

# THE NEW TIMES

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 8

OCTOBER 2009

## THINKING ABOUT FOOD—MATTHEW 25

<sup>35</sup> “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat...”

In Matthew 25, Jesus instructed his disciples that “Whatever you did (or did not do) for the least of these, you did (or did not do) for me.” This lesson follows directly after the Parable of the Talents, in which the Master rewards his servants for putting his resources to good use, but punishes the one who does nothing with that which he was entrusted.

How might these lessons apply to BPC as a Church? Our sense of Mission has been growing over the past few years, and we are working hard to find opportunities to use the gifts we have to spread the Good News. Just in the

past year, we have (to name only a few): prepared blankets for hospital patients, delivered a month’s worth of Meals on Wheels, sent our youth on a Mission Trip to Kentucky, provided for a local “Adopted” family in need, and given much to various mission efforts around Buffalo and, indeed, around the world.

In thinking about the purposes we claim for the very existence of our church, we have occasionally struggled to connect the dots between our resources and the needs we see. There are obviously more needs than we can satisfy, either with our dollars or our time. But the lessons in Matthew 25 were not about solving all problems.

Instead, these two lessons emphasize meeting the needs we confront, and doing our best with what we have. A new idea has sprung up that may connect a few of these dots. Thanks to our congregations’ involvement and support of the Buffalo Food Shelf, we know of the rapidly rising need for food supplies for those in need. And lately, we have been thinking about how to make use of the property we have been given, making use in a way that both reaches out to the community in mission and in evangelism.

That new idea is the creation of a community garden.

Please turn to **Garden** on Page 3

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Garden meeting, Sunday, September 27th following worship*
- *Women’s Retreat at Presbyterian Clearwater Forest, Friday October 9th through Sunday, October 11th.*
- *Please save large cardboard boxes for the youth’s Cardboard Box City sleep out on October 15th.*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PASTOR’S DESK	2
YOUTH NEWS	4
CHURCH FAMILY	5
ROTATIONS	6

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Friends,

Our summer weather was cool; most August days were a reminder that fall was on its way. But September has been sunny and hot; I hope I'm not the only one who is surprised that October is suddenly upon us! It seems, the Creation will always be a wondrous and unpredictable companion, just like the Creator.

*"...in this case, it is a way that we can continue to feed others as well as to nourish our own spiritual journeys."*

This newsletter contains an important and wonderful idea for the mission of Buffalo Presbyterian Church, an idea that both roots us to the very ground upon which we have built our worship space and, at the same time, allows us to reach out far beyond our physical building and into the community. I think we have been longing, not only to do God's work, but to find a stronger identity and community presence for our congregation. Even though our old building is gone from downtown, memories of pie sales

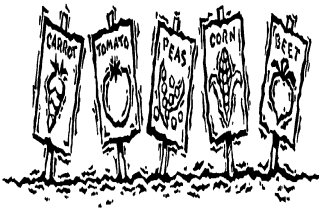
and fish dinners linger on. It is a great history, I seem to remember Jesus having a similar story (loaves instead of pie, of course). Both great histories are our legacy, and a great history is a great foundation upon which new ideas can be built -- and in this case, it is a way that we can continue to feed others as well as to nourish our own spiritual journeys.

Monastic life is not a part of the history of Reformation churches such as ours, but in this time of open communication between all denominations, we are able to share best practices, including spiritual exercises that help each person move closer to God. In the monastery, manual labor, most often, tending the garden was an important part of reigniting a flagging soul or sustaining a growing spirit. The monastics knew they and their neighbors needed to be fed and they remembered there was a time when

God walked through the garden in the cool of the evening to visit with the human beings who lived there; a garden, then, is always a good place to be and become a stronger and more faithful child of God.

I am surely not a gardener of any scale but I know we have a great deal of expertise among our congregation. I know too that, for as much as we need experienced folk who know what does and doesn't work, in a garden, there is something for everyone of every skill level to do. So, I commend to you the information in this newsletter and the invitation to be with us in church and after church in the coming weeks to discuss the viability of a BPC Community Garden. These plans will exist along side and not take the place of the continued planning for the Bell Tower, landscaping and outdoor wor-

Please turn to **Pastor's Desk** on Page 4.



## GARDEN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In concept, this garden is being thought of as having a two-pronged focus. On one hand, it would be a place where people in Buffalo who don't have their own land could grow some of their own food. This would be paired with a BPC garden in which we would participate in growing produce that would be donated to the local Food Shelf.

This garden area can fit well with the other uses we have been working on for our property – the bell tower, the ball field space, and the outdoor gathering/worship space. The garden itself can grow in the areas that separate the more active use areas. There has been some progress made over the summer toward the bell tower, and we hope that the garden preparation can be coordinated with a positive step forward on the site improvements.

A BPC Community Garden would have the potential for

meeting a serious need in our community by feeding those who are hungry, giving us a way of investing the resources that the Master has entrusted to us, and reaching out to the area with the Good News.

Of course, such a venture will take a lot of work. But God has given us many of the things we would need to accomplish this task. We have:

Land that is lying fallow

People who have extensive backgrounds in farming and gardening

Ongoing connections with the local food shelf

Undertaking this project will require a significant dedication of time for organizing, managing, and working the garden. Of course, there will need to be an investment of funds, although the costs are comparable to what we have provided to

other individual missions. The time investment requires the greatest change in our level of commitment.

To gain a better understanding of the congregation's interest in making this investment, we are planning to provide some additional information during the Sunday service on September 27<sup>th</sup>, followed by an after-church discussion time during Fellowship.

Perhaps this is a project to which you have some expertise to offer, such as in getting the soil ready, plowing or tilling, or gardening? Perhaps you are interested in helping to organize the project, or with making contacts to potential community members for garden plots? Perhaps you and your family are just willing to help with some of the gardening tasks?

Everybody can have a role in this project – we just need to  
Please turn to  
**Garden** on Page 4.



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## PASTOR'S DESK, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

ship space. I pray that whatever grows out of this discernment will be a blessing to each member and to the community at

large. Know that whatever is decided, we can plant, water and tend and it is God who will meet us there to provide growth and

fruition for our neighbors and ourselves.

See you in church!

Julia

## GARDEN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

see if there is enough interest to do a good job. That is the purpose of this first meeting. Please plan on being in attendance on Sunday, September

27<sup>th</sup> with questions and ideas.

Remember, this idea is just a seed right now. We want to see if this seed will sprout into a full gar-

den. Think of your ideas and questions as the water and fertilizer - is this where God wants us to plant a garden and feed the hungry?



## YOUTH NEWS

The youth groups are back in progress! Like last year, the middle schoolers are meeting on Wednesday nights from 7:00-8:30 p.m. The high school group is combining Sunday School and youth group again on Sundays after worship. They will take the Fall break in the middle of the month when school is off, so the youth groups will not meet on Wednesday, October 14 and Sunday, October 18.

The Senior High youth are planning to spend on night in a cardboard box to

raise awareness and money to help knock out family homelessness in Minnesota.

Our youth, along with youth groups from congregations, schools and clubs from across the state will create a temporary cardboard box city at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds on Thursday, October 15. Pledges (rent) raised by our youth and other Cardboard Box City residents will benefit families served by **Families Moving Forward of Minneapolis** and the **Saint Paul Area**

### Council of Churches' Project Home.

We must provide our own housing for this event. We need cardboard boxes (large enough to sleep in, but not too large). If you've recently purchased a larger item, please consider bringing the box to church for a youth to sleep in before you recycle it. You can also support our youth with your prayers and pledges.

Thank you!



## PNC UPDATE

While on the surface it may appear that the PNC is not making any progress, we have accomplished a lot since our brief summer break from weekly meetings. Our task of finding a new pastor for BPC is still before us and we have

made great progress in the last couple of months. We are currently considering a number of candidates and are doing both telephone and in-person interviews.

As a committee, we thank you for your

trust and ask for your continued patience. We are sincerely seeking the pastor God is calling to BPC. Please continue to support us with your prayers. We depend on them.



## CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

### Birthdays

- Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup> Marv Sikkila  
Kristie Minkoff
- Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup> Jacki Minke
- Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> Dick Jenson
- Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> Marlene Aldrich
- Oct. 9<sup>th</sup> Scott Johnson  
Jim Minkoff
- Oct. 10<sup>th</sup> Tyler Anderson  
Charlie Wilkens
- Oct. 20<sup>th</sup> Lorraine Dixon
- Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> Jean Johnson

### Anniversaries

- Oct. 8<sup>th</sup> Justin & Pam  
VanderSluis
- Oct. 9<sup>th</sup> Marv & Delores  
Sikkila



This month please pray for our leaders—whether they are in the church, community, state, country or world. All of these people need our prayers.

## A FAR-REACHING TOUCH

As we move around this world and as we act with kindness, perhaps, or with indifference or with hostility toward the people we meet, we are setting the great spider web atremble. The life I touch for good or ill will touch another life, and that, in turn, another, until who knows where the trembling stops or in what far place my touch will be felt.

—Frederick Buechner



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**B**UFFALO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IS A CONGREGATION IN WHICH THE WORD, THE SPIRIT, AND THE LOVE OF GOD ENRICH AND STRENGTHEN US AS INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN CHRIST.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS CHURCH IS TO FULLY EQUIP US TO BECOME DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST, OBEYING HIS COMMANDMENTS TO LOVE AND WORSHIP GOD, LOVE AND CARE FOR OUR NEIGHBORS, AND MAKE NEW DISCIPLES IN OUR COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD.

### THE NEW TIMES

#### OCTOBER 2009

Newsletter submissions are due by Friday, October 16th for the November issue.

**Julia Carlson,**  
Interim Pastor

**Scott Dobovsky,**  
Youth Director

**Marcy Bodin,**  
Office Manager

**Holly Minke,**  
Newsletter Editor, Youth Administrator

### OCTOBER ROTATIONS

#### Lay Leader

October 4 Jerry Aldrich  
October 11 Jo Hatcher  
October 18 Steve Grittman  
October 25 Lavina Pattee

#### Resident Pick-up

October 4 Marlene Aldrich  
October 11 Dick Jenson  
October 18 Marlene Aldrich  
October 25 Dick Jenson

#### Greeters

Oct. 4 Pat Quady  
Oct. 11 Brad & Mary Quatier  
Oct. 18 Tootie Reese  
Oct. 25 Susan & Terry Schermer

#### Fellowship

Oct. 4 Holly Minke  
Oct. 11 Dave & Jean Johnson  
Oct. 18 Delores Pensky  
Oct. 25 Bette Wilkens