

## FIRE PIT WORKS GREAT

We put our new fire pit to the test every Wednesday last month. And it works great! Built by Landon Johnson and his team of Boy Scouts, the fire pit is Landon's Eagle Scout project.

The very first time we used it was during the dedication ceremony, when we offered up Landon's work to the glory of God, and offered a blessing for every time we will use it. On hand were members of his Eagle Scout project work team, a leader from his Scout troop, and members of the church. After prayers, we roasted s'mores.

Every Wednesday night for the entire month of September, we hosted a hotdog roast and campfire pie night. It was lots of fun, and the kids loved it.

The fire pit is available for any and all church functions. It also available for non-church use by members.

Thank you, Landon Johnson. We can only imagine all the years the fire pit will be used. Who knows, maybe you will roast hot dogs and s'mores with your grandchildren many, many years from now!



## SEASONS OF PEACE BIBLE STUDY WRAPS UP

For five consecutive Sunday afternoons, twelve church members participated in a Bible study focusing on peace. Unfortunately, the word "peace" has become so watered down that for most people it seems like a call for unrealistic expectations of social harmony.

But that's not what we studied! And that's not what Jesus meant!

Instead, we studied how Jesus calls Christians to do hard work in their pursuit of peace. Jesus calls Christians to look inward and examine themselves before trying to go out into the world become peacemakers. We learned how Jesus taught us to challenge authority--some might even go so far as to say that Jesus taught us how to be belligerent to authority. All this in the pursuit of peace!

For instance, when you think about Jesus' call to "turn the other cheek," do you think he meant to be passive and submissive to authority? Well, think again. We learned that under the culture of first century Rome, Jesus was actually motivating people to stand up for themselves and not bow down to oppressive government.

*Barb Worman had this to say about the study:*

"When I first saw that Dagne was organizing a short term study on peace I was interested but also felt it would be tough to add this to my busy work days. So once it was scheduled for Sunday afternoons and only for 5 weeks I decided I could manage this and made the commitment to join the study. It has been a long time since I was part of a study group (spent many years organizing adult studies rather than participating as a learner). This class has provided a nice boost for my learning and my faith."

*Patty and Frank Kratky had this to say:*

We have really enjoyed the study. It's at the right time, the right length and is Bible based. Everyone participates in small group discussions that help all of us learn. We are learning the Presbyterian way of understanding in congenial, small group discussions that validates everyone's opinion.



## COMMUNION AND CHILDREN

*Is participation at Christ's Table, eating the meal in memory and celebration of Jesus Christ, a matter of knowledge, age and maturity? Or is sharing the bread and cup an act of living and growing in faith, an act of membership in God's household?*

-- Elizabeth Francis Caldwell

Back in 1971 the Presbyterian Church revised the Book of Order to allow children to participate in communion. For at least several decades now, First Presbyterian of Moorhead has provided educational experiences that helped children begin to understand the mystery and meaning of the Lord's Supper. Then we welcomed them into full participation in Communion. Last Spring the children baked the bread and made a new chalice and plate for the elements. During worship they stood close by the table participating in the liturgy and receiving the elements with awe and wonder. Recently, one school-aged child came into the sanctuary from the nursery to get bread pieces to take back to her mother and others who were in the nursery, making sure they did not miss out on this special meal. Our children can and do experience (and demonstrate) the love, belonging, celebration, remembering and giving thanks that are the themes of communion.

From the Presbyterian Church USA *Book of Order 2017-19*:

*The opportunity to eat and drink with Christ is not a right bestowed upon the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving who come in faith, repentance, and love. All who come to the table are offered the bread and cup, regardless of their age or understanding.* W-3.0409

*Children and youth bring special gifts and grow in their faith through their regular participation in worship. Those who plan and lead worship should provide for their full participation in the Service for the Lord's Day.* W-2.0201

In addition, this participation in communion affirms the power of practice - "From our youngest years we start forming the habits of discipleship. From our first sputtering emergence from the baptismal font, we start learning to confess, forgive, reach out, face the truth, be converted, be fed." (William Willimon) No one is too young or too old to practice the habits of discipleship. We are all children in our faith, growing and learning through the experiences of worship in community.



### References:

- *Come Unto Me, Rethinking the Sacraments for Children*, Elizabeth Francis Caldwell, 1996.
- *Sunday Dinner: the Lord's Supper and the Christian Life*, William Willimon, 1998.

-- Barb Worman