

The Tidings

January 2017

Ministerial Moments

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Wow! Time goes by fast! There is only one more time I will be addressing you. As I write this, Christmas has yet to come, but I hope you all have had a Merry Christmas. Winter set in on Dec. 18 and lowered our attendance, but as of now they are predicting 55 Degrees for Christmas Day so it will not be a "white" Christmas.

Since this is the second to last time I will be addressing you, I thought maybe I could put in writing some of the things I have done which you may or may not have been aware of. The first three years I was here, I was very active in the Marissa Chamber of Commerce. I even served on the Board for two years. It was a way for me to get to know town's people outside the church and also to find out what was going on in town at that time. In those early years, particularly after the local paper was closed down, and we switched Chamber Advertising to the Randolph County Journal, the churches were given special ads for Christmas Eve and Easter services. Even today, if we contact the Chamber, we can get our church activities (special services, Wurstmarkts, etc.) on the sign north of town. While I have pretty much ceased going to meetings, Ron has continued to be our church representative and has been active particularly in setting up the tents for the Toast of Marissa, putting out signs for village garage sales, the Chamber Bingo at Coal Fest and probably some things I don't remember.

We have hosted the Region 8 Easter Vigil twice, I think. We have hosted community Thanksgiving and Easter Sunrise services twice each. We have also hosted Vacation Bible School twice since I have been here.

I have done the Invocation multiple times at the Chamber's Annual Dinner. I was also the guest preacher at the Region 8 Easter Vigil at Trenton in 2015 and was asked to "Speak to the Gospel" at the last Community Christmas Carol Sing. In addition, my first year here I was asked to go with our church members to Relay for a Cure at Freeburg. Since my father died of cancer also,

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2017 Annual Meeting Sunday, January 22nd

Annual Meeting is Sunday January 22nd.

We will enjoy a potluck dinner after church service and then begin our meeting.

All organizations should have all reports to Lori by January 8. No reports will be accepted after this date. You can email them to loriselman@gmail.com. Or put in the basket in the office. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

Christmas Poinsettias In Memory and Honor List

In Memory of	Clyde Fauth	from Fauth Family
In Memory of	Dean Robert	from Kathleen Robert
In Honor of	My Grandchildren & Great Grandchildren	from Kathleen Robert
In Memory of	of Loved Ones	from Lorrie Lehman
In Memory of	Shannon Cathcart	from Gary & Susie Stewart
In Honor of	Ryan, Crystal, Nolan & Ashlyn Catchart	from Gary & Susie Stewart
In Memory of	Art & Mildred Cromer Gordon & Mary Walker	from Dave & Nancy Barbee
In Memory of	Mr. & Mrs. Albert Pflasterer Kevin Tod Campbell	from Mike & Peggy Dierks
In Memory of	Donald L. & Eleanor C. Eichenberger John G. & Bernice A Geisel	from Ronald W. and Pastor Gail Geisel
In Memory of	Dorothy Dressel, Harry Holcomb Jr. Harry Sr. & Selma Holcomb Loren & Jerry Holcomb Sr.	from David & Pete Dressel
In Honor of	Ethan, Erik, Jacob & Lauren Cowell	from David & Pete Dressel
In Memory of	Levi & Alice Weilmuenster	from Weilmuenster, Heil's & Cox's
In Memory of	Arthor & Elisie Sinn	from Dale Sinn
In Memory of	Irving Schickedanz, Erne Richey, Leonard Richey	from Lea & John Barrett

Comments from the Church Mouse



“Shiver my timbers,” but it is cold. Winter has finally arrived. I’m so grateful for my nice warm church home.

Although there is often ice and snow outside, it is cozy in my hidey holes throughout the church. It’s a good thing that Friedens has folks like Larry Matzenbacher, John Barrett, and David Barbee who can do a little something with the thermostat and keep it decent temperatures in church.

And doesn’t the church look nice? ! I just love it at Advent season. I also love the music of the season. For a small congregation, we have a great choir, and they are faithful.

By the way, did you notice the little tree with the red ribbons on it that sat downstairs in fellowship hall? It was the late June Fulton’s tree, and Evangelical Daughters decorated it with red ribbons in memory of departed loved ones. Memories of those who are no longer with us can enlighten our holiday season or cause more sorrow.

When you really miss someone who has “passed”, do a kind deed for someone else – sort of like doing a favor In memory of someone. My grandpa taught me that, and it does help.

Gee, now that the time is real close, I realize how much I will miss Pastor Gail. I don’t even want to talk about it. She did some good things for our area, getting grants for a community garden and for a literacy program, and helping in Conference by being chair of the Justice and Witness Committee. I could go on and on about her singing talent.

Even though Pastor Gail is leaving, we will hold a Red Cross Blood Drive on January 9. Tell your human friends to donate their blood. Besides , when people come to a blood drive, their sandwiches and cookies leave crumbs for me. So remember January 9.

On the last Saturday in February Daughters will sponsor a Women’s Pre-Lent Breakfast for which I will look forward. Then March will be Wurstmarkt time. Ta Da! Our church has some busy times ahead.

I just wish the dart ball players would have snacks and tidbits for me. Ah well. Have a Happy New Year and try to stay warm

Greeters and Ushers for January and February

	1	Marlene Karsten, Sandy Smith
	8	Marlene Karsten, Sandy Smith
January	15	John & Janet Fauth
	22	John & Janet Fauth
	29	Tim Campbell, Duane Waeltz
	5	Gary & Susie Stewart, Ron Geisel
February	12	Gary & Susie Stewart, Mandy Schmierbach and Family
	19	Mandi Schmierbach & Family
	26	Kay Trotter, Mike Trotter

Birthdays

Gary Stewart	3
Robert Schmidt	5
Terry Jenkins	10
Lindsay Lehman	10
David B. Schneidewind	11
Duane Waeltz	11
Marilyn Wine	12
Judy Heil	14
Evelyn Schneidewind	15
Eloise Fauth	19
Dale Sinn	21
Dennis Sinn	28
Matthew Lewis	30
Charles Schmidt	30

January Birthdays and Anniversaries



Anniversaries

Gary & Susie Stewart	1
Ken & Joyce Fitch	14

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I was able to honor him at that event. Later, I was asked to do the opening Invocation for Rushing for a Cure here in Marissa twice.

When Katy Cowell was here she told me about her volleyball and basketball games and Ron and I went to one each. Later we supported Volley for a Cure. I also had the pleasure of attending a FFA breakfast and one pancake breakfast at St. Peter's in Lenzburg. We went to Schlatsfest at Biddleborn several times. I also attended two school musicals and finally got to a Junior/Senior High Band Concert. The sad thing about not having a newspaper is that it is difficult to find out what is going on at the high school unless you have children involved. I have heard many people besides me speak of this problem and while the village tries by posting some events on the back of the water bill, not everything can be posted and not everyone remembers to look and mark down events that might interest them. The problem with the Chamber's sign is, I feel, that most the time I go by it, it says the same thing, plus a lot of people don't come in town from the 13 entrance. Please try to help the village and school system find a solution to this problem. People want to support the schools even if they don't have children in them, but the word is not getting around as to when concerts and other events are taking place.

Since I've been here, I've seen several restaurants open and close. I'm not sure how many owners the restaurant last known as Chatterbox had but I know several of us were sad to see it closed. The Diner is closed. Club 21 has changed management and changed management as has the shooting range. The Brick closed and when it did not sell, re-opened under the same management. Antique Station has changed management several times but seems to be doing well as they are remodeling. Ron and I were just in it and it feels much more spacious. I hope we will get to see the finished product before we leave. When I came, everyone used to go to Jim & Cindy's. Since it has become The Pour House, I never hear of it. Lee's Tavern became Rock-a-Doodle and is now for sale. On a more positive note, both Village Hall and the Historical Society have moved and the Historical Society is open more often.

In one of the biggest mistakes I made, I joined the conference Justice & Witness Team in my first year and soon allowed myself to be talked into chairing the committee, which I did for two years. In addition to chairing the committee, which meant I had to be there every month, I also was named to the Conference Council. On the one hand this was an honor. On the other hand, it took away precious time that I should have been spending here. A term on a conference committee is three years. I gave up the chairmanship after two, but I had lost the precious "honeymoon period" with the church during which there could have been a momentum built to make some changes. Being chair of Justice & Witness also led me to allow some social justice issues to influence my sermons which I know many of you did not like. On the other hand, some people did like me speaking to social justice issues.

My other big mistake, was that when I was in seminary, many of my fellow students had pastors who gave them commentaries. I never had that, so the first thing I did once I had some money was to start buying commentaries. About the same time, I learned how to use the internet for research. I was spending a lot of time on research, but my sermons became such that I was "throwing in everything but the kitchen sink". Finally, someone said that they like my shorter sermons better than my long ones and I had to agree that I did too. This allowed me to start shortening my sermons and eventually to keeping them on track better. The period in which my sermons went from bad to worse was about 18 months. I thank those of you who stood by me. While no one would ever mistake me for a great preacher, and I still feel that my sermons are woefully inconsistent in quality, I feel that there has been some improvement in the last few years.

The next step along the way will be for the council to meet with the Conference Minister, Rev. Shana Johnson. She will speak to them about options and perhaps make some suggestions regarding what to do next, whether that involves a search committee or not. I must stay out of the process and allow you to make your own decisions. My love and prayers are with you.

Blessings,

Pastor Gail

January 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Guest Speaker Nancy Barbee	2 Evangelical Daughters Mtg. 6:00 pm Pastor Gail back	3	4 Choir 7:00 pm	5	6 Epiphany	7
8 Reports due for Annual Mtg. Communion	9 Blood Drive 2-7 pm	10 Council Mtg 7:00 pm	11 Choir 7:00 pm 2:00 pm New Athens Worship Service	12	13	14
15 Annual Reports Handed out	16 MLK Jr. Day	17	18 Choir 7:00 pm	19	20	21
22 Annual Meeting After Worship, potluck	23	24	25 Choir 7:00 pm	26	27	28
29 Pastor Gail's Last Sunday	30	31 Pastor Gail's last day at Friedens				

Congratulations


Five of our young people made Honor Roll this semester. David Schneidewind and Emma Schmierbach made High Honors. Nolan Cathcart, Riley Starr, and Logan Setterlund made Honors. I also finally got to a Marissa Jr./Sr. High Christmas Concert: David Schneidewind plays trumpet in the Junior High band and Logan still plays tenor sax in the Senior High band. Good work all.

Thank You!

- We have new LED lighting and a wall switch with dimmer in the sanctuary courtesy of the Irving Schickedanz Memorial Fund. Our first usage of the dimmer switches was Christmas Eve.
 - Thank you to Gary Stewart, Jay Lehman and Larry Matzenbacher for coming in Saturday November 26 and Hanging the wreath on the Rose Window and putting up the Christmas Tree. I understand Lorrie Lehman and Susie Steward decorated the Tree.
 - Thank you to the Evangelical Daughters for the meal on November 27 and to all those who helped with the Hanging of the Greens. Hopefully you saw it, but Carol Mercer got a cute picture of Ashlyn, Skyler and Nathan putting the animals around the Nativity. It was in the County Journal.
 - Thank you to the Evangelical Daughters for the new battery operated candles which were in the windows replacing the old wax candles. They were lit on Christmas Eve and even flicker. They are battery operated and therefore will be reusable.
 - Thank you to all families who took part in the Candle lighting ceremonies.
 - Thank you to Nancy Barbee for being a guest speaker for me on Sunday January 1.
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2017-2018 Usher and Greeter List

The Spiritual Council will be getting together in January to make the 2017-2018 Usher and Greeter list. If you would like off the list or certain Sunday, please let Pastor Gail or a Spiritual Council Member know.



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*“Through the Spirit we are
a Church on the Move:
Welcoming, Caring,
Sharing.”*



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