

PASTOR'S CORNER

Spring Thoughts
by Pastor Ray Lantz

April!

Easter Morning.
Christ Risen!!

New Life.
New Creation.

Sunshine and Rain.

Trees budding.
Flowers blooming.
Gardeners preparing.
Farmers worrying.

My prayer is that we will
make this Easter a life-long
celebration of all that East-
er means to each of us.

Not only a day of joy
but a lifetime of joy.

Not only a day of hope,
but a lifetime of hope.

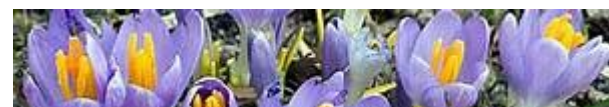
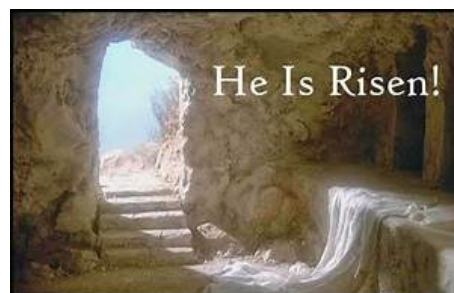
Not a day of God's love,

but a lifetime of God's
love.

April!!

Hallelujah!

Amen.



Pastor's Office Hours:

Monday: Out all day
Tuesday: 9am to Noon
1pm to 3pm
Wednesday: 9am to Noon
1pm to 3pm
Thursday: 10am to Noon
by appointment

Friday: By appointment
Weekly Scheduled Appointments:
Tuesday: Noon-1pm—Lions
Club (when in session)
Wednesday: 9:45-10:15 Head
Start Reading (when in
Session)

Thursday: 8-9:30-GC Pastor's
Group

1st Thursday of Month: Noon
to 1-Chamber of Commerce

Meladee's Office Hours:

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Mon-
day through Friday.

Continued from front page . . .
and institutions with a fine-tooth comb and having hard, uncomfortable conversations. But it also needs to register at a deeper level. "As Presbyterians, we think we can think ourselves out of stuff," Catoe said. "But this is not a brain thing. This is a soul thing. We have to start talking about it in those kinds of ways as well, because this is eating at our souls. This is killing our souls." Catoe said to address white supremacy, Presbyterians need to be willing to use a term he perceived as counter-intuitive to Presbyterians. "Another stereotype of the Presbyterian Church is we don't talk a lot about evil," Catoe said. "We actually have to be OK with talking about evil, because the older I get, the more I'm saying it exists. There is a force in this world that is instigating and pushing for the oppression of our siblings that don't hold up this kind of theology. And if we don't start really talking about it in that way, and really come to terms with 'yes, it exists, people are dying from it.' This is terrible, this is evil, this is sinful. We have to start naming it as well." Catoe and Leonard said doing so is following the lead of Jesus, who was never hesitant to call out evil and invoke his power over it. "We know we are not called to be victims. We are called to be victorious," Leonard said. "And we are called to have power to defeat sin and say this does not have to be our final resting place, sitting in this mess. But we can get up, take up my bed and walk, and live into a new reality and beloved community that God is still calling us to."

PRESBYTIDINGS

April 2021

Pastor Ray Lantz



Worship: 10:30 a.m.

This Newsletter is a publication of First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City IL.

Website: www.firstpresbygibson.org

Meladee Ferguson: Administrative Assistant

Mary Clow: Ministry Coordinator

Presbyterian leaders talk about white supremacy and Christianity by Rich Copley | Presbyterian News Service White supremacy theology starts with the image of Jesus that is popular in much of the Western world. "When we say white supremacy theology, folks have taken this system, and they also fit Jesus into this system," said the Rev. Christian Brooks, Representative for Domestic Poverty Issues in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of Public Witness. "They made Jesus into their image, they made Jesus into their likeness, they made God into their image and their likeness and moved forward and preached about it, talked about it, oppressed people on it. And we have entire denominations that are deeply embedded within this white supremacy theology, within this idea that whiteness is right. Everything that is centered around whiteness is correct. And anything outside of it is wrong." The popular image of Jesus as a blue-eyed, blonde-haired white man when history says that as a first-century Jew he was probably dark skinned, was one of numerous points Brooks and the panelists on the third episode of the OPW webinar series "Where Do We Go from Here?" touched on Thursday afternoon discussing the relationship between Christian faith and the Jan. 6 insurrection at the United States Capitol by supporters of former President Donald Trump. While the protests were denounced by faith leaders across the country and around the world, including the Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson II, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), many of the protesters carried signs with Christian slogans and imagery and even prayed in the midst of the crowd also rife with Confederate and Nazi symbols. The optics begged the question, how did

the protesters square their actions with Christian faith? To address the question, the Rev. Shanea D. Leonard, Associate for Race and Gender Justice, and the Rev. Lee Catoe, Managing Editor of Unbound: An Interactive Journal on Christian Social Justice and Associate for Young Adult Witness, took a deep dive into the history of Christianity in the United States and how it has been used to promote white supremacy and vice versa. "Within that whole happening within the insurrection at the Capitol, it does force us to look back into that time to where ministers, both in the South and in the North, were using scripture, were using the Bible to really instill how society had to hold on to slavery," Catoe said. "But also, it instilled this white supremacist theology to back that." Catoe noted that even if a person were opposed to slavery, they could still hold white supremacist views, which have perpetuated since the abolition of slavery. He cited "A Holy Baptism of Fire and Blood" by James P. Byrd for a look at how the Bible was used to justify the Confederacy during the Civil War. He also talked about ways in which white superiority was advocated in churches, school curriculum, and other institutions during the Confederacy. Leonard brought a book recommendation in "Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty" by Dorothy Roberts, which they said provides insight into how white supremacy became married to theology. Leonard pointed to the Southern Strategy 100 years later, which used racial grievance as a political weapon. "It's like, the Black folks are taking our jobs, or the Black people think they're getting so high and mighty, and it's up to us to maintain 'law and order,' which are literally words from the Southern Strategy that's

even been used by the past president," Leonard said. "This type of wording and this type of phrasing is something that comes from a history of division in our country. "Let's not forget that part of this is a part of the history of why our church was divided — why there was a North and South Presbyterian Church. This is a part of who we are and our history." And it is a history that perpetuates to this day, Leonard and Catoe said, in ways both overt and subtle, such as the ways white, heteronormative culture is centered in academics, meetings and even worship. **All this, Leonard noted, is not an indictment of white people. "There is a difference between white supremacy culture and white supremacy theology, and whiteness and white people," Leonard said. "Let's be clear about this. This is not an indictment of white people. That's not what I'm saying, and I don't think that's what any of us are saying.**" This is an indictment on our framework and a way of life that we are all victims of, because white supremacy culture is causing you to believe that you are superior to another who is on a same level and is equal to you, as your sibling has caused you to have an incorrect mindset as well. There's a clear difference between white supremacy culture, whiteness, white supremacy theology, and white folks. And there are white folks who are implicit in liberation, as much as there are white folks who are implicit and maintaining the status quo and supremacy." In the second half of the webinar, Brooks turned to the question of what the church can do about white supremacy in its own culture and institutions. "The first step is admitting there's a problem," Leonard said, "and by God, there is a problem." Leonard and Catoe said it involves going through practices **Continued on back page . . .**

MISSION COMMITTEE APPROVAL 3-25-2021

Starting Balance approved February 25, 2021	\$ 25,000.00
Addition of \$500 each for Dairy Queen & Blue Star Restaurants	\$ 1,000.00
Credit for return check from Chinese Restaurant	\$ - 500.00
Subtotal	\$ 25,500.00
GC Police Department Scholarship	\$ 1,000.00
Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts \$ 500 Each	\$ 1,000.00
Cub Scouts/Brownies \$ 500 Each	\$ 1,000.00
Gibson Girls HCE Organization (In honor of Virginia Ricks)	\$ 1,000.00
ACT Theatre Group	\$ 500.00
Goin' Places Catering, Pioletti's, & Burgers & Beer \$ 500 Each	\$ 1,500.00
Drummer Creek Catering & Tea and Grounds Coffee \$ 500 Each . . .	\$ 1,000.00
13 Beauty Salons \$ 500 Each (See Attached)	\$ 6,500.00
15 Childcare Facilities \$ 500 Each (See Attached)	\$ 7,500.00
Ten American Legion Memberships for Veterans in need \$ 35 each . .	\$ 350.00
Subtotal for March	\$ 21,350.00
TOTAL Year to Date 2021	\$ 46,850.00

HOPING TO MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR THE CITIZENS AND COMMUNITY

OF GIBSON CITY

WE ARE BLESSED TO BE ABLE TO HELP SO MANY!

RESTASURANT LIST—ROUND 2

Goin' Places Catering
214 North Sangamon

Pioletti's Spaghetti
310 North Sangamon

Burgers & Beer
109 West 8th Street

Drummer Creek Catering
120 West 19th Street

Tea & Grounds Coffee
120 West 19th

BEAUTY SALONS

Avenue Salon and Spa
216 North Sangamon

Emerald Shears
117 East 9th

Main Attraction Salon
101 South Sangamon

Speak Easy Salon
205 North Sangamon

Expression's Salon
110 East 9th

Linda Moody Schoolhouse
200 North Melvin

Headliners Unisex Salon
121 North Sangamon

Hot Heads
113 West 8th

Al's Barber Shop
120 North Sangamon

Shanna's Hair Salon
625 N 200 E Road

Hair Hutch
302 North Sangamon

Bonnie's Home Salon
307 North Melvin

Uptowne Hair Design
105 East State Route 9

CHILDCARE PROVIDERS

Abigail Bane
Maltese Court

Melissa Bane
895 N 500 E Road

Vickie Craig
Falcon Drive

Sarah Eyre
534 North Church Street

Cynthia Garrett
227 North Church Street

Laurie Hoelscher
610 East 6th Street

Donna Holt
403 South Lott Blvd.

Marla Kuder
North Sangamon Avenue

Jimmie Lange
414 South Wood Street

Brenda Main
North Church Street

Karen Rubenacker
211 South Guthrie

Cheryl Schultz
527 East 8th Street

Sarah Zumwalt
110 Walnut Street

Sherri Coit
116 West Maple

Osiris Johnson
521 East 10th Street

April 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 <i>Maundy Thursday</i>	2 <i>Good Friday</i>	3 <i>Recycle</i>
4 10:30 a.m. Worship— <i>Easter Sunday Communion</i> Mark 16:1-8	5	6 <i>Election Day</i>	7	8	9	10
11 10:30 a.m. Worship John 20:19-31	12	13	14	15	16	17 <i>Recycle</i>
18 10:30 a.m. Worship Luke 24:36-48	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 10:30 a.m. Worship John 10:11-18	26	27	28	29 <i>5:30 Session</i>	30	

Pastor Ray will be preaching on the scripture listed in bold on each Sunday.

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCH . . .

Please note: The previous week's sermon will broadcast at 7:45 a.m. every Sunday morning on WGCY.

Please note: Online Live Sunday Services will be available on our Facebook Page noted below:

First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City

https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=142499619134911&ref=br_rs

Meladee's new working hours: Meladee will be in the church office from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please make note of these new church office working hours. Pastor Ray's hours will remain the same.

FPC OF GC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM: The Mission Committee of the FPC of GC will be awarding two \$ 1,000 scholarships in order to give access to higher education for students of all income levels. Applications can be obtained from the Guidance Office at GCMS High School. These scholarships are in addition to the McCormick Tutoring Program Scholarships being offered.

CRITERIA FOR APPLICATION AND AWARD SELECTION: Applicants for one of the \$ 1,000 awards must be seniors of the Gibson City Melvin Sibley School District. Preference will be given to a student who will be working towards becoming a nurse or any deserving candidate who wants to work in the medical field. The completion of the essay is also required.

Applicants for the other \$ 1,000 award must be a senior of the GCMS School District. Preference will be given to a student who will be attending any type of trade school or any deserving candidate who wishes to obtain additional training to work in the building trades, HVAC, or becoming a beautician or stylist. The completion of the essay is also required.

New Email Addresses: As part of the hardware and software upgrade for our church's technology, there are now new email addresses as noted below:

Pastor Ray:

Ray@firstpresbygibson.org

Meladee

Office@firstpresbygibson.org



Session has approved the purchase of Easter Lilies for Easter Sunday service, April 4. They will be available for anyone to take after the service.

Dear Family at the First Presbyterian Church, thank you so much for my birthday card! I had a great 17th birthday! One more year until I am an adult! Love, Anneliese

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES		<i>K. P. Duty</i>	<i>Kerchenfaut</i>
<i>April</i>		<i>Apr: Jean Williams</i>	
<i>May</i>		<i>May: Mary Jane Roth</i>	
06: Charlie Kerchenfaut		<i>Second Sunday Offering</i>	<i>Communion Set-Up</i>
24: Barb Kirkpatrick		<i>Apr 11: Gibson Area Housing Rehab Foundation</i>	<i>Apr 4: Ted Swanson</i>
25: Harry and Dorri Groom		<i>May 9: Because of Cody</i>	<i>May 9: Sharla Williams</i>
27: Ron Clow		<i>Ushers</i>	<i>Flower Vases to CM</i>
28: Tim Swanson		<i>Apr: Jeanette Hensley and Sharla Williams</i>	<i>Apr: Ted Swanson</i>
	02: Emma Swanson	<i>May: Dale Ashmore and Jean Williams</i>	<i>May: Sharla Williams</i>
	07: Jesse Swanson		
	09: Trudy Lantz	<i>Communion Servers</i>	
	10: Ruth McClure	<i>Apr 4: Trudy Lantz and Charles Schultz</i>	
	14: Mary Jane Roth	<i>May 9: Rick & Anneliese</i>	
	14: Michele Schultz		
	17: Ray Lantz		
	20: Mac and Ruth McClure		
	22: John Davis		
	26: Ron and Mary Clow		



Dear Reverend Lantz and Presbyterian Church: Thank you so much for the contribution and the chance to pay it forward. We have a waitress/single mom employee who has struggled since the pandemic with the loss of wages and since she has no financial support from her children's father, we donated \$ 250 to her.



We also have another employee who has been with us for over 12 years. He, too, has struggled with loss of wages, so we donated \$ 150 to him.



Lastly, we have a regular customer who was struggling with the loss of his spouse as well as the pandemic, so we donated \$ 100 to him.



We so appreciate the opportunity you gave us to pay it forward! With many thanks, Imer and Fia Ballazhi

May God return to you the kindness you have shown to Shepherd's Closet and Closet, Too! Thank you. We truly appreciate your generous gift. Your support is such a blessing. John and Annie Barnett

Thank you for giving such a nice donation to Telecare! We rely on "Gibson City" for funds to keep us going. Your response of our need was unexpected, but greatly appreciated! Sincerely, Telecare Board Nelda Jordan, President



Pastor Lantz, Danny Heustis and Ron Clow set up the Easter Cross in time for Holy Week.



Dale Ashmore and Mary Clow were glad to be in church and see each other on Palm Sunday after both experienced injuries after falling. Mary commented it's better to have a broken bone than to have a broken spirit. God is at work repairing our bones and we will be back stronger than ever!



Pictures from the wedding of Ramie Lantz, son of Pastor and Trudy Lantz, Friday, March 26, 2021.

Pastor Ray Lantz presents a check to Sheriff Mark Doran from the Mission Committee.



Mary Clow presented a check from the Mission Committee to Blake and Marie Adams of Los Caminos Mexican Restaurant.



Pastor Lantz and Clerk of Session Mary Clow present Chief Adam Rosendahl with a check from the Mission Committee.



Pastor Lantz and Mary Clow sit with Nelda Jordan from Telecare after presenting her with a check from the Mission Committee.



Pastor Lantz presents a check from the Mission Committee to Marty Nuss from the Gibson City Community Chest.



Clerk of Session Mary Clow presents a check from the Mission Committee to Sharon Heavilin for the Gibson City Sesquicentennial Celebration children's games and prizes.



Pastor Lantz presents a check from the Mission Committee to Annie Barnett, Director of Shepherd's Closet.



Pastor Lantz and Mary Clow present a check from the Mission Committee to Mr. and Mrs. Doug Patel, owners of the Dairy Queen.



Staff at Bayern Stube saying "Thank you" for the check presented to them from our Mission Committee.



KNOW YOUR SECRETARY



MELADEE FERGUSON

I was born Meladee Ann Hastings on March 4, 1948 in Brazil, Indiana on a cold, snowy, windy night to John Charles and Jane Elizabeth (Willey) Hastings. On March 2, 1950 I received the gift of a baby brother, John Michael. We lived in Jasonville IN until I turned six. My mom always said I was quite the social butterfly, whenever she could not find me she would just look down the street and see my tricycle parked in front of one of the neighbor's homes. At six years of age we moved to Linton IN (about 12 miles from Jasonville and 45 miles south of Terre Haute) where the school system was better. We lived there until I was fourteen years old. My dad had a job that took him to Illinois and the center of his territory was Gibson City. That's how I ended up here.

My work ethic started out when I was 14. I worked at Johnson's IGA on South Lott Blvd. After a while a job came open at Gill's Drug Store and I worked there all through high school and even into the first two years of college on holiday breaks and some summers. Mr. Bob Jones had moved to town and was the Administrator of the hospital. I babysat for his two girls all through high school also and even spent my sum-

mer between my senior year in high school and my freshman year in college staying with the girls all day, cleaning, washing, ironing, cooking, etc. (all for \$20 a week). I would also have a nice dinner on the table when Mr. Jones came home from work. I loved it.

I started my freshman year of high school here and graduated in 1966. I started Illinois State University in the fall of 1966 with a major in Home Economics. I was certain I wanted to be a teacher. I worked for a professor typing up anything he might need and I also worked in the college library. I married Robert Francis Ferguson on August 25, 1968 just before we started our junior year at ISU. (We divorced in May, 2015.) In September of 1969 I learned I was pregnant with our first child so we finished our first semester of our senior year and then quit school to get jobs. John Alan was born on April 6, 1970. Am I sorry I did not graduate from college? Yes. Am I sorry I had a beautiful baby boy? NO! John and his wife, Becky, live in Pasadena Texas right outside Houston. John has two children, Lyndi, 30, and Lane, 28. On August 30, 1974 we had a beautiful baby girl, Jodi Anne. I was so pleased to have a boy and a girl. Jodi and her husband, Phillip VanSwol, live in Mahomet IL with their two children, Ben, 20 and Samantha, 15.

When Jodi was four I began a job with Herb Smith, an accountant here in town. I worked for him six years and loved the work. I did the books for 31 companies by hand (no computers then). I remember being off one penny in one account and I looked and looked for it and could not find it. I finally just taped a penny to the page. Herb got a good laugh out of it, but I had to keep

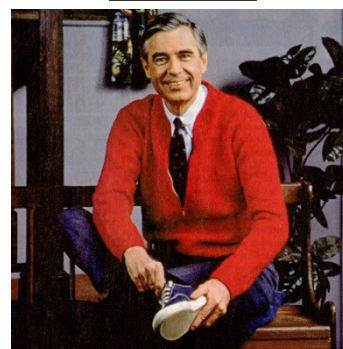
looking for that penny.

After I left my job with Herb, I started at the United Methodist Church of Gibson City and was the secretary there for 17 years. Once again, I really loved my job. I have always enjoyed working with people, especially older people, and this job fit the bill perfectly. While working there Randy Perry was the directing minister when I first began. He was also the President of the local Lions Club. Every Tuesday he would come back from a meeting and complain about the quality of food they were served. I told him I was not a bad cook so he hired me for one Tuesday. The guys liked the food so after serving them one Tuesday a month for several months he hired me for every Tuesday of the month. And then those great guys told their wives about my food and they began to hire me for their events. Before I knew it I was cooking for lots of people. That is how Meladee's Catering was born. After I left the church job I continued my catering (a total of 29+ years) for another several years and then ran into some health problems that would not allow me to do the heavy work of the catering anymore. I was looking for a job when the First Presbyterian Church needed a secretary and for me, it was the perfect fit. I love the job and the people. I thank God every day for my position here.

My hobbies include reading, crafts, and making greeting cards with my dear friend, Jean Noellsch, which we share with our families, friends, and churches.

Someone recently asked me what legacy I would like to leave the world. I answered, "I would like to be remembered as a kind, loving, giving person." I still stand by that.

FUN FACTS ABOUT MR. ROGERS



Reverend Fred McFeely Rogers (1928-2003), aka Mister Rogers star of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* which made its national debut on February 19, 1968 grew up in western Pennsylvania in the town of Latrobe, where he attended Latrobe Presbyterian Church. In the 1950s he began taking classes at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and graduate courses in child development at the University of Pittsburgh. He earned a Masters of Divinity degree in 1963. He was ordained in 1963 by the Presbytery of Pittsburgh with the unusual charge to continue his ministry with children and their families through the media. While he never served in the traditional role of pastor of a brick-and-mortar church, his ministry to children reached millions. Through *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*, he taught generations of children the quintessentially Christian but profoundly universal message of "Love yourself, love others." In 2000, Mr. Rogers hung up his cardigan for good. Over the course of 30 years, the show won four Emmy awards. He and his wife, with whom he had two sons, worshiped at Sixth Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh for many years. Mr. Rogers was a vegetarian who swam and walked daily.

MOYER DISTRICT LIBRARY would like to offer FREE Technology Classes for OLDER ADULTS

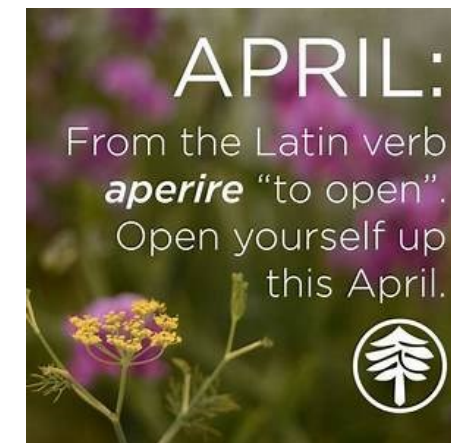
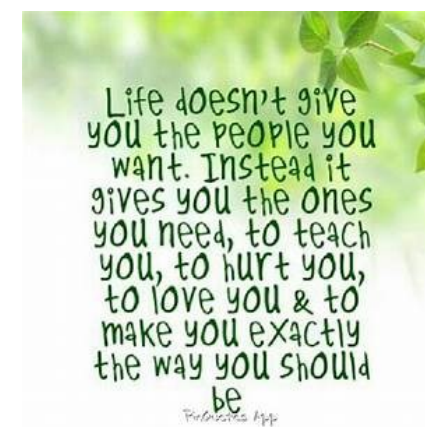
Interested in learning basic technology skills. Want to eliminate the fear of using a computer. Open a new world so you no longer feel isolated.

SIGN UP on the sheet outside the office door for 1 hour classes once per week

OR CONTACT the Library at 217-784-5343

Training will take place on Library computers – Bring your laptop if you prefer.

Be empowered to use the internet to do research.
Email with friends & family/See grandchildren on Facebook.
Shop on line to find that perfect pair of shoes.
Learn how to download apps and access games and puzzles.
ALSO, let us know if you would like additional training classes ON an iPhone or iPad tablet.



Addison Kerchenfaut, 8th grade (above) and Charlie Kerchenfaut, 6th grade (below) each made the High Honor Roll at the middle school at GibsonCity-Melvin, Sibley Schools. Congrats!!!!

