

First Presbyterian Church

September 2010 Newsletter

*From the
Pastor*



So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common. Acts 2:41-44

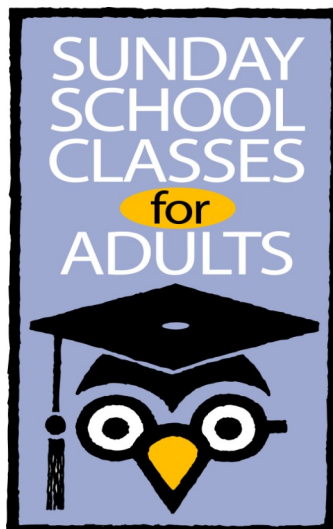
This morning I find myself at my desk reflecting on the past three weeks of our study together. Many of you have participated in some way in our five week study of Robert Schnase's book, *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*. I pray this study has been a blessing to you, as I know it has been for our church.

I am a big fan of all-church studies like this one. Something powerful happens when we meet together, and pray together, and read the same books together. When we are able to focus on one common theme, it shapes our conversations, and brings us into greater community as a church. It reminds me of what happened with the Early Church. When people began to hear about the love and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, their lives were changed, and they told everyone. Amazing things began to happen when they gathered together and explored their faith together with other Christians – the glory of God permeated their lives. Now that's powerful stuff!

The same is true today as it was two thousand years ago. There *is* great joy in gathering and studying together, but the joy doesn't end there. We also have a responsibility to apply what we've learned together and spread our joy. If the early Christians had just listened to the apostles and then continued their "normal" lives, the Gospel message would have stopped with the twelve. Instead, they took what they learned and put it into practice.

August is usually a time to regroup before the fall begins. I encourage you this month to think about what you've learned and shared from this book study. Put it into practice. Let the glory of God permeate your life. Just watch as amazing things begin to happen. I can't wait to see you Sunday!

Your sister in Christ, Julia



Genesis Class

Study the Book of Jude
Meet in the Library

Contact: Bob Kennedy
Phone: 318-627-5292

Sojourner's Class

Study the Adult Bible Study
Series

Current Study Includes:
Exodus, Psalms and Isaiah
Meet in Sojourner's Room

Contact: Jim Hockensmith
Phone: 318-443-1555

A Wing and A Prayer Class

Study on the Book of
Exodus
Meet in Sunday School
Wing

Contact: John Allen
Phone: 318-730-8242
[guywithfuzzy-
face@yahoo.com](mailto:guywithfuzzyface@yahoo.com)



Meet the Members — Jim Smolenski

By Dee Arnold

Have you had the opportunity to meet James "Jim" Smolenski? We met his father Will Smolenski a couple of months ago. Jim was born in Indianapolis, Indiana. He has a quick sense of humor as you will see on the sign in front of "First Presbyterian".

In the summer during high school, Jim worked as a life guard and pool manager in Shreveport, as well as a roustabout in the oil fields in Oil City, LA. He received his undergraduate degree in Economics and Math from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee in 1977 and then obtained both an MBA and MS in Finance at LSU in the early 1980's. He has been in banking for 16 years, from branch management, to lending, to workout/litigation, to administration, and presently works at Red River Bank as their credit Policy Officer. Jim also worked for 6 years with Noles-Frye Realty as an Associate Broker, primarily involved with commercial and investment property leasing and sales. "When I retire," Smolenski said, "I plan to go back into brokerage and consulting work."

The story Jim tells about his meeting his wife is different from your usual romance story. He said, "My wife, Annelie, and I were to initially meet on a blind date set up by mutual friends who knew both of us from our competitive swimming days. But after several weeks and not being able to work out a schedule where we all four could get together on the same Friday or Saturday night, I finally just called Annelie to talk. We hit it off well enough to agree to go out with another couple for dinner and dancing (not the ones who were trying to introduce us to each other). At about 11 pm the other couple simply tired out, but Annelie and I stayed out dancing until Studebaker's closed down for the evening," (in Baton Rouge). Now, isn't that an auspicious beginning.

Annelie and Jim have two children. Their daughter Christina was married last April in Natchitoches to Mike Frazier. She and her husband are both Captains in the U.S. Army and stationed near Bamberg, Germany. Their tours of duty have taken Christina into Afghanistan, and Mike to Baghdad. Christina works in Military Intelligence, while Mike is a Ranger who is now in charge of his company's Rear Command. Jim and Annelie's son Will, who is named for both his grandfathers, is 15 months younger than his sister. He is attending Georgia Tech in Atlanta, and will be graduating with a degree in Architecture.

Jim is a physical fitness conscious individual, enjoying cycling and swimming and also fly fishing. He helped form a fly fishing club in Baton Rouge which is still going strong. He taught casting, how to build rods and how to tie flies for saltwater fishing. He also enjoys action pistol shooting and spending time with his two dogs and two cats.

When asked what Jim's opinion of "First Church" was, he said, "We have a very friendly, sincere congregation that has plenty of potential to easily add to its membership and broaden its demographics--particularly by bringing in families with school age children. I hope to help bring in new members, primarily through our Men's Thursday morning Bible Study Group." He said his future plans were to "try to sin less often" and to "find the sense of humor God has given me." Oh, I don't think he has to worry, I think he has already found that sense of humor. You will enjoy meeting Jim and trying to catch or dodge those jokes he keeps tossing around.

September Birthdays

Lucille Davis	09/01
Margaret Killingsworth	09/02
Jill White	09/03
Claine Conner	09/07
Ed Ware	09/10
Marjorie Bengt	09/22
Nancy Davis	09/25
Judy Ready	09/26
Brady Huffman	09/27
Joseph Ellington	09/29
Charly Lacroix	09/30



**If you have a birthday in the month of August,
and are not mentioned above please notify the office. Thanks!
office@alexandriafpc.org*



SEPTEMBER 8TH



COME JOIN

RYAN PERRY MINISTRIES

FOR A GOSPEL CONCERT

AT 6:30PM



A "little" girl – Elder?

Odd. I can't seem to remember ever being a "little" girl. I can remember being shorter--- seems like forever. I can remember being younger--the "baby"! Spoiled, pampered, in the way, put up with, humored, first to bed, got my own way.....a lot! The last one – to wear the hand-me-downs, even from my brothers', but "little"? I don't think so.

I attended Sunday School, sang in the youth and adult choirs, was active in the PYF, went to Bible school and youth retreats. But one day to be an Elder? Never! It just couldn't happen. Men (mostly old men) were Elders, Deacons and preachers. Women knew "their place in church". Teaching Sunday School, women of the church meetings, circles, choir or kitchen duty. They were organists, pianists and choir directors. They were never in "male" jobs.

I graduated from high school in 1955 and thought about going to school to become a DRE (Director of Religious Education). That was about as close as I could get to being a preacher. Our church had no female ministerial candidates. So, I gave up on being a preacher and majored in music.

God lead me to my husband, marriage, babies, and eventually, here. Meanwhile, back in seminary, the Presbyterian Church ordained it's first minister of the word in 1956 and by the 1960's female elders were showing up in lots of churches. It never occurred to me that one day I would be asked to serve a church as an Elder. When Dr. Best asked me to consider it, I thought he was surely joking. Me? An Elder?? Had they gotten that desperate? That close to the bottom of the barrel?

Well, I cried and prayed.....a lot, and read about it and decided that I would find out pretty quickly if it was a wrong decision. Ever aging inadequate me!

Well, we have come a long way baby! God works in mysterious ways (some more mysterious than others). I finally figured out that all He wanted me to do was try. So, here we go again. I'll try. I'll learn. I'll pray and "Just as I am" He'll be my "Blessed Assurance". I pray you will put on your happy faces and we can smile together in the love of our Lord!

September Responders

Communion Servers

Jim Hockensmith
Bill Higgins
Brandi Woolam

Greeters

5 Dirk Benade & John Martin
12 Stacey Brown & Elizebette Kennedy
19 Gil Arnold & John Allen
26 Sonny Brown & Pat Turpin

Sunday Monitors

5 Jim Hockensmith
12 Dirk Benade
19 John Martin
26 Barry Herndon

Ushers

5 Stacey Brown & Bob Kennedy
12 Jim & Stephanie Huffman
19 Nancy Davis & Jim Hockensmith
26 Dave Conner & Elizebette Kennedy

Wednesday Monitors

1 Sharelle Herndon
8 Annalize Benade
15 Debbe Clegg
22 Annalize Benade
29 Annalize Benade



I WONDER

A poem written by Brandi Woolam

I wonder why it's hard to seek God in the smallest of things
For none of us are gifted with the insight to what the next day
could bring.



I wonder

Have you ever stood to watch a single leaf fall?
And pondered its singular purpose among a forest of them all?

I know, it's a lot, to admire each one
But time is short however, and then the season is done.

I wonder

Have you taken the time to memorize the lilt of your child's laugh?
Wasted what you felt was a perfectly good day, just to hold them in your lap?

I know, it's tough, not to work all the time
But the person they are to become will repay you in kind.

I wonder

Have you ever needed help in the hardest of times?
Then treated those less fortunate like they don't deserve your respect or your time?

I know, it's difficult, not to pass judgment on those different from you
But, God is the only judge of me and of you.

I wonder

Have you ever truly examined the ideals you've long since held true?
Holding them to the level, of "What would Jesus do"?

I know, it's taxing, to hold our tongue
But remember, when we unknowingly preach hate, we pass it to our young.

I wonder

Have you ever loved till you thought your heart would break?
And then loved a little more because you knew that's what it would take?

I know, it's so hard, to lay your whole heart out
But I'm beginning to understand that's what God's love for us, is about.

Let us be blessed to go and seek God even in the smallest of things
And be comforted in the peace, in the pure love, and in the bliss, **being love**, can bring.

First Presbyterian Church

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Alexandria, LA 71303 Fax 318.443.5965

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www.alexandriafpc.org

Julia Farrell, *Pastor*
Kim Fontenot, *Secretary*
Jack Ready, *Choir Director*
Judy Ready, *Pianist*
Delores McDaniel, *Nursery*
Charles Bell, *Sexton*

First Presbyterian Church
357 Windermere Blvd.
Alexandria, LA 71303



Wednesday Night Fellowship

<i>September 1</i>	<i>5:45 Pizza</i> <i>6:30 Game Night</i>
<i>September 8</i>	<i>5:45 Covered Dish Dinner</i> <i>6:30 Music Program</i>
<i>September 15</i>	<i>5:45 Fried Chicken</i> <i>6:30 HealthWorx Speaker</i>
<i>September 22</i>	<i>5:45 Sandwiches</i> <i>6:30 Committee Meeting</i>
<i>September 29</i>	<i>5:45 Covered Dish Dinner</i> <i>6:30 Prayer Meeting</i>

Come experience God's love at First Presbyterian Church
Sunday School - 9:45 am, Worship - 11:00 am

SEPTEMBER

2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
See Corrections: Cover Dish on the 8th and 29th.			1 5:45 pm Pizza 6:30 pm Game Night 7:30 pm Choir Practice	2  Brothers, Bibles, & Breakfast 6:30 am	3	4
5 9:00 am Kingsley Place 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship/ Communion	6 Labor Day Church Office Closed	7 8:15 am Sandwich making for HPLH patients	8 5:45 pm Covered Dish A-G Main Dish H-K Salad/Veg L-Z Dessert 6:30 pm Music Program 7:30 pm Choir Practice	9  Brothers, Bibles, & Breakfast 6:30 am	10	11
12 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship	13	14  9:30 am Women's Circles	15 5:45 pm Fried Chicken 6:30 pm HealthWorx Speaker 7:30 pm Choir Practice	16  Brothers, Bibles, & Breakfast 6:30 am	17	18
19 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship	20	21 5:00 pm HealthWorx	22 5:45 pm Sandwiches 6:30 pm Committee Meetings 7:30 pm Choir Practice	23  Brothers, Bibles, & Breakfast 6:30 am	24	25
26 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship	27  7:00 pm Session Meeting	28	29 5:45 pm Covered Dish A-G Dessert H-K Main Dish L-Z Salad/Veg 6:30 pm Prayer Meeting 7:30 pm Choir Practice	30  Brothers, Bibles, & Breakfast 6:30 am		