



# Northminster GAIT

Vol. XXXXII, No.4

April 2008

## Children and Worship in the New Testament

*Pastor Stacey Jones*

As promised last month – this month we are going to explore the role of children in the worship of the New Testament church. In the New Testament, the good news is available to everyone, male or female, Jew or Gentile, adult or child. The message was immediately personified by Jesus Christ's birth. In his ministry, Jesus himself directed his followers to bring children to know and praise him. Furthermore, in the New Testament, the image of a child continues to be used as a powerful metaphor.

Perhaps most importantly, Jesus Christ was born on earth as an infant, personifying dependency and helplessness. At the birth of Jesus, Scripture records three beautiful songs, each one praising God for bringing Jesus Christ as an infant. Mary's song glorifies the Lord for his mercy toward the humble people (Luke 1:26-55). The angel's song praises God for the birth of a baby, now wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger (Luke 2:14). Simeon's song tells of his wonder and satisfaction upon seeing the child in whom salvation will be accomplished (Luke 2:29-31).

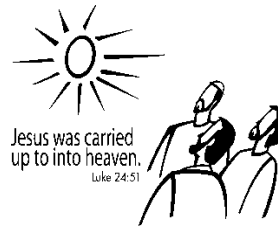
Later, during his ministry, Jesus became indignant when the disciples tried to keep children away out of fear that they would disturb him. The disciples were blind to the worth of even

the youngest ones. Jesus did not just scold adults for forbidding children to approach him, he rebuked them for hindering the children, for neglecting to bring them to himself (Luke 18:15-17).

In the New Testament, too, the image of a child is used as a metaphor for qualities necessary among Christians, particularly trust and receptivity. Jesus Christ said that anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a child will never enter it (Mark 10:13-16). Jesus welcomed spontaneous praise and worship and invited it from little children. As with the Old Testament images of children, how will we be able to understand these New Testament images if the children are not with us?

When worship happens in the fellowship of faith, it becomes a celebration of belonging and participating in that community. We need children with us to complete the family of faith, to make it all that Jesus envisioned for the church. When we begin to include children, we also begin to be open to everyone, as Jesus commanded: the children, the poor, the powerless, the foreigners, the sinners. With a view of worship that includes children in significant ways, our words and actions communicate meaningfully with many different kinds of people, and we can truly become a community.

Because of our traditions and comfortable rituals, often our worship experiences separate the congregation from the rest of the world. We



develop our own language and behavior. We understand and appreciate our meaning but others may feel unwelcome and ignored! Attitudes that exclude children in worship may be clues that worship is closed to other groups as well. Churches that do not include children in meaningful worship may be ingrown and unwilling to include people different from themselves.

What about us – do we welcome children in our worship – all of our worship? Yes, children are active and talkative, but they are still important members of our worship community. This month, welcome the children around you to worship!

Next month – Children can experience faith.

### **Visiting Theologian at UCC April 5<sup>th</sup>**

*Submitted by Arlene Jutting*

Dr. Diana Butler Bass will be the visiting theologian at UCC-Congregational, Sixth and Kellogg, April 5<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Bass holds a Ph.D. in religious history from Duke Univ., has conducted a number of studies on vital mainline Protestant churches, and is the author of six books. She will develop the theme “The Practicing Congregation: Imagining a New Old Church,” exploring the cultural changes that have impacted mainline churches; discussing the ways vital congregations are responding to these changes and stimulating renewal; examining cultural, political, and social justice commitments in mainline congregations; and sharing the ways these commitments shape the future of the church. Presentations are scheduled from 9 a.m.-noon and 1-3 p.m. Laypersons and clergy are welcome, and time will be allowed for questions and discussion. The only set charge is for lunch (\$7.50) and reservations are required. There is no registration fee but a donation would be appreciated to continue this program annually. Please call the church office (515-232-9323) or e-mail [uccames@midiaowa.net](mailto:uccames@midiaowa.net) to make reservations for lunch

## **NPC Women Host Collegiate Presbyterian Women and Korean Women**

*Submitted by Jan Beran*

April 28 the fireside room will be filled with wonderful aromas, vibrant laughter and lively conversations. Our church women will host our sister congregation, Collegiate Presbyterian, and the women of the Korean Christian Reformed congregation which worships at Northminster. All women of the congregation are invited to join at 6:00, bring a salad of some type, on Monday, April 28 in the fireside room. Invite a friend from our congregation or a friend who may not be a member of another congregation.

Our program features Charlie Flick sharing his experiences working with the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance teams in the Katrina stricken areas of Louisiana and Mississippi.



## **Synod School**

*Pastor Stacey Jones*

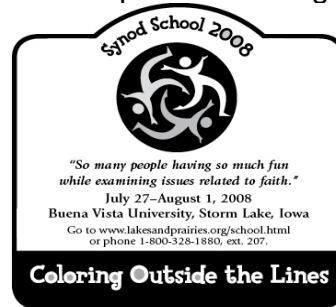
Did you know that one of the primary activities of Synods is education? Did you know that our Synod holds one of the last existing Synod Schools and it does it VERY VERY WELL. Last year there were over 600 people in attendance!

Synod School is held every summer – currently up at Buena Vista College. This is a wonderful vacation opportunity for families and singles alike. You will meet 100's of other Presbyterians from over 6 states all together to worship and learn more about their faith as well as practical everyday living. They have classes for EVERYONE from new-born up.

Here are some courses they are offering this summer:

- Between the Old and the New Testament
- Jubilee: Luke's Gospel for the Poor
- Bible Study for Dummies
- Braided Wool Rugs
- Fly Tying
- Stained Glass
- Understanding the Crucifixion
- Marilynne Robinson's Gilead
- Darth Vader, Lord Voldemort and the Beast: How modern fantasy can help us understand the Bible
- Muggles, Moderates, and Melchizedek
- Forgiveness: theological themes, psychological process
- Introduction to Islam
- Mental Illness: a challenge to the church
- Praying in color
- Toward a prairie spirituality
- Distinctly Presbyterian
- Circle Songs
- Handbells
- Music on my mind
- Faith, money and relationship
- Intro to Excel
- Puppets in the church
- Designing a Newsletter
- Fly fishing
- Belly dancing
- Ultimate sports
- Yoga: vacation style
- Juggling: the world's most creative sport
- A year in your garden
- From water to wine
- Ministry of Hospitality
- Basic electrical repair for the homeowner
- Getting in shape fiscally
- In the midst of chaos: family life as spiritual practice
- Beginning Spanish
- The religion of baseball

These are just a few of the possible courses and the youth do a youth group gathering all of their own. I have Registration booklets and would be more than happy to give you one. We attended last year and plan to do it again!



## Good Neighbor Emergency Assistance Update

*Submitted by Mary Jo Larsen*

April is Good Neighbor Awareness Month. Here is an update and you will see more in the Sunday bulletins during April.

A lot is going on at 508 Kellogg these days. You might recall seeing a short paragraph in the March 16 bulletin about our current director, Tamaria Wright, resigning.

She has promised to stay on through the end of April. Her career change will see her working with women in prison as they transition into society upon their release. This is a great opportunity for her as she will also promote this model to other states. She already has plans to visit Gov. Arnold S. in California and with the Michigan governor.

The Good Neighbor Board wishes her the best. As Tamaria exits, the board hopes to hire the next director full time. This has been a goal for quite some time. It is also an act of faith. Funding has always been an issue. ASSET funding will help with programs and services but not for salary expense. This is where NPC, as a member congregation, needs to step up, (along with our other 23 member congregations). We need to keep Good Neighbor Emergency in mind at all times.

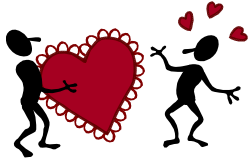
Emergencies don't just happen during the cold weather, in fact April tends to be the busiest month for utility shut offs. Rental problems come up any time of the year and food vouchers are always needed.

Consider an extra donation, offer to help in the office, donate office supplies, help at the next fundraiser. There are many possibilities. Call the GNEA office at 294-1449 or stop in at 508 Kellogg, or ask me. There are many opportunities for you to be a Good Neighbor. Thank you, Mary Jo Larsen

## Connect After School Update

*Submitted by Karen Thompson*

NPC's Valentine Lunches were a big hit with the Connect group on February 12. After swimming at ISU, all 26 students (and 5 adults) received lunch sacks adorned with valentines from the Northminster Sunday school children, and filled with food and decorated cookies prepared by members of the Goin' Like 60s.



On May 20, you're invited to join the fun as the group gathers at Inis Grove to grill hotdogs, roast marshmallows, play games and "purchase" gifts with their good behavior points at the end-of-year auction.



Helpers are still needed to grill, provide food & condiments, or add to the fun (dachunds welcome). Please sign up on the sheet at the kiosk, call Karen Thompson at 232-8430 or email [kccthom@gmail.com](mailto:kccthom@gmail.com).

## Presbyterian Border Mission Trip

*Submitted by Jan Beran*

Brochures can be found on the kiosk in the gathering space. The dates are January 3-8 to join with other Presbyterians from North Central Iowa to learn about living on the border in Arizona and Mexico. The week long experience will be directed by Mark Adams, a PC(USA) missionary who works in Frontera de Cristo. To learn more about it you can go to the web. [www.fronteradecristo.org](http://www.fronteradecristo.org). If you have questions, talk to Jan Beran

## Mother's Day Gift Opportunity

*Submitted by Jan Beran*

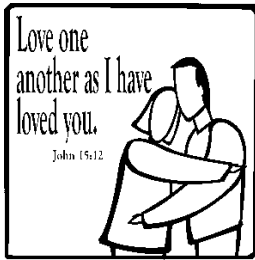


Do you want to honor a mother, sister, daughter or friend on Mother's Day? Don't know what to get of five that she would appreciate? Maybe she doesn't need another trinket or hanging? Maybe she is a person who enjoys helping others? Your Presbyterian Women Group has an answer to your dilemma.

Net Workers Mother's Day Project. It operates like the alternative Gift Market. For ten dollars, you can purchase an insecticide treated mosquito net that will protect pregnant women or children from being bitten by malaria bearing mosquitoes. You will receive an attractive Mother's Day card with a descriptive of the project that you can send to your loved one.

Malaria is the number one killer of children under the age of five in Africa, more than 3000 everyday. Thanks to the generosity of Presbyterians, \$130,000 has been raised since 2001. As Dan Cronin of the Ames Tribune said, "Just think, for ten dollars, I can save someone's life."

Look for more information on the kiosk in the Gathering space and on April 27 and May 4, come to the kiosk to “purchase” your gift.



## The Miracle of Kindness: A Workshop on Caring Relationships

On April 25-26, the Vital Ministry Initiative will present a workshop on the miracle of Kindness. To be held at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Waterloo, IA

The workshop leader will be James R. Kok, the author of: *The Miracle of Kindness, 90% of Caring is just Showing Up, No such Thing as Over the Hill, Waiting for Morning, and more.*

If interested, registration is due by April 18<sup>th</sup>. Please contact the Presbytery of North Central Iowa for more information. 800-383-3617, or go to [www.presbynciowa.org](http://www.presbynciowa.org)



## Jerusalem Marketplace VBS

This year we're transforming our church into a bustling Jerusalem Marketplace. Our Jerusalem Marketplace program will provide fun, memorable Bible-learning activities for kids and adults of all ages. Each day children of all ages will join others to create a small group that's named after one of the twelve tribes of Israel. These family Tribes will come together for singing and then explore traditional Bible-times family life.

They might take part in Synagogue School, play authentic games, or sample Middle Eastern snacks. Children and adults will even explore a Jerusalem marketplace, where they'll become apprentices in the Basket weaving shop and make clay creations in the Pottery Shop.

Jerusalem marketplace is an exciting way for families to learn more about God's love and Jesus' sacrifice. And the best part is that they learn by becoming immersed in authentic Bible-times culture. Families will witness real-life drama in the center of town, chat with shopkeepers about this prophet Jesus, and even discover what the tax collectors know about Jesus. We hope Jerusalem Marketplace will make God's Word very real to the people in our community.

Jerusalem Marketplace begins on Sunday August 3rd with a potluck dinner and continues through Thursday evening August 7th. Pastor Stacey and Lori Sulzberger will be Co-Directing VBS this year.

## VOLUNTEER TO HELP WITH VBS

### Job Descriptions

#### Tribe Leader

Qualifications: be at least 18 years old, love the Lord, love children, like to have fun. Responsibilities: attend a leader-training meeting, attend Bethlehem Village each day, participate in fun activities while shepherding a tribe, arrive 20 minutes early to greet tribe members each day.

#### Village Playground Leader

Related Interests: You'll enjoy leading Village Playground if you enjoy any of the following activities – team sports; outdoor recreational activities, and encouraging others to do their best. Qualifications: love the Lord and children; enjoy playing games, positive, active and energetic; can organize and motivate children and adults. Responsibilities: attending leader training, explain activities, lead four sessions of Village Playground each day.

## Shopkeepers

Related Interests: You'll enjoy being a shopkeeper if you enjoy any of the following activities – working with your hands; arts and crafts projects; working with or leading children. Qualifications: love the Lord and children, enjoy unique arts and crafts projects, believe children can accomplish big tasks, and give clear directions. Responsibilities: attend leader training, maintain dramatic dialogue with kids as they work, help children understand how your shop fits into Bible-times culture, guide hands-on craft projects, play the role of a Bible-times artisan or merchant.

## Drama Team

Related Interests: You'll enjoy being an actor in daily dramas if you enjoy any of the following activities – storytelling; acting or drama; improvisation; and surprising others. Qualifications: love the Lord and children, have a flair for drama and can play a role convincingly, relish a fast paced, exciting atmosphere, and believe in hands-on discovery as a learning technique. Responsibilities: attend leader training, attend rehearsal, play a specific role in a Bible-times drama. Roles we will need: The Wise One, Peter, James, John, Mary Magdalene, Jesus, Rachel, Eleazar, Simeon, Leah, and Hannah.

**Donations Needed...**Keep an eye out at church for donations needed for our VBS – Bethlehem Village – it will take all of us to provide this wonderful experience this year!!!



## Living the Questions – Returns at Last!

We will continue the Living the Questions video study beginning Tuesday April 1st at 11 a.m. here at Northminster. Rev. Barb Gaddis from Collegiate will be the first Theologian leading the discussion. This seven week course will be held on Tuesdays at 11 a.m. The topics to be covered will be: Restoring Relationships; The Prophetic Jesus; Evil, Suffering & A God of Love; The Myth of Redemptive Violence; Practicing Resurrection; Debunking the Rapture; and Reclaiming the World. This is again a Christian Education opportunity in conjunction with Collegiate Presbyterian Church. We hope lots of folks will come and be a part of this important study.

## Presbyterian Camp on Okoboji

### Summer 2008 Opportunities Soakin Up The Sun

“You are the light of the world . . . let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”  
Matthew 5:14, 16

Our Presbytery co-sponsors this Presbyterian Camp and it offers many wonderful opportunities for children and youth during the summer.

**Discovery Camps** for grades 3-4 are week long all around camp experiences offered June 15 though August 2nd.

**Trailblazer Camps** for grades 5-6 offer different themes for each week long sessions such as Night Owls and Sports and Aquatics.

**Adventure Camps** for grades 7-12 also offer different themes each week long session. These themes include: Adventures in Rappelling, Leadership, Canoe Trip and Scuba.

They also offer some special camps such as a musical camp, worship camp, and some short term fun days and weekends for younger children – including pre-school!

Please be sure to pick up a brochure on the kiosk in the gathering space. There is scholarship money available through the Christian Education Committee. Be sure to take full advantage of all that it means to be a connected church!

## **Session Clerk's Report**

### **Statistical Report**

Active Membership Roll:

March 2007 - 237

March 2008 - 235

Active Worship Attendance:

February 2007 - 102

February 2008 - 125

Deaths: Larry Garn, 1/18/08; Jane Axtell, 2/21/08

### **Other Business**

- 1) Approved the NPC Endowment Funds Policy. The Endowment Subcommittee currently consists of Jan Beran, Randall Cutlip, Don McLean, Chad Olson, Don VanHouweling, Stacey Jones.
- 2) Approved the bid from Pro Sound, Ames, to improve the sanctuary sound system.
- 3) Approved the Christian Education Mission Statement
- 4) Approved use of NPC facilities for Ames High School Madrigal Dinner, Dec 4-6, 2008.
- 4) NPC now has one contract for custodial service for the entire facility (Cindy Sobotka and her husband). They report to the Building and Grounds Committee.
- 5) NPC mortgage interest rate was lowered from 6.9% to 6.45% as of 3/1/08; lowering monthly payments from \$7,409 to \$7,190.
- 5) Arlene Jutting will assist with worship music until the organist position is filled.  
Thanks Arlene.

## **April Accolytes**

The upcoming schedule for candlelighters is as follows:

April 6	Steven & Natalie Lawrence
April 13	Brad & Lucas Johnson
April 20	Daniel & David Vigil
April 27	Ben Perrin & Andrea Daley
May 4	Connor Olson & Ben Sulzberger

THANKS TO EACH OF YOU FOR YOUR HELP WITH OUR WORSHIP SERVICES.

## Happenings in April

**April 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Happy Birthday Doris Goering!

**April 28<sup>th</sup>:** Happy Birthday Grace Myers!

**April 6<sup>th</sup>:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter: Acts 2:14a, 36-41; psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; 1 Peter 1:17-23; Luke 24:13-35

**April 8<sup>th</sup>:** Happy Birthday Isaac Maffett! Happy Birthday Debbie Johnson!

**April 9<sup>th</sup>:** Happy Birthday Greg Daley!

GAIT Deadline for **May** is Monday, **April 21<sup>st</sup>**. Please e-mail your articles to [rpcykp@msn.com](mailto:rpcykp@msn.com) or put them in the GAIT editor's box next to the church office

**April 13<sup>th</sup>:** 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter; Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 23; 1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10

**April 19<sup>th</sup>:** Happy Birthday Pastor Stacey!

**April 20<sup>th</sup>:** 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter; Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31; 1-5, 15-16; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14

**April 21<sup>st</sup>:** Happy Birthday Brad Johnson and Christine Donelson!

**April 23<sup>rd</sup>:** Happy Birthday Tom Brandau!

**April 24<sup>th</sup>:** Happy Birthday Natalie Lawrence!

**April 27<sup>th</sup>:** 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter; Acts 17:22-31; psalm 66:8-20; 1 Peter 3:13-14; John 14:15-21