



Stirling Stuff

Volume 55, No. 4

April 2011

Pastor's Letter

Recently I came across these words by Rabbi Harold Kushner in an essay entitled God's Fingerprints on the Soul:

We must remember that everything in this world has God's fingerprints on it – and that alone makes it special. Our inability to see beauty doesn't suggest in the slightest that beauty is not there. Rather, it suggests that we are not looking carefully enough or with broad enough perspective to see the beauty.

Can you see the holiness in those things that you take for granted – a paved road or a washing machine? If you concentrate on finding what is good in every situation, you will be filled with gratitude, a feeling that nurtures the soul.

We live in a time when it seems that the opposite rule is in effect – look for the ugliness in everything. Look for the ugliness in people of other religions, in the person who disagrees with you. This thought, combined with the quote, reminded me that as we continue through our season of Lent and then enter Holy Week what we really need to be about is re-setting the lens that we look at everything through. We need to start by recognizing that those who believe differently and those who disagree with us have God's fingerprint on them as well.

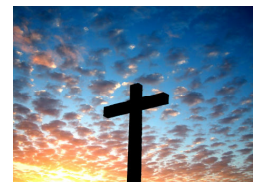
We need to remind ourselves that Christ did not go to the cross for us because we deserved it but because he loved us in spite of our sin. Lent is our time to remember that. Holy Week is our time to remember that there are many times in our lives when we would have said "crucify him" had we been in the crowd that day. We have said it when we denounced someone for who they are or what they believe. We have said it when we have averted our eyes from someone truly in need because we did not want to get involved.

Rabbi Kushner reminds us that if we can find the holiness in everything, then we will be filled with gratitude – and isn't that what Easter is all about!? If we can see the fingerprints of God on each and every person and thing – then Easter would be the gratitude of realizing that God's fingerprints are on us as well, that God's great love for all life, including ours, keeps the promise of life available to all of us.

As we continue through Lent, I hope it can be for you and for me a time to reset the lens of our hearts. I will admit that we may have a hard time finding the holiness in the potholes around town, but then maybe they are there to remind us that we need to slow down and see where we are going--and that could be a beautiful thing.

Grace and Peace,

Tom



Worship Services and Scripture Passages for April

April 3, 2011

- *Fourth Sunday in Lent*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23;
Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41
Lent Through the Camera Lens Series
3. *The Fear of Transformation*
(Movie: *Restoration*)

April 10, 2011

- *Fifth Sunday in Lent*
Ezekiel 37:1-4; Psalm 130;
Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45
Lent Through the Camera Lens Series
4. *I prayed for them to come, but nobody answered*
(Movie: *Gran Torino*)

April 17, 2011

- *Palm/Passion Sunday*
Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16;
Philippians 2:5-11; Matthew 21:1-11;
Matthew 26:14-27:66
Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Jerusalem
7:30 p.m. - Taizé Service

April 21, 2011

- *Maundy Thursday*
6:30 p.m. - *Pot Luck Supper*
7:30 p.m. - *Communion Service*
Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19;
1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Remember

*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.*

April 22, 2011

- *Good Friday*
7:30 p.m. - *Tenebrae Service*
Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 22; Hebrews 10:16-25;
Hebrews 4:14-15, 5:7-9; John 18:1-19:42
Did Jesus Have to Die?
Travnicek Memorial Ringers will be playing.

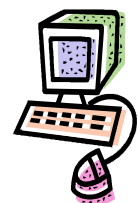
April 24, 2011

- *The Day of Resurrection/Easter Sunday*
7:00 a.m. - *Sunrise Service, Hillview Farm,
in Meyersville*
10:00 a.m. - *Worship Service in our Sanctuary*
Jeremiah 31:1-6; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24;
Acts 10:34-43; John 20:1-8; Matthew 28:1-10
God Draws Us into the Future
Travnicek Memorial Ringers will be playing.

Scriptures that are listed after the first Gospel reading are non-lectionary passages that will be used in the sermon. All the scriptures are provided here for any weekly Bible reading you may do.

Rev. Peters' sermons and the scripture readings are posted on the church website.

Visit: www.fpcstirling.org, click on:
"Sermon Archive," then select the sermon
and/or scripture reading date you would like.



Rev. Peters on Vacation

Please note that Rev. Peters will be on vacation from Monday, April 25th through Monday, May 2nd. There will be a pastor on call; should you need pastoral assistance, please contact the church office or Phyllis Clemson.

2011 Confirmation Class

The 2011 Confirmation Class was very busy in March. The class attended a retreat at Johnsonburg Camp, with Tom Parziale and Kai Ihringer splitting the chaperoning responsibilities, and where they reflected on the theme, "Belonging." They attended worship at the Shrine of St. Joseph, Temple Har Shalom, and the Orthodox Cathedral of the Holy Virgin Protection in NYC. They talked about baptism, communion, and worship.

In April, they will talk about mission and serving others and begin to learn about Presbyterian polity. They will also begin to work on their own Statement of Faith. Please continue to keep George Filippatos, Garrett Blakeslee, and Chris DeMatteo in your prayers as they continue their journey.

Interfaith Hospitality Network

- Phyllis Clemson, Chris Scott

Our next responsibility is **Friday, April 1st through noon on Saturday, April 2nd** at the Shrine of St. Joseph. We need hosts for Friday from 5:00 – 9:00 p.m., which includes serving dinner at 6:00 p.m. Chris and Mike Scott will be doing the overnight and Saturday breakfast. Hosts are needed on Saturday morning from 9 a.m. to noon. Most of the food is already taken care of, but we still need lasagna to serve for dinner.

Please contact Phyllis or Chris if you can help out in meeting this commitment. Thank you.

One Great Hour of Sharing

Now that Lent is upon us, we will once again be participating in the *One Great Hour of Sharing* offering. The Presbyterian Church has been collecting this offering for the past 62 years to benefit people around the world. We've all been touched by the plight of the Japanese people after the earthquake and tsunami, but we can also be grateful that we have helped because One Great Hour of Sharing funds are already being distributed to people affected by the disaster. The fund supports those who are hungry and those who have suffered in natural disasters, both in this country and around the world.



During the recent flooding, we received word from the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program that they were standing by if any church needed help. There are many who want to help the people of Japan, and I would say that we can help them and others like them through our gifts to OGHS, which **will be collected on Palm Sunday**. Please be generous.

Christian Education Committee
Overnight Lock-In

- Lore Pateman

The youth of the church are invited to participate in this year's "Lock In" in Pollard Hall from Saturday, April 9th at 8:00 p.m. through Sunday, April 10th at 8:00 a.m. There will be games, snacks, movies, pizza, and, yes, breakfast. Join us for a night of fun, laughter, and fellowship. See Elaine Giordano or Kai Ihringer for details.

Adult Education
Lenten Movie-Themed Series

- Debra Sprague

Rev. Peters has been doing a Lenten sermon series based on movies which have been chosen to highlight certain Lenten themes. Bring a comfy chair to watch the last two movies in the series on Fridays at 7:30 p.m. in Pollard Hall:

April 1 st	<i>Restoration</i>	Transforming our lives
April 8 th	<i>Gran Torino</i>	How people can work with God to create resurrections

Rev. Peters' sermons on April 3rd and April 10th will include material from these movies.

Lenten Sunday Soup Supper and Study Series

For many Christians, Lent provides an opportunity to look inward, to more deeply explore their faith. There is a chance to do just that this year—but you don't have to take the journey alone. Take advantage of this opportunity for your own introspection, along with fellowship and food, at our joint-church Lenten Sunday Soup Supper and Study Series.

Our topic deals with consumerism. The title, *Countering Pharaoh's Production-Consumption Society Today* reminds us that living in a consumer-driven society is nothing new. We'll look to the Bible for clues on how to be better Christians in this world. Our guide will be renowned Old Testament scholar, Dr. Walter Brueggemann, in this DVD series from Living the Questions.

Each week's soup supper will be hosted by one of the three churches, and discussions will be facilitated by various church leaders: Rev. Barbara Aspinall of Meyersville Presbyterian Church; Heather Harris-Galgoci, adult education coordinator at Trinity United Church; and, our own Rev. Tom Peters.

Please plan to join us on the final two evenings for soup, fellowship, adult education, and discussion. **Sessions begin at 5:00 p.m.** and end by 7:00 p.m. at the sites listed here. Child care is provided.

April 3 rd	<i>An Act of Imagination</i> Rev. Aspinall will lead	First Presbyterian Church
April 10 th	<i>On Not Doing God Any Favors</i> Rev. Tom Peters will lead	Meyersville Presbyterian Church

A sign-up sheet will be posted on the Fellowship Board in Pollard Hall. (If you forget to sign up, or if your plans change, please join us anyway. We always have an extra bowl of soup!)

Hosting Help Needed

Our church is scheduled to host the soup supper on April 3rd. Each host church provides the room, soup supper (soup, bread and butter, beverages, dessert), and child care. Elen Filippatos is coordinating child care. Please sign up in Pollard Hall to help set up the room (after coffee hour) on Sunday and if you can provide soup, bread and butter, or dessert. Thank you!

Deacons Corner

- Matthew Gerecht



Easter Plants/Flowers

The Deacons are coordinating the ordering of plants/flowers to be placed on the chancel for Easter morning in memory or honor of someone special in your life. Please use the order form below, which will also be available in the Sunday bulletins, to place your order. The deadline to order is April 10th.

EASTER FLOWER ORDER:

	<u>What Color?</u>	<u>How many?</u>	<u>Total Price</u>
Azalea @ \$15.50 (Red, White, Pink)	_____	_____	_____
Hyacinth @ \$10 (Pink, White, Blue)	_____	_____	_____
Tulips @ \$10 (Yellow, White, Purple, or other)	_____	_____	_____
Lilies @ \$10 (White)	_____	_____	_____
TOTALS		=====	=====

Flowers are purchased in memory/honor of:

By:

To be picked up _____
(following worship
on Easter morning)

To be planted _____

***Please submit your order by Sunday, April 10th, to
Israel Sierra, Jr. or place in the offering plate.***

**Make checks payable to: First Presbyterian Church
and note: Easter Flowers.**

Church Flowers

If you would like to place flowers on the chancel for Sunday morning worship in honor or memory of someone, please contact Israel Sierra, Jr. Allow enough lead time to have them ordered for the date you would like. The cost is \$30, and cash or checks (made payable to Flowers on the Ridge) should be given to Israel or Carolyn Malfatone. Thank you. (Please note name of new florist we are now using.)

**Worship Help**

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

Deacons' Fund Envelopes

Please remember to use the green *Deacons' Fund* envelopes to help the Deacons purchase items. These envelopes are available in the pew racks or in the church office and may be placed in the offering plate.

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

Our next commitment date for preparing 40 lunches is: **Friday, April 8th**, 9:30 a.m., in Pollard Hall. We welcome donations of bottled water, juice drinks, snacks, and fruit cups. You can drop them off in Pollard Hall on Sunday mornings. Upcoming dates: May 13 and June 10. Thank you to all who have supported this program through donations and by helping to prepare the lunches!

Easter Food Donations

Shop-Rite and other stores will be offering free hams and turkeys to qualified shoppers in time for Easter. If you are not going to use your ham/turkey, please consider donating it to the needy. **Collection will be on Palm Sunday** and will benefit the Market Street Mission in Morristown. Your support of this project is very much appreciated.

Fundraising Committee**- Jean Hoffman****Breadsticks**

With Easter just around the corner, we will again be making bread sticks and will have them ready for pick up on **Palm Sunday, April 17th**. We have not raised our prices in a number of years: rosemary bread sticks remain at \$6 per box, and cheese bread sticks are \$6.50 per box. **The deadline to order is Sunday, April 10th**. Please see Ellen Eastty or Jean Hoffman to order. All proceeds from the sale will go toward the Heating Fund Loan.

On-Going Book Sale

We would like to try a new fundraiser and will be experimenting with an *On-Going Book Sale*, which will benefit the Kenyan Student Scholarship Fund. Everyone needs a book now and then, and with our paperbacks going for 50¢ and hard covers for \$1 (slightly more if they are very up-to-date), the books will be a bargain! As you know, books are getting to be a bit pricey, so this should be a sale you "readers" will not want to miss.



We hope it will also be a fun way to help reach our Scholarship Fund goal for of the year. We welcome contributions. If you have fairly current editions you no longer need, please consider donating them to this sale; and, if anyone has a bookcase to contribute, we will surely put it to good use. Please take a look at our selections on the "Book Table" in Pollard Hall.

Worship Committee

- Janet Parziale

Taizé Service

Our Taizé service is held on the third Sunday of each month at 7:30 p.m. It is a service that helps people to find peace and center their thoughts on God. The service is generally 45 minutes long. Our next Taizé service will be on **April 17th**.

GIFTS OF WOMEN SUNDAY - May 8, 2011

In the past, our congregation has honored several women and men who contribute their gifts and talents to the church and community. Nominations for Gifts of Women Sunday for this year are open to all women who have made a difference--who have used that divine spark of vitality that might be called their "inner young woman" in serving others. Those women previously honored are Carolyn Karthaeuser, Betty Addison, Joyce Koenig, Janet Parziale, Joan Dennick, Rene' Phelan, Marge Krummel, Phyllis Clemson, Rosie Andrus, Ellen Eastty, Carolyn Malfatone, Debra Sprague, Jean Hoffman, Barbara Griswold, Madeline Hahl, Chris Scott, Lore Pateman, Jackie Dickson, Ruth Young, Lynne Combs, and Yvonne Fletcher.

The Worship Committee is looking for your nominations for this year's honorees. Please feel free to jot them down and email them to Janet Parziale at janetparziale@comcast.net or snail mail them to the church office, "Attn: Worship Committee." To help in making our decision, please note areas where this person has demonstrated outstanding effort in our church and community. The deadline for submissions is May 1st.

Visitation Schedule

- Rev. Peters

From time to time, there will be a poster board in Pollard Hall with dates and times when I will be available to make visitations. If you would like to have me visit you, please sign up for a time that is convenient. This does not affect emergency visitations, if you are in the hospital or at home ill. This is for general weekday visits. I hope this will facilitate my meeting with you to talk about life and faith and also give you the opportunity to ask questions or share thoughts you may have. If you do not have the opportunity to sign up in Pollard Hall, please contact me so that we can arrange a convenient time for a visit.

Church Website

Reminder: Our Church website, www.fpcstirling.org, is your source for church news, the Church calendar, Stirling Stuff, upcoming events/programs, Pastor's sermons, Scripture readings, Church history, and more. Please make it a point to log on regularly and keep up-to-date with what's happening.

These Days

Our Church has a subscription for multiple copies of the devotional booklet, *These Days*. The latest issue is available in the Church narthex.

Visiting Nurse Association of Somerset Hills

Do you enjoy working with the elderly? The Adult Day Center of the Visiting Nurse Association of Somerset Hills is looking for volunteers to assist in serving lunch to Center members at their facility located at 200 Mt. Airy Rd. in Basking Ridge. For more information, please call Karen Ellis, RN-Community Health Programs Manager, at 908-204-8847. Orientation will be provided.

Earth Day 2011: A Billion Acts of Green®



Each year, Earth Day -- **April 22nd** -- marks the anniversary of what many consider the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970.

“In recognition of the power of millions of individual actions, **Earth Day 2011** will be organized around A Billion Acts of

Green®: personal, organizational, and corporate pledges to live and act sustainably. The goal is to register one billion actions in advance of the Earth Summit in Rio in 2012. A Billion Acts of Green® demonstrates the kind of environmental impact that can be made when millions of people, corporations, and organizations make commitments, both small and large, to better their environment.”

“The fight for a clean environment continues in a climate of increasing urgency, as the ravages of climate change become more manifest every day. We invite you to be a part of Earth Day and help write many more victories and successes into our history. Discover energy you didn't even know you had. Feel it rumble through the grassroots under your feet and the technology at your fingertips. Channel it into building a clean, healthy, diverse world for generations to come.”

Here are the **top 5** ways to celebrate Earth Day:

- ✓ Pick up trash.
- ✓ Change lights to CFL bulbs.
- ✓ Unplug chargers not in use.
- ✓ Install a low-flow showerhead.
- ✓ Reuse something in a new way instead of throwing it out.



Ongoing Mission Programs

Mile of Pennies

Change (and more) collected during coffee hour supports scholarships for Kenyan students. 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 **160** pairs, which are sent to the Somerset Food Bank for distribution.

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

ShopRite Gift Cards

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

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

*Please e-mail submissions for the
May issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by April 24th. Thank you!*



Stirling Stuff is the newsletter of the

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