



Pastor's Letter



I first want to thank those of you who offered to help the Hernandez family. We were able to give them kitchen utensils, dishes, cookware, blankets, a sofa, a child's wardrobe, and a dresser, as well as money. They were very appreciative of all that we were able to do for them. I also want to thank our sexton, **Eric Gargiulo**, **Dale Monetti**, and **John Chen** for helping me carry and deliver the heavy items.

We are now into the season of Lent in our church year. By the time you read this, we will have had two of our three **Taizé services**. If you have not had the opportunity to attend one yet, I hope you will try to make to the last session. It is very different from our Sunday morning service. It provides the quiet and peace needed to sit and reflect and to allow God to talk to us. Our third service will be on Sunday, **March 7th at 7 p.m.**

On **Sunday, March 14th**, we begin our three week joint adult education Lenten series with Trinity United Church and Meyersville Presbyterian Church. The leader for this series is Charles McCollough.

Charles just completed a year as visiting lecturer at the Theological School at Drew University and in 2009-10 is resident artist at New Brunswick Seminary (NJ).

He is the author of seven books: *Morality of Power*, *Heads of Heaven/Feet of Clay*, *Lifestyles of Faithfulness*, *To Love the Earth*, *Resolving Conflict with Justice and Peace*, *Faith Made Visible*, and *The Art of Parables* (2008).

He sculpts, writes, and lectures. He lives on an old farm in central New Jersey which he and his wife, Carol, renovated and equipped with solar electric systems from which they receive most of their electrical power. He works with clay, wood, bronze, and stone in his barn studio.

The title of the series is *The Art of Parables*. The gatherings will begin at 5 p.m. with fellowship and a soup supper, followed by the talk and dialogue. On **March 14th** we will be at Trinity United Church, on **March 21st** at Meyersville Presbyterian Church, and on **March 28th** at First Presbyterian Church. Plan now to join us for what promises to be an exciting and thoughtful series! (Child care will be provided.)

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I ask for your prayers as I go on retreat from March 8th-15th. This retreat is for ministers in my age group as we consider our ministry the “rest of the way,” until retirement. I will be attending a retreat center outside of Asheville, North Carolina. As always, if you have need for pastoral assistance while I’m gone, you may call either Paulette or Phyllis Clemson, and they will put someone in touch with you.

May God bless our Lenten Journey

Tom

Worship Services and Scripture Passages for March

March 7, 2010

- *Third Sunday in Lent*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8;
I Corinthians 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9

March 14, 2010

- *Fourth Sunday in Lent*
Joshua 5:9-12; Psalm 32;
2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32
Kathryn Mustaro preaching

*Worship begins at 10:00 a.m. on
Sunday mornings, followed by Coffee Hour
fellowship in Pollard Hall.*

Child Care is provided in the Nursery.

*Children join their families
in church and then leave
for Christian Education classes
after the Children’s Talk.*

March 21, 2010

- *Fifth Sunday in Lent*
- *Dedication of the Organ*
- *Gifts of Men Sunday*
Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126;
Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8

March 28, 2010

- *Palm/Passion Sunday*
- *Beginning of Holy Week*
Luke 19:28-40; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29;
Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16
Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 22:14-23:56
Dramatic Reading of Holy Week in the
Gospel of Luke

Rev. Tom’s sermons are posted on the church website. Visit: www.fpcstirling.org, click on: “Sermons” in the list of links on the left.



Join Your Friends for A Night at the Museum --- Friday, March 12th, 7-9 p.m.

While no artifacts will come alive to scare us that night, there will be the most amazing quilts to be seen, and they will "jump out and stand on their own." Jack Walsh has graciously invited us to join him at the Morris Museum on Friday, March 12th at 7p.m. for a private showing of his contemporary art quilt collection. Folks, these are not your grandmother's quilts! Plan to spend the evening listening to Jack's stories about his quilts and enjoying these incredible works of art.



The museum will need an approximate head count for the event by Monday, March 8th. Please indicate your interest in attending by adding your name to the sign-up sheet in Pollard Hall, or you may RSVP to Chris Scott. Refreshments will be served; please see Chris if you can help supply refreshments.

Deacon's Corner**- Matthew Gerecht****Worship Help**

The 2010 Worship Help chart is posted in Pollard Hall. Please sign up for dates when you can help out as Liturgist, Usher, or host of Coffee Hour. If you have questions about any of these duties, please speak with any Deacon.

Coffee Hour: Would you be willing to supply goodies or make a donation for Coffee Hour and have someone else actually host rather than not have it at all? Please sign up on the chart for Coffee Hour as host or donator. Thank you!

Worship**- Janet Parziale**

Over the past several years, our congregation has celebrated *Gifts of Women Sunday* by honoring women who have made significant contributions of service to our church or local community. Last year, the Worship Committee established a new celebration with *Gifts of Men Sunday* when we honored Warren Hoffman for his contributions of service to our church. This year, the Worship Committee is planning a special coffee hour for *Gifts of Men Sunday* on March 21st. The nominations are open to all men who have made a difference in our church or community.



For the next few weeks, the worship committee would like your suggestions of possible honorees for this year. You may submit your choice during worship service by using the form included in the bulletin, or you may submit your response to one of the committee members listed below. To help in making our decision, please provide a few sentences describing the areas in which this person has demonstrated outstanding effort within our church or community. If you have any questions, please see any member of the worship committee (Ellen Eastty, Barbara Griswold, Phyllis Clemson, Lynne Combs, or Janet Parziale).

Christian Education**- Lori Pateman, Debra Sprague****Fourth Sunday Focus on . . . Connections****- Tom Parziale**

You are invited to join us at the next "Fourth Sunday" gathering on **March 28th** in Pollard Hall. Fourth Sundays give us an opportunity to connect with other members of our church family in a relaxed atmosphere: a pot of tea, a Box o' Joe, Munchkins . . . and conversation.

We start around 8:45 a.m. and end by about 9:45 a.m. --- but, come and join us whenever you can. We don't have a topic yet for this month, so join us and see what we're talking about.



2009 Mile of Pennies for Kenya Student Scholarships

We reached a Mile of Pennies - **\$844.80** for 2009! What a wonderful accomplishment as a congregation.

Here's what scholarships cost -

Primary Scholarships - \$50 - School is free at primary level - goes towards uniforms and school supplies.

Secondary Scholarships - \$225 - School is not free - goes towards tuition, school supplies, and uniforms.

So, our mile of pennies (\$844.80) can provide just under four secondary scholarships, just under 17 primary scholarships, or just over 3 secondary and 3 primary scholarships. This makes a tremendous difference in young people's lives!



(This is a photo of students taken by Rev. Peters when he was in Kenya.)

Thank you all for your generosity and the spirit of love and learning that you foster!

All-Church Retreat - Johnsonburg Presbyterian Camp & Conference Center

- Chrissie Parziale

A good time was had by all on Saturday, February 13th up at Johnsonburg! We joined Kitchell Memorial Church (of East Hanover) for a joint retreat. We had fun making crafts, meeting new people, enjoying the camp atmosphere, participating in a book discussion, worshipping together, hiking, playing games, singing and, of course, sledding!! Discussion has begun for our next retreat at Johnsonburg, and we hope you will consider joining us next year.



Mission**-Yvonne Fletcher****Bridges Outreach Lunch Program****- Jean Hoffman, Coordinator**

Our next commitment for preparing lunches is Friday, **March 19th**. We can always use juice boxes, fruit cups, and snacks (small packets of chips, cheese crackers, cookies, etc.). Large packages of cookies are broken down to lunch sizes. We have sufficient paper supplies at this time. Beginning in March, we are increasing our donation to 40 lunches per month.

**Winter Clothing Collection**

We are collecting winter clothing items which will be sent to a non-profit organization in Elizabeth. If you have items to donate, please place them on the pew inside Pollard Hall.

Coming in May - Church Yard Sale**- Jean Hoffman, Mariann Powell**

When you are doing your spring cleaning, please keep in mind that **we can use the following items** and set them aside. This is not a complete list, so if you have questions, use your judgment, or call Mariann Powell or Jean Hoffman, who are coordinating the sale.



- ✓ Easily transported small furniture
- ✓ New, unused gifts
- ✓ Kitchen utensils, china, glassware
- ✓ Small appliances that work: radios, toasters, clocks, etc.
- ✓ Bric-a-brac, lamps, vases
- ✓ Linens: sheets, towels, blankets
- ✓ Up-to-date hardcover books/paperbacks
- ✓ Jewelry
- ✓ Christmas ornaments in good condition; no lights
- ✓ Children's toys: puzzles with no missing pieces, etc.
- ✓ Children's items: strollers, chairs, etc.,
- ✓ but **no clothing**

**Items that do not sell in a short sale:**

- ✓ Mugs
- ✓ Florist vases
- ✓ Stuffed toys
- ✓ Small, inexpensive items that we cannot tag for at least \$1
- ✓ Clothing
- ✓ Baskets

We will also have a "**Goodie Sale**" - mostly baked goods, but if you make candy, jelly, or relish, these items sell well.

Proceeds from the yard sale will go toward paying down the heating loan.

Endowment Fund**- Bill Combs**

Income from the Endowment Fund is disbursed each year based on an inflation factor from the previous year. All income earned, less inflation, will be available to "property" as well as the "mission" committees. This year, "property" is entitled to \$1841, and "mission" is entitled to \$1896. Please continue to consider the Endowment Fund as a recipient for church gifting in honor or memory of special people in your life.

Presbyterian Women of Newton Presbytery

Following are two upcoming events sponsored by the Presbyterian Women of Newton Presbytery:

Spring Gathering: The Well Woman - "Caring for Ourselves, Caring for Others"

Date: **April 25th**
 Location: First Presbyterian Church of Succasunna
 99 Main St., Succasunna, NJ 07876
 Time: Register: 2:00-2:30 p.m.
 Program: 2:30-7:00 p.m.
 Dinner: 5:15 p.m.
 Cost: \$5
 Child care provided upon request.



- Business Meeting
- Parish Nursing
- Global Women's Health Issues

Offering to Breast Cancer and Global Women's Health

RSVP by April 16th to Janet (Succasunna Church Office) at 973-584-5238 or
fpcsunna@optonline.net

Sunday Gospel Brunch

The Spiritual Life Committee of Newton Presbytery's Presbyterian Women invites everyone to enjoy an *all you can eat* soul food brunch while listening to the voices of the world famous Harlem Gospel Choir.

Date: **May 30th**
 Location: B.B. King Blues Club
 237 West 42nd St., NYC, NY
 Time: 12:30 p.m.
 Cost: \$42 per person

Reservation deadline is April 15th
 Contact CLP Linda Gaden at 973-462-1543

Ongoing Mission Programs

Mile of Pennies

Change (and more) collected during coffee hour supports scholarships for Kenyan students. We're into our fourth year/mile now, as we begin our 2010 drive. Please help us reach our goal.

Food Pantry

Items can be left in baskets marked "Food Pantry Donations."

Toiletries

Full-sized bars of soap and "courtesy" sizes of soap, shampoo, conditioner, and shower caps are donated to various causes. Place on the table outside Pollard Hall.

Sneaker Project

Place used pairs of sneakers (any size) on the pew inside Pollard Hall. To date, we have collected 120 pairs, which are sent to the Somerset Food Bank.

Eyeglasses, Sunglasses, Cell Phones

Place used glasses and cell phones on the table outside Pollard Hall.

Yarn & Cotton Material

Yarn is used to make lap robes for wounded veterans; any color is acceptable. Fabric (with the exception of wool and stretchables) of about 1/2 yard is used to make small bears for children, totes for wheelchair patients, etc. Place on pew inside Pollard Hall.

Ongoing Fundraiser

Grocery Store Gift Cards

- ✓ No additional cost to you to use
- ✓ Church earns **5%**
- ✓ Denominations available:
 - **ShopRite** in \$20/\$50/\$100
 - **Pathmark** in \$25/\$50/\$100

Gift cards are available each week during coffee hour, or call Jean Hoffman (908) 756-1075.

*Please e-mail submissions for the
April issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by March 25th. Thank you!*



Stirling Stuff is the newsletter of the

First Presbyterian Church

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