



February 18

Campership meal at noon

March 11

MYF pie auction and lunch

April 1

Easter Sunday breakfast and worship service

April 8-15

Family Promise rotation

April 14

Goodbye concert for Betsy and Bruce

April 20-21

MSMC Faith and Life Forum, LaJunta

April 22

Pastor Betsy's last Sunday



FROM THE



PASTOR

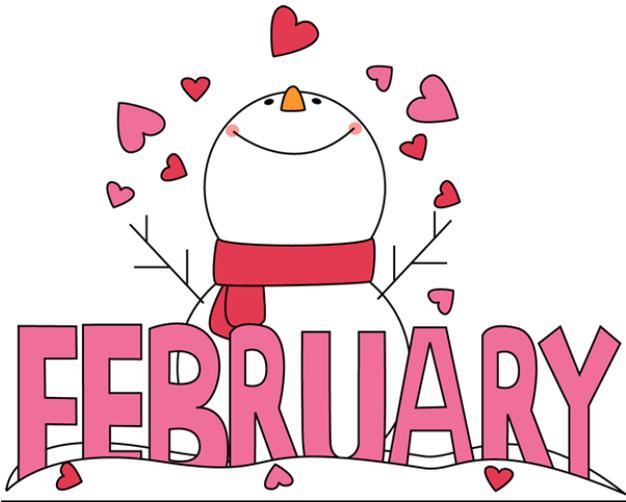
I recently wrote a blog post for Mennonite Church USA entitled “Cherishing the gift: thoughts on leaving the pastorate.” As my reflections this month I’d like to share an edited version of that blog post with you. I wrote:

I never expected to be a pastor. However, God had other plans. Now, ten and a half years later I am looking back on my time of being a pastor. It feels like a time-out-of-time in terms of my life trajectory. Something so unexpected. A marvelous, precious gift.

How has it been a gift? Let me count the ways....

In seminary we were told, the best thing you can do as a pastor is to love your people. *Ok, I can use that as a strategy*, I thought. I came into the job determined to love. What I didn’t anticipate was how real, how deep, how very God-inspired that love would turn out to be. You dear folks at GHMC have become “my” people. I know you. I care about you. I enjoy you. I hurt with you. I struggle with you. This is my job, yes, but it is so much than that. It is my heart. And though my heart will break when I leave, this love is and has been a precious gift.

It is a reciprocal love, of course. You have also loved me! You have held me, supported me, encouraged me and opened yourselves up to me. It is a wonder how, as a pastor, one is invited in. You are supposed to show up and when you do, you are welcomed. It is meaningful that you are there. At first I was uncertain about this. But time after time, after I’d spent time in a hospital room or around a kitchen table, folks would say, “Thanks for being there, Pastor. It meant a lot to me.” I began to trust that in these situations God was

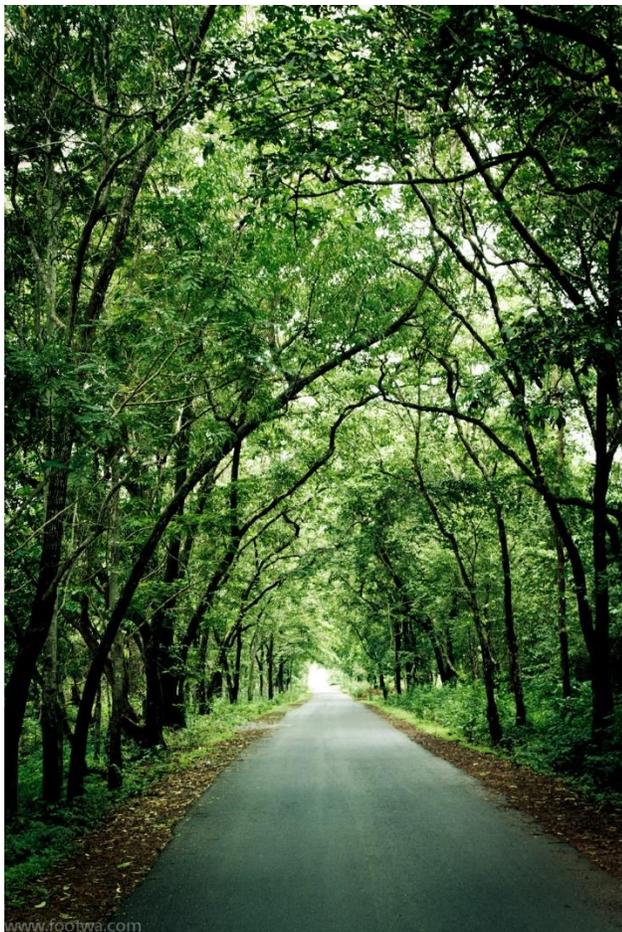


ANNIVERSARIES:

1 - Steve & Sharon Jackson

BIRTHDAYS:

4 - Huck Hale
9 - Ken Zook
12 - George Hussey
20 - Stan Eigsti
27 - Audrey Ruth



From the Pastor, continued

and would be working through me. What a gift it has been to be God with skin on.

I have received the gift of gratitude, pressed down, shaken together, running over. One thing that plagues us pastors, or at least it plagued me, is uncertainty always about who will show up, who will participate, who will be present. Church is a voluntary organization, after all. And of course there were times when it became obvious that whatever it was I was trying to do, was not a high priority. But for the most part, you folks here at GHMC are all in. This is your church; you own it. I am grateful for your willingness to say “yes!” For your creative thinking about our life together. For your generosity. For your commitment to being here – most of the time. I am grateful for your participation in worship and in service together. At GHMC I received the gift of providing leadership for folks who value and are personally invested in this joint venture of being a faithful community of Jesus Christ. For this I am very grateful.

And, oh, the sweetness of being able to spend time immersed in scripture and prayer. As part of my job! Of course this is directly related to the fact that each week (almost) I need to prepare a sermon. At first I wondered how on earth I would do this. How would I find something fresh and inspiring to say week after week? I didn’t know then that the freshness and the inspiration would happen to me. It’s true: It did. Over and over and over again. At first I was amazed when just the right story or article or event or inspiration would show up as I was thinking about where I would go with a passage or a theme. But this happened so consistently that after a while I began to trust that it would, and it has. I received the gift of knowing very concretely that God’s Spirit is and will be at work in me, in my work, in my life. Glory be!

I never expected to be a pastor. But I thank God that’s what I became for these past 10 and a half years. What a wonderful gift it has been.

With love, your pastor,

Betsy

Lent 2018

Between Me & You

The 40-day season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and ends on Easter Sunday. This year Ash Wednesday is on February 14 and Easter is April 1.

Our theme for this Lenten season is "Between Me & You." It's all about covenants.

Covenants of various kinds are found throughout the Old and New Testaments. Promises are made and broken, narrowed,

expanded, and reimagined. The covenants that God makes with the people of God provide hints at the nature of the relationship intended between God and creation, as well as guidelines for how we are to relate to God and to one another.

We start the Lenten journey discovering how vastly inclusive God's covenant is and that it is extended from generation to generation. As humans, though, we struggle with barriers getting in the way and are in need of guidelines and eventually a new covenant. As we approach Holy Week, we are invited to lay down the barrier of our preconceived understandings and expectations, and to realize the good news that in Jesus' death and resurrection there is no longer anything in between God and us.

The theme "Between Me & You" is multifaceted. It refers to the relationship between us and God; it also refers to the relationship between people, and the relationship between people and the rest of creation. Covenants are made between two parties, and sometimes things get in between those parties. As humans, we may struggle with maintaining our relationships and commitments. We bind and blind ourselves with limitations and barriers. Like Mary standing at the empty tomb on Easter morning, we find ourselves amazed, if still a bit confused and disoriented, at the new reality of nothing between us.

Lent #1

February 18: Me & You & the Creatures Too

Scripture: Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

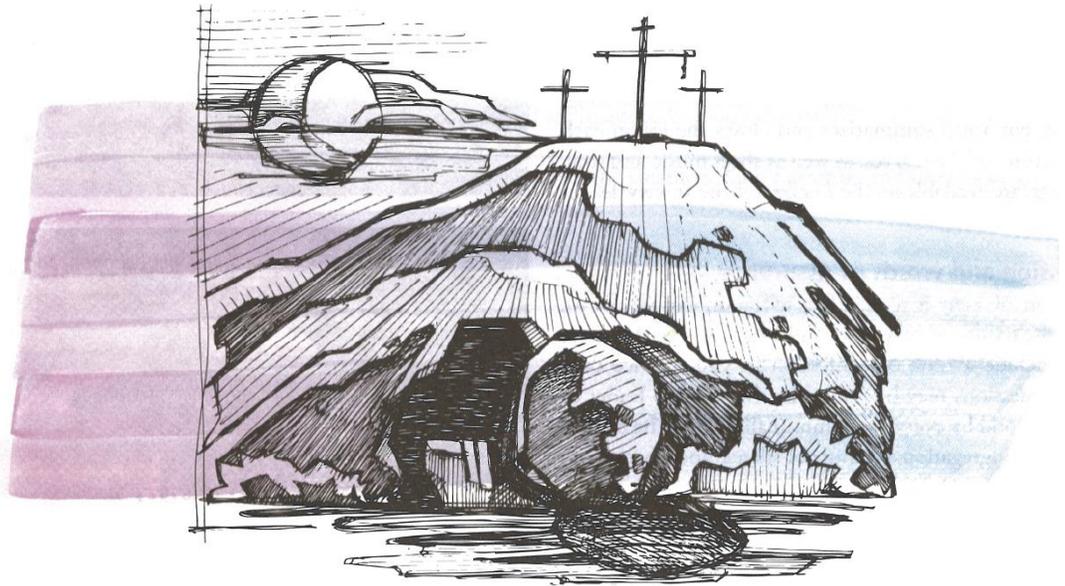
Focus statement: Between Me & You and all the creatures, God's promise and God's love grow wider.

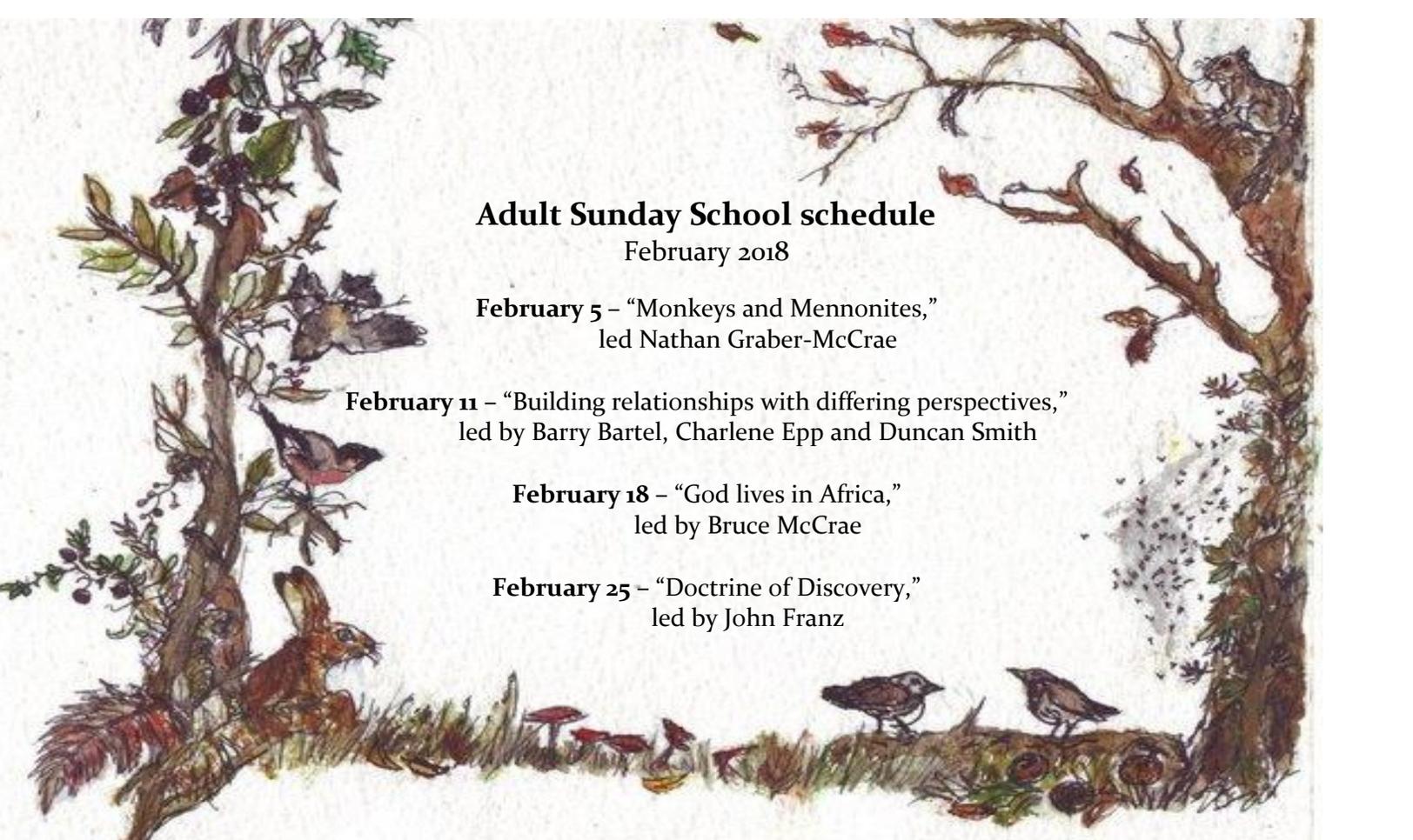
Lent #2

February 25: Me & You & the Generations after You

Scripture: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38

Focus statement: Between Me & You and generation after generation, God's promise and God's love grow longer





Adult Sunday School schedule

February 2018

February 5 – “Monkeys and Mennonites,”
led Nathan Graber-McCrae

February 11 – “Building relationships with differing perspectives,”
led by Barry Bartel, Charlene Epp and Duncan Smith

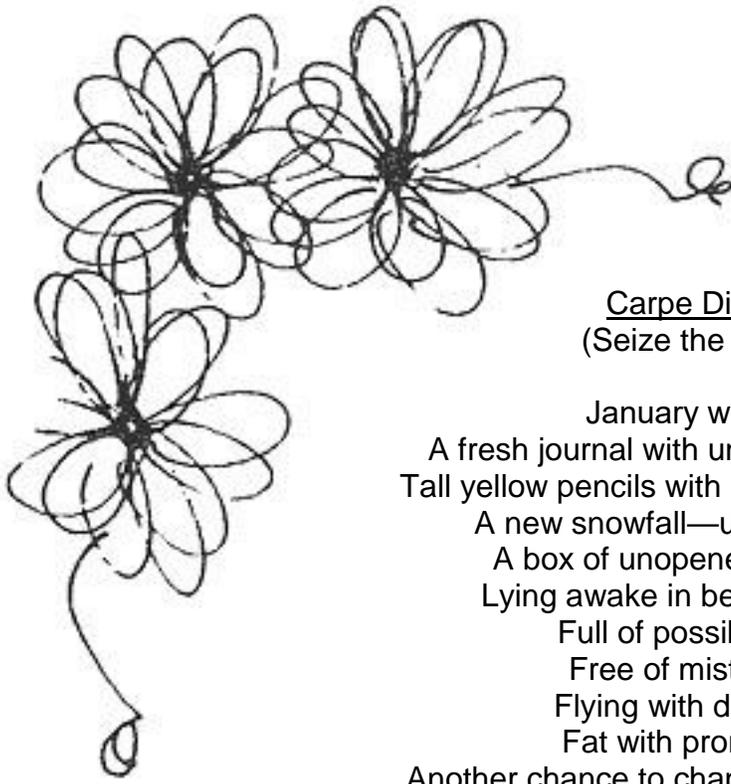
February 18 – “God lives in Africa,”
led by Bruce McCrae

February 25 – “Doctrine of Discovery,”
led by John Franz

Prayer for Black History Month

Spirit of Abundance, God of Grace, Mother of Hope,
We pause now to remember those stories that are all around us,
But so often passed over,
Those stories that when told are shared because
Of what someone is, not who they are.
This month in our nation's character
Is Black History month.
Help us to realize that Black history is
All our histories.
May the day come when these stories
Are so wildly taught that no month need
Be separately divided.
We know this day will not come until we as a people
Make different choices...
There are so many beautiful stories needing to be told.
And we need to get the chance to hear them.

- Author Unknown



Carpe Diem
(Seize the Day)

January was...
A fresh journal with unmarked pages.
Tall yellow pencils with needle sharp tips.
A new snowfall—unblemished.
A box of unopened crayons.
Lying awake in bed, at dawn.
Full of possibilities,
Free of mistakes,
Flying with dreams,
Fat with promises,
Another chance to change for the better.

February is...
A few journal entries, scribbled thoughts.
Tallish yellow pencils with blunted ends.
Rabbit tracks across the snow.
A favorite crayon with rounded tip.
A sleepy walk downstairs for a cuppa.
Recreating possibilities,
Rebounding from mistakes,
Reigniting dreams,
Renewing promises,
Another chance to change for the better.

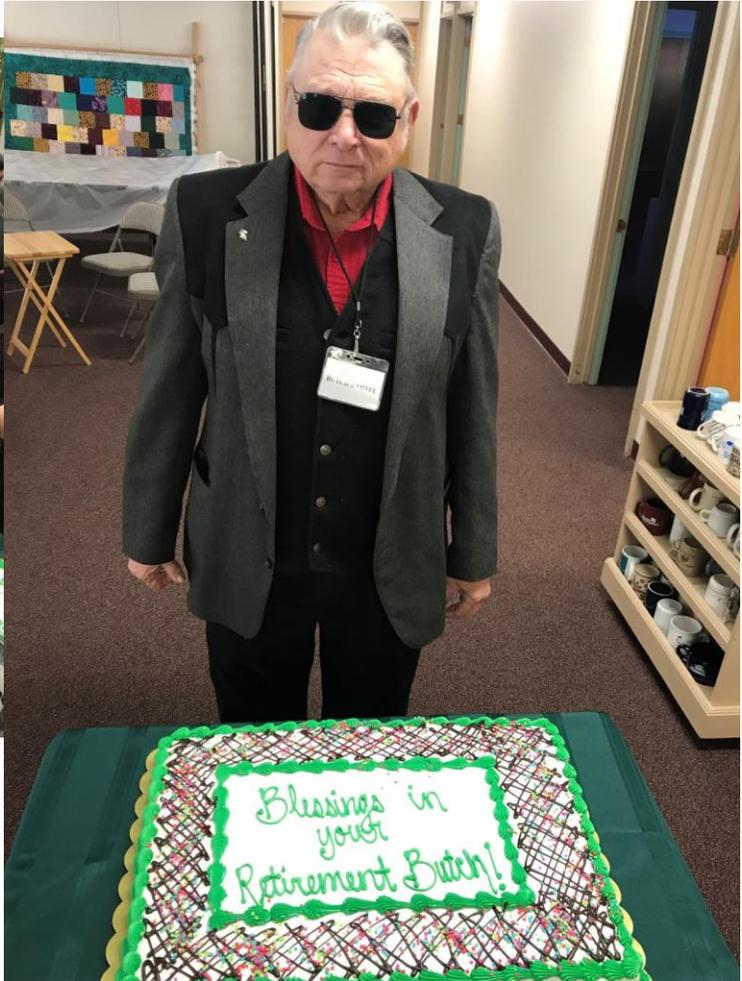
Every month shows wear and tear.
Every month reflects new thoughts.
Every month births new dreams.
Every month sees promises kept.
There's always a chance to change for the better.

Any new day is another new chance.
Carpe Diem!

— Peggy Owen



Retirement Celebration for Butch Bartel



Youth Cookie Decorating!



Game Night!



February 2018 Calendar

Thursday, February 1	Bible Study at Doris', 7 pm
Wednesday, February 7 Thursday, February 8	Facilities Team meeting, 7 pm Bible Study at Doris', 7 pm
Monday, February 12 Thursday, February 15 Saturday, February 17	Outreach Team meeting at Doris', 7 pm Bible Study at Doris', 7 pm Men's Breakfast, 9 am
Sunday, February 18 Monday, February 19 Tuesday, February 20 Wednesday, February 21 Thursday, February 22	Campership Meal, noon Bipolar/Depression support group, 7 pm Daytime Mennonite Women, 9:30 am Elders meeting, 7 pm Bible Study at Doris', 7 pm

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Pastor Betsy Headrick McCrae

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Hours: Tuesday – Friday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Kate Rempel

Administrative Assistant

Office Hours: Tuesday, 8 am – 2 pm

Friday, 8 am – 2 pm

Our Mission

To be a faithful community of Jesus Christ

Our Vision

Empowered by the Holy Spirit,
We envision growth;
building a community of faith which practices
constructive responses to conflict;
and, in a world driven by fear, promoting a
Christian voice of love and nonviolence.

NEWS & NOTES

Compiled by Betsy Headrick McCrae and Kate Rempel

Layout by Kate Rempel