



Stirling Stuff

Volume 56, No. 5

May 2012

Pastor's Letter



Fire, when it is controlled, is amazing. It produces energy that can do many wonderful things. Because of this, it is very appropriate as a symbol for the Day of Pentecost. Pentecost, which we will celebrate on Sunday, May 27th, is, as many of you know, when we celebrate the beginning of the Christian Church. It is when the disciples experienced the rush of a mighty wind and flames. The disciples, who had been hiding and waiting after the ascension of Jesus, suddenly became energized with the Spirit of Christ and left their upper room and began to preach the Good News. The movement known as *The Way* was begun.

It is appropriate to think about fire during May in our church because we will begin to do our part in discovering a new beginning for our church. Fire and energy are what we hope will happen as we begin to meet in small groups and talk about our assessment and what possibilities it portends for our church. If the process is to work for us, it will have to energize us. We, as members of the church, will have to catch the spirit of Christ in our personal lives and in our church.

On Friday and Saturday, May 11th and 12th, leaders from our church will attend a two-day program led by the national New Beginnings Team (NBT). We will see our assessment for the first time and begin to learn not only how to understand it, but also how to present it in small groups in a way that will lead to a new vision for our church. The NBT will teach us how to encourage thinking inside, and, more importantly, outside the box. The small groups are where we will begin to experience the fire as a church. It should be exciting, and when we start the small groups, I hope you will sign up to be part of one. That is the only way we can move forward.

I find it interesting that when our assessor was here and met with the congregation, he talked about the lifecycle of a church. The thing that was needed to start a church was "Energy," and when a church began to decline, the first thing to go was "Energy." So, I hope you will join us and get recharged by the flame of God's Spirit working in and through our church.

See you in church!

Tom

Pentecost:
the Birth of
the Church



Worship Services and Scripture Passages for May

May 6, 2012

- *Fifth Sunday of Easter*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
- *Non-Perishable Food Collection*
- *Pot-luck brunch following worship*
Acts 8:26-40; Psalm 22:25-31;
I John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8
*Elder Francis Maina from the Kayole P.C.
of the Nairobi West Presbytery*

May 13, 2012

- *Sixth Sunday of Easter*
- *Mother's Day*
Acts 10:44-48; Psalm 98;
I John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17
Picked Last

*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.*



May 20, 2012

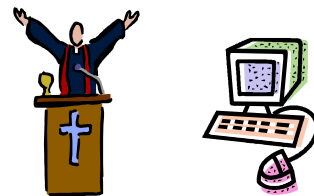
- *Seventh Sunday of Easter*
- *Gifts of Women & Men Sunday*
Acts 1:15-17, 21-26; Psalm 1;
I John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19
I'm a Christian, Unless . . .
Ms. Debra Sprague doing a reading

May 27, 2012

- *Day of Pentecost*
- *Memorial Day Sunday*
Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b;
Acts 2:1-21; John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15
Have You Said Yes?

**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.



New Roof Fund

There is a new dedicated fund: New Roof Fund. The monies in this fund will be used to replace the flat roof with a peaked roof. Please see the following article about this project and our Raise the Roof Fund Drive.

Raise The Roof Update

At its March 8th meeting, the Session voted to replace the flat roof over the office portion of the building with a peaked shingle roof. Fund-raising letters will be going out to:

- congregation members
- former church members
- people in the community who have been using the church as a meeting place over the years

The Buildings and Ground committee is coordinating the project. Church blue prints and survey materials were shared with our architect of choice. We received a proposal dated March 27th from the architect. The architect, Robert Scialla, is an architect Dale Monetti has done a lot of work with. Prior to submitting the proposal, the architect reviewed the material provided and conferred with the township officials. We will be required to apply for a minor variance due to the non-conforming side and rear yard setbacks. The proposal was signed by Dale Monetti and Ed Gerech on April 8th, and we have formally hired the architect.

The next step is the variance process. We had hoped this would not be necessary, but we are optimistic that everything will be in place to start the work early this summer

Please consider your gift carefully and help your church out as much as you can.

Thank you, and let's **Raise the Roof!**

Camp Johnsonburg

We have received the brochures for this summer's camping program at Camp Johnsonburg in Johnsonburg, NJ. They have programs for children from 4 years old (which can include a parent) through high school, a family camp, and a special needs camp. There are half-week camps and full-week camps. There are camps with special themes (i.e., sports, safe sitter, music, art, drama, photography, rope & rock climbing, canoeing, Lifeguard training, Leadership Training, etc.). If you, your child, or someone you know might like to attend, pick up a brochure, and get registered now. The brochures are on the Christian Education Board in Pollard Hall.

iGive

- Debra Sprague

Want to help our church financially, in a way that doesn't have to cost you anything? Sign up for **iGive!** **iGive** is an online portal. You can shop through it; you can search online through it. Either way, each time you use it, the church can earn a small fee.

It costs nothing to sign up - and the church can earn \$5 for each person who signs up. Make one purchase through it, and the church earns another \$5.

To sign up, or for more information, go to: <http://www.igive.com/FirstPresbyterianChurch-StirlingNJ>

Check it out, and let me know what you think of **iGive!**

Christian Education Committee**- Lore Pateman****Special CE Project**

The CE committee is collecting pictures of the church school children over the years. If you could go through your pictures and bring them in, we'd appreciate it. There is a box in Pollard Hall for the pictures. Down the road, we will schedule a fellowship event to put together scrap books. Thank you to everyone who has already brought in their pictures!

**Adult Education****- Debra Sprague****Fourth Sunday Focus, May 27th****- 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. In February, we discussed *A View of Lent*; March's topic was how the idea of Sabbath has changed. In April, we met on Earth Day and discussed *God's Earth*. May's topic has not yet been finalized. 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.

**Educational Resources**

We subscribe to *The Thoughtful Christian* (www.thethoughtfulchristian.com) and use it as a source for many studies. *The Thoughtful Christian* is changing the pricing structure this year, but our subscription is good through June. Please take time to look at the website. Any downloadable studies you are interested in can be downloaded for no extra cost. Just let Debra Sprague know what studies you'd like. The studies can be for adult education, youth education, or just for your own use.

Worship Committee**- Janet Parziale****Guest Preacher and Pot-Luck Brunch, May 6th**

On Sunday, May 6th, we will welcome Elder Francis Maina from the Kayole Presbyterian Church of the Nairobi West Presbytery. Elder Maina will be speaking during morning worship and then joining us for a pot-luck brunch in Pollard Hall. We invite everyone to attend on the 6th to hear Elder Maina and stay for brunch. There is a brunch sign-up sheet in Pollard Hall.

Canned Food Collection, May 6th

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.

Gifts of Women and Men Sunday, May 20th

Over the past several years, our congregation has celebrated Gifts of Women Sunday, honoring women who contribute their gifts and talents to the church and community. Two years ago, we decided to also celebrate Gifts of Men Sunday. This year, the worship committee has decided to celebrate both of them together on **Sunday, May 20th**. Nominations are open for all women and men who have made a difference 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, Yvonne Fletcher, and Beth Badilla. Those men previously honored are Warren Hoffman and Tom Parziale.

Please e-mail your suggestions for this year's honorees (men and women) to Janet Parziale (**janetparziale@comcast.net**) by **May 5th**. Or, complete the nomination form included in the church bulletin on Sunday, April 29th, and place it in the offering plate. To help the committee in making their decision, please note areas where your nominees have demonstrated outstanding effort in our church and community. Thank you, and please plan to join us on May 20th to honor two very special people!



Pentecost Sunday

We will celebrate Pentecost on Sunday, **May 27th**. Don't forget to wear something red!

Deacons Corner

- **Katherine Ihringer**

Worship/Fellowship Hour Help

Please sign up for dates when you can help out as Liturgist, Usher, or host/sponsor of Fellowship Hour. The Worship/Fellowship Hour sign-up chart is posted in Pollard Hall, and **there are lots of openings**. If each church family signs up for one Sunday for each responsibility, most weeks will be covered. Fellowship Hour can be simple; just bring some juice and some cookies, and you are good to go! If you would like to donate to a coffee hour and have someone else host it, contact Jan Somers. Please speak with any Deacon if you have questions about any of these duties. Thank you!

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.

Thank you.

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, May 11th**, 9:30 a.m., in Pollard Hall. We can always use juice containers, bottled water, fruit cups, packets of cookies or other snacks, 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: June 8th

Community Food Bank**- Debra Sprague****Doing Something Good on Good Friday**

On April 6th, a group of 15 church members and friends traveled to the Community Food Bank of NJ in Hillside. They spent the morning in the warehouse, sorting and organizing some of the many cans and boxes of food and household products donated by companies, groups, and individuals for distribution in the Northern New Jersey area. Everyone enjoyed their time working together as a team to help a good cause. Kai Ihringer organized the trip as an opportunity to do something good on Good Friday. *Success!*



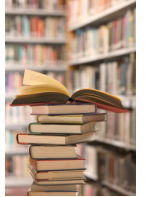
Front row: Grace Nielsen, Nicole Honegger, Kai Ihringer, Ian Blakeslee
 Middle row: Kristin Skierski (of the Food Bank), Lynn Blakeslee, Brooke Kupferman, Katherine Ihringer, Juliana Engler, Shaylyn Gallagan, Lukas Ihringer
 Back row: Kevin Branco, Israel Sierra, Trevor Peters, Garrett Blakeslee, Rev. Tom Peters

Fundraising Committee**- Jean Hoffman****Breadstick Project**

Our thanks to the "breadstick crew" and Madeline Hahl, who chaired the committee. A good time was had by all, and the results are approximately \$600 towards the New Roof Fund! Many thanks also to Karen Peck, who made the dough and contributed all the ingredients and her professional time. And, thank you to everyone who supported this project.

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 \$46, which benefits the Church Heating Loan. For more information, please speak to Ellen Eastty or Jean Hoffman.

**Church Archives****- Ellen Eastty**

Ellen Eastty is trying to update and finalize our church archives from the past few years. If you have any pictures, newspaper articles, awards, etc. involving church members, please give them to Ellen so she can finish this process and move on to the next year.

Visitation Schedule**- Rev. Peters**

There is a sign-up sheet posted 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, 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 new issue is available in the Church narthex.

Box Tops for Education**- Jan Somers**

ARTS • ATHLETICS • ACADEMICS

Please continue to cut out "Box Tops for Education" and "Labels for Education" coupons that can be found on many food and paper products. If you do not use them elsewhere, please bring them to church and put them in the collection canister in the church office or in Pollard Hall during Fellowship Hour on Sunday. Each coupon has a point value, and the points are used by parent organizations to earn free educational/recreational items for schools. The coupons we collect will be donated to the schools where members of our church families attend. It's an easy way to get some free materials that can be put to very good use!

Thank you for your support of this ongoing project.

Things God Wants Us to Know About**- Jan Somers, Editor**

A suggestion at a recent Worship Committee meeting has prompted a new feature in Stirling Stuff. Think of it as a way to "get the word out" about something that might be helpful to others. It can be websites, information about government programs or benefits, community programs, etc.

Please try to keep your articles brief, and send them to me or put them in the *Newsletter* mailbox outside the church offices. They will be considered for inclusion in a future issue when space allows. Thank you.

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
June issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by May 24th. Thank you!*

Why not invite a friend to church?



Stirling Stuff is the newsletter of the

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