



Stirling Stuff

Volume 55, No. 8

September 2011

Pastor's Letter

Have you ever wished you had the opportunity to gather every so often over a cup of coffee and talk with some friends about important things in a setting where you knew you would not be judged? In the 17th century, the French had what they called the *Salons* where people gathered to talk about literary works and philosophy. In a time when people are becoming increasingly afraid to talk about important things because they fear the judgment of others, we need to reclaim this old method of connecting with one another. I invite you to consider being a part of a group like this. It would be small enough to be held in people's homes. The host would only have to contribute their place and perhaps something to drink.

Over the next several weeks, I will have five books on a table in Pollard Hall during coffee hour. Please look them over, and put your name down if you find one or more of them to be something you might be interested in reading/discussing. The books are in three areas: *Meaning in Life, Faith, and Spirituality*. You can also review them at www.amazon.com. The titles are:

God at 2000, by Marcus Borg, edited by Ross Mackenzie

Spiritual Direction, by Henri Nouwen, edited by Michael Christensen
and Rebecca Laird

An Altar in the World, by Barbara Brown Taylor

Wrestling with Grace, by Robert Corin Morris

The Life of Meaning, by Bob Abernethy and William Bole

The group would gather once a month in the home of one of those in the class. I would hold the first one in my home. Participants would read a chapter or several chapters before the gathering, and then we would respond to questions and share insights that have been gathered by members of the group. I would like to see a group of 8-10 people and, if there are more, we could have several groups. But, I would ask that we all be on the same book. We could also have a day group and a night group.

There will be a sheet on the table with the books with some possible gathering times, and I ask that you put your name by all of the ones that would work for you so that we can find a time(s) that helps the most people. I hope you will consider this opportunity to "go deeper" into some important questions with people who love and support you.



See you in church!

Tom

Worship Services and Scripture Passages for September

Worship Service Back to 10:00 a.m.

Just a reminder that on Sunday, September 4th, the worship service will move back to 10:00 a.m.

Sept. 4, 2011

- *Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time*
- *Labor Day Sunday*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 149;
Romans 13:8-14; Matthew 18:15-20
Honoring Each Other

Sept. 11, 2011

- *Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
- *Rally Day*
- *10th Anniversary of September 11*
Exodus 14:19-31; Psalm 114
Romans 14:1-12; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
Celebration Series: 1. Celebrating Old and New

Sept. 18, 2011

- *Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
- *Confirmation Sunday*
Exodus 16:2-15; Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45;
Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16
Who Do You Live For?
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.*

Sept. 25, 2011

- *Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16;
Philippians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32
*Guest Minister: Rev. Judy Kolwicz,
Presbytery Leader of Newton Presbytery*

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 Preaching in His Home Church

On Sunday, **Sept. 25th**, Rev. Peters will be preaching at the First Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Indiana. This was the church he grew up in and where he was ordained 30 years ago on September 13, 1981. The church is celebrating the 175th anniversary of their chartering and the 125th anniversary of their current building (pictured here).



Celebration Sermon Series

This fall, Tom will be preaching a series on what he believes our church should celebrate about their ministry. These sermons will be held throughout the fall. The first one will be on Sunday, **Sept. 11th**. While that is a somber day for our nation on the tenth anniversary of 9/11, it is also our Rally Day, which marks the beginning of our education program year. The celebration that day will be centered on the education program, and it will also tie into our 9/11 remembrance. Plan to join us on Sunday, **Sept. 11th**.

Remembering 9/11



On Sunday, **Sept. 11th**, there will be a 10th Anniversary Ecumenical Service at the Tower of Remembrance at the Shrine of St. Joseph in Stirling at 7:30 p.m. Our Travnicek Memorial Ringers will be participating in the service. Bring a lawn chair. In case of inclement weather, the service will be held in the Shrine Chapel.

The History of the Tower of Remembrance

. . . a place of healing, prayer, and peace honoring the innocent victims who died on September 11, 2001:

This memorial combines steel from the North Tower Building of the World Trade Center and bells from the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity's Seminary in Monroe, Virginia. The structure is an extension of God's magnificent natural beauty, a place of great reverence and sacredness.

The bells were originally blessed and installed in 1960 at the Seminary and rang there until 1973. They have been silent since then. Bells have always been significant in calling people. These bells will ring out calling all people to pray and work faithfully for world peace, so that these victims will not have died in vain. This Tower of Remembrance emerging from the rubble of violence will remind us that in God there is hope; that as we remember, we heal. The name of each innocent victim who died at the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and in the field in Pennsylvania is inscribed on the memorial walls.

The Tower of Remembrance is a place where everyone can reflect on the sacredness of lives remembered. A bell tolls forty-six minutes after each hour starting at 8:46 A.M. and ending at 8:46 P.M. It tolls four times in remembrance of the lives lost at the North Tower, at the South Tower, at the Pentagon, and in the field in Pennsylvania.

(From the Shrine web-site)

Confirmation Class to Join

On Sunday, **Sept. 18th**, our confirmation class will be joining the church. We invite you to celebrate this day with our confirmands, George Filippatos, Chris DeMatteo, and Garrett Blakeslee, as they make their profession of faith before God and the congregation.

The Worship Committee will be hosting a special coffee hour in their honor following morning worship.

Annual Softball Game

Our annual softball game with Meyersville Presbyterian Church will be held on Sunday, **Sept 18th** at 4 p.m. The game will be at the Meyersville field, with a pot-luck supper to follow at Meyersville church. Participants and fans are asked to bring a side dish, salad, or dessert to share. There will be a sign-up sheet in Pollard Hall.

**Christian Education****- Debra Sprague****Adult Education****-Debra Sprague*****Another Successful Summer Joint Adult Ed Series***

Once again, we held Summer Adult Education classes jointly with Trinity United Church (Warren) and Meyersville Presbyterian Church. The *Echoes-Sentinel* ran a piece at the beginning of the summer about the program, and we opened it to the community. Our six-week joint-church program (held Wednesday evenings, July 6-August 10, at 7:30 in our **air-conditioned** child care room) had **22 total participants, representing 6 different churches**. Sessions included three "Contemporary" topics (theology/current events) and three "Biblical" topics. Sessions were led by pastors Tom Peters (who led two sessions) and Barbara Aspinall and three different lay leaders from Trinity United Church.

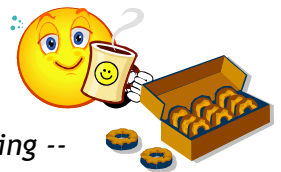
Attendance ranged from 11 to 17 people, **averaging 14 participants per session**; six people came to every session. **(Our church's attendance ranged from 5 to 9 and averaged 6 people per session.)**

This was our third year sponsoring this series. It has been well-received and well-attended, especially for a summer program. Attendees expressed the wish to return next summer. We look forward to it!

Fourth Sunday Focus**- Tom Parziale**

Since Hurricane Irene had other ideas last Sunday morning, our Fourth Sunday Focus has been rescheduled for **Sept. 4th**. Our topic is: **"If I Had A Million Dollars."**

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 join us whenever you can. **We may meet in the Memorial Garden, weather permitting -- or else in Pollard Hall.**



We will resume our regular schedule for "Fourth Sunday Focus" gatherings on Sunday, **Sept. 25th**. If you have a topic you'd like to discuss, please contact Tom Parziale.

Christian Education Rally Day**- Lore Pateman**

Our Christian Education year will kick off with Rally Day on **Sept. 11th**. Please join us for this commissioning service for all those involved with the education program of the church.

Deacons Corner**- Carolyn Malfatone****Coffee Hour**

Tracy Higgins is now the Deacon in charge of coordinating coffee hour. Tracy will be responsible for replenishing supplies as needed. Please let her know if you notice supplies getting low.

Church Flowers

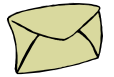
If you would like to place flowers on the chancel for Sunday morning worship in honor or memory of someone, please contact Israel Sierra, Jr. Allow enough lead time to have them ordered for the date you would like. The cost is \$30, and cash or checks (made payable to Cash) should be given to Israel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

Our next commitment date for preparing 40 lunches is: **Friday, Sept. 9th**, 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 over 200 lunches, and we are serving a great need. We appreciate all the support you have given to this program. Upcoming dates: Oct. 7th, Nov. 4th, Dec. 9th

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 find peace and center their thoughts on God. The service is generally 45 minutes long. Our next Taizé service will be on **Sept. 18th**.

Travnicek Memorial Ringers

Our handbell choir is in need of additional ringers. They rehearse on Monday evenings at 7:30 p.m. You do not need to know how to read music to ring the handbells. Please speak with Rev. Peters if you are interested.

World Communion Sunday

On Sunday, **October 2nd**, we will celebrate the Sacrament of Communion with Christians around the world. Plan to join us for this special service. We invite you to wear some traditional garb from your ethnic background. We are also planning a special coffee hour with treats from our various nationalities. If you would like to bring something to share at coffee hour, please speak with Janet Parziale.

Canned Food Collection

In the near future, possibly October, we will be starting a monthly collection of canned goods. It will take place on the first Sunday of each month, Communion Sunday, and will involve the children collecting the canned goods in a wagon during worship. If anyone has a wagon they would like to donate for this purpose, please contact Janet Parziale or Rev. Peters.

Fellowship Committee**- Tom Parziale**

Twenty-one people participated in a Night at the Ballpark trip to Bridgewater on Friday, August 12th. With beautiful weather and a great night for baseball, we all had a fun time watching the Somerset Patriots. Following the game, we were all treated to fantastic fireworks at the ballpark. Here are some pictures of our group, including one of Madeline and her new friend, Slider.

**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, including children's books. Proceeds from this sale so far are \$41.50, which will benefit the Kenya Scholarship Fund. For more information, please speak to any committee member: Ellen Eastty, Jean Hoffman, or Mariann Powell.

**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

Angels Across the USA Tour 2011

Please join us for a FREE concert presented by singer/songwriter Alan Pedersen

"...His gentle mix of humor and straight from the heart talk wrapped around powerful songs about love, loss, and healing makes for a unique concert experience..."

**7:00 PM on Wednesday, September 28th
St. Matthew The Apostle Parish
335 Dover Chester Road, Randolph, NJ**

Come join us as we honor and remember the children that have left our lives too soon. For anyone who has lost a loved one, Alan Pedersen's music brings healing and hope.

For more concert information, please contact:
Teresa Myers: 570-350-6695 teresahadlock@yahoo.com or
Kim Healey: 973-479-9404 KHealey@optonline.net

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 **170** 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
October issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by **Sept. 25th**. Thank you!*



Why not invite a friend to church?

First Presbyterian Church

158 Central Avenue

Stirling, NJ 07980

Editor: Jan Somers

The Rev. Dr. Thomas T. Peters, Pastor
pastor@fpcstirling.org
Paulette Irlander, Office Manager
Secretary@fpcstirling.org
Church Office: 908-647-1033
Website: www.fpcstirling.org