I don’t know about all of you, but October is without question my favorite month of the year. Weather is changing in wonderful, refreshing new ways, the kids are in a routine at school enjoying many familiar activities, football is back and baseball is about to play the most important and exciting games of the year, and here at church we’ve emerged from our summer slumber and we are now very active and busy with many important tasks. As you read this newsletter, you will notice many things that are happening this month here at First Presbyterian. The most important spiritual activity that we will be undertaking during October will be stewardship.

Three of our October worship services will be focused on the message of Christian Stewardship. Pledge cards will be available to everyone as early as Sunday, October 20, and everyone will submit their church pledge for 2014 on Stewardship Sunday, October 27, during our one service for that day at 11 A.M.

The sermon series that I have developed for this year is called “Worth Giving.” It’s based on three separate passages from the book of Luke that confront us with the goodness and generosity and love of God and with the question of how we are called to respond in the light of this amazing grace.

During these very important weeks, as we gather together in the House of God, we will spend our time and energy prayerfully considering what God is calling us to give for the next year. This is not a financial drive nearly as much as it is a time of spiritual reflection. Certainly, we will be making financial pledges to the ministry of First Presbyterian Church, but more importantly, each one of us will be re-evaluating and renewing and redefining our commitment to our Lord Jesus Christ. We will be deciding and declaring how we will participate in the mission of Christ in the next year.

To begin the process, I encourage all of you to seek out these passages in your own time and to pray over them in preparation for this very important season in the church year. I have included notes on the sermon series below:

**Sunday, October 6—“Faith Worth Giving”**  
*Luke 17:11-19*

In this story, Jesus heals ten lepers of their disease, but only one comes back to Jesus to express gratitude and praise for the healing that he has received. True faith doesn’t just bring us into the presence of Jesus, it opens our eyes to the wonderful things that Christ does and it leads us toward submitting our lives completely to him.

**Sunday, October 20—“Grace Worth Giving”**  
*Luke 18:9-14*

In this story, two men go to church. One thanks God with empty words, thinking of only how good it is that he is more fortunate than others. The second man falls on his knees, confesses his sin and begs God for mercy. It is the one who has a personal knowledge of God’s grace who is prepared to serve God according to God’s will and not his own.

**Sunday, October 27—Stewardship Sunday—“Love Worth Giving”**  
*Luke 19:1-10*

In this story, Zacchaeus, the tax collector, receives the incredible honor of having Jesus choose to visit his house and dine with him. Jesus transforms Zacchaeus’ life, like ours, with simple, true, pure love. Zacchaeus then quite naturally returns the love that he has received by offering his best gifts to God’s glory.

See you in church,

Rev. J.D.
A Letter from Our Missionaries Mark Hare & Jenny Bent in Haiti & the D.R.

I am sitting here looking at a list of donations for the month of May, and I just feel like I need to give a shout out to all the folks who support Jenny, Keila, Annika and me in this “thing” that we are doing—Jenny serving here in the Dominican Republic with the Dominican Evangelical Church (IED) working on community health, and me serving in Haiti with resource-limited farmers through the farmers’ organization known as Peasants Movement of Papay (MPP, its initials in Haitian Creole).

A lot of the people who support us aren’t on this list, and never will be. They are the people here in the DR who bring us safely home from the supermarket on motorcycles, make food for us in our kitchen, watch our daughters so that we can “get things done,” welcome us in the churches we visit and especially in the church up the road in the Cacique barrio where we attend more regularly. Our support people are also the folk who meet me at the border in Haiti when I get across, the ones who make space for me to sleep and make sure there is food to keep me going while I work, the ones who work alongside me, guiding and inspiring me. They are the people in the churches in the States who write us notes and send us cards, with all the kids in the church signing them, or everyone on the mission committee. They are also our families in the States and in Nicaragua who worry about us and pray for us and make sure that we are able to stay connected with their lives, and when they can, visit us. The value of all of this support is utterly immeasurable.

And then there are the ones on this list. It is easy at times to forget how much money it takes to keep a family of four going. And, frankly, I would feel really good about myself if I could do what I am doing and somehow make it pay for itself and for our family. Perhaps it is our cultural ideal of “rugged independence” that makes that idea attractive to me. At the same time, our dependence forces us to recognize that we are part of a bigger picture and particularly that God is in charge of our lives, not us. Humbling.

So, by the Grace of God there are all these folks out there who are willing to take the risk on us, reaching out in faith to make it possible for Jenny and Keila and Annika and me to do this incredible work. I don't know if I want them to know that, but it is so. Each one of us can act with the best of intentions and the purest of hearts and still screw up. I love what I do (most of the time), but there are at least half a dozen folks in Papaye I thought would be my success stories, people who would light their communities on fire with the new agricultural ideas we are sharing. I spent a lot of time investing in training and encouraging them, but in the end they simply didn't share the vision I have. What is happening is that the folks who are turning their yards into models of abundance and health, and sharing that good news with their neighbors, are people I would never have picked.

It is difficult to realize that I am not really in control, in any which way. Not in our support and even less in my work. One way I could describe it is that it feels something like walking through a very dark forest without knowing if I am on anything that even resembles a path. Then, suddenly and always unexpectedly, I come to a place shining with light and right there is a post with a sign on it that points the way, on down the path that, sure enough, really is there. That path goes on, into the darkness that will soon close in again but also hopefully, on to other spaces of light. These moments of clarity usually seem to be a kind of reward for the times I truly let go. They seem to come most often when I fully recognize that I can be the conduit for the work of the Holy Spirit, but I am never in control of where that Spirit will blow. I can only walk, if walk I will, by faith and not by sight.

Final word? It really is a risk they’re taking, these folks giving of themselves for us. They are joining us in a mutual leap of faith, and we are grateful for it. Very. If you are one of those risk takers, supporting us with whatever you use to support us, blessings on you. You rock, every one of you.

Mark, Jenny, Keila and Annika
Stewardship Sunday is Coming!

Our focus on Christian Stewardship will culminate in a single Sunday service, October 27, at 11:00 am. Everyone will have the opportunity to place their completed Pledge Card on the altar at the end of this service.

The 11:00 am single service will be followed by a Carry-In Dinner in Fellowship Hall. The Ministry Guild will provide the main dish, drinks, and tableware...so bring a side dish or dessert that serves 8-12 people. Please join us for this very important day in the life of our church!

Charlie & Claudia Sursa,
Aaron & Jacqueline Burton
Stewardship Committee Chairs & Vice-Chairs

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First Presbyterian Church
2013 Advent Booklet
Favorite Christmas Carols

Do you have a favorite Christmas carol? One that makes you smile, brings tears to your eyes, or reminds you of a special person or memory?

This year, the Worship and Religious Arts Team is preparing an Advent booklet about Christmas carols that will include short articles about the songs that are important to the people of First Presbyterian Church. We invite you to write a paragraph or two about your favorite Advent or Christmas carol and to share why it has special meaning to you. Children are encouraged to participate by making a drawing illustrating their favorite carol and briefly explaining why they like it.

Entries should be submitted to the church office to jsmith@firstpresmuncie.org, preferably in Word format for written documents, by Monday, November 18. It may seem as if Christmas is a long way off, but it’s not too early to start thinking about your favorite Christmas carol and what it means to you. Contact Aileen Howard (765-273-7178), Barb Kvam (216-386-7413), or Tom Schwartz (765-282-2586) for more information.

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STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27th

ONE SERVICE ONLY*
at 11:00 am

followed by a
CARRY-IN DINNER
Bring a side dish or dessert to serve 8 - 12!

*NO 8:30 am SERVICE
Spring Mission Trip to the Dominican Republic

Who: A team of 15 missionaries from FPC (see application info below under Deadlines)

What: Our second international mission trip to the Dominican Republic

When: March 21 through March 29, 2014

Where: We will travel again to the village of Mella, in the southwest part of the DR, where the PCUSA has a partner church, the Iglesia Evangelica Dominicana. This is fairly close to Barahona, where PCUSA missionaries Mark Hare and Jenny Bent live.

Why: To continue to build a relationship between First Pres Muncie and the wonderful people of Mella.

To answer these questions...

- What can I learn about myself?
- How is my understanding of God growing?
- What is the impact of culture on faith/faith on culture?
- What am I learning about my lifestyle?
- How does the PCUSA do mission?
- What might God be calling me to do as a result of this experience?

Cost: TBA

Deadlines: Because of the church-wide interest in last year’s trip, an application process is necessary. Applications are available at the information desk. Completed applications are due in the office by October 6. If you are selected for the trip, a copy of your passport and $100 will be due by November 15. Full payment (or a payment plan) will be due by January 6, 2014.

Special Considerations: While this is a transformative experience, please be aware that the travel is arduous, the days are long, the temperature is high, the accommodations are extremely primitive by US standards, the food is different and lacks variety, and additional vaccinations are required.

Want to learn more? Talk to someone who went last year: Dan Alexander, Jack Alexander, Amanda Brown, Scott Brown, Mackenzie Clinger, Hyejung Cho, Lucas Clay, Dan House, John Foster, Alan Simmons, Lauren Simmons, Michelle Kaitchuck, Cathy Alexander, Pastor Lee, Carrie Jo Miller.

Check out these websites:


Adult Sunday School
9:45 - 10:30 am in Fellowship Hall

Sept. 8 through Oct. 13 Series on Tim Keller's book *Generous Justice* and social justice from a Christian perspective, led by Jim Williams

Oct. 20 "I Am Second" - How faith shapes our lives and how we talk about it to impact others, led by Bill Rogers

Oct. 27 through Nov. 10 "The Universe and Faith", led by Ron Kaitchuck

Nov. 17 "I Am Second", led by Bill Rogers

PCM Presbyterian College Ministry
Sundays -9:45 - 10:30 am College Sunday School class
12 noon Eat 'n' Run lunch
Wednesdays - 6:00-8:15 pm KOINONIA all-church dinner & Bible study
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.

Oct. 2 (Wed.) Koinonia!

Oct. 6 Pack-A-Sack
We will assemble 100 sack lunches for Harvest Soup Kitchen.

Oct. 9 (Wed.) Koinonia!

Oct. 13 Installation for JD
Watch for more details about this wonderful event in the life of our church! We will attend the service and help with clean-up after the dinner.

Oct. 16 (Wed.) Koinonia!

Oct. 20 No Meeting

Oct. 23 (Wed.) Koinonia!

Oct. 27 Mystery Meeting!

Oct. 30 (Wed.) Koinonia!

We Welcome Children and Families on Sunday Mornings to First Presbyterian!

Infants through 3 year olds receive child care and Christian nurturing in Room 101 with Marie Burkey and Nancy Conn throughout Sunday morning from 8:15 am to noon.

During Worship Services:

Children’s Worship Center
Children 4 years old through 2nd grade join their parents in the sanctuary for the beginning of worship and are dismissed with a leader for Children’s Worship Center. Held in Youth Hall, Children’s Worship Center is a way to be in worship with young children. Storytelling is used as a primary means for encountering God, so God is experienced, not just learned about. Children in the 3rd grade and older remain in worship with their parents.

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9:45-10:30 am Sunday School for Children and Youth:

- Room 104: 4-year-olds through 5th graders with Jeff & Tracy Clinger*
- Room 23 (on the stage): 6th-12th graders with Aaron & Jacqueline Burton

*We combine our elementary classes into a single class, using the "One Room Sunday School" curriculum. This curriculum provides comprehensive Bible study, application of Bible lessons and a variety of age-appropriate activities.
Adult Ministry Luncheon

*NOTICE: CHANGE OF DATE - THIS IS THE 4th WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH!

Join us for lunch on
Wednesday, October 23*
12 noon in Fellowship Hall

The Third Age Theater Group will present a very entertaining program of music

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 Monday, October 21.

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

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

Mark your calendar and plan to be a part of this important milestone in the life of First Presbyterian Church!

You are invited to the Service of Installation of The Rev. J.D. Georlett Sunday, October 13, at 4:00 pm in the sanctuary and a Catered Dinner afterwards in Fellowship Hall
Ron’s DVDs in Demand

All copies of the DVDs of Ron Naylor’s retirement dinner and his last sermon have been checked out. But none have been returned. If you have one, please bring it back to the library within a week or two. Others are waiting to see them. Thank you.

Living the Good Life

In order to achieve a good life it’s necessary to distinguish between standard of living and quality of life, according to the authors of Heaven on Earth (241.5 SEID). Authors Chris Seidman and Josh Graves declare that the Beatitudes are Christ’s “declaration of the good life and provides the way and the call to immerse ourselves in it.”

Rev. Seidman is senior pastor of the Branch, a church in Dallas, Texas, and Rev. Graves is lead minister of Otter Creek Church in Nashville, Tennessee.

More than “I’m Sorry”

Everybody makes mistakes, so we should all have occasions to say “I’m sorry.” But that’s not always enough to repair a relationship. In The Five Languages of Apology (158.2 CHAP), authors Gary Chapman and Jennifer Thomas explain how to express remorse in ways that enhance relationships.

This book is based on extensive research and interaction with hundreds of individuals and many years of counseling individuals and couples.

A Penetrating Look at the Good Book

What more could be said about the world’s all-time best-selling book that hasn’t already been said in countless sermons and commentaries? It turns out that one of the nation’s most prominent ministers has plenty to say.

In The Good Book (220.1 GOME), Peter J. Gomes offers a new analysis and interpretation. He is Plummer Professor of Christian morals at Harvard College and pastor of Harvard’s Memorial Church. Time magazine named him one of the seven best preachers in America.

Rev. Gomes wrote his book to explore the “risk and joy of the Bible: risk that we might get it wrong, and joy in the discovery of the living word becoming flesh.”

His book speaks to those who want to introduce (or re-introduce) themselves to the Bible, who are looking for timeless wisdom and comfort, who want to reconcile what they know of the Bible with what they know of themselves and the world, and those who want to reclaim the responsibility of biblical interpretation from those who would use the Bible for division and exclusion.

Officer Nominations

At the end of October, the 2013 Church Nominating Committee will be considering (i) officers whose terms are expiring, (ii) previously ordained but currently inactive officers, and (iii) persons never before ordained, for nomination for the offices of Elder and Deacon.

Nomination forms which include criteria will be available at the information desk every Sunday throughout October. Please prayerfully consider whom you may wish to nominate. Please note that before nominating someone, you should contact the person to ensure they would be willing to accept the position if contacted to serve.
NEW MEMBER CLASS  
Saturday, October 19, 5:00 pm

A New Member class will be offered on Saturday, October 19th, at 5 P.M. in the Conference Room. The class will be followed by dinner with the elders of the church. New members will then be formally received into the membership of the church during the 11 A.M. service on Sunday, October 20th.

All those who are interested are encouraged to call the church office to reserve a spot in the class.

If you have questions, please contact Rev. J.D. by email at revjd@firstpresmuncie.org or at the office, 765.289.4431.

REGULAR MID-WEEK STUDY & FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES


Women's Bible Study - 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month - in the Jr. High Room. Current Study: Revelation. For more information, contact Carrie Jo Miller (289-4431).


International Students' Bible Study - every Friday at 7:00 pm - in the Conference Room. For more information, contact Pastor Lee (289-4431).