:00 am	Prayer Group at Autrey's
May 17	6:30 pm	Choir at Webber's
May 20	10:30am	Senior Sunday
May 21	7:00 pm	Christian Ed. Mtg.
May 23	8:00 am	Prayer Group at Autrey's
May 24	6:30 pm	Choir at Webber's
May 28		<i>Memorial Day</i>
May 30	8:00 am	Prayer Group at Autrey's
May 30	7:00 pm	Church Council
May 31	6:30 pm	Choir at Webber's

**STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE**

***Some Thoughts on Stewardship:***

With everything costing more these days, we sometimes feel like we have less to give to the church. Yet some members are maintaining a strong financial commitment and have continued to maintain one for decades. How do they do that?

Perhaps it's because *stewardship* is not just the amount of money they give to the church, but how they spend all of their money.

So, just how important is Open Prairie in our lives? Do we live our lives any differently? Do we spend our money differently? As we strengthen our faith, are we also reexamining our views about money in our everyday lives? Stewardship is not a separate part of our lives. It mirrors our life as a whole.

See you in church,  
Patricia Wilson

**☺ HAPPY MAY BIRTHDAYS! ☺**

*Note: if you have any additions or corrections, please let Ami know.*

May 4	Katie Morrison
May 12	Michell Heider
May 13	Roger Perkins
May 15	Jan Milles
May 15	Carl Carman
May 21	Mary Jane Goble
May 22	Nikki Kromphardt
May 23	Kevin Hale
May 23	Rebecca Hughes
May 27	Evan Hale

**HEALTH TEAM MINISTRIES**

The health ministry team continues to meet on a monthly basis to discuss the health needs of the congregation. We have done several visits and remind everyone of the sign up sheet by the bulletin board in the church entry way. If you would like a visit and feel more

comfortable contacting one of the members of the team instead of signing the sheet please feel free to do so.

We handed out a survey to identify the educational health needs of the congregation on April 22. Once we have reviewed the survey we will begin planning our first educational program. If you were not in church on the Sunday the 22<sup>nd</sup> and would like to share your ideas/needs for health education please do so with myself or any member of the team.

Peace and Good health to all of you.  
Mimi Cofoid

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*The summer sun is upon us and even thought a tan looks healthy, the only good kind comes from a spray or lotion bottle.*

**So here are some tips to stay safe in the summer sun from WebMD.com.**

1. Stay indoors between 10 am and 4 pm if possible.
2. Cover up as much skin as possible with dark colors and a hat or cap. For small children choose “sun protective” swimwear.
3. Always use sun blocks or sunscreen. Apply before going outdoors and reapply often. Reapply every time you get out of the water and towel off. Blocks and sunscreens with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide are good for all ages. Blue Lizard Baby and Total Block CTZspf58 are good choices. Also Bullfrog – this contains both chemical protection and sun blockers. Always use an SPF30 or greater.
4. FIND SHADE. An umbrella, hat or cap, and strollers for young ones.

Have a fun and safe summer!

**THANK YOU!**

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*A BIG Thank You to everyone who supported the Celebration Concert on March 25<sup>th</sup> with Curran Reichert and Laura Hall. Your donations (\$562) and your presence (121 people) made the concert a huge success!*

**SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Open Prairie has recently established a Scholarship Fund for the Seminary education of Wendy Brown and Adam Webber. All donations will be gratefully accepted and will be applied to tuition, fees, and book expenses.

**RUMMAGE SALE**

Open Prairie will have it's annual rummage sale on June 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> at the church. This will coincide with the City-Wide garage sale “More on 34”. Please start collecting items you no longer need and plan to donate them to the sale. Remember, the more you clean out, the more room you'll have for new treasures! We will start taking donations the week of June 10<sup>th</sup>. Watch the weekly bulletin for more information.

*All proceeds from the rummage sale will go to help defray the travel expenses of our members who are attending the Annual UCC Synod in Hartford, CT.*

**BLANKET SUNDAY**

Church Women United is sponsoring the *Tools and Blankets* program during the month of May through Church World Service. OPUCC will provide envelopes for this collection on May 13<sup>th</sup>.

*CWS Tools and Blankets* provide the right tools at the right time, making a difference in the lives of children and families the world over. Gifts to *Tools and Blankets* can provide blankets, tents, and other emergency shelter items in the wake of a disaster.

When disaster strikes, CWS is there. When people struggle under the crushing burden of extreme poverty, CWS is there, too, thanks to the support of caring people and congregations across the country. Your support provides care to those in need in some 80 countries around the world.

Prairie Circle, a member of Church Women United, encourages your participation. Place cash or your check (with the memo “tools” so it can be properly assigned) in the Tools and Blankets envelopes in the church office.

Thank you for your help. ~Prairie Circle

## **CHURCH CONTACTS**

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Church Office:  
25 E. Marion Street  
Princeton, IL 61356  
(815)872-5150  
mail@openprairie.org

Rev. Curran Reichert  
308 Park Ave W  
Princeton, IL 61356  
(815) 872-1661 church phone  
(815) 872-1515 home phone  
revreichert@openprairie.org

Church Web Site:  
[www.openprairie.org](http://www.openprairie.org)

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## **May Church Hours**

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Please keep Curran in your prayers as she travels on the following dates:

May 5<sup>th</sup> through May 12<sup>th</sup>  
May 18<sup>th</sup> through May 26<sup>th</sup>

*Barb Ollila will be on call while Curran is out of town.*

Church Secretary, Ami Chamberlain, will be on vacation from May 11<sup>th</sup> through May 23<sup>rd</sup>. The church office will be closed on May 11<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup>. Curran will have regular office hours on May 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>.



Open Prairie UCC  
25 E. Marion Street  
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