

Presbyterian Times

September, 2015

First Presbyterian Church
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A Message from Rev. Lou Ellen Hartley

These days my heart is full of thanksgiving and hope, as one might expect when one is beginning a new job in a new place surrounded by new faces. One of the greatest gifts we receive within the church is the friendships and acquaintances we make as part of a faith community. Usually, the people we meet at church are people with whom we would otherwise never know. Within the rich tapestry of the church, we see how God's love and grace extends to all ages, ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds, political and social differences, and religious roots. The great diversity within the church can challenge us to see beyond our own narrow experiences and can broaden our perspectives as we see God at work within the lives of so many people. We share each other's burdens, walk with each other through grief, encourage each other in the faith and in difficult life moments, and nurture one another in the faith. We can disagree with each other, even argue and wound one another. In those times we can learn the way of peacemaking and reconciliation. Through it all, we are bound together by the Holy Spirit who brings us together and lets us share grace with one another and with others whom we meet. We learn a new way of being in the world – one that allows us to see the dignity in others as well as ourselves. What a great and glorious gift – this life within a faith community.

With that in mind, I share with you this prayer by Queen Salote of the Tonga Islands.

God, our Heavenly Father, we draw near to Thee with thankful hearts because of all Thy great love for us. We thank Thee most of all for the gift of thy dear son, in whom alone we may be one. We are different one from another in race and language, in material things, in gifts, in opportunities, but each of us has a heart, knowing joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain. We are one in our need of Thy forgiveness, Thy strength, Thy love; make us one in our common response to Thee, that bound by a common love and freed from selfish aims we may work for the good of all and the advancement of Thy Kingdom. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

I offer thanks for you and the life of this congregation, and your individual and corporate ministries. I look forward to our life together and all that God will do through us.

Peace –

Pastor Lou Ellen

Thank You...

Dear First Presbyterian Church Family:

THANK YOU! Brett and I would like to thank you for your warm and gracious welcome. We appreciate the items we received from the pantry shower. Thank you for providing the necessities to set up our new house. You have gone above and beyond, and we truly appreciate you.

Thank you!!!

Pastor Lou Ellen and Brett

Stewardship News **Barbara Ford, Treasurer**

Stewardship meeting was cancelled due to a special called meeting. Financials for July were: Income of \$12,318.45, and Expenses of \$11,190.60.

The Session met to discuss Heating and Air Conditioning needs for the church sanctuary. As you may be aware, the registers have deteriorated beyond what would be reasonable to restore them, and bids for upgrading the system have been sought. Preliminary amounts are around \$70,000.00.

In addition, this spurred a discussion about how we can raise the funds to pay for this. As we have a building over 50 years old, things are going to break and need to be fixed. Recent examples include a new roof, new sanctuary carpeting, and upgrades to the windows, among others. Discussion about a Capital Improvement Fund ensued with the idea of starting a fund of \$100,000.00.

So, for this fall, the Stewardship Committee will be thinking about how the church can raise the money for the air-system, as well as beginning a Capital Improvement Program, plus the annual stewardship campaign. Please include us in your prayers as we work toward possible solutions. I know that we can do it! Pray, and pray some more, and with God's providence, we will develop a good plan to accomplish this mission.

Looking forward to your ideas!

Membership News

Mary Kwantes

What a wonderful several weeks we have had during worship and Fellowship. We have welcomed lots of visitors, thanked Bob Morrison and praised God as we greeted and got to know our new pastor Lou Ellen Hartley. Hopefully the picnic on the August 30 at BerJuan at noon will be an integrating event. The canoe trip is September 12 at Akers Ferry. Please check the worship guide for all the costs and see the sign-up list which will post right after Sept 1.

Worship and Music

Jonathan Kimball

With the start of the school year, the chancel and bell choirs will be starting up again. If you would like to join us, rehearsals are on Wednesdays—bells at 6:00, singers at 7:00. Bells play about once a month. The choir also rehearses each Sunday morning at 9:00. As I've said in the past, one of Jeff's special skills is getting the most out of whoever shows up. If you can read music, you can play bells. If you can sing at all, you can find a place in the choir.

FIRE UP! continues to meet Thursdays at 6:30. On August 16, we had a FIRE UP-style service as our Sunday worship. I think it went very well, and all of the feedback I've received has been very positive. The W&M committee will discuss possibilities for the future. You may recall that roughly two years ago, we would periodically have more modern music during Sunday worship. That pretty much ended when I started organizing FIRE UP! So, one possibility would be to just have occasional contemporary music on Sundays. But FIRE UP! is more than that. We have a somewhat different order of worship, we project the lyrics, it's a more informal feel overall, etc. So, other possibilities include having a fully contemporary service once a quarter, or even once a month. That said, if we continue to project lyrics in the sanctuary, we will need to do something different. We borrowed a screen from RCAS (thanks, Jeff!) and I used my projector. It would be better to have a built-in screen, and my projector simply isn't bright enough.

So, if you have any comments, good or bad, about the FIRE UP-style service on Sundays, please talk with anyone on the W&M committee. I worry a little that the people who liked it got excited and told me about it, but the people who didn't like it just suffered in silence. If we're going to expand at all, we need to hear the negative just as much as the positive.

Changing the subject, I'd like people to think some about communion—how we do it, what it means, and so forth. For a recent FIRE UP! reflection on John 6:51-58, I went searching for information about the PC(USA) understanding of communion. What I found was a report produced by a special study committee, which you may read at:

<http://www.pcusa.org/resource/invitation-christ/>

I would recommend it to anyone in the church who has an interest in the history and meaning of our two sacraments, baptism and communion, and especially anyone who grew up in a different faith tradition. I found the discussion to be somewhat similar to my understanding from a Methodist

perspective, but it is much different than the Catholic or Baptist understanding. Anyway, I'm not proposing that we change what we're doing, so much as a change in our spiritual focus.

As always, if you have a desire to contribute to worship in any way, please contact me or anyone else on the W&M committee. We always have needs for ushers, sound system operators, worship leaders, and communion servers. Also, if you start coming to FIRED UP! and would like to get on the rotation to give a short reflection (typically less than 5 min) or help with the music, let me know.

Peace,

Jonathan Kimball, Chair

Committee Members: Dixie Finley, Mary Kwantes, Chris Rueffs, Jan Roberts, Jeff Sandquist

A Word about Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts

Jonathan Kimball

With the start of the new school year, both Boy Scouts Troop 83 and Cub Scouts Pack 83 are returning to the church. Troop 83 meets at Lions Club from Memorial Day to Labor Day, so they will resume meetings on Mondays at the church on September 14. Pack 83 basically follows the school year, so they have begun meeting on Tuesdays at the church already. Please remember that the two groups are separate and different. Cub Scouts is 1st through 5th grade; Boy Scouts is 6th grade and up. I am the Chartered Organization Representative for both, which essentially is a liaison between the pack/troop and church. If there are ever any issues that need to be addressed, please contact me first. (It is possible that many people will see the same thing, so it's better to have one clearinghouse person. Naturally, contact the appropriate party in an emergency. Larry, Ken, and Betti Jo should all know who to contact.)

I want to address "membership standards" changes in the Boy Scouts of America. In 2012-13, there was a movement to eliminate the ban on membership by gay and lesbian Scouts and Scouters. (A Scouter is a registered adult leader of any sort.) One of the proposals being floated would have left the issue entirely up to chartering organizations. There was some grumbling among the adult leaders of Troop 83, with the possibility of moving the charter elsewhere. I made two points at that time:

1. Troop 83 is a part of First Presbyterian Church. It's like a marriage. It's not just some organization that uses our facilities. Leave if necessary, but only after a period of discernment, with an understanding that moving is a divorce and will have significant repercussions. It must be a consensus decision made by all interested parties, not a simple majority vote by a small group of adult leaders.
2. I will not endorse any policies that are exclusionary. That is, any given individual may be excluded for scouting reasons, but nobody will be excluded simply because of who they are. I would no more tolerate a "no gays" policy than a "no blacks" policy.

BSA ultimately resolved the situation in 2013 by allowing gay Scouts, regardless of chartering organization policies, but excluding gay Scouters. This was an untenable situation. A 17-year-old could earn the highest honor, Eagle Scout, then turn 18 and be excluded from all Boy Scout activities.

This summer, BSA changed their policy to remove the contradiction. The current policy states that

- All paid positions are open to anyone regardless of sexual orientation. (This is in part due to legal challenges.)
- All volunteer positions are open or not, according to chartering organization policies. That is, if the chartering organization is a church with an explicit prohibition on gay leaders (e.g., LDS churches), they may extend this prohibition to Scouters. If the chartering organization has non-discrimination policies (e.g., other churches, PTA, public schools), they may extend this openness to Scouters.
- The 2013 rule on gay Scouts is still in place, that is, chartering organizations may not exclude gay Scouts even if they exclude gay Scouters.

As you may imagine, this has caused rejoicing in some places and disappointment or anger in other places. I expect that competing organizations (non-BSA but with similar principles) will emerge. I expect that some people who are or have been a part of Troop 83 will either leave our troop or leave BSA.

I had a long discussion with Richard Altheide, whom many of you know. He is once again our unit commissioner, which is a liaison to the district and council. He had stepped out of that role in 2013, and resumed it when the contradiction was resolved this summer. He said that his views on the issue have evolved, but to make a long story short, sexuality is not a scouting issue. We never talk about sex—gay, straight, or otherwise—or romantic relationships, or anything like that. He agrees with me that sexual orientation has no relationship to scouting principles. The Scout Law is: A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent. If someone satisfies those basic principles, or at least aspires to them, little else matters.

I am just old enough to remember when women were first allowed to be Scouters. There was much wailing and gnashing of teeth, how it was going to “ruin” the Boy Scouts, etc. The reality is, NOT allowing women Scouters would have ruined BSA. Similarly, NOT allowing LGBT Scouters would have ruined BSA. It’s a very conservative organization, in the classical sense of changing slowly, if at all. Yet, this is 2015, and if BSA does not accommodate changing understandings and beliefs about what makes a good leader, it will slowly die.

If anyone has comments or concerns about these issues, please feel free to talk with me about them, or with Richard Altheide. Either of us can also put you in touch with individuals higher in the council hierarchy.

Yours in Scouting,
Jonathan Kimball

BUD PUMFREY Chosen for Honor Flight

Pat Look

Bud, who served in the US Army during World War II was chosen to be flown to Washington, D.C. July 27 of this year. There he visited the World War II Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, the Viet Nam War Memorial as well as Arlington Cemetery.

It was a whirlwind trip within 24 hours.

On November 8, 2015 there will be a VCR shown during Fellowship Hour about his Honor Flight. This will be before Veteran's Day on the 11th.

GET YOUR BUCKET LIST!!

Recently JCPDA delivered 10 disaster clean up buckets to Cassville OACAC for community recovery and clean up. As you know, many are needed right here in our own area!

This being said, the NEED FOR DISASTER CLEAN UP BUCKETS is still great. Flood, tornadoes, and storms are happening all over the country and the buckets are leaving the warehouse at Ferncliff as fast as they come in.

This is a great service to those affected by disaster. Your help is appreciated. Thanks for helping to serve "the least of these."

There are a few buckets in the hall with a list of what needs to be included. Feel free to sign up for one.

Preschool News

Rachel Allison, Director



Preschool News

A new school year is under way and we are off to a great start! First off I want to thank Larry Roberts and Ray Fox for their monumental amount of work in the hot July weather to get the playground ready for our students! You are both very appreciated! I also want to thank Ray

Evans for all of his efforts on our behalf to get our new security system installed! It has been a pleasure working with the members of this congregation!

Our teachers and staff had a very busy summer preparing for the new school year. Some of us had CPR training, we attended the Early Learning Conference at Missouri S & T, and a few of us were able to attend Nature Unleashed in Columbia, Missouri with the Missouri Department of Conservation. We all took a class on Mandated Reporting and a class on Emergency Management with Karen Daily.

We have a very busy month ahead. The State Fire Marshalls office will be teaching our pre-k students all about fire safety in a three day class, we will have Fall Pictures, the Book Fair, PE at The Centre and Music with Mary Kwantes AND starting this month, Romanian language lessons!

We DO have a few openings so if you or someone you know is looking for a quality preschool environment please check in the office for availability.

Looking forward to another great year!



First Day of School. (Not Pictured: Serena Franks, Angela Isaac & Hatice Scott)

Personnel Britt Whitaker

Welcome to our newest staff member, Aurelia Hernandez. She is our custodian who works on Tuesday and Thursday evenings in the preschool area.

From the Office
Betti Jo Pyatt, Office Manager

September birthday wishes go out to the following: Tammy Bennett, Dena Anderson, Cody Moon, Jean Moran-Day, David Drewniak, Pauline Taggart, Lou Ellen Hartley, Delanie Winchester, Bill Cottingham, Jo Ann Anderson, David Winch, Illa Bell, Karen Hudson, Josh Turner, Ashlyn Lewis, Leslie Skelton, Matthew Skelton, and Lauren Postlewaite.