



Stirling Stuff

Volume 57, No. 10

November 2013

Pastor's Letter

There is always, always something to be thankful for

In my Thanksgiving sermon in 1992, I told a story from the book, *Tales of the Hasidim*. The story is about Rabbi Moshe Leib, who wrote:

How easy it is for a poor person to depend on God! What else have they to depend on? And how hard it is for a rich person to depend on God! All their possessions call out to them: "Depend on us!"

This is a truth I saw being lived in Kenya when I was there. Many people had a great faith in God because they did not have anything else they could count on. I thought of this as I reflected on our times because it seems that the pedestals we've erected to support us are crumbling--even our own U.S. government, which was so evident in the recent shutdown. Everywhere we look we see things falling apart or broken. We easily become depressed. This sense of brokenness seems to say, in answer to Jeremiah's question in Jeremiah 8:22, "there is no balm in Gilead."

However, Thanksgiving, is a time to reset our sights. Of course we are to be thankful at all times; but, having a day to remind us of the need to be thankful is still helpful. Thanksgiving reminds us that, as broken as things may seem, we still have family, we still have friends, we still have God. We may be poor in wealth, in possessions, in government, in a lot of things, but we can be, and still are, rich in a lot of the most important things. This Thanksgiving, spend some time experiencing gratitude for the blessings you do have. Thank God for the lives, the people, the hope, the comfort you have been given in your life. If it helps, write them down, and post them somewhere where you will see them, and be sure to look at them every day.

May God bless you and yours this Thanksgiving!

Tom



Worship Services and Scripture Passages for November

November 3, 2013

- *All Saints Sunday, Service of Remembrance of those who have died in the past year*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
- *Non-Perishable Food Collection*
Daniel 7:1-3, 15-18; Psalm 150;
Ephesians 1:11-23; Luke 6:20-31

Who Has Shined God's Light To You?

November 10, 2013

- *Ordinary 32C*
Haggai 1:15b-2:9; Psalm 145:1-5, 17-21;
2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17; Luke 20:27-38

The Time In-Between

*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 17, 2013

- *Ordinary 33C*
Isaiah 65:17-25; Psalm 118;
2 Thessalonians 3:6-13; Luke 21:5-19

Boldly Proclaim God

November 24, 2013

- *Reign of Christ Sunday*
Jeremiah 23:1-6; Luke 1:68-79;
Colossians 1:11-20; Luke 23:33-43

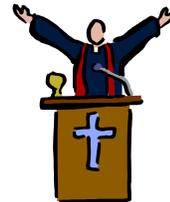
A Good Shepherd

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.



Annual Election Meeting

The Annual Election Meeting of the congregation was held on Sunday, October 27th, immediately following morning worship. The following members were elected to terms starting in February 2014:

Elders: Lore Pateman and Lynn Blakeslee
Deacons: Israel Sierra, Jr. and Shaylyn Gallagan

There are still terms for one additional Elder and Deacon to be filled. This will be addressed at the Annual Congregational Meeting in January.

The revised Church By-laws were also approved at the meeting on October 27th.

Pastor's Coffee Klatch

Please note that the November Coffee Klatch will be held on the 2nd Saturday of the month, which is Nov. 9th. Rev. Peters will be at the Stirling House Diner at 9:00 a.m. The date was changed this month because the November Presbytery of Newton meeting is on the 1st Saturday, and Tom has to attend that meeting to present a report.

If you have a question, just want to talk, or have a friend you want to introduce to our church, plan to join him at the Diner. Since he will not be doing any counseling, if you come and someone else is sitting with him, pull up a chair and join them.

Christian Education Committee**- Lore Pateman****Senior Highs****- Tom Parziale**

We spend some time at the beginning of each Sunday School year talking about *Respect*. Last year, and again this year, we created an Acrostic Poem. An acrostic is a poem or other form of writing in which the first letter of each line comes from the word itself and helps form a reflection on the word itself.

Attached is what the high school class has developed each of the past two years for the word **Respect**. During a recent Fourth Sunday Focus, we also developed an Acrostic Poem using the word **Respect**. We then moved forward and developed one for the word **Diversity**. An interesting reflection . . .

<u>RESPECT</u>	<u>Sunday School 2012-13</u>	<u>Sunday School 2013-14</u>	<u>4th Sunday Focus 9/22/13</u>
R	Responsible	Reaching	Responsible
E	Everyone	Enthusiastic	Empathize
S	Special	Salute	Support
P	Participate	Polite	Partake
E	Equally	Empathy	Engage
C	Caring	Compassion	Connect
T	Together	Truth	Trust

DIVERSITY **4th Sunday Focus 9/22/13**

D	Depend
I	Investment
V	Variety
E	Engage
R	Reaching
S	Same
I	Insight
T	Trust
Y	Youth

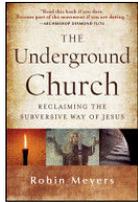
Adult Education

- Debra Sprague

Fourth Sunday Focus, Nov. 24th

- Tom Parziale

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. Our next "Fourth Sunday Focus" gathering will be on **Nov. 24th**. If you have a topic you'd like to discuss, please contact Tom Parziale.

**Adult Book Study**

The Book Study on *The Underground Church: Reclaiming the Subversive Way of Jesus*, by Robin Meyers, will begin on **Thursday, Dec. 5th**. Those attending are asked to read the first three chapters. If you do not yet have a book, speak to Rev. Peters, or you may order a copy on amazon.com.

CROP Walk 2013

- Debra Sprague

On Sunday, Oct. 20th, we had 13 walkers who joined with others from the area to participate in the 35th Annual New Providence CROP Walk. Our group of 60 followed a 3-mile route through the town, raising awareness and funds to help fight hunger. A total of 59 Crop Walks were held throughout NJ that day.

The New Providence Walk raised over \$5,000. Part of the funds will go to St. John's Soup Kitchen in Newark, and the rest will be used for Church World Service projects. Walkers also donated jars of peanut butter for distribution to local food banks.

Our group from Stirling raised over \$1,100; but, you can still add to that total. Go to the Crop Walk website, and make a donation or enter information on a Matching Funds program offered by your employer:

http://hunger.cwsglobal.org/site/TR/2013FallCROPHungerWalk/TR-Fall2013?pg=entry&fr_id=17145

Our enthusiastic group included:

Barbara & Tom Peters
Tom Parziale
Ed Gerecht
Chris Scott
Shaylyn Gallagan
Jan Somers
Lore Pateman
Katherine & Kai Ihringer
Brooke Kupferman
Elaine Giordano
Robin Schmidt
Debra Sprague



I couldn't walk this year because of injury, but I was cheering our walkers on and helped serve ice cream at the end of the 3 miles! Thank you to all of our walkers and supporters!

Worship Committee**- Janet Parziale****Non-Perishable Food Collection, November 3rd**

On the first Sunday of each month, we collect donations of non-perishable food during the worship service. While we are receiving the Lord's Supper, we also want to provide for others. 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.

**All Saints' Sunday, November 3rd**

On Nov. 3rd, we will be observing *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 as each name is read.

Peacemaking Offering**“PEACE at all times in all ways.” (2 Thessalonians 3:16)**

Our annual Peacemaking offering will be collected on Nov. 3rd and 10th. Please support this Presbytery program that is so important to the peace process here at home and around the world. Session has voted to donate the local portion of the offering, which is 25%, to the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization.

Thanksgiving Service, November 24th

Rev. Peters has been asked to give the message this year at the Thanksgiving Service which is part of the covenant between Wilson Memorial and St. Mary's Stony Hill. The service will be held at **Wilson Memorial Church on Sunday, November 24th at 7:00 p.m.** You are all invited to attend.

Heritage Sunday

On December 1st, the church will be celebrating Heritage Sunday. As in past years, we will have a guest bagpiper, Dave Paladino.

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 bring their favorite Scottish goodies to share. Some of the planned goodies include scones and shortbread. Of course, a fine pot of tea will also be served!



Please plan to join us for this festive service as we celebrate our church's Scottish heritage, and remember to wear a wee bit of plaid.

First Sunday of Advent

December 1st 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.



Mission Committee**- Madeline Hahl****Bridges Outreach Lunch Program****- Jean Hoffman, Coordinator**

Our next commitment date for preparing 40 lunches is: **Friday, Nov. 8th, 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.

Upcoming Dates: Dec. 6th, Jan. 10th

Family Promise of Morris County**- Chris Scott & Phyllis Clemson**

Our third and final responsibility this year for hosting Family Promise clients will be on **Tues., Nov. 19th**, at the Shrine of St. Joseph in Stirling. We need volunteers to provide dinner, serve as hosts for dinner, and sleep overnight with the group. The dinner menu includes pork roast, mashed potatoes, green beans, applesauce, and dessert. A sign-up sheet is posted in Pollard Hall. Come, help out, and get a taste for just how difficult it is to be homeless.

Contact Phyllis Clemson or Chris Scott for additional information.

Family Promise - Paper Products Collection

For a few more weeks, we will be collecting paper products for the *Family Promise of Morris County (Interfaith)* network. Suggested items include: facial tissues, paper towels, bath tissue, and napkins, which can be placed on the pew inside Pollard Hall. This program helps people right in our own "backyard," and it would be wonderful if we could surpass last year's donations!

**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, Nov. 24th, and Lynne & Bill Combs will deliver them to the Market Street Mission in Morristown for distribution. Your support of this program is very much appreciated.

Warm Clothing Collection**- Jean Hoffman**

A great big thanks to everyone for your abundant donations of warm clothing and blankets. A total of 19 bags and a bag of baby food was delivered to St. Hoseph's Social Services in Elizabeth. The blankets are particularly appreciated as they are given to the homeless who sleep on the street. In view of the need, we will continue to collect blankets and baby food. Please place items on the pew inside Pollard Hall. Thank you!

Community Food Bank - Nov. 23rd**- Kai Ihringer**

Our church is scheduled to volunteer at the NJ Community Food Bank in Hillside on the morning of **Saturday, Nov. 23rd**. The food bank is always looking for assistance, and this effort is a great way to help people right here in New Jersey who benefit from the program. In return for our efforts, we get to enjoy fellowship and camaraderie with our church family and friends.

Here is the information:

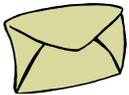
Date: Sat., Nov. 23rd

Departure: Meet at 8:00 a.m. in the church parking lot to carpool; leave shortly thereafter

Food Bank Slot: 9:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Return: Back at church parking lot between 11:30 a.m. and noon

If you plan to help that morning, please contact Kai Ihringer by Nov. 15th so that he can provide the Food Bank with a fairly accurate estimate of the size of our group. And don't forget to reach out to non-church members who may want to join us.

Deacons Corner**- Katherine Ihringer**

I just want to remind everyone that there are green envelopes in the pews that are for the Deacons. It would be greatly appreciated if you could put loose change in the envelopes. Every little bit goes into the Deacon's fund.

I am extremely excited to announce that there will be an upcoming **game night** on **Friday, Dec. 27th!** We will begin at 7 PM and snacks will be served. We would love if church members will bring an outside friend to the game night. Please bring some board games. Game nights are a great way to have fun with other members of the church. Remember to save the date!

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.

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.

Fellowship

Our annual softball game with members and friends of the Meyersville Presbyterian Church, held on Sunday afternoon, Sept. 29th, was a test of endurance as we battled to a 19-19 tie.

Players from Stirling included Tom Peters, Sue, Ed, and Amanda Gerech, Ian Blakeslee, Katherine, Lukas, and Kai Ihringer, and Tom Parziale.

Our fans included Madeline Hahl, Sue Sanders, Elaine Giordano, Lisa Wernett, and Lynn Blakeslee and her mom, Ginny Norcia.

Although there was a rumor about some players using Performing Enhancing Drugs, that allegation could not be confirmed. Following the game, exhausted players and fans enjoyed a pot-luck barbecue dinner hosted by Meyersville church.

Here are some pictures of our players in action--note the perfect form . . .



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.

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

- Jan Somers

Please continue to save Labels for Education, Box Tops for Education, and pop-top can tabs.

The labels are used by parent organizations to earn educational and recreational items for students. The can tabs are sold by weight to recycling centers, and the proceeds are donated to Ronald MacDonal House to help fund their programs for children and their families. There is a collection canister in the church office. Thank you.



Ongoing Mission Programs**Township Food Pantry**

Items can be left in baskets labeled "Food Pantry Donations" in the Church narthex and on the table outside of Pollard Hall.

Toiletries

Full-sized and "courtesy" sized bars of soap, shampoo, and 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 & Fabric

Yarn is used to make lap robes for wounded veterans, afghans for battered women, and hats for newborns in hospitals; 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 & Kings Gift Cards**

- ✓ No additional cost to you to use
- ✓ Purchase cards at face value
- ✓ Church earns **5%**
- ✓ Denominations available are:
 - ShopRite: \$20, \$50, \$100
 - Kings: \$25, \$50, \$100
- ✓ Cards are available each week during Fellowship Hour or by contacting Jean Hoffman

iGive

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

**Please e-mail submissions for the
December issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by November 24th. Thank you!**

Stirling Stuff is the newsletter of the

First Presbyterian Church

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Why not invite a friend to church?



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Website: www.fpcstirling.org

Our Mission

Jesus said, "Feed My Sheep." This welcoming and caring family, empowered by the love of Christ, shares the grace and peace of God's blessings by serving those who are hungry in body or spirit.

**First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger**