



Stirling Stuff

Volume 58, No. 7

Summer 2014

Pastor's Letter

At our June *Fourth Sunday Focus* gathering, Tom Parziale led us in a discussion of *compromise*. One of the things we all pretty much agreed on was that compromise is an art, and it seems that fewer and fewer people have it. We live in a day and age when many people are saying it is "my way or the highway." This is especially true in the area of politics, and also, to a degree, in the area of religion. Many people are having problems living with the diversity we have in our country and world today.



I believe this is not just a problem of discourse, but it is a spiritual problem as well. It is a spiritual problem in that we have difficulty in seeing the person we disagree with as a good human being, beloved by God, unless they agree with our viewpoint. It is an issue of our being right rather than being loving. This is the thinking that nailed Jesus to the cross. The Jewish leaders of Jesus' day were more about being right than seeing the loving actions of Jesus.



I bring all of this up because I believe the action taken at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA), that just concluded in Detroit, MI, regarding same sex marriages in the Presbyterian Church was one of compassionate compromise. It allows pastors and churches in states where same sex marriages are legal, and who in good conscience believe that same-sex couples should be able to marry, are now able to perform those weddings. However, if pastors and churches in good conscience do not believe that they should marry, they do not have to do them and cannot be forced to marry them. What we are saying is that the relationships we have in our connectional church are more important than forcing others to accept our viewpoint.

We need more of this respect for the viewpoints of others in our lives. While we may not agree with the other viewpoint, we have to respect it for the person who believes it. At the same time, we have to be willing to reach compassionate compromises or else we will stagnate and become bitter in our stubbornness. This is what I see happening in the politics of our time. The Church of Jesus Christ needs to model to the country and the world how we can reach compassionate compromises. I hope we can recover that art before it is too late.



I also hope you all have a great summer. And, if you read any good books, please let me know about them!

See you in Church!

Tom

First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger

Worship Services and Scripture Passages for July and August

July 6, 2014 – 9:30 a.m.

- *Fourth Sunday after Pentecost*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
- *Non-Perishable Food Collection*
Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67; Psalm 45:10-17;
Romans 7:15-25a; Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30
Rev. Aspinall preaching – Service at Stirling

July 13, 2014

- *Fifth Sunday after Pentecost*
Genesis 25:19-34; Psalm 119:105-112;
Romans 8:1-11; Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
Rev. Brooks Smith preaching – Service at Stirling

July 20, 2014

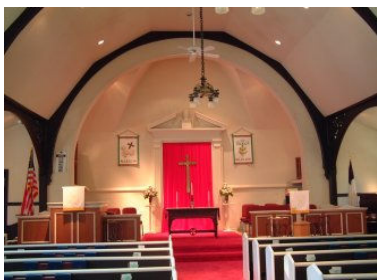
- *Sixth Sunday after Pentecost*
Genesis 28:10-19a; Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24;
Romans 8:12-25; Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
Rev. Alan Schaefer preaching – Service at Stirling

July 27, 2014

- *Seventh Sunday after Pentecost*
Genesis 29:15-28; Psalm 105:1-11, 45b;
Romans 8:26-39; Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52
Rev. Aspinall preaching – Service at Stirling

*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.*



August 3, 2014 – 9:30 a.m.

- *Eighth Sunday after Pentecost*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
Genesis 32:22-31; Psalm 17:1-7, 15;
Romans 9:1-5; Matthew 14:13-21
Rev. Aspinall preaching – Service at Meyersville

August 10, 2014

- *Ninth Sunday after Pentecost*
Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28;
Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b;
Romans 10:5-15; Matthew 14:22-33
Rev. Peters preaching – Service at Meyersville

August 17, 2014

- *Tenth Sunday after Pentecost*
Genesis 45:1-15; Psalm 133;
Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32; Matthew 15:10-28
Rev. Peters preaching – Service at Meyersville

August 24, 2014

- *Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost*
Exodus 1:8-2:10; Psalm 124;
Romans 12:1-8; Matthew 16:13-20
Rev. Peters preaching – Service at Meyersville

August 31, 2014

- *Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost*
- **Service at 7 p.m. with pot-luck dinner at 6 p.m.**
Exodus 3:1-15; Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c;
Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28
Rev. Peters preaching – Service at Meyersville

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.

Pastor's Coffee Klatch

The next Coffee Klatch will be on **Sat., July 5th, 9:00 a.m.**, at the Stirling House Diner. If you have a question, just want to talk, or have a friend you want to introduce to our church, plan to join Rev. Peters 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.



Session and Presbytery Meeting Highlights**- Madeline Hahl****Summary of key discussions from the May Session meeting:**

- Fish & Chips event was a great success; thanks to all who helped, before, during, and after. We sold about 300 meals, of which 40 were given to needy families.
- It is hoped that the roof repair will be done in August.
- We are sorry to say goodbye to Chris and Mike Scott and wish them success and happiness in their new life.
- A reminder that in July, Sunday services will begin at 9:30 a.m. in Stirling with Rev. Aspinall and two guest ministers preaching. August services will be in Meyersville with Rev. Peters preaching. On August 31st, we will worship in Meyersville at 7:00 p.m. The service is called Graze and *Praise*. There will be a pot luck supper at 6:00 p.m. There will be no morning service on that Sunday.

Summary of key discussions from the May Presbytery meeting:

- The new by-laws were approved unanimously. Madeline has a copy available for your perusal.
- Elders were elected to various committees, Rev. Aspinall was elected Moderator, and Elder Steven Choi of Stewartsville was elected Vice-Moderator.
- There was a very detailed presentation of the Nairobi Partnership, which includes health, education, and welfare. Some congregations are very involved in this program.

Congratulations to All Our Graduates**College**

- Emmy Fletcher, granddaughter of Yvonne & Art Fletcher, graduated from Rutgers University with a B.A. in Political Science

High School

- Chris DeMatteo will be attending Johnson & Wales University in Rhode Island majoring in Hospitality Management
- Jacob Malfatone, grandson of Carolyn Malfatone, graduated from Ridge High School, Basking Ridge

**Memorial Day Parade**

Thank you to Lynn Blakeslee and Paul Wermuth for staffing our church table and serving lemonade during the Memorial Day parade. It also gave them the opportunity to invite people to the Fish & Chips dinner.

Spring Clean-Up, Memorial Garden

Thank you to everyone who helped with our spring clean up to make our church grounds more inviting for the Fish & Chips Dinner. Rene' Phelan and her daughter, Donna, are "weeding machines!" Israel also helped out until he got a First Aid call and had to go. Other volunteers included Susan Brodziak, Brooke, Josh, Lynn Blakeslee, and Lore Pateman. Special thanks to Tom Parziale who was at the church earlier than everyone else taking care of Buildings & Grounds business.

The church's Memorial Garden had fallen into a bit of disrepair, so it received a facelift. Working together with Lynne Combs and Rene' Phelan, the Buildings & Grounds team initiated action. With the help of Israel Sierra and Paul Weermuth, several dead arborvitae were removed, saving a big expense. Regency Landscaping then completed the work: new plantings, new fencing, and mulch. A modification of the sprinkler system was made so the garden will receive a more effective soaking rather than a spray. The landscaper, who handles our lawn and plowing, will now also maintain the Memorial Garden.

Christian Education Committee**- Lore Pateman****Adult Education****- Debra Sprague****Joint-Church Summer Study Series**

We're running our 6-Week Summer Wednesday Adult Ed series again this year! We meet **7:30-9:00 p.m. in our air-conditioned child care room**. Leaders and topics are diverse, and each topic stands alone – so don't worry if you can't make all the sessions; just come when you can!



Here's the schedule:

- **July 9: What Happened at this year's PCUSA General Assembly?**
Led by Rev. Barbara Aspinall, who attended this year's G.A. as a delegate – come hear a first-hand account of the session's happenings.
- **July 16: Visiting Someone in the Hospital**
Heather Harris-Galgoci will lead this study from *The Thoughtful Christian* on what can be an awkward, difficult time for many of us.
- **July 23: Immigration**
We'll watch the new 45-minute film from *Sojourners*, "The Stranger," with discussion led by Andrew Galgoci.
- **July 30: "Religion and Science"**
Led by Rev. Barbara Aspinall
- **August 6: Bringing the Awe to Worship**
Led by Cyndy Reames
- **August 13: Class Warfare in the Bible**
Rev. Tom Peters will lead us in this study from *The Thoughtful Christian*, written by Walter Brueggeman.

Fourth Sunday Focus**- Tom Parziale**

Our next "Fourth Sunday Focus" gathering will be on **July 27th**. Since worship begins at 9:30 a.m., we will start at about 8:45 and have a shorter session.



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. If you have a topic you'd like to discuss, please contact Tom Parziale.

Fish & Chips Fundraising Dinner

On Saturday, June 7th, our church hosted an Argyle's Fish & Chips dinner on our church's front lawn (with additional seating indoors). We were blessed with a perfect day on many fronts.

- Sold over 300 tickets (Comments were heard that Ed Gerech is a selling machine!)
- About 40 dinners were donated to those in need from the community (thanks to those who donated their tickets!)
- Everyone pulled together - we had more than 30 volunteers helping the day of the dinner; it was a wonderful time of fellowship
- We made close to \$3000, making this a very successful event for the church
- More importantly, we were able to talk to others in our community and let them know about our church and who we are - Ed Chang mentioned that he had friends attend, and they felt very welcomed
- Carolyn Malfatone did a fabulous job of organizing the desserts and getting all those wonderful goodies from many people for the dinner

- Susan Gerecht led the drinks tables - Ed & Sue were able to get Shop-Rite to donate the lemonade and iced tea and Kings to donate the ice
- Debra Sprague led the check-in and ticket sales; ticket sales and handling the money was a huge job that Debra handled with great skill
- Ed Gerecht led the handling of parking and safety for the event
- Paul Wermuth led the clean-up efforts during and after the event
- Lore Pateman led the servers, who did a great job both outside and inside the church; many of the youth helped with serving, and the attendees enjoyed interacting with them
- Lore also led the setup on the day of the event - we had many volunteers who helped set up tables and chairs, put on the tablecloths and tape them down, set up desserts, make the drinks, prepare flower arrangements for the tables (thanks Ruth!), put out cones for parking, etc.
- Thanks to our Parking & Safety crew who kept cars and people apart and heading in the right direction
- Thanks to those who helped with clean-up duties
- Thanks to those who arranged for the bagpipers - the Rampant Lion Pipe and Drums, under the direction of David Palladino - to play during part of the event; it was a treat and certainly attracted some attention!
- Thanks to all those who helped with pre-event cleanup - pulling weeds and trimming bushes, washing around the entryways, sweeping sidewalks, and cleaning out the hallway and Pollard Hall
- Thanks to the Changs for donating the printing of tickets and the Patemans for donating the signs
- Thanks to Meyersville Presbyterian Church for loaning us extra tables and chairs
- Thanks to all who helped with publicizing the dinner



It took a lot of work to put this event together. We would like to thank the organizers - Paul Wermuth, Debra Sprague, Rev. Tom Peters, Tom Parziale, Carol Malfatone, Ed & Jenny Chang, and Lore Pateman. We really couldn't have done this without everyone's help, whether it was large or small! It truly was a church-wide effort. Thank you everyone!



Pictured here are just some of the volunteers - many wearing their *First Presbyterian Church of Stirling* shirts - who helped make this event so successful. Among those not shown are Israel Sierra, Paul Wermuth, and Ed Gerecht who were busy returning tables and chairs, parking cones, etc.

Worship Committee**- Janet Parziale****Non-Perishable Food Collection, July 6th**

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. We continue to collect non-perishable food in the baskets located in the church entry-ways during the rest of the month.

**Summer Worship Schedule**

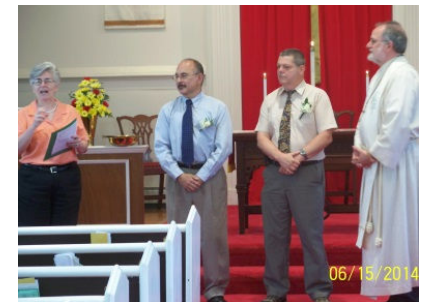
Starting July 6th and going through Sunday, Sept. 7th, our Sunday morning worship service will be held at 9:30 a.m. During the month of July, worship will be held in Stirling with Rev. Aspinall and two guest ministers preaching while Rev. Peters is on vacation. During the month of August, we will worship at Meyersville Church with Rev. Peters preaching.



On **Labor Day Sunday, August 31st**, there will be an evening worship service at Meyersville that will begin with a pot-luck supper with hamburgers and hot dogs at 6:00 p.m., followed by the service at 7:00 p.m. **There will be no morning service on that Sunday.** We will then be back in our church on Sunday, Sept. 7th, at 10 a.m. Please plan to attend whenever you are not traveling.

Gifts of Men Sunday

On June 15th, we celebrated Gifts of Men Sunday by recognizing two church members who continue to make contributions to our church and the community--Ed Gerecht and Israel Sierra. Following the service, the Worship Committee hosted a special fellowship hour in their honor.



Ed Gerecht is a "home-grown" guy, having been born and raised in Long Hill Twp. He grew up on Chestnut St. in Stirling and now lives in Millington with his wife, Susan, and children, Matthew and Amanda.

His dedication to the community goes back many years. He joined the Millington Volunteer Fire Dept. in 1974 and continues to serve as well as being a Trustee and the Treasurer. He was a member of the Millington First Aid Squad until they merged with the TOP Squad in 1980. Growing up in town, he played on the Little League and later coached both baseball and softball when his children played.

Ed has been practicing law since 1986 and has always been available to assist the church and members of the congregation with legal matters. He served 3 years on the Board of Education and has been on the Board of Adjustment since 2006. He has been a member of CERT (Citizens Emergency Response Team) since its inception in 2005. One of Ed's main interests is Boy Scouts, and he is the Chartered Organization Representative for our church for Troop 59 and has been a Scout Leader since 2000. In 1991, Ed joined the church and has been busier than ever. He has served two terms for a total of 12 years on Session, and he is on the Personnel and Buildings & Grounds Committees. He participates in adult study groups, including Fourth Sunday Focus, Book Study, and Joint-Church Study Soup Suppers and Summer Series.

When asked what he does in his spare time, Ed laughed. He says he likes to take walks and bicycle, but doesn't have much time. He also said he just got a new bike, so here's hoping he finds some free time to take it out for a spin.

Israel Sierra, Jr. was born in New York City's East Village and lived there for the first 30 years of his life. He moved to NJ in 1982 and to Stirling in 2003.

Israel worked for the Millburn Fire Department and retired in 2008. He was a volunteer with the Stirling Fire Dept. from 2003 - 2008. In 2008, he joined the Long Hill First Aid Squad (formerly TOPS). Israel is a member of CERT (Citizens Emergency Response Team) and is part of CERT's MRC (Medical Reserve Corp).



After attending our church for several years, Israel became a member in 2010 and has been kept very busy. He is currently on the Board of Deacons and is responsible for ordering and picking up the chancel flowers for Sunday worship and special services such as Easter and Christmas. He participates in adult study groups, including Fourth Sunday Focus, and he is always available to help out wherever needed at the church.

Israel has a grown son, Dorian, who lives in Hillside, and they enjoy spending time together. When he has free time, he likes to visit his old neighborhood in the East Village.

Nominating Committee

- Paul Wermuth

We must meet in August to find someone to complete Chris Scott's term on Session. Please call me with a good date (908-647-7948). I suggest we meet on a Sunday after church. Take time to look through the church directory for your nominations.

Mission Committee

- Madeline Hahl

Bridges Outreach Lunch Program

- Jean Hoffman, Coordinator



Our next commitment date for preparing 40 lunches is: **Friday, July 18th, 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: Sept. 12, Oct. 10, Nov. 7

Deacons Corner

- Katherine Ihringer

It's summertime, which means hot weather. That means that coffee hour can be much more simple. Instead of serving hot beverages, you can serve lemonade or ice tea. Therefore, if coffee hour intimidates you, doing it in July is a good time to do so. However, for the summer and the future, if coffee hour makes you nervous because you do not know how to work the coffee pot, just ask a Deacon for help, and we will assist you!

Deacons Fund



There are green envelopes in the pews for donations to the Deacons Fund. This fund supports their Mission work. 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.

Water Available During Worship



There is a pitcher of water and cups available in the Church narthex in case you need a drink during worship. Please feel free to help yourself or signal an Usher to bring it to you.

Church Directory Update

The Church Directory is being updated. Please check your current listing and send any changes/updates to the church office ASAP. Update forms are available in church and in the office, or just note the changes and send them to Paulette.

Johnsonburg Camp & Conference Center

Information regarding the 2014 Camp Johnsonburg Summer Program is available in Pollard Hall and the church office. You can also go to their website: www.campjburg.org.

National Do Not Call Registry



Starting in June, cell phone numbers will go public, which means they are being released to telemarketing companies. Then you will start receiving lots of sales calls on your cell phone as well as your home phone, and you will probably be charged for them! You can remove your cell phone number for 5 years by calling: **888-382-1222** - **provided by the Federal Trade Commission**. You must call from the number you wish to block.

Church Website

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.

Ongoing Mission Programs

Road to Bridges

Change (and more) collected during coffee hour supports Bridges Program, providing 40 lunches per month for NJ/NY homeless.

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: \$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
September issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by August 24th. Thank you!**



Stirling Stuff is the newsletter of the

First Presbyterian Church

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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.