The other day, I was reminded of one of my favorite books. It’s called *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway. It was Hemingway’s final book of fiction and it was a work of such incredible brilliance that it won both the Pulitzer Prize and the Nobel Prize for Literature. It has always appealed to me because while it tells a very simple story, it is very clear that just about every element in the story is symbolic of something else greater and more important.

It tells the story of an old fisherman named Santiago who has endured a terrible stretch of time when he has hardly caught a thing. So, he decides to sail out into the sea further than he ever has and when he does, after a long and difficult fight, he catches and eventually secures the largest fish of his entire life. Now he faces the problem of sailing all the way home. He is alone in a small boat and the fish that he has caught is so large that there is no way for him to bring it up into the boat. He will have to sail for home dragging his great trophy behind him. As he makes that long journey, sharks attack his catch and succeed in slowly tearing it apart. Santiago fights them off to the best of his ability and exhausts himself doing so, but it’s no use; by the time that he returns home, the glorious fish that he had caught is now only a skeleton.

It’s as simple as that. It would seem that if you want to win the greatest of all literary prizes, all you need to do is jot down a few notes from your most recent fishing trip and you’ve got it. Yet, as I said, just about every element in that story points the mind to something else; something greater; something difficult to understand; something that needs the help of simple images and symbols to open up its full significance. In *The Old Man and the Sea*, the little pathetic boat, the act of fishing, the fish itself, the sharks, the vast ocean, the relentless heat of the sun, and much more all speak of individual struggles and situations that all of us face every day, while also working together to make a comprehensive statement about life itself. Now, if you can do all of that in only a few pages, you’ve got a book that I want to read!

Some have very little use for art and symbol. They will say, “Tell it like it is! Say what you mean and mean what you say!” People said the same thing to Jesus. They became frustrated with Jesus and said, “Tell us plainly!” They were tired of Jesus speaking to them in parables and using symbols like bread and water and shepherds and sheep to talk about who He is and why He is here. They assumed that if the Lord would put everything in simple black and white terms, then they would be able to fully embrace everything that He had to say.

What they didn’t realize and what we often forget is that, by definition, the great things of God are larger than words. They go far beyond the limits of human language. Jesus could’ve gone around and simply told everyone that God loves them but instead, He chose to tell us the story of the Prodigal Son so that we could see our own personal relationship with God in an entirely new way and then feel the love of God for ourselves. Jesus could’ve told everybody to simply be nice to everyone but instead, He chose to tell us the parable of the Good Samaritan so that we could see the full extent of the sacrificial love that God expects from us.

First Presbyterian and all other Christian churches exist very much for the purpose of carrying on this tradition of the symbolic. The Cross, the bread, the juice, the table, the offering plate and many other elements in church are symbolic of something greater. They can be ignored or they can be embraced. They can take root in us or they can collect dust. It’s all in how we read and listen and observe. It’s all in whether or not we are willing to learn.

See you in Church,

Rev. J.D.
September 7 marks our return to our fall schedule.

Both services will be held in the sanctuary.

Children and youth will begin their fall Sunday school classes at 9:45 to 10:30.

Adults will spend the Sunday school time visiting a mission fair to be held in Fellowship Hall. Please greet representatives from our partner agencies and learn more about how they serve our brothers and sisters in Christ here in Delaware County.

Following the 11:00 service, there will be a catered picnic in the garden.

After a wonderful meal, 2:00 marks tee time for the Gishler Golf tournament at the Delaware Country Club.

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Kick Off - September 7 with the Mission Fair and Picnic.

Sunday School for all ages begins September 7 at 9:45 am

Sept. 7 – Oct. 12— Mona Simmons will be teaching the 4 year olds – 3rd grade in room 103 and Susan Clay will be teaching 4th - 6th graders in the Jr. High Room.

If you have any questions or if you would like to teach a Sunday School class please contact Tracy Clinger at tracy@firstpresmuncie.org or 751-7960.

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SUNDAY FORUMS

Adult Sunday School resumes on Sunday, September 14TH!

9:45 - 10:30 am in Fellowship Hall

September 14 - October 12

Jeff Clinger

"John's Letters" ~ Discovering Genuine Christianity

Jennifer Williams:

"The Traveler's Gift" ~ Discussing life principles exemplified by seven historical figures.
Welcome Back!

Pre-K begins

September 2nd, 2014

Parents at Pre-K Orientation

**CROP Hunger Walks** help to support the overall ministry of Church World Service, especially grassroots, hunger-fighting development efforts around the world. In addition, our local CROP Hunger Walk sends 25% of the funds it raises to our local Christian Ministries.

CROP Hunger Walks help to provide food and water, as well as resources that empower people to meet their own needs.

You are invited to walk (forms are available at the information desk) or make a donation (check payable to First Presbyterian Church with Crop Walk on the memo line).

September 14 at College Avenue Methodist Church
Registration- 1:30p
Walk- 2:00p

Prayer Partners needed for two FPC ministries:

Please contact Cathy Alexander (cathy@firstprespuncie.org) if you would be willing to pray for...

Nine missionaries (Tom Schwartz, Brad Southwick, Michelle Kaitchuck, John Foster, Terri Truex, Walt Campbell, Alan Wilson, JD Georgett, or JD’s friend, Tom Wendland) who will travel to Oklahoma October 5-11 to assist in the rebuilding effort following the 2013 storms.

Kids’ Hope returning/new mentors (Cathy Alexander, Doug Bakken, Lee Ann Brown, Joyce Carmichael, Barb Dennis, Muggs Gooden, Sheila Lachat, Carrie Jo Miller, Denise Reedy, Richard Reedy), and returning/new substitute mentors (Olga Butler, Carole Caldemeyer, Myron Earhart, Carol Pyle, and Jerry Rushton). These mentors and their students will meet for an hour a week throughout the school year.

What is a small group????? let’s figure it out together!

If you are interested in starting a small group or have a suggestion for a group, let’s talk! Call me at church or email me (cathy@firstprespuncie.org).

Thanks! Cathy
Adult Ministry Luncheon

Join us for lunch on Wednesday, September 17, at 12 noon in the Fellowship Hall.

Allen Thomas will tell us all about *The Birds and the Bees . . . and the Bats.*

If you’re an adult, male or female, young, old or in-between and can join us for lunch ($3.00 per person), please call the church office (289-4431) to make reservations by September 15.

First Presbyterian Church
1400 W. Riverside Ave.
Muncie IN 47303
Phone: 765-289-4431
Fax: 765-289-4486
www.firstpresmuncie.org

SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES:
8:30 a.m.—Garden Service (Garden)
11:00 a.m.—International Service (Chapel)
11:00 a.m.—Traditional Service (Sanctuary)

The Rev. J. D. Georlett, Senior Pastor/Head of Staff
revjd@firstpresmuncie.org

The Rev. Dr. Myungku Lee, Associate Pastor
ninebrights@hotmail.com

Cathy Alexander, Director of Mission & Small Group Activities
cathy@firstpresmuncie.org

Tracy Clinger, Director of Children’s Ministry
tracy@firstpresmuncie.org

Lisa Ulrich, Business Administrator
lisa@firstpresmuncie.org

Keena Troyer, Administrative Assistant
jsmith@firstpresmuncie.org

SALVATION ARMY FOOD PANTRY
ITEM FOR SEPTEMBER:
Canned fruits and veggies
Please place your donation(s) in the cart in Fellowship Hall.

First Presbyterian Church
26th Annual Golf Outing
benefiting the Gishler College Scholarship Fund

DELDAIRE COUNTRY CLUB
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 2014
2:00 TEE TIME

Greater Muncie, Indiana
Habitat for Humanity®

Thank you to all the wonderful construction and lunch volunteers. Together, we contributed 240+ hours to the Faith Build home on E. Memorial!

Attention: All Artists & Crafters!

Art & Craft Fair
Sunday, October 26, 2014

More information/entry forms are available at the information desk and from the FPC website.
KIDS HOPE USA mentors from FPC spend one hour per week reading, talking, playing, and listening to a child at Southview Elementary School. By helping the child feel loved and valued, we help that child learn, grow, and succeed.

There are Southview school children who need a mentor. If you have one hour a week, you can change a life...and that’s no small change! Please contact Cathy Alexander for more information about becoming a mentor.

One simple thing will make a big difference in the life of an at-risk child: One-on-one, positive attention from a responsible, caring adult.

**A Great Big Thank You**

. . . . . . from South View Elementary School for our volunteer helpers with Kick-off for Kindergarten—which was a great success. This 3-week, 5-day a week, 3-hours a day program helped prepare 22 children for Kindergarten. Every day, two enthusiastic volunteers from First Pres worked with the teacher and aide to get the children ready for Kindergarten. Our volunteers were Lee Ann Brown, Joyce Carmichael, Barb Dennis, Muggs Gooden, Chris Hostetler, Aileen Howard, Carrie Jo Miller, Carol Pyle, and Lani Wilson.

On Wednesday, August 13, Barb, Carrie Jo, and Muggs plus Myron Earhart helped with “first day of school” morning routine, helping students find where they were supposed to be and wiping a few tears. (Mr. Myron is especially good at that.) First Pres also provided school supplies for some South View students. The administrators and teachers have expressed over and over their sincere gratitude for our help.

**WE NEED COATS!**

**...AND HATS, SCARVES, MITTENS AND GLOVES**

Bring those new and gently used winter coats—and scarves, hats, mittens, and gloves—to the church for the Coats against the Cold collection. We need children’s coats and adult women and men’s coats, especially washable ones and larger sizes—2XL and 3XL. Bins are in the North Lobby and upstairs hallway. Collection ends Oct. 12. Thanks for your help in keeping Delaware County children and adults warm this winter.

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**Branches’ Upcoming Events**

To glorify God, Branches’ activities provide education, fellowship, mission, stewardship, and worship experiences for all junior high and senior high students. All gatherings are from 5:00 to 7:00 pm at the church unless otherwise noted and will usually include dinner. Always check your email for more details and last minute changes.

- **Sept. 3 (Wed.)** KOINONIA
- **Sept. 7** Gishler Golf Outing
- **Sept. 10 (Wed.)** KOINONIA!
- **Sept. 14** Scavenger Hunt
- **Sept. 17 (Wed.)** KOINONIA!
- **Sept. 21** Movie Night
- **Sept. 24** No KOINONIA
- **Sept. 28** Tye Dye Party

**Dee Dah Day Circle**

First meeting on September 12th 9am-11am in the lounge. Second meeting September 26th. We will finish the John Ortberg book.

**Sunday Liturgists**

The pastors would like to involve more members of the congregation in our Sunday worship. If you are willing to serve as a Scripture reader for a Sunday service, please sign up on the poster behind the information desk.

“I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.”
Koinonia

A night of food, fellowship and learning for all ages at First Presbyterian Koinonia (Koy-nuh-nee'-ah)—noun—Fellowship, Participation, Close Relationship [with God], Gift

Wednesdays beginning ..... ~ Dinner together at 6 pm; Bible Study & Children's Programming at 7:15 pm

**Bible Study Topics (for adults & teens)**

**Holy Moly**

- **Koinonia for Kids!**

  **What will children, K-5th, do during Koinonia Bible study?**

  Holy Moly, we're glad you asked! Holy Moly is children's curriculum from Spark House, a division of Augsburg Press.

  **What happens during a Holy Moly lesson?**

  Each lesson has four components. During Discover, kids watch an animated Bible story video. In Relate, they talk about the story they just watched. Then, in Connect, kids engage with the story again in the NRSV Bible to understand the story. Finally, they complete the Create activity with their leaflets.

  **Sign up your kids today!** Holy Moly, they won't want to miss it!

  For more information, check out [http://wearesparkhouse.org/kids/holymoly](http://wearesparkhouse.org/kids/holymoly)

  (Childcare will be provided for children under age 5.)

**JOIN THE FUN AND HELP THE HOMELESS**

On Sunday, September 14, 2014 **Project Stepping Stone** will hold a dessert auction to raise money to support its ministry to the homeless.

You can help by providing a dessert to be sold at the auction. The dessert should be made by your kind hands (store bought are not welcome). A simple description should be on the top of each container. Please use containers that will not need to be returned. The desserts should be presented in the following portion sizes:

- One dozen brownies, bars, or cupcakes.
- Two dozen cookies.
- A cake.
- A pie.

Please help by bringing your dessert contribution to Fellowship Hall by 10:45 a.m. on Sunday morning September 14. Bake up a storm. First Presbyterian is committed to providing 20 deserts.

You can also help by attending the auction at Lutheran Church of the Cross, 4401 N. Wheeling, starting at about 12 noon, and bidding on auction items.

Project Stepping Stone is a not-for-profit agency sponsored by First Presbyterian, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, and Lutheran Church of the Cross. It provides free temporary housing for homeless working poor families for 3 months or more, which gives the families a chance to get back on their feet by saving enough money to pay for a place of their own.

If you have any questions about the auction or Project Stepping Stone, please call Roger Sherwood at 284-5260.
Eternal Question

In his travels to three tragic scenes – a mass murder in the United States, a civil war in Europe, and a natural disaster in Japan – the author and journalist Philip Yancey confronted brutal realities that gave rise to the same questions: Where were You, God? Why did You let this happen?

The author visited Newtown, Conn., where school children were slaughtered by a gunman; Japan where a giant tsunami killed some 19,000 people; and Sarajevo in the former Yugoslavia where 11,000 men, women, and children died as a result of the civil war.

He recounts his personal experiences as he traveled through these scenes of suffering. His stories will help readers respond to their own suffering in ways they never thought possible. In the midst of personal suffering that everyone experiences, it is possible to find hope and comfort.

Travels with Ruth

In The Girl’s Still Got It (222.35 HIGG), the popular author Liz Curtis Higgs takes a fresh look at the biblical story of Ruth. This book is like time travel, an approach to Bible study that zooms from past to present gleaning eternal truths along the way. It is also a journey through the holy land as Ruth journeys from Moab to Bethlehem.

Ms. Higgs is a conference speaker as well as the author of dozens of books with more than three million copies in print.

Making Sense of a Chaotic World

What do we do when life lurches out of balance? How can we reconnect to one another and to what’s sustaining when evil and catastrophe seem inescapable? Where do we start again after personal and public devastation?

In her new book, Stitches (248.8 LAMO), Anne Lamott offers help for those trying to find meaning and peace in these chaotic times. As the title suggests, the process involves figuratively gathering the tattered shreds of one’s emotional and spiritual fabric and sewing them back together one stitch at a time.

Idol Worship

Not many people worship idols these days. Timothy Keller writes about some things that people now worship but which fail to deliver the goods. His book is Counterfeit Gods: The Empty Promises of Money, Sex, and Power, and the Only Hope that Matters (241.3 KELL).

This book shows how a proper understanding of the Bible reveals the truth about the things that modern society values. Readers will learn how to identify the idols in their own hearts and how to replace empty promises with hope in Christ.

Maxine and Chuck Leslie
Adult Mission Trip Opportunity:  
Oklahoma, Oct. 5—11

Pastor JD will lead an adult mission trip to Oklahoma, October 5-11. Several communities in Oklahoma were impacted by the spring 2013 storms. Many agencies are working together in a coordinated effort during this difficult time and plan to continue over the months and years to come to help the communities recover and rebuild.

One of the biggest VOIDS and challenges in long term recovery is the availability and coordination of adequate resources and skilled and unskilled labor to repair and rebuild survivors’ homes.

There are 5 more spots available. If you feel called to serve the disaster survivors in Oklahoma, please contact Cathy Alexander to get your name on the list. Thank you for your willingness to serve those in need!