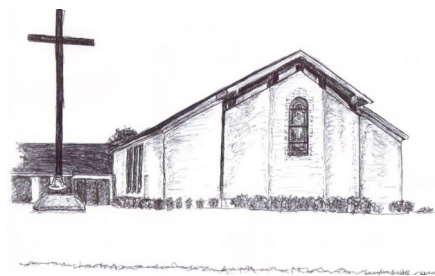


Presby News

August/September 2014



FROM THE PASTOR

DO NOT TAKE FOR GRANTED THE GIFTS OF GOD



"He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and the herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth. And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart."- Psalm 104: 14 -15

We would do well not to take for granted or forget the gifts of God. We are nourished daily from the very substance (earth) from which we come.

The land of Palestine had three basic products, grain, wine and oil, all products of the land. These were the very things of which the people were reminded not to forget to give the tithe.

Wheat gave them their food. Wine was very commonly consumed because the water supply was bad but there was little drunkenness. The wine was drunk in proportions of two parts of wine to five of water.

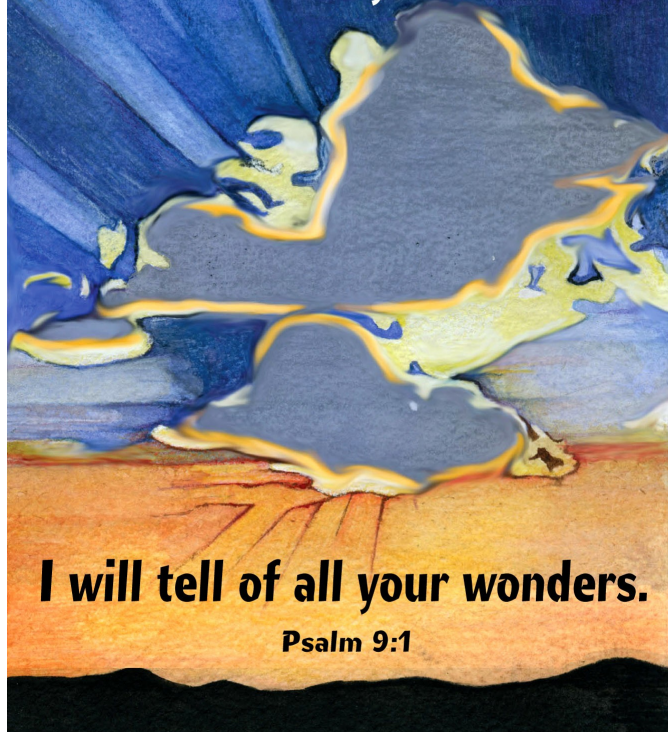
"Bread is made for laughter,
and wine gladdens life,
and money answers everything."
(Ecclesiastes 10: 19)

"Wine and music gladden the heart,
but the love of wisdom is better than both."
(Ecclesiastes 40: 20)

Our Lord gives us not only the things that support life but the things that make life more enjoyable. God means for us "to pass a good time". This of course amply refers to the fact that He came that we might have life, which He defines as abundant life. Let us not take this for granted.

Doyle Bailey

**I will praise you, O LORD,
with all my heart;**



I will tell of all your wonders.

Psalm 9:1

SPECIAL DATES

- Sep 1 - Labor Day
- Sep 7 - National Grandparents Day
- Sep 11 - Patriot Day
- Sep 15—Oct 15 Hispanic Heritage Month
- Sep 23 - First Day of Autumn



The Southern Plainsmen Quartet



Mark your calendars!

The popular gospel group,
Southern Plainsmen Quartet will be
performing here

September 20, 6:30 p.m.

No admission charge

Tell all your friends

True sacrifice

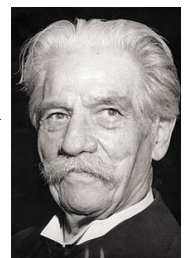
In 1 Chronicles 21, King David prepares to offer God a sacrifice of repentance. The man from whom David must purchase supplies is so eager to help that he offers everything for free. David replies, "No. I'm buying it from you, and at the full market price. I'm not going to offer GOD sacrifices that are no sacrifice" (v. 24, *The Message*).

How often we do that ourselves: forgo a latte to put a few dollars into the collection plate ... read Scripture for only five minutes a day ... say we're too busy for a service project, then spend hours watching TV The list goes on.

It's not that we should "give 'til it hurts"; it's about giving 'til it feels good! God doesn't need our sacrifices; we do. Our faith grows when we challenge ourselves to give up something less valuable to embrace the richness of God. When we give more than we're comfortable giving, our need for control is replaced by confidence that God holds us.

Early influences

Because his dad was a pastor, Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) spent much time in church while growing up. Seeing devoted worshipers had a great impact on the future physician, theologian and Nobel Peace Prize winner. "From the services in which I participated as a child, I took with me into life a feeling for the solemn and the need for stillness," Schweitzer said. On the first Sunday of every month, his father spoke about missionaries, and Schweitzer later became a medical missionary.

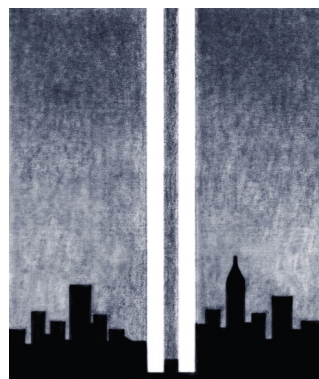


Interestingly, Protestant and Catholic congregations shared the church in Schweitzer's small town in Alsace (which shifted between German and French control). The groups met in different areas of the church at different times on Sundays. That attitude of religious tolerance led to Schweitzer's belief that Christians should work toward unity of faith and purpose.

The slurry walls of life

As horrific as 9/11 was, it could've been even worse if not for a 30-year-old engineering feat. Reaching some 70 feet underground, a 3-foot-thick concrete structure called a "slurry wall" surrounded the base of the World Trade Center complex. Designed to prevent the Hudson River from flooding the basement, this wall prevented New York's subway system from flooding and countless additional people from dying on September 11, 2001.

A slurry wall is constructed by pouring a thick, goopy mixture of powdered clay and water into a deep, narrow trench. The solution coats the sides, preventing water and



IN REMEMBRANCE OF

SEPTEMBER 11

soil from collapsing the trench. Pipes are then inserted through the slurry, and concrete is pumped into the trench, pushing the slurry up and out. At the WTC, the concrete formed such a strong wall that even two airplanes and the falling towers didn't fracture it. Part of the slurry wall still stands at the 9/11 Memorial site, a symbol of resilience.

Sometimes God uses life's "slurry" to make us stronger than we ever thought possible. We might wish something yucky hadn't happened — until we discover it was part of what sustained us, making us resilient and enabling us to rise out of destruction and death to awe-inspiring new life.

Minutes of Stated Session Meeting
First Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Louisiana
April 21, 2014

The Session met in the church library, 357 Windermere Boulevard, Alexandria, Louisiana. At 6:00 p.m. the meeting was called to order with prayer by Ron Sutto, General Presbyterian and Stated Clerk for the Presbytery of South Louisiana.

Members Present: John Allen, Debbe Clegg, Bill Higgins, Jim Hockensmith

Treasurer Present: Jim Smolenski

Elders Excused: Elizebette Kennedy and Jack Ready

Guests Present: Doyle Bailey, FPC Temporary Stated Supply Pastor

A quorum was present.

Finance Report:

The financial statements for March, 2014, were distributed to the Session. The March, 2014, bank statements were reviewed and initialed by Session members.

Motion:

(1) That Session table the March Financial Reports pending clarification of a few items.

(Jim Smolenski will check into interest income, which should have been reinvested. He will also check into music expenses.)

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Bill Higgins
Motion: Carried

Approval of Minutes:

The Session members reviewed the minutes for the March 17, 2014 Stated Meeting of the Session.

Motion: That the Session approve the minutes of the March 17, 2014 Stated Meeting of the Session.

Moved: John Allen Seconded: Jim Hockensmith
Motion: Carried

Clerk's Report:

Holy Communion was served on Sunday, April 6, 2014 during worship.

Holy Communion was served on Sunday, April 6, 2014 at Emeritus

FPC received thank you letters for donations from the following organizations:

The Food Bank of Central Louisiana

Community Healthworx

The Shepherd Center

Friendship House

Motion: That the Clerk's Report be approved as presented.

Moved: John Allen Seconded: Jim Hockensmith
Motion: Carried

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND SESSION ACTIONS

Congregational Life/Christian Education Report:
Presented by John Allen

John Allen reported that an Easter Egg Hunt was held on Easter Sunday, April 20. One child attended.

John also reported that he contacted Sue Shipman regarding the status of the DC3 Concert scheduled for Wednesday, April 30, 2014. John did not get a confirmation on the date from Sue.

Doyle and Barbara Bailey are scheduled to share their experiences as missionaries in Costa Rica and Argentina on Wednesday, April 23.

John Allen and Debbe Clegg will open on Wednesday, May 14.

Debbe Clegg agreed to take over the planning for the 2014 Vacation Bible School.

John Allen will be out of town during the summer months, and he asked that someone be appointed to Chair the Congregational Life Committee in his absence. Doyle Bailey said he would serve as Chair during John's absence.

Worship and Evangelism Report: Presented by Jim Hockensmith

Jim Hockensmith and Doyle Bailey will talk with Aaron Rogers and Scott Laborde about problems with the worship service music.

Personnel Report: Presented by Bill Higgins

Bill Higgins reported that Delores McDaniel had given the church the doctor's note needed to allow her to return to her nursery duties.

Higgins also reported that three applications for the minister position had been submitted. Ron Sutto gave suggestions for where to check for possible applicants.

Property Report: No Report

Pastor's/Moderator Report: Presented by Doyle Bailey

Doyle Bailey discussed the savings program proposal for a new minister he presented in the March Session Meeting for review. The program would total \$15,000 after 10 months. The proposal reinforces Doyle as the temporary minister and helps the church to set up a fund for the future. This savings proposal can be readdressed periodically to check on how well it is working. A conversational fellowship/luncheon will be held to explain the program to the congregation.

Motion: That the pastor savings program go forth.

Moved: Debbe Clegg Seconded: Jim Hockensmith
Motion: Carried

Doyle Bailey reported that he will be out of town May 21, May 25 and May 28. Jim Hockensmith will deliver the sermon on Sunday, May 25. Committees will meet on May 21 in lieu of Bible Study. Jim Hockensmith will contact Linda Lejeune at Healthworx about speaking on Wednesday night, May 28.

Old Business:

John Allen is scanning First Presbyterian archival material. When completed, a copy will be given to LSU-A, Rapides Parish Library, Genealogical Library, Presbyterian Historical Society and two copies will be given to the church.

By common consent the Session approved Doyle Bailey and Jim Smolenski taking FPC Administrative Assistant Carolyn Sterne out to lunch on Wednesday, April 23, for Secretary's Day.

Debbe Clegg has completed the new FPC Facebook page, and it is now ready for the church to view and use.

New Business:

Debbe Clegg will open the church on May 15 at 5:00 pm for the Willowwood Townhomes Association Meeting. Allen

Cripps is the contact person for the meeting.

By common consent the Session approved Tom and Debbe Clegg taking the Sunday offering to the bank so the monitors do not have to wait for the money to be processed.

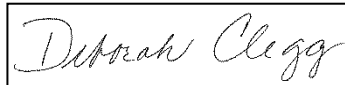
Discussion followed about Vacation Bible School plans, which are in the beginning stages. Barbara Bailey will offer workshops for parents of VBS attendees during the week. Nursery care will be assessed by the response on the VBS pre-enrollment form. A meeting of VBS leadership is scheduled for Sunday, April 27.

Motion: That the meeting of the Session be adjourned.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Bill Higgins
Motion: Carried

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m. with a closing prayer by Doyle Bailey. The next Stated Meeting of the Session will be **Monday, May 19, 2014.**

Respectfully submitted:



Debbe Clegg, Clerk of Session
/cs

Birthdays

Aug 05 - Jim Hockensmith
Aug 16 - Scott Laborde
Aug 18 - Lacie Ellington
Aug 19 - Dee Arnold
Aug 19 - Tom Brasket Sr.
Aug 22 - Elizebette Kennedy,
Aug 25 - Mac McBurney
Aug 28 - Floy Elliot
Aug 31 - Sharelle Herndon
Sep 07 - Elaine Conner
Sep 08 - Martha Higgins
Sep 10 - Ed Ware
Sep 22 - Marjorie Bengé



Anniversaries

Sep 25 - Nancy Davis
Sep 26 - Laurie Morris
Sep 26 - Judy Ready
Sep 27 - Brady Huffman
Sep 29 - Joseph Ellington
Sep 30 - Charly Lacroix
Aug 07 - Mac & Georgia McBurney
Aug 19 - J. Barry & Sharelle Herndon
Aug 19 - Wynn & Debbie Ware
Aug 24 - Doyle & Barbara Bailey
Sep 08 - Roscoe & Tanna Wilson

Five gifts from God

Love makes our friends a little dearer.
Joy makes our hearts a little lighter.
Faith makes our paths a little clearer.
Hope makes our lives a little brighter.
Peace brings us all a little nearer.
—Author unknown



From a worship bulletin in Terre Haute, Indiana:

Doors open at 6 p.m.

We'll collect a lover offering.

Please support this great cause!

We'd love to see how this collection turns out!



From a worship bulletin in Appleton, Wisconsin:

Sunday School news

3-year-old teacher needed

Add your name to our sub list

"Early education" seems to be getting earlier all the time!

Minutes of Stated Session Meeting
First Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Louisiana
May 19, 2014

The Session met in the church library, 357 Windermere Boulevard, Alexandria, Louisiana. At 6:00 p.m. the meeting was called to order with prayer by Ron Sutto, General Presbyterian and Stated Clerk for the Presbytery of South Louisiana.

Members Present: John Allen, Debbe Clegg, Elizebette Kennedy, Jim Hockensmith, Jack Ready

Treasurer Present: Jim Smolenski

Elders Excused: Bill Higgins

Guests Present: Doyle Bailey, FPC Temporary Stated Supply Pastor, Ron Sutto

A quorum was present.

Finance Report:

The financial statements for April, 2014, were distributed to the Session. The April, 2014, bank statements were reviewed and initialed by Session members.

Motion: That Session approve the April Financial Reports.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Bill Higgins
Motion: Carried

Motion: That the Session establish a Pastor Transition Fund with Red River Bank, and make deposits in preparation for the new pastor.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Jack Ready
Motion: Carried

Approval of Minutes:

The Session members reviewed the minutes for the April 21, 2014 Stated Meeting of the Session.

Motion: That the Session approve the minutes of the April 21, 2014 Stated Meeting of the Session.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Jack Ready
Motion: Carried

Clerk's Report:

Holy Communion was served on Sunday, May 4, 2014 during worship.

Holy Communion was served on Sunday, May 4, 2014 at Emeritus

Presbytery Cluster Meeting will be held in Welch, Louisiana in June.

FPC received thank you letters from:

Carolyn Sterne for Secretary Day Lunch

Hope House for Donation

Motion: That the Clerk's Report be approved as presented.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Jack Ready
Motion: Carried

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND SESSION ACTIONS

Congregational Life/Christian Education Report:

Presented by Doyle Bailey

Doyle reported on a new Wednesday night meal cycle and enlisting a coordinator for each meal. This will help with the same people being responsible for the Wednesday meals every month. Tea and water glasses will be self-serve. Members are encouraged to start bringing their Bibles for Bible study.

Worship and Evangelism Report: Presented by Jim Hockensmith

Jim Hockensmith reported that new pianist Justin Lincecum is doing well. The former pianist, Scott Laborde, was dismissed.

Motion: That Justin Lincecum be hired as pianist for FPC, effective May 18.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Second: Jack Ready
Motion: Carried

Motion: That Stated Supply Doyle Bailey's salary be increased to \$2,000 monthly starting the next pay period (June 1, 2014).

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Second: Jack Ready
Motion: Carried

Motion: That the June Session Meeting date be changed to June 23 due to Archery Bible School.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Second: Jack Ready
Motion: Carried

Motion: That the Session approve a Congregational Luncheon for Budget Awareness on July 13 after worship.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Second: Jack Ready
Motion: Carried

Personnel Report: No Report

Property Report: No Report

Pastor's/Moderator Report: Presented by Doyle Bailey

Doyle Bailey discussed the upcoming Archery Bible School, the Behl Fund expenditures, and use of young adult volunteers to help with a follow-up to the Archery Bible School throughout the year. He suggested a breakfast for adults and children and archery. (Dates to be announced.)

Motion: That the Session approve an ongoing follow-up to

the Archery Bible School as outlined above.

Moved: Debbe Clegg
Motion: Carried

Second: Jim Hockensmith

Doyle also stated that Music Director Aaron Rogers wants to have a patriotic concert on July 16. He also wants to try to do youth ministry through music.

Motion: That the Session approve the July 16 patriotic concert.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith
Motion: Carried

Second: Jack Ready

Old Business:

John Allen is scanning First Presbyterian archival material. When completed, a copy will be given to LSU-A, Rapides Parish Library, Genealogical Library, Presbyterian Historical Society and two copies will be given to the church.

John Allen has been given a VHS tape, which will have to be digitalized. He also has some deacon records and old photos of church, which need to be restored. John Allen has offered to pay for the restoration of these records, which can be sent to Philadelphia.

By common consent, the Session agreed to John Allen

restoring the records.

New Business:

Motion: That the Session elect a Commissioner (to be named) for the June 3 Presbytery Meeting.

Motion: Jim Hockensmith
Motion: Carried

Second: Jack Ready

Debbe Clegg reported that plans for the June 16-20, 2014 Archery Bible School are moving ahead.

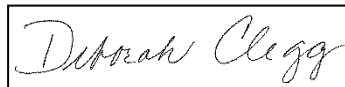
Motion: That the meeting of the Session be adjourned.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith
Motion: Carried

Seconded: Jack Ready

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m. with a closing prayer by Doyle Bailey. The next Stated Meeting of the Session will be **Monday, June 23, 2014.**

Respectfully submitted:



Debbe Clegg, Clerk of Session

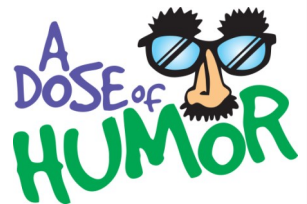
Let's face it: English is a crazy language

There is no **EGG** in **EGGPLANT** nor **HAM** in **HAMBURGER**; neither **APPLE** or **PINE** in **PINEAPPLE**. **ENGLISH MUFFINS** weren't invented in **ENGLAND**. **QUICKSAND** can work **SLOWLY**, **BOXING RINGS** are **SQUARE**, and a **GUINEA PIG** is neither from **GUINEA** nor is it a **PIG**. And why is it that **WRITERS WRITE** but **FINGERS** don't **FING**, **GROCERS** don't **GROCE** and **HAMMERS** don't **HAM**? Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make **AMENDS** but not one **AMEND**? If **TEACHERS TAUGHT**, why didn't **PREACHERS PRAUGHT**? If a **VEGETARIAN** eats **VEGETABLES**, what does a **HUMANITARIAN** eat?

In what other language do people **RECITE** at a **PLAY** and **PLAY** at

a **RECITAL**? We **SHIP** by **TRUCK** but **SEND CARGO** by **SHIP**. We have **NOSES** that **RUN** and **FEET** that **SMELL**. We **PARK** in a **DRIVEWAY** and **DRIVE** in a **PARKWAY**. And how can a **SLIM CHANCE** and a **FAT CHANCE** be the same, while a **WISE MAN** and a **WISE GUY** are opposites?

You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your **HOUSE** can **BURN UP** as it **BURNS DOWN**, in which you **FILL IN** a form by **FILLING IT OUT**, and in which an **ALARM** goes **OFF** by going **ON**. And in closing, if Father is **POP**, how come Mother's not **MOP**?



Creation's splendor

In Romans 1:20, St. Paul writes that God's powers are on display for all people through creation. Humans, he reasons, should conclude there's a God simply by observing.

What does creation's splendor and beauty reveal to us about God? Take a moment and stick your head out the window. It's amazing how colorful creation is. God isn't a boring God who sees only in black and white. He's a God of beauty with an amazing imagination. God creates with a splash of joy.

Every day this week, stop and ask, "What is God's creation revealing to me about his character?"

—Rev. Mike Paulson

Minutes of Stated Session Meeting
First Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, Louisiana
June 23, 2014

The Session met in the church library, 357 Windermere Boulevard, Alexandria, Louisiana. At 6:00 p.m. the meeting was called to order with prayer by Jane Conerly, Pastor of Woodland Presbyterian Church, Pineville, Louisiana, who moderated the meeting.

Members Present: Debbe Clegg, Elizebette Kennedy, Bill Higgins, Jim Hockensmith

Treasurer Present: Jim Smolenski

Elders Excused: John Allen, Jack Ready

Guests Present: Doyle Bailey, FPC Temporary Stated Supply Pastor, Jane Conerly, Moderator

A quorum was present.

Finance Report:

The financial statements for May, 2014, were distributed to the Session. The May, 2014, bank statements were reviewed and initialed by Session members.

Motion:

That Session approve the May Financial Reports.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Elizebette Kennedy
Motion: Carried

Approval of Minutes:

The Session members reviewed the minutes for the May 19, 2014 Stated Meeting of the Session.

Motion: That the Session approve the minutes of the May 19, 2014 Stated Meeting of the Session

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Seconded: Bill Higgins
Motion: Carried

Clerk's Report: Debbe Clegg

Holy Communion was served on Sunday, June 1, 2014 during worship.

Holy Communion was served on Sunday, June 1, 2014 at Emeritus.

There was a large group at Emeritus for communion in June. The group continues to grow.

Vacation Bible School was held the week of June 16. It was well received.

The Clerk's Report was approved as presented by common consent.

COMMITTEE REPORTS AND SESSION ACTIONS

Congregational Life/Christian Education Report:

Presented by Doyle Bailey

Doyle moderated the Christian Life Committee meeting in

John Allen's absence. He submitted a written report of the meeting, which the Session discussed.

Doyle reported that Bill Higgins and Brandi Woolam have agreed to explore the possibility of promoting archery classes throughout the year.

Motion: That an exploratory committee be formed regarding archery classes throughout the year.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Second: Elizebette Kennedy
Motion: Carried

Doyle suggested that Aaron Rogers be compensated for his mileage from Natchitoches during Vacation Bible School week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday).

Motion: That Aaron Rogers be reimbursed for his mileage during VBS week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday).

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Second: Debbe Clegg
Motion: Carried

Worship and Evangelism Report: Presented by Jim Hockensmith

Jim Hockensmith reported that Pianist Justin Lincecum has resigned to take a job closer to home. A new pianist is needed to replace Justin.

Discussion followed on whether to continue providing meals for Healthworx due to so few people signing up. Debbe Clegg volunteered to prepare the meal for July. The Session noted that meal cost will be reimbursed by the church. No decision was made on whether to continue this ministry.

Doyle Bailey presented a written proposal for a change in the order of worship to begin in July.

Motion: That the order of worship be changed as outlined in the proposal.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith Second: Debbe Clegg
Motion: Carried

The July Liturgist will be Jim Hockensmith.

Personnel Report: Bill Higgins

Bill Higgins reported that the six-month trial child care arrangement with Nursery worker Delores McDaniel will end on August 1. The Session agreed that she will no longer be needed due to the decline in children and infants needing care during the worship services. She will be recognized for her service to the church.

Property Report: No Report

Old Business:

The Session approved hosting a congregational meeting on July 13 to discuss the following budgetary matters:

A statement of funds and explanation of their distribution for the first six months of the year.

One Great Hour of Sharing.

Where Presbytery Funds go and how they are used.

New Business:

Bill Higgins commended Debbe Clegg for organizing a very successful Vacation Bible School for 2014. There were 21 children registered and several adults who participated in the adult VBS activities.

Debbe Clegg requested that the Session look into the use of electronic banking and/or a credit-debit card for the church to use to order items online or for large expenses, thus avoiding the use of the members' personal credit cards. Jim Hockensmith agreed to look into it and report back in the July Session Meeting.

The Session also discussed the need to allocate a portion of

Doyle Bailey and Aaron Rogers' travel during VBS from the Behl Fund, which assists in the promotion of children's projects.

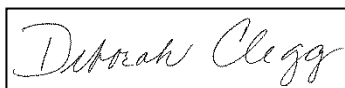
Motion: That the meeting of the Session be adjourned.

Moved: Jim Hockensmith
Motion: Carried

Seconded: Bill Higgins

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m. with a closing prayer by Doyle Bailey. The next Stated Meeting of the Session will be **6:00 pm, Monday, July 21, 2014.**

Respectfully submitted:



Debbe Clegg, Clerk of Session

/cs



Responders Schedule

	Usher Narthex	Greeter Front Door	Monitor	Communion Servers
Aug 3	Ben Yang Sulin Best (Oct-May) Helen McDaniel (May-Oct)	Vacancy	Jim Hockensmith	Bill Higgins Ruth Coon Vacancy
Aug 10	Vacancy	John Allen Liz Magee	Dirk Benade	
Aug 17	Bob Kennedy Elizabette Kennedy	Bill Higgins Martha Higgins	Roger Best (Oct-May) Bill Higgins (May-Oct)	
Aug 24	Jim Hockensmith John Allen	Mike Vickers Pat Turpin	Jim Smolenski	
Aug 31	Mac McBurney Georgia McBurney	Vacancy	Jim Hockensmith (May - Oct) Bill Higgins (Oct - May)	
Sep 7	Ben Yang Sulin Best (Oct-May) Helen McDaniel (May-Oct)	Vacancy	Jim Hockensmith	Jack Ready Pat Turpin Wynn Ware
Sep 14	Vacancy	John Allen Liz Magee	Dirk Benade	
Sep 21	Bob Kennedy Elizabette Kennedy	Bill Higgins Martha Higgins	Roger Best (Oct-May) Bill Higgins (May-Oct)	
Sep 28	Jim Hockensmith John Allen	Mike Vickers Pat Turpin	Jim Smolenski	

There's an app for that!

These days, there's a smartphone app for just about everything. But what about spiritual concerns? Where can you turn?



Depressed? Try the joy app. Read Isaiah 51:11.

Tired? Try the renewal app. Read Isaiah 40:30-31.

Unsettled? Try the peace app. Read Philippians 4:7.

Unloved? Try the love app. Read Romans 8:38-39.

Worried? Try the refuge app. Read Psalm 46:1.

Fearful? Try the power app. Read 2 Timothy 1:7.

Guilty? Try the forgiveness app. Read Colossians 1:13-14.

Praying? Try the prayer app. Read 1 John 5:14-15.

The Scriptures are God's storehouse of meaningful applications for what we face every day. Think of the Bible as the iTunes Store of spiritual apps. Best of all, everything's free!

Desperate for peace

During worship, our congregation "passes the peace." More than a friendly greeting, this ritual is a symbol of Christ's peace shared with us, for us to share daily with others. It also echoes Jesus' exhortation that we be reconciled with others before offering our gifts in worship (see Matthew 5:23-24).

One Sunday morning, I sat behind a 9-year-old girl and her toddler brother. The boy was active and talkative, keeping his parents busy. As the pastor invited us to "share Christ's peace with one another," big sister popped up from her seat and offered to shake hands with everyone nearby, proclaiming "Peace!" to each.



As she tried this with her mom and brother, however, they were occupied with each other and wholly unaware of her efforts. Finally, I overheard her not inviting but demanding, "Mom! James! I want PEACE!" I had to smile, for the girl had voiced the desperation with which we all crave peace in the world and in our lives.

—Heidi Mann

Unanswered prayer?

One day a little boy asked his pastor-mom why she always bowed her head for a moment before starting to preach. The mother, delighted that her son was so aware of what went on during

worship, answered, "I pray for God to help me deliver a good sermon to the people."

Alas, her delight was short-lived and fizzled at the child's response: "So why doesn't God ever answer?"

A 90-10 split

When the weather prediction is for a 10 percent chance of rain, do we sigh and grumble and stay indoors? Or do we go ahead and picnic, golf or hike because the chance of bad weather is so low?

When doctors say our child has a 90 percent chance of full recovery from a deadly illness, don't we rejoice at the great prognosis? We quickly decide we can live with the slight chance of some impairment.

When a really tough exam comes back with a 90 percent grade, aren't we glad to have done well?

When a politician runs for office, 90 percent of the vote would be considered an overwhelming mandate.

Why then, when God gives us 100 percent of our material blessings, are we so horrified at the thought of giving him 10 percent back?

An ancient stewardship message

Some Christians actively avoid church on Stewardship Sunday because giving is a private matter "between me and God." New pastors are even sometimes advised never to preach about money, lest certain people get riled up. Yet Jesus talks frequently in the Gospels about giving and sharing our material goods — and he wasn't the first in Scripture to do so.



A thousand years before Christ's birth, King David prepared to hand over the kingdom to his son, gathering tons (literally!) of gold, silver and other materials for Solomon to use in building the temple. Revealing his take on stewardship, David prayed: "But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand" (1 Chronicles 29:14, NIV)

*Doyle and Barbara Bailey presented an informative talk on their mission in Argentina
April 30, 2014*



Great Food



Fellowship



We learned a lot about Argentina





**A great display of
products from
Argentina**



Archery Bible School

2014



Secret Agents were everywhere

There were contests



They learned crafts



Bible study was an important part of their training.





They attempted to make a mummy



But the project was a failure

They were more successful at Archery



And they always had a song in their hearts



The easy way

In *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*, Eugene H. Peterson maintains that the path to a blessed life is pretty obvious:



"Everyone wants to be happy, to be blessed. Too many people are willfully refusing to pay attention to the One who wills our happiness and ignorantly supposing that the Christian way is a harder way to get what they want than doing it on their own. They are wrong. God's ways and God's presence are where we experience the happiness that lasts. Do it the easy way."

Peterson concludes those thoughts by quoting Psalm 128:1 from *The Message*, the translation he authored: "All you who fear GOD, how blessed you are! how happily you walk on his smooth straight road!"

The burning of the noontide heat ...

At a vast zoo one stifling summer day, my family and I got overheated. The only shady spots were off-limits because signs insisted, "Keep off the grass!" When we finally found a shaded bench, we collapsed, exhausted.

Likewise, spiritual weariness and thirst can zap us of strength. Elizabeth Clephane's 1868 hymn "Beneath the Cross of Jesus" describes the crucified Savior as "a mighty rock within a weary land" in whose cool shadow we find refuge. Christ's glory shines on us not glaringly but gently — redeeming love to light our way.

The hymn concludes:

I take, O cross, thy shadow for my abiding place.

I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of [Christ's] face.

Content to let the world go by, to know no gain or loss.

My sinful self my only shame, my glory all the cross.

—Heidi Man

Just come near

Rev. Stuart Sacks was serving in Paraguay when Rafael, a Maka Indian, came and sat on his porch. Sacks, who'd been inside eating, went out to see what the man wanted. Rafael said, "Ham, henek met," which means "I don't want anything; I have just come near."

The pastor, not understanding the significance of that statement, again asked what he could do for Rafael. But the answer was the same.

When Sacks later shared the incident, a veteran missionary explained it was Rafael's way of showing honor. He didn't need anything in particular; he just wanted to sit on the pastor's porch. He found satisfaction and pleasure merely by being near him.

Sacks points out that the phrase "Ham, henek met" also reveals the heart of true worship. When the Lord asks, "What brings you here, my child?" we don't need to mention or ask for anything specific. We can reply that we simply want to come near our God.

Party time

My mother's 100th birthday party was definitely an occasion to celebrate. We invited relatives and neighbors, prepared favorite foods and helped her pick out an elegant outfit. After all, she'd been anticipating this milestone for a long time.



Mom was excited about her party, yet not much else interests her anymore. When I visit, I notice that her daily routine has slowed to a crawl. It's lackluster and tedious. She waits for someone to call, for dinner or bedtime. The details and problems that were once a big part of Mom's life are no longer important.

There's one thing, though, that Mom does anticipate: her homecoming with God sometime soon. She knows an amazing celebration will occur when she arrives. She'll wear another lovely outfit, too. This time it will be a garment of salvation and righteousness that Jesus purchased for her. It will be the best party of her life.

—MaryAnn Sundby

The bottom shelf

I used to think that God's gifts were on shelves one above the other and that the taller we grew in Christian character, the more easily we should reach them. I find now that God's gifts are on shelves one beneath the other and that it is not a

question of growing taller but of stooping lower, and that we have to go down, always down, to get his best gifts.

—F.B. Meyer



Ordinary impact

Sin sprouts, as banana trees on the Nile, whenever the effect of your relationships with others is to diminish rather than enlarge them. There is no neutral corner in your human encounters, no antiseptic arena in which “nobody else is hurt” or “nobody else knows about it.” You either make people a little better, or leave them a little worse.

You define your faith and moral posture in the ordinary stuff of your daily routine. The kingdom belongs to those ... who love others simply and directly, without thinking about anything but them. The inheritors of the Promise are those unsung folks who lend others a hand when they're falling. That's the only work that matters in the end.

—Frederick Buechner



T.H.I.N.K.

British evangelist Alan Redpath suggested these five helpful questions to ask yourself before you speak:

- T — Is it True?
- H — Is it Helpful?
- I — Is it Inspiring?
- N — Is it Necessary?
- K — Is it Kind?

To love is to give

The most famous verse in the Bible [John 3:16] begins “For God so loved the world that he gave” It’s a generosity verse. I say you can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving. If you want to become a loving person, you have to learn to give. You spell love G-I-V-E.

—Rick Warren

Bad news, Moses

God called down to Moses and said, “I have good news and bad news. The good news is that I’ve chosen you to deliver my people from bondage. I will force Pharaoh to release my children by causing years of pestilence in Egypt. There will be plagues of locusts and frogs and inconceivable devastation upon the land. Pharaoh’s armies will chase you, but don’t fear; I will part the waters of the Red Sea so you can escape.”

“So what’s the bad news?” Moses asked.

God answered, “You’ll have to prepare the environmental impact statement.”

Showing some spine

Because of a back injury, a teacher had to wear a plaster cast around his upper body. It fit under his shirt and wasn’t noticeable at all. On the first day of school, still wearing the cast, he walked confidently into a classroom full of rowdy students.

After giving a lecture and assignment, the teacher opened the window and busied himself at his desk. When a strong breeze made his tie flap, he grabbed his stapler and stapled the tie to his chest. Needless to say, the teacher had no trouble with discipline that year.

Jesus, you ask, “Who do you say I am?” (Matthew 16:15). We answer, “Savior, Lord, Christ, Son of God.” Yes. But may we be open to learning still more about who you are for us and the world. Amen.

“If you look at the world, you’ll be distressed. If you look within, you’ll be depressed. But if you look at Christ, you’ll be at rest.”

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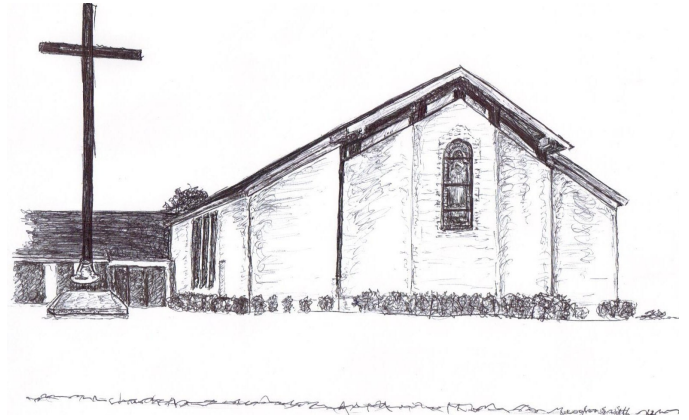
Doyle Bailey, *Pastor*

Carolyn Sterne, *Secretary*

Aaron Rogers, *Choir Director*

Charles Bell, *Sexton*

Sue Shipman, *Newsletter Editor*



5:45 Dinner

6:30 Program

7:30 Choir Practice



First Presbyterian Church

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