Seasons

We’ve been vacillating between Fall and Summer for weeks now in East Central Indiana. Hoosiers know historically that if we don’t like the weather, we just need to wait ten minutes. Right? These past few weeks are like a tug-of-war match between equal sides. All seems in even tension, and then the advantage moves ever so slightly to one side and then, and after a prolonged period of stasis, the other side gains for a while. Back and forth we go, one season and then the other.

The weekend of the 21st gave us the opportunity to care for one family in our fellowship as we remembered Joyce Bell’s life among us for many years. Her memorial service was, among other things, a marker for a long life invested for good. That same weekend, in fact that same day, we joined the Hill family to witness the wedding of Alex and his fiancée Justine. That ceremony was, among other things, a marker for a life just beginning, in this case a beginning of a marriage. Endings and beginnings, late and early, life comes to us in seasons.

I love the changing seasons of a calendar year. I know people who live in places where there is largely, or even totally, one season for all twelve months. Though I may eat my words someday, it’s hard for me to imagine liking that. Variety is pleasing to me. I like down coat and sandal weather alike. I even like these in-between times when seasons can’t seem to make up their mind whether to hold sway or not.

I’ve been hearing comments around the First Pres family that this season as a congregation feels good. Now, of course, there will be different opinions on this. After all, not all of us have the same take on the weather, and we can hold divergent opinions about our faith home as well. Words I hear lately are energized, compelling, rich, exciting, grateful, hopeful, healed and the phrase forward looking. These please me, of course, as your interim pastor. Where these are accurate, they also please the heart of God.

As Autumn settles in around us, I hope we might all see glimpses of the good that God is doing among us and, perhaps more importantly, through us. This is a season of life as a congregation that is touched by where we are in this transitional stage and also in anticipation of a whole new chapter beginning when First Pres’ new pastor will arrive to join you. Whenever that happens, a new season begins. I live with a grateful heart for the season in which we find ourselves right now and for what is to come. I hope you do, too.

The Rev. Pat Smith
Fall Spiritual Formation Class: “Reading the Bible Like Jesus”

There is a fascinatingly marvelous account in Luke’s gospel about an unexpected conversation between Jesus and two of his followers. This particular conversation is remarkable because it is the first lengthy interaction Jesus has with anyone after his resurrection. An interesting note is that these disciples don’t realize who he is at the time.

As the three of them talk, Jesus takes his customary role as rabbi/teacher. He doesn’t walk them back through some of the inside scoop of his last hours before his death or reveal all that happened while his body was in the grave. (These are all things we might want to know, right?) Instead, he takes them back to their Scriptures (our Old Testament) and shows them everything they say about him and his mission.

These were Jewish men discussing Jewish Scripture, words they knew by heart and had both been taught and talked about almost every day of their lives. Even with all this, they still didn’t understand them. 2,000 years later, we too, can read them and not understand them. Part of what hampers us that did not hamper them is that most of us are not Jewish and we come to them as people schooled in Western thought.

Started on Sunday September 8th, the Spiritual Formation Class give us an opportunity to have our understanding expanded and transformed so we can more fully grasp what the Scriptures and Jesus’ teaching meant to their original audience in an Eastern context. What we discover will allow us to read and understand the Bible with greater depth and insight for life in 21st Century Mid-America.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall at 8:45 a.m. for refreshments and visiting. We’ll get the guided conversation underway right at 9:00 a.m., and it will last until 9:45. Our primary resource will be Lois Tverberg’s book, “Reading the Bible with Rabbi Jesus”.

We believe this class will open up our understanding and our lives in deeply meaningful ways. We look forward to seeing you join us this Fall.

Angel Workshop

Learn how to turn one of our old hymnals into an angel at a Workshop on Wednesday, October 9, 2:00-4:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Space is limited to 10 people—call the church office to register, and to get more details.

765-289-4431 or email office@firstpresmuncie.org

There will be a small charge for supplies needed along with a suggested free-will offering to the instructor, Debra Goggans.

The Mission Committee thanks the dozens of church members that participated in the rummage sale on September 28. Several members worked every day the week before the sale. Many more came to help as they could. The donations came every day. By 5pm Friday, we were ready! Saturday was a wonderful day. Fellowship Hall was literally full of our members’ donations. We raised $1500 in cash, but more importantly we made major donations to Habitat for Humanity Restore Store, Muncie Mission and winter coats and sweaters for those Avondale Church serves. We also may have the opportunity to help initiate a new program that will help children and their mothers which is the major criteria of First Pres Mission. Thank you everyone! You made a real difference in more lives than we will ever know.
**Women's Book Study & Prayer Group**

Dee Dah Day will be meeting on Friday, October 11 and Friday, October 25 in the Church Lounge at 9:00-11:00.

We are studying *The Gift of Years: Growing Older Gracefully* by Joan Chittister.

If you have any questions, please contact Barbara Ottinger, 765-289-4080 or kbaott59@comcast.net.

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**ONE WEEKEND – TWO CONCERTS!**

Ball State University School of Music presents an afternoon of male chorus singing featuring the Ball State Statesmen, the Varsity Men’s Glee Club of the University of Illinois, Circle City Sound Barbershop Chorus, and the 2015 International Champion Barbershop Quartet “Instant Classic.” Don’t miss the chance to hear three wonderful men’s choruses and a top-tier quartet performing individually and together!

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 4:00PM, SURSA PERFORMANCE HALL**

**TICKETS $5, AVAILABLE FROM EMENS AUDITORIUM BOX OFFICE**

Masterworks Chorale and the East Central Indiana Chamber Orchestra present “Out West at the Masterworks Corral” - a concert of western-themed music. This light-hearted program will feature familiar tunes from the movies, folksy wisdom from Will Rogers, and a cowboy oratorio “Oedipus Tex” by PDQ Bach.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 3:00PM, SOUTHSIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL AUDITORIUM**

**Tickets $12 for adults, $10 for seniors, free for students.**

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**Planning Your LEGACY**

We rarely come across a person who regrets having been truly generous. However, many of us wonder how to gift cash, securities, life insurance or even real estate when we do not know if our family will need these assets in the future. One solution among many is to make a gift through a bequest – a gift in your will.

Some advantages of a bequest is that it is…

- **Easy.** A few sentences in your will accomplishes the gift.
- **Versatile.** You can bequeath a specific amount, a specific item or a percentage of your estate.
- **Revocable.** Until your will takes effect, your wishes can be changed.
- **Tax Favored.** Your estate is granted an unlimited charitable deduction for charitable gifts.

Please watch for planned giving learning opportunities coming this fall from the Generosity Committee.
Finally, after months of preparation, we are starting to see the fruits of our labor. Below are some of the September projects:

**VOLUNTEER TRAINING:** Dr. Angela Stefanski (BSU Liaison to South View) was the featured speaker at the Harvester’s meeting on Monday, September 16. She discussed the first chapters of the Fostering Resilient Learners book with an audience of 28, 2 of whom represented Heritage Apostolic Tabernacle while the rest were First Pres volunteers. She did a wonderful job of showing why it was important to engage this book as a volunteer or as someone invested in South View. Dr. Stefanski’s fee and the books were paid for through our Community Ministry Grant. Books are available (free) in the church office to volunteers who would like a copy. Others were given to Principal Anthony Williams for his new teachers.

**PRESCHOOL:** Preschool teacher Nancy Rice requested a special chair because of her back problems. Both she and her students were excited when the box arrived in her classroom. Nancy is very thankful, and as you can see, her students love it also.

**STRESS BUSTER #1:** About 20 teachers participated in the first of 10 monthly after-school Stress Buster activities on Sept. 18. Our hospitality team provided healthy snacks. Jenni Flanagan and Lisa Beck of Ball State taught 5 different relaxation/mindfulness techniques. As part of the session, titled “Relaxation and Mindfulness”, teachers made mindful jars using water, corn syrup, food color, liquid soap, and glitter. The jar, a homemade snow globe, represents one’s mind. Without stress, the mind is calm. But when you are shaken by stress, your thinking becomes cloudy and moves in frantic circles. The jar is a visual reminder for teachers to use the relaxation techniques they learned until they regained their sense of calm. Everyone had a lot of fun and left feeling much more relaxed!

**OCTOBER PROJECTS:** Renovations to the Teachers’ Lounge, a Gaga Ball Pit for the 4th/5th playground, and acoustic sound-absorbing tiles for the cafeteria are on schedule. On October 25th, the teachers/staff, First Pres volunteers, school board and community guests are invited to a celebration dinner highlighting the grant and our collaboration with South View. **Watch for more pictures next month.**

Jan McCune for the Community Ministry Grant Team of Cathy Alexander, Myron Earhart, and Marty Kendrick
First Presbyterian Pre-Kindergarten News

First Presbyterian Pre-Kindergarten still has openings for 3-year old kids! We also have some openings still available in our Thursday and Friday PDO classes.

Please contact Sharon Rogers at 751-7960 or sharon@firstpresmuncie.org for more information.

This is such a fun time at preschool! Many of our preschoolers will be going to the pumpkin patch this month! Our 3-year old will enjoy Whitetail Tree Farm and our 4-year old will go to Landess Farm. All the children will enjoy a hayride, pumpkin patch, and a corn maze!

There will be NO PRESCHOOL October 7-11, 2019 due to Fall Break.

Join our Korean Language School

Every Sunday at 1:30 p.m.
Free of charge!
Learn a new language, have fun and make new friends!

Fall Bible Study Opportunity

The NT book of Philippians contains some of the most memorable phrases in all of Scripture. Here are just a few of those:

* "For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain." * "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again, Rejoice!"
* "I can do everything through Christ who gives me strength."

Though often taken out of context, these truths are closely tied to the historical reality of Paul's situation and that of the people to whom he was writing. This eight-week study, using a guide by N.T. Wright, will help us to explore Philippians in its context as we apply its truths to our lives today. We will meet every Wednesday through November 20, from 4:00-5:00 pm, in the Brides Room.

Contact Laura Smith by email, call, or text at knappkin76@gmail.com, 317-873-2678, with questions or to order a study guide.
Join our team of Volunteer Bus Drivers

We have a volunteer opportunity providing Sunday morning transportation for our Westminster Village members.

The church bus doesn’t require a special license and is easy to drive. The bus leaves the parking lot at 9:15 a.m. to arrive at Westminster around 9:30 a.m.

The group is in the main lobby waiting for the bus (pull under the overhang). After the service, you bring the van to the circle to pick up the group. If you have any questions, ask one of our current drivers: Cathy Alexander, Tim Koontz, Jonathan Schmidt, and Bob Wadsworth.

If you would be willing to drive, please contact the church office. A reminder email with the schedule will be sent out weekly.

We Need Liturgists

If you would like to serve as a Scripture reader for our 10 a.m. service, please sign up on the bulletin board, call 765- 289-4431, or email office@firstprespuncie.org Readings for the week will be emailed to you by Friday prior to the scheduled Sunday, or/and a copy will be available to be picked up at the office. Thank you!

Worship

Sundays at 4pm in Youth Hall

We gather for worship every Sunday during the BSU school year. Come as you are for informal worship & discussion, with weekly communion.

Bible Study

Wednesdays at 4pm in Youth Hall

Join us as we study & discuss scripture texts and seek to further explore our faith.

Grab & Go Breakfasts

Weds & Thurs 7:30-10am in back parking lot

Stop by for a free breakfast to Grab and Go on your way to class. Fresh fruit & protein bars, tea & muffins, coffee & donuts, something for everyone to start your day off right for morning class.

Dinners for Hope & Justice

Join us for a free dinner with guest speakers and roundtable discussions. Dinner is at 6pm in Fellowship Hall

Fall Semester Topic: Oct 28 - Sexuality, Gender Identity & Faith

For more info and updates: www.gracevillagebsu.com - gracevillagebsu@gmail.com twitter.com/BSUGrace - facebook/GraceVillage
Ministry Guild continues collecting crafting items for Beyond I CAN:

Bring anything that can be used or repurposed: Magazines, newspapers, crafting materials, jewelry, paint, glue, yarn, old and new greeting cards, stickers, paint brushes, terracotta flower pots, cardstock paper, scotch tape, etc.

Beyond I CAN creates jobs and experiences that allow individuals with developmental disabilities the opportunity to operate a business with assistance from volunteers. Please put your donations in the tub basket located in the North Lobby.

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**Flower Dedication Calendar**

If you wish to dedicate flowers to a loved one, or for a special occasion on a Sunday worship service, please sign up on the Flower Calendar posted behind the information desk.

You will be contacted by the church office in advance of the date you requested, to gather information for the Sunday bulletin.

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**Canned Meats and Hearty Stews**

Please place your donation(s) in the cart in the Coat Closet in Fellowship Hall.

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Thank you to our Weekly Weeders!!

For their dedication, hard work and commitment to maintain our church gardens and grounds clean, healthy and always looking beautiful throughout the year!

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**SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES:**

10:00 am One Unified Service
11:30 am International Congregation Service
4:00 pm University/Young Adult Worship

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**First Presbyterian Church**

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oratsmith@firstpresmuncie.org

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cjmiller3501@comcast.net

**Sharon Rogers, Director of Pre-Kindergarten**
sharon@firstpresmuncie.org

**Lisa Ulrich, Business Administrator**
lisa@firstpresmuncie.org

**Gabriela Burciaga, Administrative Assistant**
office@firstpresmuncie.org

**Asher John, Building Superintendent**
ashersw@yahoo.com
Some of us may be fans of the long-running “reality” show, The Apprentice. I am not. With apologies for all who love to watch this show, it only took me as long as the thirty seconds of one of the early commercials to know this was not my cup of tea. Competition, meanness, the goal to come out on top no matter what it takes, autocratic decisions of who’s still in—it all left me immediately cold. I remember declaring to my television, “That’s not apprenticeship!”

We know there are other apprentices in our world. These are real life opportunities to learn a trade. A person signs on under the supervision and tutelage of a master craftsman in whatever chosen profession. The goal is to learn everything that person can teach about how to successfully accomplish the work. A good apprentice is attentive, committed to learning and capable of successfully completing the apprenticeship so he or she can proceed on into a career. A good master carefully nurtures his or her learners so they achieve that goal.

In Jesus’ day, rabbis were already taking on what they called “disciples” to learn their take on the Jewish Scriptures and Jewish life based on those words. These disciples, actually the same word as the word apprentices, listened carefully and watched the rabbi carefully. Once they were ready, they were able to stand on their own as they sought to live Godly lives and teach others.

At the end of Jesus’ ministry, he told his apprentices, “Wherever you go, apprentice others as I have apprenticed you.” What a simple and profound instruction! What does this life look like? Of what does it consist? What are we supposed to do and be? This Fall we’ll explore what it means to live as Jesus’ disciples, “Apprentices Unlike Any Others.”

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Scripture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 6</td>
<td>The Foundation</td>
<td>Luke 17:1–10</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>Healing</td>
<td>Luke 17:11–19</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>Justice</td>
<td>Luke 18:1–8</td>
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