



Stirling Stuff

Volume 56, No. 10

November 2012

Pastor's Letter

If you Google "Thanksgiving quotes," you get a lot of pithy sayings about Thanksgiving: what it is about, how to be thankful, and humorous thoughts about Thanksgiving. I came across the following quote about Thanksgiving by the late author and comedienne, Erma Bombeck:



What we're really talking about is a wonderful day set aside on the fourth Thursday of November when no one diets. I mean, why else would they call it *Thanksgiving*? "No One Diets on Thanksgiving" 26 November 1981

What is wonderful about Thanksgiving is that it is not just a day, but a way of life. Edward Sandford Martin, a writer, humorist, editor, founder of "The Harvard Lampoon," and co-founder and first editor of the original "Life" magazine, wrote the following:

Thanksgiving Day comes, by statute, once a year; to the honest man (and woman) it comes as frequently as the heart of gratitude will allow.

Thanksgiving is a way of life. It seeks to express gratitude for all that we have - even if what we have is not much. Melody Beattie, who wrote the 1987 bestseller *Codependent No More*, writes about Thanksgiving:

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow.

However, one of the best ideas of Thanksgiving I have come across is from the 13th to 14th century philosopher, theologian, and mystic, Meister Eckhart:

If the only prayer you said in your whole life was, "thank you," that would suffice.

I share these thoughts with you as you reflect on your upcoming celebration of Thanksgiving. Do we say *thank you* enough?

See you in church!

Tom



Worship Services and Scripture Passages for November

November 4, 2012

- *All Saints Sunday, Service of Remembrance of those who have died in the last year*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
- *Non-Perishable Food Collection*
Isaiah 25:6-9; Psalm 24;
Revelation 21:1-6a; John 11:32-44
The Porch at 15 Ames
Travnicek Memorial Ringers – *Dona Nobis Pacem*

November 11, 2012

- *Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Ruth 3:1-5, 4:13-17; Psalm 127;
Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 12:38-44
Honoring the Sacrifice of our Veterans
Job 19:23-29; I John 4:7-21;
John 15:12-17

Worship begins at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings, followed by Fellowship Hour 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.



November 18, 2012

- *Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time*
I Samuel 1:4-20; Psalm 113;
Hebrews 10:11-25; Mark 13:1-8
Facing the Fearful Places of Our Lives
Travnicek Memorial Ringers –
Tuya Es la Gloria (We Sing of Your Glory)

November 25, 2012

- *Reign of Christ Sunday*
2 Samuel 23:1-7; Psalm 132:1-18;
Revelation 1:4b-8; John 18:33-37
When Politifact is Not Helpful

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.



Confirmation Class

In November, the Confirmation Class will be meeting for the following programs:

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|-------|--|
| 11/4 | Taking Part in the Common Life of the Congregation - Noon |
| 11/10 | Attending mass at St. Joseph's Shrine; meet at the Shrine at 7:40 a.m. |
| 11/18 | What is Mission? – Noon |
| 11/25 | No Meeting – Thanksgiving Break |

New Beginnings Update**- Lore Pateman**

The New Beginnings house meetings have been completed. All 4 groups came to the same conclusion: the New Beginnings option that fits our church is Mission Redefinition. Mission Redefinition is:



Churches that seek to change may need to establish a whole new way of being a church. While all congregations will need to do visioning about their future mission opportunities, most congregations will do so alongside a redevelopment opportunity. Sometimes, however, there are congregations who “could be” the right church in the right place with a significant shift in missional focus. This option requires of the congregation significant energy, ingenuity, creativity, and spirituality because people will be leaving behind previous ministry entirely and doing a very new focus in ministry. It is important to note that there is no guarantee of numerical growth by entering Mission Redefinition. It also is important to note how well – or even if – the congregation can sustain its ministry through what may be a years-long process.

Next Steps

One thing everyone agreed on is that we don’t know our community’s needs very well. So, the next step is to go out into the community and talk to various groups to gather information about what our community needs. Our goal is to have the conversations completed by November 14th. Then, the New Beginnings leaders will come back together and develop a cohesive decision about the future and bring that report to the session and congregation for further discussion and adoption.

Please keep our congregation in your prayers. This decision is sizeable and will have long-reaching effects on the community, our congregation, and the Kingdom of God.

Annual Election Meeting

The Annual Election Meeting of the congregation was held on Sunday, October 28th, immediately following morning worship. The congregation approved a Session request to extend the current term limits to the end of January in order to avoid scheduling conflicts during the holiday season and to have the current officers still active for the Annual Congregational Meeting in January.

The following members were elected to terms starting in February 2013:

Elders: Susan Brodziak, Paul Wermuth, and Mike Nugent (There is a 1-year unexpired term to be filled.)

Deacons: Carolyn Malfatone, Janet Parziale, Barbara Nugent, and Shaylyn Gallagan

Nominating Committee Members-at-Large:

Ellen Eastty, Jean Hoffman, Ed Chang, Debra Sprague, and Jan Somers

Christian Education Committee**- Lore Pateman****Adult Education****- Debra Sprague**

We will be offering two Adult Education Programs in November:

On Wednesday nights, Nov. 17th and 28th, 7:30 p.m., Rev. Peters will be offering classes to help us get ready for the upcoming holiday season. The session on Nov. 17th is entitled, *What is Advent All About?* We will be looking at the themes of Advent through scripture and music. The session on Nov. 28th is entitled, *What Does the Word “Incarnation” Mean?* *Incarnation* is a word that is used a lot during the Christmas season, and we will look at what it means and how it informs our worship at Christmas.

Fourth Sunday Focus, Nov. 25th

- Tom Parziale

Just want to remind everyone about Fourth Sunday Focus gatherings. We meet at 8:45 a.m. and end at 9:45 a.m., but come and join us whenever you can. We have a Box o' Joe, a Pot of Tea, some Munchkins, and some conversation. Tom Parziale facilitates the sessions, and we look forward to seeing you at one of the upcoming discussions. If you have a topic you'd like to discuss, please let Tom know.

**Worship Committee**
All Saints Sunday

- Janet Parziale

On **Nov. 4th**, we will be celebrating *All Saints Sunday*, a day when Christians give thanks for all the good people God has placed in their lives. During this service, we will take time to remember those special people we have lost during the past year, and a candle will be lit for each person as their name is read aloud.

Our handbell choir, the Travnicek Memorial Ringers, will be playing a piece entitled, *Dona Nobis Pacem*, during the service.

Non-Perishable Food Collection, Nov. 4th

On the first Sunday of each month, we collect donations of non-perishable food during the worship service. The food is donated to the township food pantry at St. Vincent Church. Please keep your food items with you in church for the children to collect. We continue to collect non-perishable food in the baskets located in the entry-ways to the church during the rest of the month.

Upcoming in December**Heritage Sunday**

On **Dec. 2nd**, the church will be celebrating Heritage Sunday with a "Kirkin' of the Tartan" service (translation: Church blessing of the tartan). As in past years, we will have a guest bagpiper, Dave Paladino, play the tune Richard Streeton composed for our church entitled, "Stirling on the Hill."



Following our worship service, there will be a special coffee hour with lots of Scottish goodies to enjoy. The Worship Committee invites anyone who enjoys baking to bake their favorite Scottish goodies to share. Also, bring along the recipe, as you're sure to be asked for it. Some of the planned goodies include scones and shortbread. Of course, a fine pot of tea will also be served!



Please plan to celebrate our church's Scottish heritage, and remember to wear a wee bit of plaid.

First Sunday of Advent

Dec. 2nd is also the first Sunday of Advent, and we will begin a special program that will continue for the four Sundays in the season of Advent. More information about Advent and our special services and programs will be included in the December issue of Stirling Stuff.



Greens for Decorating

As we look ahead to the holiday season and the decorating of the sanctuary, tentatively scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 15th, please keep in mind that we will need some fresh greens, berries, holly, etc.

Please watch for more information on all of these upcoming services/activities in church bulletins and the December issue of Stirling Stuff.

Family Promise of Morris County (formerly Interfaith Hospitality Network)

- **Phyllis Clemson**

We have received our 2013 responsibility dates for *Family Promise* at the Shrine of St. Joseph. They are as follows: Tues., January 8th; Fri., February 8th (until noon Sat.); and, Tues., November 19th.

Watch for more information in the church bulletins and Stirling Stuff. Sign-up sheets will be posted in Pollard Hall as the dates approach. Please help with this important on-going mission of our church.

Deacons Corner

- **Katherine Ihringer**

Worship/Fellowship Hour Help

We need people to sign up for Liturgist, usher, and coffee hour for the upcoming weeks. Remember that Fellowship Hour does not have to be fancy. All you need is coffee, tea, juice, and cookies. Fellowship Hour is an excellent way for everybody to talk after church, and it tends to have more people if there is food.

Church Flowers

Don't forget to sign-up on the Flower Chart in Pollard Hall if you would like to place flowers on the chancel for Sunday morning worship in honor or memory of someone. 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 Sierra.



When you sign up on the flower chart, please be specific, i.e. *in memory, honor, given by*, and print clearly.

Deacons' Fund Envelopes

Please remember to use the green *Deacons' Fund* envelopes for donations to help the Deacons with their Mission work. These envelopes are available in the pew racks or in the church office and may be placed in the offering plate. Thank you!



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

Our next commitment date for preparing 40 lunches is: **Friday, Nov. 9th, 9:30 a.m.**, in Pollard Hall. We welcome donations of juice boxes, small water bottles, fruit/pudding cups, snacks of all kinds, fruit, and plastic spoons. You can drop these items off in Pollard Hall on Sunday mornings. We appreciate all the support you have given to this much-needed program.

Upcoming date: Dec. 7th

4th Annual "Bridges" Program: *Teens Tackle Homelessness*

All high school students are welcome to attend a conference on homelessness:

When: Sat., Nov. 10th, 3:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Where: Kent Place School, Summit

Keynote Speaker: Richard Codey, NJ State Senator and former Governor

Endnote Speaker: Christine Carter, President and Founder, *Against All Odds*

Advance registration is free; \$20 at the door

Participants will take part in a workshop session of the "Just Neighbors" program, designed by Family Promise of Summit. This is an interactive learning experience with participants putting themselves in the place of someone who is homeless or near homeless and making difficult choices.

For more information or to register, please go to www.bridgesoutreach.org.

Thanksgiving Turkey/Ham Donations

The supermarkets are once again promoting free turkeys/hams during the holiday season. If you are eligible to receive a turkey/ham that you will not be using, please consider donating it. As you know, the list of hungry people grows longer each day, and the food banks cannot keep up with the demand.



We will be collecting the turkeys (please keep them frozen) and hams at church on the Sunday before Thanksgiving (November 18th), and Lynne and Bill Combs will deliver them to the Market Street Mission in Morristown for distribution. Your support of this program is very much appreciated.

Global Mission Day**- Madeline Hahl**

We are pleased to report that our Global Mission Day on Sept. 29th was a huge success. Thanks to the generosity of the Shop-Rite management and shoppers, we were able to collect in excess of 500 lbs. of food and \$232 in cash. These were distributed equally among the Long Hill Food Pantry, the Morris County Pantry, and the Somerset County Food Bank. We are glad we were able to contribute so much to the welfare of those in need in our area. Thank you to everyone who helped with this project.

Fundraising Committee**- Jean Hoffman****Church "Inside" Yard Sale****- Madeline Hahl, Jean Hoffman, Yvonne Fletcher**

Our October sale was very successful, netting \$2,000.75! This includes \$194 from the bake sale. Our sincere thanks go to all who helped before, during, and after the sale to make it such a success. It was not only fun, but very rewarding. The profit has been designated to help the Church Roof Fund.

Thanks also to everyone who baked, donated items for sale, and purchased items. You were all part of our success.

On-Going Book Sale

We have received many new books, so please take a look at the "Book Table" in the hallway outside Pollard Hall. To date, we have raised \$115, which benefits the Church Roof Loan. For more information, please speak to Ellen Easty or Jean Hoffman.

Upcoming Programs at Camp Johnsonburg

Grateful for the abundant blessings of our summer camp season, we now look towards the fall anticipating a new rhythm at Johnsonburg.

Spiritual Sanctuary at Johnsonburg – Men's Retreat Weekend

On **Nov. 2-4**, Johnsonburg will offer its first Men's Retreat, led by Terry Chapman, pastor of Forked River Presbyterian Church and author of the new book, *Sabbath Pause*.

Advent Retreat Day

In preparation for Advent and Christmas, Anita Milne, pastor of Plainsboro Presbyterian Church, will take us on a journey through the season during our Advent Retreat Day, **Thurs., Nov. 29th**.

For additional information and to register for these programs, call 908-852-2349, email lorelei@campjburg.org, or register online at www.campjburg.org/retreats

Church Website

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

"Featuring daily meditations and devotions wonderfully written by clergy and lay leaders, These Days continues to be the source of comfort and hope throughout the world and has been for thirty-five years." (Taken from *These Days* website)

The latest issue is available in the Church narthex.

Labels/Box Tops for Education; Pop-Top Can Tabs**- Jan Somers**

Please continue to cut out "Labels for Education" and "Box Tops for Education" coupons that can be found on many food and paper products. Please bring them to church and put them in the collection canister in the church office or in Pollard Hall on Sunday. The coupons we collect will be donated to the schools where members of our church families attend.



Ronald McDonald House collects pop-top can tabs and earns money from recycling centers based upon weight. It's an easy way to support RMH and make a difference for families and children. If you would like to support this project, please put the tabs in the same collection canister.

Thank you for supporting these programs.

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. They 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 Fundraisers

ShopRite Gift Cards

- ✓ No additional cost to you to use
- ✓ Purchase cards at face value
- ✓ Church earns 5%
- ✓ Denominations available: \$20, \$50, \$100
- ✓ Cards are available each week during fellowship hour.

iGive

- ✓ No cost to you
- ✓ Log on / sign up / find out more at:
<http://www.igive.com/FirstPresbyterianChurch-StirlingNJ>
- ✓ E-mail this link to your friends

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

Why not invite a friend to church?



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