



Stirling Stuff

Volume 55, No. 7

Summer 2011

Pastor's Letter

Last month I sent you a letter talking about the vote that approved overture 10-A that allows churches and presbyteries to decide if they want to ordain those of a homosexual persuasion and what it would mean. This month I want to mention another vote that passed that will make a big difference in how the Presbyterian Church (USA) and its councils will conduct the business of the church. The *New Form of Government (NFOG)* will take effect in mid-July. However, because of its radical change in philosophy and terminology, your Session, at the request of the General Assembly and the Presbytery of Newton, voted at its June meeting to continue to be guided by our current by-laws until new ones can be drawn up.

It is our hope that over the next year we can make the revision of our by-laws. However, it is not just a matter of changing some terminology here and there in the by-laws. As I said, it is a whole new philosophy of how we think about government in the Church. In the past, the *Form of Government* was based on rules and regulations. The *New Form of Government* is based on mission and allows the local church, presbyteries, synods, and General Assembly much more flexibility in how they organize themselves and do their ministries. In the case of the local church, it means they can organize themselves and make decisions based upon what is best for the mission of their church, and not on rules made up for the whole Church.

Therefore, the process of redoing our by-laws has to begin with looking at our mission statement and deciding if it still says what we are about. Our current mission statement is 11 years old. If it does not say what we are about, then we need to develop a new statement of who we are and what God is calling us to be. Then the processes of the church--the by-laws--will be developed to support that mission. While I will be putting together a small committee to guide this process, it will also necessitate participation by the entire church at different points in the process which would end with the church membership voting on the new by-laws.



I'm excited about this process. I'm excited because it opens the church up to learn to love and trust each other rather than force certain things with rules. If we've learned anything from Church Growth discussions over the past 20 years, it is that there is no magic formula. It is different for every church because every church understands its mission a little differently, and to respond to that they need to do things a little differently. I hope you will enjoy the process and will be active participants.

See you in church!

Tom

Worship Services and Scripture Passages for July and August

July 3, 2011

- *Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67; Psalm 45:10-17;
Romans 7:15-25a; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30
Freedom Isn't Free

July 10, 2011

- *Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 119:105-112;
Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
When Sighs Run Deep

July 17, 2011

- *Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Genesis 28:10-19a; Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24;
Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
Guest Preacher

July 24, 2011

- *Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Genesis 29:15-28; Psalm 105:1-11, 45b
Romans 8:26-39; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
Guest Preacher

July 31, 2011

- *Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Genesis 32:22-31; Psalm 17:1-7, 15
Romans 9:1-5; Matthew 14:13-21
Rev. Barbara Aspinall preaching

During July and August, worship begins at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings, followed by coffee hour fellowship in Pollard Hall.

Child Care is provided in the nursery.

August 7, 2011

- *Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28; Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b;
Romans 10:5-15; Matthew 14:22-33

August 14, 2011

- *Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Genesis 45:1-15; Psalm 133;
Romans 11:1-21, 29-32; Matthew 15:10-28

August 21, 2011

- *Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Exodus 1:8-2:10; Psalm 124;
Romans 12:1-8; Matthew 16:13-20

August 28, 2011

- *Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Exodus 3:1-15; Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c;
Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28

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," and select the sermon and/or scripture reading you would like.

Christian Education**Adult Education****- Debra Sprague****Summer Joint Church Adult Education - Give Yourself Some Christian Brain Food This Summer!**

Once again, we will be joining with Meyersville Presbyterian Church and Trinity United Church for a six-week Summer Joint Church Adult Education program. **All sessions will be held on Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m., in the air-conditioned child care room at our church.**

Discussions will include some theology, some current topics, and some people in the Bible - something for everyone. The topic and leader schedule is as follows:

July 6: ***Spiritual, but Not Religious?***
Heather Harris-Galgoci

Can one be spiritual, but not religious? We'll take a look at why so many people these days make this claim, examine the use of the terms *spiritual* and *religious*, and explore what this means for Christians.

July 13: ***The Importance of Context***
Rev. Tom Peters



July 20: ***Atheism: A Christian Response***
Andrew Galgoci

July 27: ***Priscilla***
Cyndy Reames

Aug. 3: ***Jacob***
Rev. Barbara Aspinall



Aug. 10: ***Elijah***
Rev. Tom Peters

A description of the first topic is provided here. Look for information about upcoming topics in the weekly church bulletins. Each week's topic stands alone—please come whenever you can this summer.

Fourth Sunday Focus**- Tom Parziale**

There will be no "Fourth Sunday Focus" gatherings in July or August. Everyone is invited to join us at the next gathering on September 25th.

Meyersville Presbyterian Church Vacation Bible School

Meyersville Presbyterian Church is hosting Vacation Bible School again this summer for children ages 4-13. It will be held **August 8-12, from 9:00 a.m. until noon**. The theme is *Jesus' Birth: from Prophecy to Fulfillment*, and the cost is \$30 for the week. Teens are needed as helpers. If you are interested in registering your child(ren) or would like to help out, please contact Rev. Aspinall at the Meyersville Church Office at 908-647-0390.

Child Care

Please sign up in Pollard Hall to help with child care coverage during the summer. We need two people for each Sunday. It's play time and snacks with a really sweet group of children, and, as a bonus, the nursery is air-conditioned.

Worship Committee**- Janet Parziale****Summer Worship Services**

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

Taizé Service

Because Rev. Peters will be away on the third Sunday in July, there will not be a Taizé service on July 17th.

Our Taizé service is generally 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 about 45 minutes long. **Our next Taizé service will be on August 21st.**

Church Finance**- Warren Hoffman**

The church is establishing separate checking accounts, one of which will be for general operations, and the other for all dedicated/committed funds. Member regular contributions will be deposited into the General Operations Account; dedicated/committed contributions will be deposited into a separate account.



With this new arrangement, it will be very helpful, if not a necessity, that you submit separate checks when making these contributions. For example, one check should be written for regular contributions, and a separate check should be written for One Great Hour of Sharing, a dedicated account. Thanks for your cooperation.

Deacons Corner**- Matthew Gerecht****Worship Help**

We need volunteers for Sundays during the summer. 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. **Coffee hour during the summer need only be cold drinks (iced tea, lemonade, juice) and some cookies.** If you have questions about any of these duties, please speak with any Deacon. Thank you!

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.

**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.



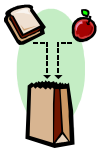
Mission Committee**- Yvonne Fletcher****Mission Fund**

Correction to totals reported in the June issue:

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

Presbytery Disaster Relief (US \$ only)	\$366
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: **Saturday, July 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. We appreciate all the support you have given to this program. Upcoming dates: August 12, Sept. 9

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 will benefit the Kenya Scholarship Fund. The 2011 total for the Mile of Pennies thus far is \$87.31 (\$21 of this total is from book sales). For more information, please speak to any committee member: Ellen Eastty, Jean Hoffman, or Mariann Powell. Thank you for your support of this project.

**Visitation Schedule****- Rev. Peters**

There is a sign-up sheet 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.

Church Website

Reminder: Our Church website, **www.fpcstirling.org**, is your source for church news, the Church calendar, Stirling Stuff, upcoming events/programs/meetings, 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.

Ongoing Mission Programs

Mile of Pennies

Change (and more) collected during coffee hour and our on-going book sales support scholarships for Kenyan students.

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 **161** 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 veterans and people in nursing homes; 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.

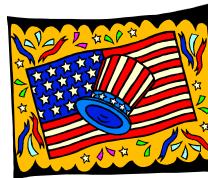
Ongoing Fundraiser

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
September issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by August 25th. Thank you!*



Why not invite a friend to church?

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