By now most of you know that I’m a big baseball fan. Those who have stopped by the office have seen that, of the few things that I have scattered about, many have something to do with baseball. I’ve got stuff that you’d typically find in a pastor’s office—Bibles and crosses and other articles of the faith, but in my case, all of that stuff sits right next to signed baseballs, bobble heads and two real bleacher seats from Detroit’s Tiger Stadium.

I love the Tigers, but I love the game of baseball every bit as much. I’ve often marveled at how someone can take a simple piece of wood in their hands and whack a ball that’s traveling toward them at more than 90 miles an hour. Yet, if they do this successfully, they are then faced with the equally difficult task of traveling around the bases. If one is so blessed as to hit a home run, the journey is an easy and glorious trot. Every other journey is much more difficult.

The bases provide safe places to stop in an otherwise inhospitable land, but even though a runner is safe while standing on a base, they cannot stay. The safety of the base must be wisely abandoned in the name of reaching home. While many runners will be congratulated and admired for taking a base, they won’t be if they refuse to leave. Because they are places of safety and security, those bases can seem like home to the runner, but they’re not. They are only temporary and inferior examples of the ultimate goal. The runner must always boldly strive toward home with the firm belief that it is indeed better than anything he or she has ever experienced or could ever experience anywhere else on the base paths.

As you might imagine, I’ve been thinking about home quite a bit lately. Recently, I left the community that I had called home for 35 of my 46 years. I chose to leave that very familiar and very comfortable place and I moved to Muncie Indiana.

Suddenly, I wasn’t home. Everything was new and very strange. I felt as if I was somewhere in-between the bases; trying to get somewhere that I couldn’t yet see; unsure of every choice and every direction. Yet, even so, I knew that this was what God wanted me to do. This was definitely the journey that God had set before me. It’s not easy facing a situation that’s always completely new and unfamiliar, but it’s good.

It challenges you to look for home and to appreciate it. For years, I had assumed that home was a place with an address, but when I didn’t have that place anymore, I started to find home all over the place. I mainly saw it and experienced it through the love and the friendship of the people of First Presbyterian. Because of the incredible kindness and generosity of this congregation, I now realize how blind I had previously been. The home that we are seeking is quite often right before us and all around us.

As it is with baseball, life can often make us feel as if the home for which we hunger is far away and elusive. Many live as if they are always desperately racing around the bases with no end. Christianity teaches us something different. It declares that we have been claimed by God and that we are in relationship with God. No matter where we are or what we are experiencing or what we may be feeling at any given time, God knows us and is with us - protecting, guiding, blessing and loving us. I’ve been in Muncie for a little more than a month now and I can tell you that even though life makes us feel like we’re caught between unfamiliar bases, the truth is that in Christ, no matter where we are, we’re already home.

See you in Church,
Rev. J.D.
Thank You!

Words do not begin to express my appreciation to the choir and congregation for the beautiful anthem “What Does the Lord Require of You?” presented in my honor on April 28th. The words and music certainly reflect my passion for ministry. Mission, reaching out to the lost and broken with compassion and love, I believe is the lifeblood of the church. Seeing all people as God’s children reflects for me the nature of this omnipotent and unconditionally loving Creator God.

I will always cherish the experience of hearing “What Does the Lord Require of You?” for the first time but knowing it came from a loving choir and congregation means more to me than you will ever know. Thank you.

Faithfully,

Ron Naylor
Volunteers Needed for
Kindergarten Kick-off at South View Elementary

What: A “getting ready for Kindergarten” program needs two helpers every day
When: Weekdays July 22 through August 9
9:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
Where: South View Elementary School

If you could help even just one or two days, we’d appreciate your help.

Some of our KidsHope volunteers will be at South View (where we mentor through the school year) for this program which is being offered in several city elementary schools this summer. The B-5 initiative, a Muncie Action Plan group that focuses on education between the ages of birth and 5 years, has offered to help expand a program begun at Longfellow Elementary several years ago which has proven to be very effective in giving incoming students a head start on school. The class is limited to 25 students and staffed by a teacher, two aides and two First Presbyterian volunteers. We need more volunteers for this summer program which is sure to be fun and you don’t have to be a KidsHope mentor to take part. We also need more KidsHope mentors for the fall. Questions? Please call Carrie Jo Miller at 289-4431 for more information about either of these opportunities to make a difference in a child’s life.
### 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. If I don't have your email address, please send it to cathy@firstpresmuncie.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 30</td>
<td>Mystery Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 4</td>
<td>Parking Lot Picnic and Fireworks</td>
<td>Meet in the parking lot (starting at 7:30; fireworks start at dusk). Bring the whole family and your own picnic, blanket and chairs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 7</td>
<td>Bike Trip</td>
<td>We will meet at a Cardinal Greenway trail head in Muncie and bike to the Mill Street Inn in Gaston (about 11 miles one way). Bring money for dinner at the Inn.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 14</td>
<td>No Meeting (meeting on July 15)</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 15</td>
<td>&quot;Cooking for Kirk&quot;</td>
<td>Kirk Johnston will be bringing a group from his Presbytery to Triennium. We will welcome Kirk’s group and provide dinner on Monday night.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 15</td>
<td>DEADLINE TO SUBMIT YOUR VBS FORMS!</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 16-20</td>
<td>Presbyterian Youth Triennium, Purdue University</td>
<td>Imagine 5,000 Presbyterian youth all in one place! Triennium will be a wonderful experience for Ian, Jack, Jessica, Kayla, Mac, Megan, and Pierce! Oh, and for Dan and Thea, too!</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 21</td>
<td>No Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 26 (Fri.)</td>
<td>VBS Decorating</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 28-Aug. 1</td>
<td>VBS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 4</td>
<td>No Meeting</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 5 (Mon.)</td>
<td>VBS Un-Decorating</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**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.”**  
*John 15:5*

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**Branches Summer Mission Trip is a WRAP!**  
(June 17-22, 2013)

By the time you read this, our group will have just returned from our mission trip to Crestfield Camp and Conference Center in Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania. Watch for more information about our trip in the next Columns!

The Columns

Recognition Sunday

Congratulations to Paige Wilson, a second grader who “graduated” to full-time worship next year as a 3rd grader. Paige, daughter of Chris Wilson and granddaughter of Bob and Kathy Wilson, was presented a Bible during the Recognition Brunch on May 19.

Congratulations to the following high school seniors who are graduating this year. These students were given a Bible dictionary during the recognition brunch on May 19.

Jack Alexander, Burris Laboratory School
Katie Bittermann, Indiana Academy
Laura Schmidt, Indiana Academy
Spencer Varner, Yorktown High School
Leah Williams, Delta High School

Gishler Scholarships Awarded

Four high school seniors are recipients of this year’s Lewis Weber Gishler Memorial Scholarship. Friends, family and former parishioners created the scholarship in Dr. Gishler’s name to further expand his commitment to education and excellence. The scholarship is given to children of members of the congregation of First Presbyterian Church, where Dr. Gishler served for 30 years. This year’s recipients are Jack Alexander, Katie Bittermann, Laura Schmidt, and Leah Williams.

Jack Alexander graduated from Burris High School. He is the son of Dan and Cathy Alexander. His church activities include 2 international mission trips, 6 national mission trips, Sunday school, AP Bible study, Vinedressers, and Branches (youth group). He has also served as a youth deacon. Jack plans to attend Indiana University as a direct admit to the Kelley School of Business.

The daughter of Katja and the late Duke Bittermann, Katie Bittermann plans to study pre-veterinary medicine at Purdue University following graduation from the Indiana Academy of Science and Mathematics. She was a member of the Sunday morning Praise Team and attended Branches (youth group). Laura, the daughter of Jonathan and Lynn Schmidt, will study musical theatre and communications.

Leah Williams, daughter of Jim and Jennifer Williams, is graduating from Delta High School and will attend DePauw University. Leah was a member of the bell choir and traveled with a group of church members to Greece and Turkey.

Laura Schmidt will study at Hope College after graduation from the Indiana Academy of Science and Mathematics. She was a member of the Sunday morning Praise Team and attended Branches (youth group). Laura, the daughter of Jonathan and Lynn Schmidt, will study musical theatre and communications.

Nancy J. Mannies Scholarship Awarded

Jack Alexander, who graduated from Burris High School, participated in 2 international mission trips, 6 national mission trips, youth group, Sunday school, Vinedressers, and served the church as a youth deacon. In the fall, Jack, the son of Dan and Cathy Alexander, plans to attend the Kelley School of Business at Indiana University.

Nancy Mannies was a generous member of First Presbyterian church, sharing her time and talents. Following her death in 2004, her husband, Morry, and their children, created the scholarship in Nancy Mannies’ name to further expand her commitment to education, excellence, and to the First Presbyterian Church.
**TOOLS FOR SCHOOL DRIVE**
Collection drive: June 23 – July 21
(Collection Bins are in the North Lobby & outside the Library)
- #2 pencils
- Blue or black ballpoint pens (not gel)
- Colored pencils, crayons, markers, or highlighters
- Wide-lined notebook paper (not spiral)
  - Scissors
  - Glue
- Composition notebooks (120 pages)
- Hand-held pencil sharpeners
- Multi-colored 2-pocket folders

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**4th of July Fireworks!**

*Our own church parking lot is a great place to view the fireworks launched from Muncie Central! That just begs for an informal FPC family gathering!*

- No RSVP necessary...just come on July 4 and bring your friends and neighbors.
- Meet in the parking lot (starting at 7:30; fireworks start at dusk).
- Bring your own picnic, blanket and chairs. Popsicles will be provided!

*Any questions? Check with Tracy Clinger, Jacqueline Burton, or Thea! 😊*

*I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your precepts.
I will speak of your statutes before kings and will not be put to shame,
for I delight in your commands because I love them. —Psalm 119:45-47*

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**KINGDOM ROCK VBS IS ALMOST HERE!**

July 28th - August 1st
5:30 - 8:15 pm

*All are welcome to join in this medieval experience!*

The celebration will start each night with dinner at 5:30 for the entire family. At Kingdom Rock, preschoolers through 5th graders will discover what it means to stand strong for God! We will discover together that God is active in our lives and that his fingerprints are everywhere! Kingdom Rock is filled with Bible stories, crafts, games, and music.

Bring your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and family friends to come join the party!

Registration is now open on the church website - [http://www.firstpresmuncie.org/vacation-bible-school.html](http://www.firstpresmuncie.org/vacation-bible-school.html)

*Questions? Please contact Jacqueline Burton (jburton823@att.net)*
Thank You

As a result of the Book Fair, the church library has acquired some 66 new books. Thanks to all who donated.

Lincoln and Faith

Evidence of the religious faith of President Abraham Lincoln is rather sparse and often contradictory. While in Washington, he sometimes attended a Presbyterian church. But he never joined that church or any other. The word “God” appears often in his public statements. But he seldom mentioned Jesus.

In *Lincoln’s Battle with God* (973.709 MANS), the biographer and historian Stephen Mansfield explores the President’s struggle to find religious faith and obey his mother’s death-bed challenge to “Worship God.”

Lincoln sought the consolations of faith during times of personal and national tragedy. He lost his mother before he was 10. He lost a son at age three and another son at age 11. He suffered many setbacks and disappointments in his efforts to win a war and begin the process of mending a fractured nation.

Shortly before his assassination, Lincoln delivered his second inaugural address which has been deemed the greatest American sermon. He concluded his address declaring:

“With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation’s wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan – to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.”

Who Do You Think You Are?

If you ever feel inadequate or wonder if you are well liked or wish you could “measure up,” Craig Groeschel has some good news for you. You are not who you think you are. You have not yet become the person God intends for you to be.

In his new book *Altar Ego* (248.4 GROE), Rev. Groeschel lays out a path to help readers embrace their God-given identity. He encourages readers to shed ego-driven identity -- often based on the opinions of others -- and embrace a new faith-based identity.

The author is senior pastor of a multi-campus church in Oklahoma.

Differing Faiths Explained

*So What’s the Difference* (261.2 RIDE) examines 20 worldviews and faiths. The book first discusses Christianity then uses these beliefs as a “plumb line” to bring out comparisons and contrasts with other faiths. Also discussed are cults and the occult.

Faiths and belief systems covered include Buddhism, Mormonism, Humanism, Witchcraft, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Postmodernism, Evolutionism, Islam, Judaism, and New Age. This book provides rather brief discussions of various practices and beliefs without going deeply into theological matters. Some readers may be disappointed to find that all “mainline” denominations are lumped together in a discussion of Protestantism.

The author is Fritz Ridenour who has written widely on religious topics.

Window Replacement Project Update

- Final Phase
- Your Help Needed

The final phase of the window replacement project has begun. Windows have been ordered. Delivery of the windows is expected within 8 - 10 weeks, and the goal is to have installation completed prior to the onset of winter weather. We’ve already seen significant savings in utility costs from the windows that have been installed to date, so please prayerfully consider what you can give in addition to your yearly pledge to help defray the cost of this most-needed project. *

--Rev. J. D.

*Cereal (not oatmeal) Please place your donation(s) in the cart in Fellowship Hall.

*Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian, memo: windows
Retirement Dinner
Honoring The Rev. Dr. Ronald Naylor
Saturday evening, July 27, 6:00 pm
BSU Student Center

Reserve Your Place!

After 28 years of devoted service to First Presbyterian Church, The Rev. Dr. Ronald Naylor will be retiring at the end of July. The church is now taking reservations for Rev. Naylor's Retirement Dinner to be held on Saturday night, July 27, at 6:00 pm at the Ball State Student Center. Cost is $30 per person.

Reservation forms are available at the information desk and in the narthex and also on the church website (firstpresmuncie.org). As space is limited, please send in your reservation and payment soon.

~ Sunday, July 28 ~

ONE WORSHIP SERVICE
AT 11:00 A.M.
(No 8:30 am Garden Service)

Pastor Ron Naylor will be preaching
(Ron's last Sunday at First Presbyterian)

A reception in the lounge at 9:30 a.m. will give those unable to attend the dinner on the 27th an opportunity to fellowship with Ron before the service.