



Stirling Stuff

Volume 55, No. 6

June 2011

Pastor's Letter

By now, perhaps many of you have heard that the Presbyterian Church (USA) has passed the overture (10-A) from last year's 219th General Assembly giving churches and presbyteries the right to ordain gays and lesbians to the offices of Elder, Deacon, and Minister. I want everyone to be clear on what exactly has taken place, because there is going to be a lot of misinformation going around and, yes, there will still be a lot of pain for several reasons.

First of all, this vote will not take effect until July 17th. Votes do not take effect until all of the presbyteries have voted, and there are still some 25 presbyteries that have yet to vote. We are able to say that 10-A has passed because they passed the number needed for a majority (87 of 173 presbyteries).

Overture 10-A does **not** mandate that every church and every presbytery must allow for the ordination for gays and lesbians. I've included below what the actual amendment to the constitution says.

Standards for ordained service reflect the church's desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (G-1.0000). The governing body responsible for ordination and/or installation (G.14.0240; G-14.0450) shall examine each candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of office. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003). Governing bodies shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.

In essence, what this amendment does is allow individual churches and presbyteries to determine the calling and suitability of a candidate to an ordained office based upon their understanding of the Bible and the PCUSA Constitution, as contained in both parts (Book of Order and Book of Confessions). Those churches and presbyteries that continue to see homosexuality as a sin will not find gays and lesbians as suitable for ordination and, therefore, will not allow for ordination. Churches and presbyteries that do not see homosexuality as a sin will be free to set aside one's sexual preference as a defining factor and focus on other aspects of a person's suitability for the office to which they are being called.

This is still a painful issue for the church, and it is possible that some churches may choose to leave the denomination over this. They believe the success of this vote is evidence that the church has lost its Biblical center, while there are many who are saying that the church has found its Biblical center. The pain for me is that once again we're going to go through a difficult time to see if the church can live and thrive with its diversity in theology and practice. I hope we can. When people join the church, we only ask that they accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. That being said, can we live as a denomination with all of the different ideas of what that means to the people in the Church? I hope so. I hope you will join me in keeping our denomination in your prayers.

Peace,
Tom

Worship Services and Scripture Passages for June

June 5, 2011

- *Seventh Sunday of Easter*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
- *Christian Education Recognition Sunday*
Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35;
I Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11; John 17:1-11
Who's Got the Power?

June 12, 2011

- *Day of Pentecost*
Numbers 11:24-30; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b;
Acts 2:1-21; John 7:37-39
Jesus Promised a Kingdom . . .

June 19, 2011

- *Trinity Sunday*
- *Father's Day / Music Sunday*
Genesis 1:1-2:4a; Psalm 8;
2 Corinthians 12:3b-13; Matthew 28:16-20
From Havens of Rest to Valleys by the Wildwood
7:30 p.m. - Taizé Service

*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.*

June 26, 2011

- *Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Genesis 22:1-14; Psalm 13;
Romans 6:12-23; Matthew 10:40-42
When the Bible Offends Us

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.



Travnicek Memorial Ringers

On Sunday, **June 5th** at 4:30 p.m., the Travnicek Memorial Ringers will join with the Ost Memorial Ringers of Wilson Memorial Church in Watchung for a concert of handbell music. Once again, both choirs will join together for five mass ringing pieces, and each choir will do two pieces on their own. This concert has been well received the previous two years, so plan to join us for an afternoon of good music. Wilson Memorial Church is located at the intersection of Hillcrest Road and Valley Road, just off the Watchung Circle.



Property Administration Committee (PAC)**- Mark Powell**

In April, the Session formed a new committee called the Property Administration Committee (PAC). The committee is made up of Mark Powell, Chairperson; Ed Gerech, Attorney; John Chen, Session Liaison/Renting Experience; Bill Hopcraft, Treasurer; and Dale Monetti, Buildings & Grounds. Tom Parziale, as head of Buildings & Grounds, is an ad hoc member of the committee and invited to all scheduled meetings.

The committee responsibilities include:

- ❖ The Manse: handling of lease agreements, renting, repairs, and all correspondence with tenants. Any and all necessary repair work will be closely coordinated with the Buildings & Grounds Committee.
- ❖ All lease agreements with the Montessori School.
- ❖ All church building usage fees and agreements with all external organizations. This includes bringing recommendations for usage fees and agreements with groups to the Session.
- ❖ Monitor and make recommendations to the Session regarding the church's insurance policies.

This committee will not be responsible for contracts related to grounds maintenance, snow plowing, or the Memorial Garden. Those contracts will fall under the purview of the Buildings and Grounds Committee and the Memorial Garden Committee, respectively.

The committee is planning to meet quarterly or more frequently if needed.

Adult Education**- Debra Sprague****Fourth Sunday Focus****- Tom Parziale**

Everyone is invited to join us at the next "Fourth Sunday Focus" gathering (which will actually be held on the fifth Sunday in May) on **May 29th**. The June session will be held on **June 26th**.

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 may meet in the Memorial Garden, weather permitting -- or else in Pollard Hall.* If you have a topic you'd like to discuss, please contact Tom Parziale.

Deacons Corner**- Matthew Gerecht****Church Flowers**

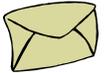
If you would like to place flowers on the chancel for Sunday morning worship in honor or memory of someone, please contact Israel Sierra, Jr. Allow enough lead time to have them ordered for the date you would like. The cost is \$30, and cash or checks (made payable to Cash) should be given to Israel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

**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****Mission Fund**

In April 2011, monies not used from the 2010 Mission Fund were distributed as follows:

Presbytery Disaster Relief (US \$ only)	\$300
Johnsonburg Camp & Conference Center	\$200

The "Thank You" letters received by the church are posted on the bulletin board in Pollard Hall.

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program**- Jean Hoffman, Coordinator**

Our next commitment date for preparing 40 lunches is: **Friday, June 10, 9:30 a.m.**, in Pollard Hall. We can always use juice containers, bottled water, fruit cups, and packets of cookies or other snacks. You can drop these items off in Pollard Hall on Sunday mornings. To date, we have prepared 200 lunches, and this program is serving a great need. We appreciate all the support you have given to this program.

Fundraising Committee**- Jean Hoffman****On-Going Book Sale**

Please take a look at the "Book Table" in Pollard Hall. The sale is going well and, therefore, we could use more current books/paperbacks. We could also use some children's books. Proceeds will benefit the Kenya Scholarship Fund. For more information, please speak to any committee member: Ellen Eastty, Jean Hoffman, or Mariann Powell.



Worship Committee**- Janet Parziale****Pentecost Sunday**

We will celebrate Pentecost on Sunday, **June 12th**. Don't forget to wear something red! The Worship Committee will be decorating the sanctuary and hosting a special coffee hour following worship.

Music Sunday

We will celebrate Music Sunday on **June 19th**. Watch for more details in upcoming weeks.

**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 find peace and center their thoughts on God. The service is generally 45 minutes long. Our next Taizé service will be on **June 19th**.

Summer Worship Services

Please note: Starting on Sunday, July 3rd, and throughout July and August, Sunday morning worship services will start at 9:30 am.

Gifts of Women Sunday

On Mother's Day, Sunday, May 8th, our congregation celebrated Gifts of Women Sunday by honoring Beth Badilla. Following morning worship, the Worship Committee hosted a special coffee hour in her honor. Beth has participated in many areas in the life of our church, including teaching Sunday School; attending family events—movie nights for children, church picnics, Patriots baseball games; serving as Kate a Confirmation Sponsor; helping with spring clean up; and, directing the annual children's Christmas Pageant, for which she has been writing her own script in recent years. Beth and her husband, Macho, and two children, Elen and George, live in Gillette.

Outside of church, Beth is employed as an Educational Administrator in Plainfield, advocating and planning for over a thousand students with special needs.

Congratulations Graduates

Graduating from Watchung Hills Regional High School:

Tierney Gallagan, who plans to attend RVCC in September.



College Graduates:

Brian Monetti graduated from Lehigh University with a double major.

In September, he will be starting the Masters program at Brown University.

Travis Then, grandson of Bert & George Lare, graduated from the University of North Carolina with a B.A. in Communication studies.

Please send Jan (Editor) information on other graduates so that it can be included in the next issue of Stirling Stuff. Please include details about special awards, future plans, etc.

Congratulations!

Visitation Schedule**- Rev. Peters**

There is 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 to arrange a convenient time for a visit.

The Presbytery of Newton**- Phyllis Clemson****Camp Johnsonburg**

Camp Johnsonburg will have a mission group on-site the week of July 17th. They are looking for a connection with an off-site work project for one or two days on July 18, 19, or 20. If you know of a church or not-for-profit organization that would benefit from a day of work from a group of approximately 20 people, please contact Kurt or Harry at camp: 908-852-2349, kurt@campjburg.org, or harry@campjburg.org.

Big Tent Registration

This summer, thousands of Presbyterians will gather to celebrate the mission and ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Big Tent (**June 30-July 2**) combines nine national church conferences under one roof. Children and youth are vital participants of Big Tent too! There will be children and youth programs, and older youth will have the option to participate in a Pathways event that will run in tandem with the Big Tent.

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.

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 labeled "Food Pantry Donations" located in the Church narthex and on the table outside of Pollard Hall.

Toiletries

Full-sized and "courtesy" sized bars of soap, shampoo, conditioner, and shower caps are donated to various causes. Place on the pew inside 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 and other charities.

Eyeglasses, Sunglasses, Cell Phones

Place used glasses and cell phones on the pew inside 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
Summer issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by June 26th. Thank you!*



Why not invite a friend to church?

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