

Focusing on the Kids – FPC Syracuse



For the first time in approximately 25 years, **First Presbyterian Church, Syracuse**, will house a pre-school. The school's first day is Aug 28th. This pre-school has been in operation in Syracuse for about 40 years but needed to find a new home. FPC Syracuse is very excited to have the pre-school! The head of the preschool wants to attend FPC Syracuse. Last spring the church had six people join and they are hoping that this fall finds even more folks interested in being a part of their church family.

VBS at the **FPC in Syracuse** with co-sponsor First Methodist Church was another huge, huge success this summer with an approximate attendance of 115 children and 30 adults everyday. The church was over flowing!! The theme was "Maker Fun Factory, Created by God, Built for a Purpose." The FPC church was transformed into a fun factory which included a snack factory, an imagination station and more. The community children discovered they are lovingly crafted by God, through easy-to-learn Bible truths. They found that we are like gears in a machine; we need to all work together to produce experiences that really connect kids with Jesus.



(Thanks Deb Hasik)

On The Wind

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Rev. Dr. Leonard Sweet will serve as the speaker for the 2017 FPC Wichita Durfee Lectures. Make plans to attend the seminar and lecture from Rev. Dr. Sweet on the weekend of Oct 14-15. Dr. Sweet has authored 200+ articles, 1300 published sermons & more than 60 books. Please remember that there is no charge to attend these events. (Hotel rooms set aside for this event.) Visit www.firstchurchwichita.org/media/durfee-lecture-series or www.pbysk.org

July 17th – 21st, First Presbyterian Church, Independence hosted VBS, "Maker Fun Factory," featuring nightly supper, games, Bible studies and FUN!

(Thanks Alberta Smith)



WELCOME to the Presbytery of Southern Kansas

Rev. Craig Waetke – Comes to PSK from West Jersey Presbytery to serve New Covenant, Hutchinson

Rev. Scott McGinnis – Comes to PSK from San Fernando Presbytery to serve FPC, Newton

Greetings from Westminster United Presbyterian Church in Campbell, NE, to FPC in Ashland, KS

My name is Pam Johnson, and I am the director of our church's annual Vacation Bible School. Each year we choose a mission project as part of our VBS program. Early on in the planning stages this year, we decided that the people affected by wild fires in Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas would be an appropriate place for our mission proceeds to go. You see, here in South Central Nebraska, we also have a predominantly farm/ranch based economy. Most of our congregation has ties to farming and/or ranching, And as far as the children in our community go, if they don't live on a farm, then they have friends or relatives who do. We understand the devastation that you have faced, and can hardly imagine how difficult it would be to overcome such adversity. In doing some research of the hardest hit areas, I saw the community of **Ashland, Kansas** mentioned several times.

My husband was given the name of a woman at your local bank who was spearheading a foundation for donations. When I called her to explain what we were doing I told her that we were just a small church and that we were looking for a fund with a "personal feeling." I mentioned that I had been trying to contact the **Presbyterian Church Ashland**, and that's when she connected me with a very friendly woman from your congregation. If I remember correctly, her name was Terri Lucky. (I probably spelled that wrong.) Terri and I had a wonderful visit It seems that our two congregations are very similar. Both are facing dwindling memberships and an aging population. On an average Sunday, We probably see between 50 - 60 members. Most Sundays, we only have 4 or 5 children in attendance at Church. Financing the operations of our church is becoming more and more difficult. Again, we are a rural area, and the farm economy is not great right now. We do have a pastor who serves our church on a part-time basis, and for that we count our blessings. Another thing we count our blessings for is the fact that our community really supports our Vacation Bible School. This year we had 41 children in attendance, which is huge for our community of 347 people. About half of those kids are in some way connected to our church. The rest are simply kids from the community.

Many do not attend church on a regular basis, and I consider VBS as our opportunity to reach out to them and teach them about Jesus. Again, I feel very blessed! As Terri and I were talking, she stated that with some recent rains, the grass was beginning to grow back and that people were finally starting to feel hope.

That statement gave me the chills. You see, the VBS lesson that very day was the topic of HOPE! It was at that moment that I became certain that God had put me into touch with the right person. I strongly believe that God always has a plan. And it was HIS plan that we should dedicate this mission to you.

When Terry told me about the Brett and Katie Shaw family, and how they had lost practically everything in the fire, I KNEW that we had found God's purpose for our mission project Later that day, I told their story to our children. The fact that Brett and Katie have children who are similar in age really seemed to resonate with our kids. They wanted to do whatever they could to help! The next day our offering was quadruple what it had been on previous days! But it didn't stop there ... they told their grandparents, their neighbors, anyone who would listen. Our VBS theme this year was "Hero Central." The kids learned about what it means to be God's SUPER-HEROES, and I think they really took it to heart.

And that brings us to now. Between children's offerings, other donations and our annual aluminum an drive, our simple little VBS in our friendly little town was able to raise \$1,850.00. It would bring us MUCH JOY if you would please present this money to the Shaw family. You will notice that we did not fill in the name on the check. Our treasurer was not sure of the name, so he left it blank for me to fill in. My husband and I were discussing this (we are farmers/ranchers also), and we decided that we would hate for the Shaw's to have to pay income tax on our donation. We are hoping that you will be willing to cash this check in your church's name and then present our gift to the Shaw's in the form of cash.

You will notice that this package also contains a small gift for Addie and Hayden. We hope that it will remind them of their friends up here in Nebraska, and how we are all ONE FAMILY under God. We wish you all the best and pray for your community as you continue to overcome the fires. If any of you are every passing through south central Nebraska, we would love to have you visit and worship with us. In Friendship and god's Love, Pam Johnson, VBS Director.
(Thanks Terrie Luckie)

PSK Presbytery Women Fall Gatherings

Ladies, remember these dates:

Tuesday, September 26th – FPC Wichita

Tuesday, October 3rd – FPC Coffeyville