

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

After our last newsletter our family received news of our son Will's injury during a combat operation in Afghanistan. Thank you for your prayers and concern for Will, for Goldy and me, for our whole family. It has been great to be able to get out to Maryland to be with him and to help in the ways I can. Family can provide moral support, love, prayers and strength as Will moves from surgery to healing to physical therapy to rehab. Walter Reed National Military Medical Center is the best place he can be at this time, and we're all most grateful. His doctors tell us that PT may come sooner than we think. His progress is moving along and his prognosis is strong. You have reached out and helped in so many ways, and we are grateful. We will keep you updated on Will. I look forward to the day when he becomes an outpatient and can travel. I want you to meet him in person and I want Will to meet this wonderful congregation called Open Prairie UCC.

Sometimes I just stop and observe my delight in being here with you at Open Prairie and being part of the Princeton community. We love being with Paul and Mary Jane @ the Goble apartments. Goldy's mom Jean likes her first floor apartment and is enjoying getting to know Princeton as well. She participates in many of the activities for seniors. The basement of the Clark House is home to senior services for our area, with a wide variety of daily options and opportunities.

As I write, Stewardship Committee members are preparing letters inviting your support of our congregation for 2012. In my earlier days I somewhat dreaded stewardship time in the fall. It felt heavy. Something has changed in me in recent times. I've gotten in touch with my early joy

in giving to the church. As a child I learned that my best friend's parents, who were rich in my estimation, gave a substantial portion of their income to the church and beyond. Ten per cent seemed to me at the time big money. Did I need to be rich to do that? Would it happen one day? In my twenties I began giving a percentage of my income to the church. My take home pay for working in the seminary kitchen scrubbing pots was \$120 every two weeks. The church I attended in Evanston had many people of means, made clear by their cars and clothing and hats and shoes. In this environment, markedly different from my small town church, I didn't feel out of place. In giving that \$6 per week, I felt somehow rich, too. Now I wouldn't say the purpose of giving to the church is to feel rich, but it is a value added side benefit. As I think of giving for 2012, I'm quite taken with the notion of giving an amount that gives me joy. What would that amount be for you? Wow, I couldn't say, and I'll need to pray about what that is for me. I just know that when I write my check for Open Prairie on Sunday mornings, I feel great joy in being part of this extraordinary congregation, called by one of our members a "great group of planet earth inhabitants." I pray for that for us all, we find joy in our giving that swells into joyous abundance for Open Prairie and beyond.

Your sister in Christ,

*Pastor Mary Gay*

# October CALENDAR OF EVENTS



1	7-10:00am	Community Coffee
2	9:30am	Sunday School
	9:45am	Choir Rehearsal
	10:30am	Worship
5		RED CROSS HERE
	5-6:30pm	Interns
	6:30pm	Choir Rehearsal
9	9:30am	Sunday School
	9:45am	Choir Rehearsal
	10:30am	Worship
12	5:00pm	Centering Prayer
	6:30pm	Choir Rehearsal
16	9:30am	Sunday School
	9:45am	Choir Rehearsal
	10:30am	Worship
	6:00pm	Mission Movie Night
19	5-6:30pm	Interns
	6:30pm	Choir Rehearsal
23	9:30am	Sunday School
	9:45am	Choir Rehearsal
	10:30am	Worship
24	4:00pm	Christian Ed Mtg
	7:00pm	Church Council
26	5:00pm	Centering Prayer
	6:30pm	Choir Rehearsal
30	9:30am	Sunday School
	9:45am	Choir Rehearsal
	10:30am	Worship
31		Happy Halloween!



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY To YOU!!!

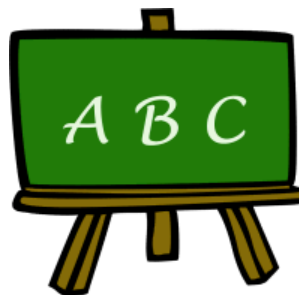
Oct 6	Rick Zinn
Oct 8	Joe Zearing
Oct 21	Jocie Vaughn
Oct 24	Ron McCutchan
Oct 29	Danielle Hughes
Oct 31	Margo Bertram

### *Church Council News*

The next Church Council Meeting will be Monday, October 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM.

**Last call for updated information and photographs for the 2012 OPUCS Directory! Thanks again to Meagan Johnson for all of your help!**

**During worship, childcare is available for young children from infancy through kindergarten. The children will be able to leave the sanctuary and go to the preschool room after the "Children's Moment" with Pastor Mary Gay**



*Happy Halloween!*  
*Love, Aria*



## WHAT IS CHRISTKINDL MARKT?



Recently, one of our visitors at Open Prairie brought it to my attention that he didn't understand our announcements in church about *Christkindl Markt*. "I don't know what you're talking about," he told me. It occurred to me that he probably isn't the only one! Here's what's happening:

We are planning our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual *Christkindl Markt* to be held at Open Prairie on **Saturday, November 19, from 9:30 – 3:00**. A *Christkindl Markt* is a *German Christ child Market*. It is a festive holiday market that sells food and gifts for Christmas.

Our church will be filled with different kiosks from which vendors will sell their wares—most of which are handmade, unique creations. Open Prairie will have kiosks selling hand knit clothing items, homemade cookies, Christmas ornaments and poinsettias, frozen homemade dinner entrees, and Fair Trade coffee and chocolate.

Our church will also have a German restaurant selling lunch, and two free activities for children. Weather permitting, we will have a tent on our

west parking lot from which we will sell coffee, cider, hot chocolate, and sweets. Other vendors from around the community rent kiosk space from the church to participate.

So, all you new and not-so-new folks at Open Prairie, mark your calendar for **Saturday, November 19**, and join in the festivities. Let us know if you are willing to bake some cookies, make a pot of soup, and/or work during the event. The following people are chairing the various kiosks and need plenty of help: Molly Blogg, Marcie Jagers, Barb Schiff, June Harmon, Carol Kuhnert, Rich Hornbaker, Goldy Mortenson, Susan Hale, Sarah Criner, and Patricia Wilson. This is a fund raiser for Open Prairie and a community outreach project. It is held during Princeton's Chamber of Commerce Christmas Walk and offers a festive holiday experience to the community—especially the children. Don't miss it.

*Sarah Criner*



### **"Our Table"**

Located at The First United Methodist Church of Princeton, every Monday night.

*"Our hope is to offer help to families and individuals who are struggling to make ends meet, and to offer fellowship around the table for those who find themselves alone at meal time."*



Don't forget about the box in the church office to collect printer inkjet cartridges for recycling. We earn up to \$4 per cartridge and keep them out of the landfills!

### Mission News

The Mission Team would like to thank all that donated school supplies. **Six** very full boxes were filled and delivered to area schools. We had some great help from the youth to sort and deliver.

Watch for movies coming up in the near future. We will try showing **The Visitor again in October.**

Please continue to provide items for the Food Pantry. In this time of high employment there is a much greater need.

Coffee is for sale, if you do not find what you want please let Susan know. It is getting cooler so chocolate will be available soon also.

Thank you for your continued support of the Mission Team

Barb Schiff

Mission Team

October  
FOOD BANK:



Cake and  
Brownie Mix



*Community Coffee*



**When:**

Saturday, October 1st, 2011

**Where:** UCC Parish Hall

**Time:** 7:00am-10:00am

*Featuring their Famous Fresh Baked  
Cinnamon Rolls*

### Neighbors in Need

**"Neighbors in Need" is one of four special UCC offerings that Open Prairie has each year. There are many ministries and special projects that are funded by this offering, all in the U.S. For example, one of the larger missions comprise Indian tribes in the northern plains. Interestingly, there are 20 UCC churches on Indian reservations and one, multi-tribal church located in Minneapolis.**

**Our Neighbors-in-Need offering will be received on Sunday, October 23. Before that date, watch for posters in the church, Sunday bulletin inserts, and special envelopes for your contribution. If you expect to be absent on October, please take an envelope and place it in the offering, either before or after that date. Thank you!**

### Biloxi Work Trip

Open Prairie is booked to go to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS the week of January 22-28, 2012. We need to determine if there are enough people interested in going on this trip again. Open Prairie started sending a group down there each year after Hurricane Katrina to help renovate and rebuild devastated homes. Back Bay Mission has built a very nice, new facility to house their volunteer groups, after having lost several of their own buildings in the storm. They continue to need help rebuilding homes of victims of Katrina.

You do not need to be a skilled carpenter to go on this trip. The volunteer coordinators determine jobs to fit the skill level of the group.

We have done everything from putting up siding and hanging drywall to painting and cleaning. If you are interested in going on this trip in January, think you might be interested, or if you have more questions about it, please call Molly Blogg, at 815-878-4664, or email her at [mjblogg@gmail.com](mailto:mjblogg@gmail.com). This has been an amazing experience for those who have gone in previous years, and we hope to be able to send a group again this winter.



### **UPCOMING MISSION TEAM MOVIE DATES:**

**October 16<sup>th</sup>  
"The Bible Tells Me So"**

**January 22<sup>nd</sup>  
"Spitfire Grill"**

**\*\*All movies begin at 6:00 PM at the church. Members of the mission team will provide popcorn!**

**The October 22nd Princeton Coffeehouse show will feature Tennessee Songbird Diana Jones.**



Diana won the 2006 Kerrville Folk Festival New Folk Competition. The *Chicago Tribune* called her 2006 release, "My Remembrance Of You", the best country album of the year.

**Saturday October 22nd  
at 7:30 PM**

**\$10.00 at the door**

**[www.theprincetoncoffeehouse.com](http://www.theprincetoncoffeehouse.com)**

## 2011 Pledge Season

Our 2012 financial pledge season is coming a bit earlier than in past years - we need to receive pledges in advance of preparing a budget the will be submitted to the congregation in early November - all as prescribed by the church's bylaws.

So, the plan is to mail out pledge forms before October 1. Pledge Sunday, when pledges are to be received, is October 9. Please try to get your pledges in by that date. Thank you.

Here's some information that newer members and friends may be wondering about:

**Who knows what I pledge or give to the church?** Only the church's treasurer, financial secretary, and stewardship committee members.

**What if I make a pledge, and for some reason can't fulfill it?** Your pledge is not like a legal I.O.U. If you can't fulfill your pledge or need to change it, you are asked to inform the church treasurer, Lisa Stefani.

**I don't choose to make a pledge, but will contribute in the Sunday offering.** A pledge allows the church to more accurately prepare the annual budget. But some people may prefer not to make a pledge. It would be helpful to return your pledge form, indicating that you prefer not to submit a pledge this year. (One advantage of making a pledge is that the financial secretary will then keep track of all your giving and provide you a year-end statement, perfect for tax purposes.)

**Bequests.** Bequests are an additional form of giving. Contact the moderator or the treasurer. There may be ways a bequest can be structured to provide tax or other benefits to the donor.

**Special Gifts.** Maybe you know something the church needs that is outside our normal budget. Such directed gifts are always welcome.

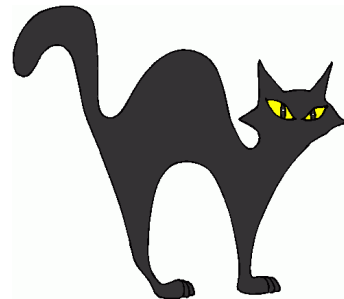
## **ILLINOIS CONFERENCE WOMEN'S RETREAT**

**October 7-8, 2011**

**Pilgrim Park Camp, Princeton, IL**

**Details about costs, program and the fun opportunities will be available at all the Spring Association Meetings and through the Outdoor Ministries Office in April. You may also contact Reverend Carol Currier-Frighetto at [ambsnana@aol.com](mailto:ambsnana@aol.com)**

**Reserve the date and help spread the word!**



### Calling All Cooks!

Sunday School interns, teachers, and guest presenters meet on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month from 5:00-6:30 p.m. for a learning/planning session and supper. We are looking for folks who are willing to provide a simple supper for our group of 6-8 people. Suppers can be homemade or purchased. We are not a fussy group! If you would like to provide supper for us one evening, please contact Dani in the church office to reserve a date.

**UPCOMING COFFEEHOUSE EVENTS,  
18 Years and counting:**

**Nov. 19th – Andrew Calhoun**  
[www.andrewcalhoun.com](http://www.andrewcalhoun.com)

**Dec. 10th – Kris Delmhorst**  
[www.krisdelmhorst.com](http://www.krisdelmhorst.com)

**Jan. 28th – Peter Mulvey** [www.petermulvey.com](http://www.petermulvey.com)

**Feb. 23rd – Stacey Earle & Mark Stuart**  
[www.staceyandmark.com](http://www.staceyandmark.com)

**Mar. 24th – Dana & Susan Robinson**  
[www.robinsongs.com](http://www.robinsongs.com)

**Apr. 28th – Rita Hosking** [ritahosking.com](http://ritahosking.com)

**May 26th – Nels Andrews** [nelsandrews.com](http://nelsandrews.com)

All shows begin at 7:30 PM. There are no advance ticket sales. All seating is general admission, and the recession-proof ticket price remains a modest \$10.00. Door open at 7:00 PM. The Princeton Coffeehouse is located at Open Prairie UCC Church, 25 E. Marion Street in Downtown Princeton. We still serve Open Prairie's fair trade coffee, as well as assorted teas and homemade desserts. For further information, check our website at

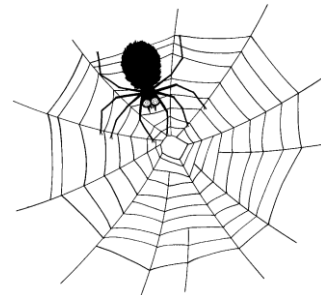
[www.theprincetoncoffeehouse.com](http://www.theprincetoncoffeehouse.com)



The Bureau County Chorus begins fall rehearsals for the Holiday Season on Mondays and Thursdays, from 6:30-8:30 PM, starting Oct. 3, 2011 at the Evangelical Covenant Church (no rehearsal October 10 and 31).

The Bureau County Chorus, under the direction of Joy E. Schertz, is an opportunity for interested singers in the area to come together to sing because they like to sing. Singers of all ages, those having completed freshman year in high school through senior citizens (no age limit!) are welcome. No audition is required. There is a place for both the experienced singer and those with less choral singing experience. The voices of the traditional mixed ranges are included: soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. The rehearsal activities include vocal warm-ups and techniques as well as learning the music for performances.

Questions should be addressed to Joy E. Schertz, director (815) 646-4218, or Kevin Glover, manager (815) 915-7478.



*"When witches go riding,  
and black cats are seen,  
the moon laughs and whispers,  
'tis near Halloween."  
~Author Unknown*

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