

Issue 5, Vol 5

May 2009

# The Tie That Binds

## GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



[www.gracechurchsh.org](http://www.gracechurchsh.org)

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352-683-2082

## PASTOR'S CORNER

by Rev. Chet Okopski

When I was young and studying preaching I was very fortunate at the Presbyterian Seminary in Louisville, to get a semester under an old preaching warrior named George Buttrick. He opened our minds to many new ideas, and to the preaching of many ministers whom we had never heard of before. He once quoted one of his students of the past who said: "I have read the sermons of Halford Luccock, and they were good. And I have preached the sermons of Halford Luccock, and lo, they were very good." That old joke got me interested in the writings of Halford Luccock.

Luccock once said: "In preaching we cannot be reminded too often that it is the duty of a shepherd to feed the sheep and not to entertain the goats." He also said: "The aim of preaching is not the elucidation of a subject, but the transformation of a person." Great words from great teachers have kept me inspired to do better in the pulpit for many years.

In his sermon titled "The Richest Hill on Earth" Luccock starts out by telling about a drive from Helena to Butte, Montana. There he passed the Silver Bow Mountain, one hill that had produced more wealth from minerals (gold, silver, and copper) than any other single hill on earth. He compares this hill to Calvary, the Hill that Hal called "truly the richest hill on earth." In this wonderful sermon he says: "We don't really see the cross until we see it as a way of life for ourselves."

This is the heart of Christianity... seeing the Cross of Christ Jesus as a way of life for ourselves and a way of life for the entire world. I was smitten the other day by a few words of the Old Testament



in the Noah story. God was getting ready to allow the giant flood to overcome the earth, and the Bible says: “Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence.” God makes a profound correlation between corruption and violence. The cross reaches out to all of us, one by one, taking away our violence, and the part of our corruption that is of violence.

I have resisted for many years the idea that television programs and the movies are becoming increasingly more violent. After all, my heroes were always cowboys. Lately I have surrendered. I believe that our entertainment industries have brought us too much violence. Much of our contemporary entertainment directly involves the theory of redemptive violence. That is, the idea that a greater violence or a more effective violence can stop violent people and violent actions. The Cross teaches us a “more excellent way.”

From the top to the bottom our Faith, all of the teaching in every church on every Sunday in America is under judgment. Calvary is the cure to selfishness, greed, and violence. But our churches today are filled with the weak whine, as Halford Luccock once said: “the weak whine of “is everybody happy”. We do not really see the cross until we see it as a way of life for ourselves, something we must do. The glory of the Cross begins to show forth from our being as we begin to realize that the Cross is not something we simply “learn about, something to receive, but is also something to do.” The richest hill on earth isn’t in Montana, it’s right outside Jerusalem where Jesus died, for you.



*Peace be with you,*

**Rev. Chet**

## **REFLECTIONS....**

## **WHAT NEXT?**

“The end is nearly here. Things can’t get any worse. Jesus will return any day.” Who spoke these words? It was my mother. How long ago did she say this? It was 77 years ago! Obviously she was wrong. Things have gotten a great deal worse. And Jesus has not returned. Although a devout Christian who read her bible, she made the mistake of listening to preachers who taught dire times were here, and who neglected the scripture where Jesus said no one knows the day nor hour of his return.

Will Jesus return some day? There is no doubt that He made a promise, “I will come again.” At the Last Supper He told his disciples that as often as they ate the bread and drank the cup they were showing His death until he returned. When after his resurrection he ascended to heaven, angels declared, “This same Jesus who has been taken from you into Heaven will come back...” (Acts 1:11)

The apostle Paul proclaimed “The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven.” (1 Thessalonians 4:16) Peter proclaimed this truth, saying “the day of the Lord shall come.” (2 Peter 3) John’s first epistle declared “...when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” (3:3)



Many other verses speak of this truth, but there is no doubt that Jesus promised to return, and that the apostles believed and proclaimed this as the “blessed hope”. Gospel hymns we sing in church emphasize it also.

Our next question is when is he coming? Countless have attempted to set dates, all of which have proven wrong. While we cannot know the day or the hour, there are certain conditions that will precede the event. These we know as “the signs of the times”. Critics claim these have existed in past centuries. However the extent of these signs and their coming together is significant. Never before have they been clearer.

In chapter 3 of 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy it is written, “Mark this: there will be terrible times in the last days.” What will characterize these last times? “Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self control,

brutal. Not lovers of good, but treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God – having a form of godliness but denying its power, always learning but never able to acknowledge truth, depraved minds...have nothing to do with them.” These verses are in all versions, although wording may differ. I have used the NIV (New International Version) here. Space does not permit it here, but in Matthew Chapter 24 Jesus said more about these terrible times.

Since both Jesus and the apostles clearly affirmed the future return of Christ, and since Jesus, Paul, and Peter spoke of the signs indicating the general time of his return, what does this mean to us? It certainly calls for our readiness...”Be also ready, for in such an hour as you think no, the Son of Man comes.” How many church members are ready for this event? It calls for awareness that our era is ending. There will be no more opportunities to witness to the lost, ask forgiveness of those we may have hurt, or do the deeds of kindness we know we should do. It calls for godliness. (1 John 3:2) But we know that when he shall appear we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.” (v.3) Impurity in speech and act surrounds us daily as Christians, but we must recognize we have been called from sin to godliness.

Are these the last days? I do not know, but they certainly could be. Even as I write April 8, I see our economy collapsing, one world government being considered, inflation near the door, our faith challenged, and insurmountable problems. But I know God has a plan, and we should pray, “Even so, come Lord Jesus.”

*By Rev. Douglas Clark*



## Bell Ringers

To all present **Bell Ringers** and any “**Wanna Bees**” who would like to learn about ringing and not be tied to a long term engagement:

Join us for three consecutive Friday mornings in June (5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>) at 10 a.m. in Fellowship Hall.

We will learn one piece and be ready to play at 2<sup>nd</sup> Service on June 21.

Thank you from your  
Head Ding a Ling, Marian Bodwell.  
Any questions, call Marian at 683-3281.

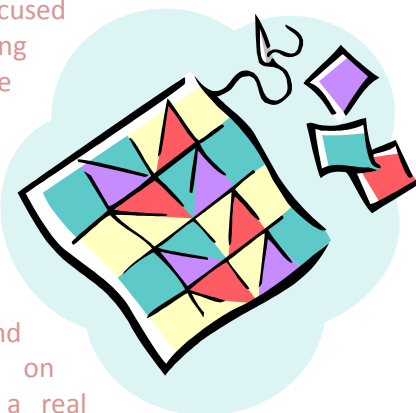
## Wednesday Prayer Meeting

Can you spare 30 minutes once a week to join in fellowship with the pastor and members of the church to pray? Our summer prayer meeting schedule will start Wednesday, May 6 at 11:30 a.m. in the chapel.



## Quilters

What a surprise when we opened the quilter’s closet last week and found a new stack of bright fabrics, six lengths totaling 15 yards! We appreciate your contribution so much and assure you they will be put to good use! The past few months we’ve focused on sharpening our quilting and sewing skills while making small items including table runners, placemats and pot holders for the next Bazaar. Stitching accurate quilter’s scant quarter inch seams and controlling bias edges on setting triangles can be a real challenge. If you’re an experienced sewer or a brand new “wanna-be”, you are welcome to join us – the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of each month, in Fellowship Hall, 9-12 am. As we say goodbye to our Northern folk, we wish you a wonderful summer, and are looking forward to your return next fall.



## Sarah Circle

Our gathering on April 8<sup>th</sup> was opened with a prayer by Pat Larson. We discussed the items brought in for Jericho Road and the upcoming PW meeting April 13<sup>th</sup> with the Rev. Douglas Clark as speaker. Barb completed our Bible study with lesson 9.

Libby then read devotions. We welcomed Dorothy Chaudoin, a visitor, to our circle and hope to see her soon.

Our last meeting will be May 13<sup>th</sup> at Kally K's at 12:30 pm for our luncheon.

Marian Palamaro

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## NAOMI CIRCLE

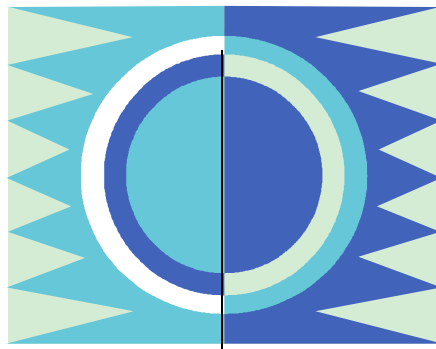
Ten circle members were in attendance for lesson 8; *You are Invited*, from our study guide presented by Dia Stoner. Nancy Maxwell opened with a beautiful reading of Psalms 23 from the Prayer Book. Nancy thanked those for all their hard work that assisted in the successful rummage sale. The participants were happy to give their time. Nancy passed out more thank you notes from those who received the Valentine flowers delivered by the loving ladies of Naomi Circle. Many members like the project enough they would like to do it again next year.

Nancy informed the attendees of the upcoming April 27<sup>th</sup> PW Retreat and the rush to get your application in this week. Nancy informed us that the Bible study for next year was Joshua and the exciting events we will share through the study. We are in need of a treasurer for the circle next year. A volunteer will be greatly appreciated.

Our hostesses, Millie Mergler and Dia Stoner, served delicious breakfast treats. Plans were finalized for our May breakfast at the church on May 14<sup>th</sup> prepared by our own Roberta Jarvinen and helpers. Members not counted to attend the breakfast can call Roberta to be sure to get in on our special end of the year event. We will complete lesson 9 in our study book.

Dia Stoner for Laura Haug - Secretary

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## DORCAS CIRCLE

Nine members of the Dorcas Circle met in Building B at 1:00 PM on Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>. for a time of fellowship and spiritual growth.

Following the treasurer's report by Alice Custer the missions team, Ann Martin and Toni Hunter, reported that baskets for the children and a gift certificate for Easter were delivered to our missions family. Cheryl Carter, Devotions Coordinator, shared fascinating information (including colored pictures) about the history of the "Jesse Tree" stained glass window discovered in a small church in North Wales.

Betty Vance led an informative and interesting discussion of Jubilee (lesson 8) from the 2008-2009 Horizon Bible Study after which the group discussed plans for our next meeting.

On May 19, 2009, we will meet in the Grace Presbyterian Church parking lot and then car pool to Brook House (Hwy 19) for "High Tea" at 2:00 PM. Please contact Cheryl Carter if you plan to attend.

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## MARY MARTHA CIRCLE

Fourteen members were present at our April meeting. Our hostesses, Wanda Kinckman and Betty Bertschinger, served tasty desserts. The meeting was opened with a reading from *Be Blessed*.

The Spring Retreat was discussed and plans were made for next month's luncheon on May 19<sup>th</sup>. It will be at My Favorite Café at 12:00. Those wishing to ride in the van will meet at the church at 11:30 am.

Our lessons 7, 8, and 9 of our Bible study were presented by Gladys Ledford. This concludes this year's study and we thank Gladys for another year of a job well done.

The meeting was closed with a reading from Joyce Meyer's *Ending Your Day Right*.

Betty Schielein, Secretary

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## Thoughts on Mother's Day

By Betty Caparbi

### My Grandmother – Elizabeth S. Schiefer

For as long as I can remember, my grandmother at bedtime would let her hair fall down her back, brush it, divide it into three parts, and plat it into one long pigtail. Then she took her Bible from her bureau, opened it, read for several minutes, then knelt beside the bed for prayers (no matter how she felt or how cold it was; we had no heat upstairs). After prayers she would slide into bed beside me and listen to me say the prayers she had taught me.

On Sunday mornings she made sure my sister, brother, and I were dressed and waiting for some kind Sunday School teacher to pick us up and take us to church. We each had a nickel tied into the corner of a homemade hankie. From this bedtime ritual and attending Sunday School I learned to love Jesus and to serve Him.



### DEVOTED

I was but a child of three  
When she first knelt to pray with me.

Her knotted hair a'back her head,  
Her folded hands upon the bed.

Her Bible open as we prayed,  
Her voice speaks clear the prayer God gave.

I still remember being there,  
Inside the circle of her care.

T'was God, to me, she made well known;  
The seeds of faith she'd surely sown.

As years passed by I came to know,  
Her love and God's, I'd not outgrow.

Through her devotion, that child of three,  
Became the woman God meant her to be.

Now in heaven, some thirty years,  
I hold her close in memories dear.

For in my dreams of life, once fair,  
I still kneel beside my Gram in prayer.

*Written for her Grandmother, by Betty Caparbi  
Grace Church Member, May 1999*

## GIDEONS

The Gideons are coming to our church on Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>. Our Gideon representative, Mr. Bill Krupp, sends this message:

This year I am reading through the Bible for the 51<sup>st</sup> time. New truth is being discovered that seemed not to be there previously. What a book! Who could write such a work? God says His Word is alive and will live forever. I think it deserves my attention.

So, other Gideons and I give away free copies daily. I have a mental image of a Publix grocery bagger following us to the car to retrieve the electric cart. Receiving his copy as a tip, he propped his elbows on the handlebars to steer while he read God's Word on the way back into the store.

Whenever the rehabilitation specialist sees me, she tells me she reads her Bible daily. She claims it's the first Bible she's ever had.

Around the county, around the country, around the world, Gideons are giving away 72 million copies this year. We could use your help.

(If you can't be in church on May 17<sup>th</sup>, you may send an offering for the Gideons to the church office anytime!)



**The sympathy** of the entire congregation is extended to the family and friends of the following who went home to be with our Lord:

Mrs. Anna Davidson  
April 23, 2009

Dr. Paul Clemons  
April 24, 2009



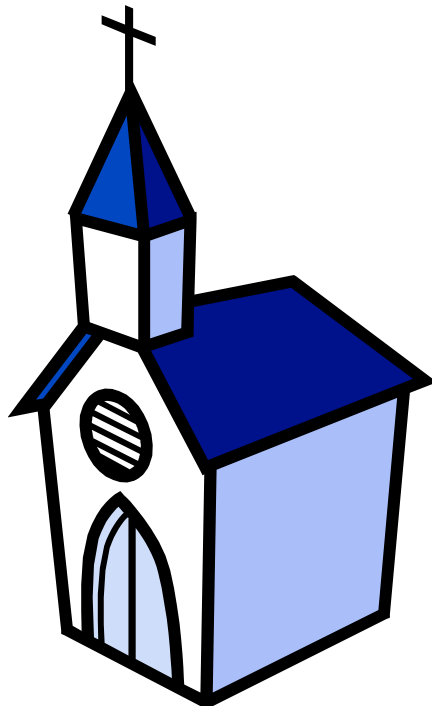
Our prayers and love are with you all.

# Children's Church Highlites

## WELCOME TO THE CHILDREN'S CHURCH HIGHLIGHTS

In the month of May spring begins and a new season comes along. And just like the seasons, May brings great new things in our Bible Lessons and new stories about Jesus. We will learn how Jesus' strength makes us strong. Acts 4:5-14. We will learn to respond to God through worship. Acts 8:26-40. We will learn that God accepts into His family anyone who believes in Jesus. Acts 10:1-44. We will worship God together with joy. Acts 11:19-26. We will experience and learn how God's spirit lives in us. We praise and worship Him. Romans 8:9-17. Wow! That's a lot to remember, but you just need to open the Bible and with your parents help read these wonderful stories that are only found in the Bible. Come join us this month. We have new games and always a treat or two.

God Bless, and see you in church.  
Ms. Pat, Ms. Michelle, and Ms. Iris



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## POSITIVE THOUGHTS

From Rev. Chet Okopski

The Bible says: *"Do all things without grumbling."*  
(Philippians 2.14)

This is probably some of the best advice of the whole of Scripture, since grumbling has a profound effect upon the one who participates in it, and sometimes

upon those who have to listen to it all the time. Negative thinking usually brings about negative results. Grumbling is a type of negative thinking that involves others, since it is the sharing of criticism. Halford Luccock once said:

*To allow oneself to become a pathological and habitual grumbler is a major affliction, for such a one easily slides down the steep descent to the state where nothing is right, something is the matter with everything. Someone said, when he heard of the death of Matthew Arnold, "Poor Matthew, he won't like God." That was certainly unfair, but it does describe the critical, often scolding attitude of Matthew Arnold.*

*Living with a grumbler is like living in a room with all the window shutters banging in the wind. The tragedy, too, is that the grumbler hears the banging all the time.*

*Grumbling also drives the spirit of service out of a life. How can a person think of others with any ongoing love if he is always concerned with the sore toe? How can his world open out to human need if it is full of his own complaints and bewailing? The constant clang of the riveting machine of his own dissatisfaction shuts out the still small voice of God and the still gay music of humanity. ("The Halford Luccock Treasury" p.372)*

Grumbling also affects those who must hear it. In Japan there is a concept of the *"wa"* or, the *"peace"* of the household. Things and people who affect one's *"wa"* or the peace of one's household are bad and undesirable. It is considered quite rude to disrespect the *"wa"* of your neighbor or of your family. *"Wa"* is also a Christian concept, like when we say: *"The peace of Christ be with you."* We long for the peace of Christ to rest in our hearts and in our homes. That's why the Bible says that we should do things without grumbling.

Of course, like most things in life, grumbling harms the grumbler most of all. Memorize instead this lovely verse from Colossians 3.17 *"Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."* It's impossible to be thankful and grumble at the same time.

## TIMES FOR WORSHIP

CASUAL DRESS SERVICE	8:30 AM
SUNDAY SCHOOL	9:30 AM
TRADITIONAL WORSHIP	10:45 AM

*Have a GREAT Month of May!*

## BIRTHDAYS



### MAY

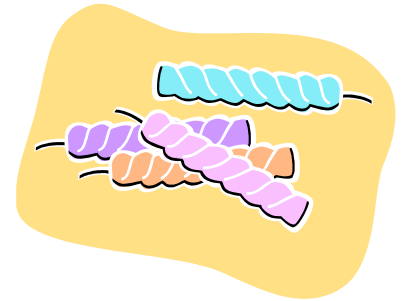
- 2 – Robert MacDonald
- 3 – Elden Herrstrom
- 4 – Gayle Kratzert
- 4 – Jane Kwasniewski
- 4 – Catherine Terry
- 6 – Edward Cox
- 6 – Betty Franke
- 6 – Pat Hawken
- 7 – Betty Caparbi
- 7 – William Tuceling
- 8 – Irene Clarke
- 8 – David Gardner
- 8 – Jamie Geddes
- 10 – James Hogan
- 12 – Eugene Millham
- 13 – David Burr
- 14 – Lois Lawrence
- 15 – Nancy Burton
- 15 – Armenta Dennis
- 15 – Jacqueline Hanf
- 15 – Fred Kraut
- 17 – Kilmer Caban



- 18 – Linda Wilson
- 19 – Elizabeth Hogeland
- 19 – Robert Sanchez
- 19 – Eunice Sterner
- 20 – Betty McCarthy
- 22 – Walter Russ
- 23 – Richard Weaver
- 24 – Allison Woodin
- 25 – Ivanhia Davis
- 26 – Shirley Kinor
- 26 – Merle Smith
- 27 – Angus Blakey
- 27 – David Philipsen
- 28 – Patricia Motter
- 31 – Stephanie Mocas



## JUNE



- 1 – Carly Churpita
- 1 – Don Watson
- 2 – Margaret Lockwood
- 2 – Barbara Petrizzi
- 2 – Alexandria Wood
- 3 – Ruth Cressman
- 4 – Dorothy Dietz
- 4 – Ken Vogel
- 5 – Kelly Atkinson
- 5 – Carol Ross
- 5 – Jeremy Stewart
- 6 – Elizabeth Dickerson
- 6 – Gloria Hugg
- 6 – Catherine Mazowski
- 6 – Jack Toney
- 7 – Arlene Osmun
- 7 – Christine Rizzuto



# May 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
<b>3 Communion</b> 8:30 Casual Service 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Traditional Ser 11 Children's Church	<b>4</b> 1 PM P/W Coordinating Team 7 Christian Ed	<b>5</b> 8 AM Yard Work 10 AM Flexercise	<b>6</b> 8-12 Bike Ministry 10 AM Bible Links 11:30 Prayer Meeting 7 PM Choir 7 PM Puppets	<b>7</b> 8 AM Yard Work 9:30 Grace Crafters 12:30 Holy Rollers	8	9
<b>10</b> 5 Cents A Meal 8:30 Casual Service 9:30 Sunday School 10:45 Traditional Ser 11 Children's Church	<b>11</b> 1 PM P/W Gathering, Fell Hall Worship 4 PM	<b>12</b> 8 AM Yard Work 9 AM Quilters 10 AM Flexercise 12 E&O Boston Cooker	<b>13</b> 8-12 Last Bikes 11:30 Prayer Meeting 12:30 Sarah, Kally K's 7 PM Choir 7 PM Puppets	<b>14</b> 8 AM Yard Work 9:30 Grace Crafters Naomi Circle 12:30 Holy Rollers 7 Deacon's Mtg	15	16
<b>17</b> 8:30 Casual Service Last Sunday School 10:45 Traditional Ser 11 Children's Church 3 Evergreen Woods	18	<b>19</b> 8 AM Yard Work 10 AM Flexercise Dorcas Circle Mary Martha Circle	<b>20</b> 10 AM Bible Links 11:30 Prayer Meeting 7 PM Choir 7 PM Puppets	<b>21</b> 8 AM Yard Work 9:30 Grace Crafters 12:30 Holy Rollers 7 PM Session Mtg	22	23
<b>24</b> 8:30 Casual Service 10:45 Traditional Ser 11 Children's Church	<b>25</b> Office Closed Memorial Day	<b>26</b> 8 AM Yard Work 9 AM Quilters 10 AM Flexercise	<b>27</b> 11:30 Prayer Meeting 7 Last Choir practice 7 PM Puppets	<b>28</b> 8 AM Yard Work 9:30 Grace Crafters 12:30 Holy Rollers	29	30
<b>31</b> 8:30 Casual Service 10:45 Traditional Ser 11 Children's Church Choir off for summer						

# This Month's Volunteers

## CHURCH OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

Barbara Harrower  
Ginny Okopski Hazel Sandhoff  
Charline Lanman  
Marjorie Halloran Kay Jensen  
Betty Bertschinger

## FINANCIAL AIDES

Barbara Harrower Helen Dakers  
Marjorie Halloran Roberta Jarvinen  
Lois Cunningham  
Ione Plis, Honorary Aide

## FOLDING THE NEWSLETTER

Lynne Crawford Kay Jensen  
Hazel Sandhoff Don Sandhoff  
Bob Jensen Barb Harrower  
Roberta Jarvinen

## USHERS

Jan Remington Len Newkirk  
Barbara Harrower John Pitt  
Tony Holbrook John Pepin  
Debbi Holbrook Gary Maille  
Jessica Yanson Donna Maile

## ELDERS - South Door

Jan Johnson

## ELDERS - Middle Door

Don Halloran

## ELDERS - North Door

Ken Gerstner

## Caring for the Sanctuary

Lois Cunningham

## GREETERS

3  
1<sup>st</sup> Cheryl Kopia  
2<sup>nd</sup> Toni & Rufus Hunter  
10  
1<sup>st</sup> Eileen Jaeger  
2<sup>nd</sup> Ray & Dia Stoner  
17  
1<sup>st</sup> Joan Unger  
2<sup>nd</sup> & Barb Kingen & Gloria Caboy  
24  
1<sup>st</sup> Tom Foster  
2<sup>nd</sup> Don & Maria Hixon  
31  
2<sup>nd</sup> Renee Clarke  
2<sup>nd</sup> Betty Schielein & Betty Katke

# CHURCH OFFICERS 2009

## SESSION

Moderator: The Reverend Chet Okopski  
Clerk of Session: Dee Bodel

## 2009

Bill Ambrose  
Dee Bodel  
Betty Katke  
Wayne Keister  
Dean Moore  
Russell Schick

Helen Dakers  
Rufus Hunter  
Nola Kay Knox  
Cheryl Kopia  
Bill Larkin  
John Romaine

## 2010

Jack Bartell  
Cheryl Carter  
Lois Cunningham  
Len Davis  
Ken Gerstner  
Paula Morton  
Barbara Vogel

## DEACONS

Moderator: Joyce Flint

Ralph Ambrose  
Mildred Bartell  
Sharon Courter  
Pat Hawken  
Sue Lightbody  
Pat Schick  
Thelma Volzer

## 2011

Don Halloran  
Janice Johnson  
Bonnie Kauffman  
Ray Lanzilotta  
Jerry Larson  
Larry Ottos  
Virginia Ritzenthaler

Linda Ausenbaugh  
Jackie Boewe  
Joyce Flint  
Nancy Hammel  
Roberta Jarvinen  
Nancy Maxwell  
Len Newkirk