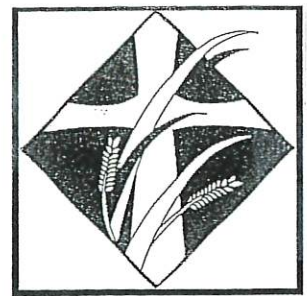


August, 2026

The Prairie Press



Volume 18, No. 12

Rev. Kimmie Briggs Explains Outreach Foundation Goals

The Outreach Foundation has a stated focus of "Fueling the Global Mission of Christ by growing trusted relationships," as they work in over 60 countries around the world, "To fuel the global mission of Christ."

Representing Outreach, Rev. Kimmie Briggs led Worship here on June 28, explaining her organization and some of her experiences and hopes.

Rev. Briggs and her husband Will recently moved to Madison, but she may not be spending too much time there, as her travel with Outreach has taken her to Egypt, Lebanon, Israel, and Iran in recent years.

"Traveling to foreign lands and meeting so many wonderful people is a great part of my job," she said.

For 45 years, Outreach has en-

gaged in a beautiful, simple, and profoundly transformative mission, wrote Rev. Bruce. "They connect Christians in the United States with church partners around the world," he added.

In beginning her remarks, she said, "My job here today is to share with you what God is doing all over the world."

"Even in places where we least expect it, God is at work, and the Church is on the move," she added.

She cited the familiar text, John 3:16, "For God so loved the world..." and expanded on the

(Continued on page 8)



Rev. Kimmie Briggs

Pot Luck, Water Ski Show Outing Set For Aug. 2

by Julie Engebretson

Would you like to join friends from church on Sunday, Aug. 2 at 4:30 for a potluck picnic, which will be held at the warming house in Traxler Park?

Following the picnic, we will be walking the short distance to the stands (where we have reserved seats) for the National Anthem at 6:45 and the Rock Aqua Jays show at 7 pm.

Since 1961, a group of enthusiastic water skiers have come together in Janesville's Traxler Park to demonstrate their skills and also to entertain and amaze spectators.

The Rock Aqua Jays was formed and named by Tom Kuhlo, Wayne Manthey, and Roger Sterk. Their original club consisted of 25 skiers, and they focused mainly on 3-event skiing, but they also performed in a few ski shows.

(Continued on page 7)



This is a photo from the Outreach Foundation's pamphlet showing some of the children in the Middle East that they are working with.

In This Issue

Letters To The Editor
Page 3

ChurchUnited Night
Page 5

Picnic, Aqua Jays
Page 7

Donuts For Dad
Pages 10

Guest Musicians
Page 11



Serving As The Body Of Christ

by Rev. Bruce

Our Nominating Committee will begin their work in August with a discernment process seeking God's wisdom in selecting Elders and Deacons.

Christian leadership is not about titles—it's about servant leadership shaped by God's Spirit.

A church community grows when leaders and members commit to our shared faith, creating a way of life together that reflects Christ.

We begin with our Christian identity; together, we are the Body of Christ:

"Now you are the Body of Christ and individually members of it."

—1 Corinthians 12:27

The Apostle Paul reminds the community that, just as a physical human body relies on diverse parts to function, the church relies on the unique gifts and contributions of every single person.

Every member serves a purpose in the community, meaning no single contribution is less important than another. In many congregations, many members allow a few

to do most of the work—the "80/20 principle." This occurs when a small group of dedicated people do most of the work.

I once served in a church where I think the ration was 95/5.

This situation, however, can lead to burn out. While we celebrate those who serve, we encourage others to become involved. Ministry must be shared and, in healthy churches, the circle of participation is broadened over time.

When people get involved, they grow in their faith and develop their leadership skills. When we work together, we share in discerning God's direction for our common life. A church becomes vibrant when leadership is shared.

Jesus led by example. He served others as a servant leader. Jesus washed the Disciples' feet; He empowered the disciples to serve, and He celebrated their successes.

They shared the burdens of leadership and grew in their faith and understanding of God's love. To live effectively as a Christian community, everyone is needed.

Maybe it's time for you:

- To hear Christ's call to be an Elder or a Deacon;
- To share your knowledge of what has been done in the past;
- To serve on a committee to help the leaders organize an event or activity;
- To pray for our church leaders and the ministry of each committee;
- To embody the Gospel in your daily life.

When we commit to walking together in faith, Christ becomes visible in how we love, forgive, and serve.

If you want the Nominating Committee to consider you to be-

come an Elder or a Deacon, or if you think someone is ready to serve, let a committee member know. Please pray for the committee's time of discernment and for members to accept nominations to serve.

Nominating Committee: Alison Fish, Cindy Kuter, Richard Johnston, Tammy Porsch, Jeri Torpy, Elder Tom Wolfe, and Deacon Chris Stried.

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Bruce

Great Ends of the Church

We will continue with The Great Ends of the Church in August. As we plan, lead, and serve, it's helpful to return to the "Six Great Ends of the Church" to guide our ministry and mission.

These statements remind us "why" we exist and "what" our service in faith is meant to accomplish for Christ's Kingdom..

1. **The Proclamation of the Gospel for the Salvation of Humankind** Everything begins with the Good News of Jesus Christ. Our worship, teaching, and witness point people toward God's grace.
2. **The Shelter, Nurture, and Spiritual Fellowship of the Children of God** The church is a home, which offers belonging, care, and spiritual growth for all ages.
3. **The Maintenance of Divine Worship** We gather to glorify God through Word and Sacrament, shaping our identity and mission.
4. **The Preservation of the Truth** We seek wisdom rooted in Scripture, guided by the Holy Spirit, and expressed

(Continued on page 5)

How To Contact Us

The Prairie Press is a publication of the congregation of the Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church.

8605 County Rd. A
Janesville WI 53546

(608) 752-1172

office@rockprairiechurch.org

Visit our web site at
rockprairiechurch.org

Letters To The Editor

Dear Editor:

Thank you Rock Prairie for your recent wonderful donation. Our children love their cereal!

We really appreciate your bringing in this lovely donation!

Your continued support is appreciated!

Sincerely,

Pat Chapet and
The Board of Directors,
Whitewater Community
Food Pantry

Dear Editor:

For those of you who may not have been in Worship when Brittany DeLao spoke to the congregation about the YWCA Alternatives Program recently, I want to remind you that we will be collecting items and money to give to the her program through the month of August.

Please bring your donations to the Fellowship over the next four weeks.

Alternatives To Violence assists domestic violence victims in imminent danger with a 33-bed shelter, help with basic needs, and other supports offered.

The crisis shelter helps those fleeing domestic abuse from intimate partners. Beds, linens, food, clothing, and personal care items are all provided. These are the

kinds of items that you could donate, or you could write a check and let the shelter's personnel do the shopping.

Additional services provided by the Alternatives Program include legal advocacies, safety planning, case management, support groups, child/youth service, and referrals for additional needs.

Cathy Wagner,
Missions Committee

Dear Editor:

Thank you for your generous donation to Agrace and for your many years of faithful support provided to our mission.

Your congregation's commitment has touched countless lives, making it possible for us to continue serving our community with care and compassion.

The kindness you demonstrate through your giving reflects the deep spirit of service that defines your congregation. We are blessed to have your support.

With gratitude,
Lisa Dahlgren
Agrace Foundation

Dear Editor:

A decision was made to cancel our Vacation Bible School, which had been tentatively planned for early August.

Unfortunately, we were unable to recruit an adequate number of volunteer teachers and helpers; too many people had schedule con-

flicts this year.

As the saying goes, "It takes a village to raise a child," and our village has dwindled to a few houses.

We are hopeful that we will be able to get things rolling earlier next year so folks can get VBS on their calendars.

We appreciate the folks who had volunteered to help us this year and are hopeful that they can assist us in hosting an exciting, fun-filled experience during the summer of 2027.

--Kathy Crandall

To everyone who . . .

Puts the grocery cart back, smiles at strangers, waves people ahead even when it's their turn, practices empathy for others, actively listens with the intention to understand, is kind to animals, notices the small things, offers to help, isn't afraid to ask people if they are okay, sends the "Did you make it home?" text, and feels and expresses compassion when someone else is hurting.
Thank you. The world needs more of you.

Letter Policy

The PRAIRIE PRESS welcomes letters from our members and friends.

We will print them all, as space permits.

Send or email or drop off your letter to the Church office,

attn: **The PRAIRIE PRESS**

Please continue to collect aluminum cans.

Drop them off in the bins behind the partition near the main entrance.

The cans are recycled regularly, and the money is sent to the Living Water Mission.

The requested item for the Food Pantry Cart for August is peanut butter and jelly.

God is Good! Let's fill up the cart and help our less fortunate and struggling neighbors as we show God's love by sharing our own blessings.



August 2026

August 2026

September 2026

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Jul 26	27	28	29	30	31	Aug 1
2 9:30am Worship - summer schedule 5:00pm Potluck Dinner 7:00pm Aqua Jays Water	3 2:00pm Legacy Fund Meeting 5:45pm Mission Committee Meeting	4	5	6	7	8
9 9:30am Worship - summer schedule	10 1:30pm Nominating Committee Meeting	11 6:30pm Worship Committee Meeting 6:30pm Worship 6:30pm Christian Ed	12 6:30pm Outreach & Communication Committee Meeting	13	14 10:30am Prairie Pals	15
16 9:30am Communion Served 9:30am Worship - summer schedule	17	18 6:30pm Session Meets	19 9:30am Deacons Meeting	20	21	22
23 9:30am Worship - summer schedule	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 9:30am Worship - summer schedule	31 10:00am Bazaar Committee Meeting	Sep 1	2	3	4	5

Rev. Bruce . . . (Continued from page 2)

through thoughtful theology.

5. **The Promotion of Social Righteousness** We work for justice, compassion, and peace—living out Christ's call to love our neighbors.
6. **The Exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the World** Our life together should reflect God's reign—showing hope, reconciliation, generosity, and joy.

These Great Ends help us to:

- Prioritize what really matters;

- Evaluate ministries with clarity;
- Stay grounded in our Reformed identity;
- Lead with purpose rather than busyness.

These are not goals to check off—they are a “way of life” for a faithful Christian community. Come and explore how Christ calls us to serve.

Pastor's Schedule

Rev. Bruce will observe the Sabbath on Aug. 7, 14, 21, and

28.

Preaching Schedule

**Aug. 2, 10th Sunday
After Pentecost**

**The shelter, nurture, and
spiritual fellowship of the
children of God**

*Acts 2:41-47; **John 1:1-4.

**“Shelter and Nurture
in Community”**

**Aug. 9, 11th Sunday
After Pentecost**

**The Maintenance
Of Divine Worship**

*Psalm 150; **John 4:16-26.

“Worship in Spirit and Truth”

**Aug. 16, 12th Sunday
After Pentecost,
Communion**

**The Preservation
of the Truth**

*2 Timothy 3:10-17; **2 Timothy 4:1-8.

**“Truth, Nothing But
God's Truth”**

**Aug. 23, 13th Sunday
After Pentecost**

**The Promotion of Social
Righteousness**

*Micah 6:6—8; **Matthew 25:31-41.

“Promoting Faithful Living”

**Aug. 30, 14th Sunday
After Pentecost**

**The Exhibition of the
Kingdom of Heaven
to the World**

*Matthew 5:14-20;
**Revelations 21:1-5.

“Kingdom Vision”

(Continued on page 9)

Area Church Gathering Set For August

(Rev. Bruce recently received this in the mail, and he asked me to pass it along to readers of the PRAIRIE PRESS.—Ed's note))

Hey fellow pastors and church leaders in the Stateline area!

I believe one of the most powerful things we can do as the Church is come together and point people to Jesus.

I'd like to invite you and your church family to our next ChurchUnited Night on Thurs-

day, Aug. 27, at 6:30 at the Marv Pavilion in downtown Janesville.

My hope is that this isn't just another worship night but a spark that reminds us we're better together.

As churches from across the Stateline gather to worship and pray, my prayer is that God would strengthen our unity and deepen our shared mission to make Jesus known in our communities.





by Frank Liston

In Quarter 2, the Legacy Fund received contributions totaling \$22,627. The newly established Missions Restricted Fund accounted for \$20,500, while \$2,127 was given in the Unrestricted category.

As of June 30, the Fund's total assets stood at \$165,166, comprised of:

- \$2,576 in checking;
- \$39,318 in certificates of deposit;
- \$123,272 in mutual funds.

Gratitude for Contributions

We extend heartfelt thanks to the following donors who contributed to the Legacy Fund during the 2nd Quarter:

- Julie and Bob Fulton;
- Elaine and Bo Plank;
- Kay and Tom Ward;
- Judy Jaggard;
- Lindi and Bob Paull;
- Mary Ann and Richard Greene;
- Karen Johnston;
- Sandi Fogle;
- Char Behling;
- Martha Johnson;
- Robin and Tom Rios;
- Julie and Dave Engebretson;
- Katie Blija;
- Virginia Pavek;
- Ramona and Roger Henke;
- Rev. Bruce and Krista Jones;
- Kathy Crandall;
- Bonnie and Rich White;
- Cathy Wagner;
- Mary Ellen Ahrens;
- Linda and Terry Lyons;
- Gail and Tom Wolfe.

In addition, contributions from

Meals On Wheels Delivers Again

by Judy Jaggard

A big thank you to all our Rock Prairie members and friends who answered the call to deliver Meals on Wheels this June and July.

Our recent two-week schedule was in late June and early July.

There were some challenges these two weeks, including excessive heat, road closures, and a

several non-members were received in memory of Donna Liston, Earl Marquis, and Betty Kuranz.

Ways To Contribute

Support the Legacy Fund through these options:

- **A Qualified Charitable Donation (QCD):** Through an individual retirement Account (IRA);
- **Cash Contributions:** Gifts of an amount are welcome at any time;
- **Through Your Will:** Designate "Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church Legacy Fund" as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy.
- **Real Estate and Securities:** Transfer ownership of real estate, securities, or other appreciated assets to "Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church Legacy Fund."

Contributing to the Legacy Fund is a meaningful way to express your faith and commitment to the church's mission.

Your donation helps ensure the church's mission. Your donation helps ensure the church's work continues to thrive.

Thank you for your continued support!

Note: Always consult a qualified tax advisor to ensure compliance with regulations and to minimize applicable tax benefits.

storm siren right in the middle of deliveries.

In spite of the challenges, however, we persevered and completed all meal deliveries. A word of gratitude to all who helped would be appreciated.

Those people who delivered meals included Kay Ward, Eileen Howarth, Kathy and Brandon Crandall, Julie and Bob Fulton, Lindi and Bob Paull, Karen and Richard Johnston, Pat and Dale Rozeboom, Judy Jaggard, Sue Kumlein, and Cindy Busch.

We're still looking for some "new blood" to carry on the wonderful tradition that we have developed here at Rock Prairie with the Meals on Wheels Program.

Mercy Hospital requires a short video program and some paperwork for all delivery persons, but it is not too painful.

If you think helping deliver meals might be something you might enjoy, please speak with one of our volunteers and keep an eye out for our next delivery dates that will be coming up in the late fall.

There are also other weeks where drivers are needed to fill in on some routes, so you might want to let me know and you can become a part of the substitute driver listing.

Please consider joining in this wonderful way we can continue our Rock Prairie mission within our own community.

I'd also like to thank all the MOW drivers who were able to attend the updated MOW training session at Mercy on July 17.

Those who gathered with about 25 other drivers and enjoyed ice cream treats included Eileen Howarth, Judy Jaggard, Martha Johnson, Lindi Paull, Bob Paull, Jerry Peterson, Chris Stried, Ed Stried, and Kay Ward.

Picnic, Water Ski Show . . .

(Continued from page 1)

In the last 65 years, they have developed into a club that has won 24 national ski championships.

They have also collaborated with other ski clubs to achieve barefoot pyramids and a 93-person pyramid that earned places in the Guinness Book of World Records

Team members have performed in China, Australia, and in the World Water Ski Show Tournament.

In short . . . they are really good!!

The 2026 show is based on the movie Monsters Inc. and is called "SkiTropolis." When the door to SkiTropolis is accidentally opened, skiers enter the monster world, creating a lot of fun (and a little chaos.)

It is up to Mike, Sully, Boo, the CEO of SkiTropolis, the mini monsters, and the crowd's energy to find the right door to get the skiers back to the factory.

The Rock Aqua Jays are truly a gem of our city. And seeing their show is an exciting and fun experience—we're sure everyone will enjoy the show!

Hot dogs, tableware, and drinks will be provided for the picnic by the Fellowship Committee. Plan to arrive at 4:30 to hear from some members of the show about the show and their experiences.

We look forward to sharing the evening with you. Feel free to bring friends.

And if you didn't sign up earlier, come anyway. There will be plenty of food, and we'll get you in to see the water ski show.

Picnic



Sunday - August 2, 2026

Potluck at **4:30 pm** Aqua Jays Show at **7:00 p.m.**

Traxler Park Warming House, Janesville

ROCK AQUA JAYS



RPPC August Birthdays

August 5 Mary Zordel

August 15 Nancy Nesbitt

August 15 David Ott

August 17 Vicki Solomon-
McLain

August 21 Kathy Gibbs

August 30 Georgia
Waterman

If you have ever baked or purchased cookies for Sunday mornings, we appreciate you! (And so do our cookie enthusiasts!)

If you would be willing to bake or purchase cookies for a Sunday morning, we would be grateful for your contribution to fellowship time here at The Church on the Prairie.

There is a sign-up sheet on the cookie table. Please put your name on it if you would like to help out in this shared effort.

Thank you again!

—The Fellowship Committee

Rev. Briggs . . . (Continued from page 1)

idea that God has given us, as Christians, to spread the love of God to all the corners of the Earth.

She went on to refer to the story of the woman of Samaria, from John 4. She said that Jesus said to his disciples that "... we must go to Samaria," even though they could have avoided going through this land of enemies to the Jews.

She said that His point in this out-of-the-way trip for Him and His disciples was that God doesn't just love his Chosen people—His love extends to everyone, and it is our job to tell them of God's love.

"Jesus wanted to demonstrate that the 'For God So Loved The World . . .' idea is a real thing," said Rev. Riggs.

"A decade ago, I found myself in Egypt for the first time. It was a time of uncertainty. Christian churches were being burned. It was a time when people could have given up.

"But instead, they got creative. They created medical clinics, food pantries, day care centers. They chose to serve their neighbors, regardless of who they happened to be. They chose to show Christ's love to their neighbors," she added.

Rev. Briggs also related experiences from Lebanon.

"In Lebanon, over 1,000,000 people have been displaced due to factions fighting against the government and against other factions. Regular, every-day people who went to jobs and were raising families were suddenly living in tents and refugee camps without understanding why. 'The Other' is blamed," she explained. "Those in power blamed their enemies for the suffering of the people.

"We have gone into Lebanon and are doing what we can to bring hope through our expres-

sions of the love of Jesus Christ."

She also spoke about her experiences in Iran.

"In Iran, despite the nearly absolute restrictions against Christian groups meeting or even communicating, love is being shared via pamphlets being cleverly distributed, by covert radio broadcasting, and by word of mouth," she related.

"While it can be dangerous, we have seen so many people willing to take chances so they can spread the Love of Jesus to others. We do what we can to help them, because we believe that is what Jesus has asked us to do," she said.

She mentioned the Outreach Foundation's work in Ukraine, North Africa, China, and Central Asia—literally, "The ends of the earth."

"Even in the most unlikely places, more and more people are learning of God's love," she added.

"Now, I know that you may say, 'But I can't go.' Yet there are

many ways that you can 'go,'" she explained.

- "You could donate money;
- You could pray;
- You could go on virtual visits (Zoom);
- And you really could go to the ends of the world—people like me do it all the time."

"God is up to something great! It is a joy and a privilege to be involved in global mission. Join us and see first-hand the amazing work of the Spirit as the Gospel is spread to the ends of the earth," wrote Rev. Dr. Mark Mueller in a pamphlet that Rev. Briggs handed out.

She stayed after the service to answer questions and talk with members of the congregation about her experiences and her plans and hopes for the future.

If you would like more information on The Outreach Foundation, their website is

www.theoutreachfoundation.org



Congratulations To Our Most Recent Graduates

Collin Devine—Pam and Bill Hatfield's oldest grandson graduated from Bangor High School, Bangor, Wisconsin. He plans to enter the workforce and then figure out what he wants to do for a career.

Jonathan (JJ) Jones—Krista and Bruce Jones' son graduated from UW-LaCrosse with a Bachelor's of Science in Kinesiology. He will be working full-time at Three Rivers Performance, a strength and conditioning facility. He will be coordinating the Strength Training at the Sparta School District, offering personal training, and coaching.

Sarah Rose Davis—The granddaughter of Jackie and Bill Davis graduated from high school in Alpine, California.

Emma Perry—A granddaughter

of Gail and Tom Wolfe, Emma graduated from UW-Madison, earning her Master's Degree in Social Work. She has accepted full-time employment as a social worker at the Mendota Mental Health Institute's Juvenile Treatment Center in Madison.

Emily Kleinheinz (who has been our nursery assistant for two years)—Emily graduated from Craig High School and plans to be a Muskie, playing softball at Lakeland University in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, where she will major in exercise science and minor in sports management.

London Marquis—Is the daughter of Mark Marquis and granddaughter of Jan Marquis and the late Earl Marquis. She graduated from Milton High School. London will be attending Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, majoring in biochemistry with plans to go into the pharmaceutical field.

Julia Masterson—The daughter of Kari and Ryan Masterson and granddaughter of Chris and Ed Stried, Julia graduated from UW-Madison with a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction. She has been hired to teach History at Craig High School, where she will be teaching in the Social Studies Department with her father.

Isaac Stried—Who is the son of Chantel and Matt Stried and the grandson of Chris and Ed Stried, graduated in December of 2025 from UW-Whitewater with a Bachelor's Degree in Business. He has been working in Rockford for the past six months.

Rev. Bruce . . . (Continued from page 5)

Thank You For Giving To The Lord

As we move into August, we give thanks for the Spirit of the Living God who refreshes us. The spirit empowers us to serve.

We give thanks to those who . . .

- Provided school supplies for the three food pantries;
- Worked to plan VBS, even though we are not hosting this year;
- Organized the Consumer Alert program;
- Helped with ordering supplies and Memorial items;
- Interviewed for our new staff positions (Caretaker, Nursery Assistant);
- Planned our Sky Carp outing;
- Organized our Fireside concert;
- Covered pastoral concerns while Rev. Bruce was on vacation.

Summer Worship

We continue to worship at 9:30 each Sunday morning.

Lost and Found

There are several coats hanging in the closets at church. If you are missing one, please check next week.

At the end of the summer, we will donate any unclaimed items to someone in need.

The school called on a Wednesday—my son Eli, 17, had been marked absent from two afternoon classes three times in the past month. I drove there ready to be firm. The vice-principal pulled up the security footage before I could say much. Eli wasn't skipping. He'd been spending those periods sitting with a freshman who ate lunch alone every day on the back steps—a kid who had recently transferred in and was struggling visibly with the adjustment. Eli had never mentioned it. Not once. The vice principal cleared his absences entirely and asked if she could share what he'd been doing with the school counselor as an example to other students. On the drive home, I asked Eli why he hadn't said anything. He shrugged. "It wasn't a big deal." But it was to that freshman.

"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

—Philippians 4:7

'Donuts For Dads' Celebrates Congregation's Men

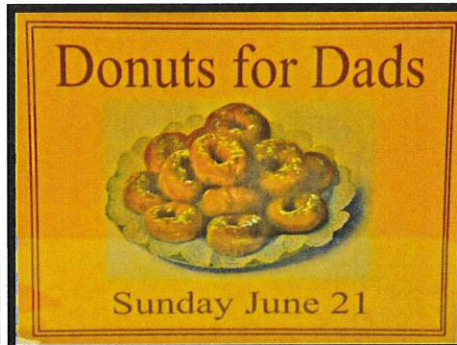
Giving equal time to our fathers (and father figures), the Fellowship Committee presented a celebration of the men of our congregation on Father's Day.

Donuts, along with other pastry delights, were enjoyed by fathers and those who were celebrating their own fathers or their memories.

A large number of those present for Worship on June 21 lingered after the service for fellowship,

reminiscing, and conversation.

Ann Williams created a bulletin board display that featured a number of family photos of dads with their children. (Ann had made a similar display of mothers and their children in May to celebrate Mother's Day.)



Skilled People Share Their Talents

When our choir goes on summer hiatus, members of our congregation and others step up and offer beautiful music during summer Worship services.

Some of those recent talented musicians are pictured here.

"We really enjoy the music that is provided by so many talented people. It is just a beautiful experience every Sunday morning," said Chris Stried, a Choir member who is also on the Worship Committee.

"There are still a few open Sundays, in August, so if anyone would like to participate, please contact Krista Jones or Sylvia O'Connor," Chris added.

One Act Of Kindness

A community caseworker brought a 10-year-old foster boy to my music studio for a trial lesson. "He dreams about playing the piano, but his foster family can't afford classes. Could you give him a chance?" The hope in his eyes was unforgettable. I smiled and told them I had a "special scholarship." Truthfully, I didn't. I simply decided to teach him for free. Twice every week for three years. His talent was impossible to ignore. Then everything changed. He was placed with a new foster family nearly 45 minutes away. He missed his first lesson. "The distance is just too much now," the caseworker explained. So I started making the drive myself. Every Tuesday and Thursday. A 90-minute round trip. His new foster mother was stunned. "You're really doing this without charging us?" "He has something special," I replied. "I'm only helping him discover it." Two years later, he earned a full scholarship to a music academy. During the celebration, he performed a piece he had written called



Michael Solomon



Katie Swanson



Richard MacDonald and Sylvia O'Connor

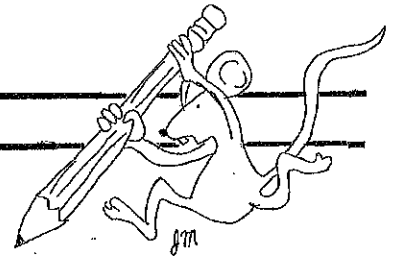


Jim Manus

"Tuesdays." Before he played, he said, "This is for Mrs. Collins—the teacher who drove across town every week because she believed I could become more than my circumstances." Today, he is 19. Every weekend he teaches piano to foster children. Fourteen students. Every lesson is free. Last month he returned with one of his students, a quiet 8-year-old girl. "This is Mrs. Collins," he told her. "She showed me that kindness can unlock gifts money never could." The little girl sat at the piano and played a flawless scale. In that moment I realized that one act of kindness can echo through generations.



Sylvia O'Connor



The Church Mouse

Dear Friends,

Maybe there is something going on in your life this month that you could use some help with. Possibly there is a passage below that might speak to your heart. I'll be praying for you.

Bible Emergency Numbers

When in sorrow . . . John 14 When man fails you . . . Psalm 27
 When you have sinned Psalm 51 When you feel small . . . Psalm 19
 When you have worry . . . Matthew 6:9-34
 When you are in danger . . . Psalm 91 If people seem unkind . . . John 15
 When you grow bitter and critical . . . 1 Corinthians 13
 When you feel down and out . . . Roman 8:31-39
 When you want peace and rest . . . Matthew 11:25-30

+++++

—The Church Mouse

(This is a "Church Mouse" taken from the archives of over 30 years of columns printed in The PRAIRIE PRESS. I will be reprinting these old but still relevant and meaningful pieces until someone from the congregation comes forward and volunteers to carry on the tradition of The Church Mouse.—Ed's note)

NON-PROFIT ORG.
 US POSTAGE PAID
 JANESVILLE WI
 PERMIT NO. 458

Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church
 8605 E County Road A
 Janesville WI 53546

Please deliver by July 31, 2026
 RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED