



Stirling Stuff

Volume 58, No. 2

February 2014

Pastor's Letter

There are several things that are good about this February. One good thing is that we are one month closer to Spring! I'm sure most of us are looking forward to warmer temperatures, green grass, and flowers. The other good news is that this February, as we are huddled indoors trying to keep warm, we have the pageantry of the Winter Olympics to help us pass the time. I must admit that I like the winter version of the Olympics more than the summer. I'm not sure why, but I've always felt that way.



This year, the Winter Olympics will be held in Sochi, Russia. The last time Olympics were held in Russia, the U.S. boycotted them. In 1980, then President, Jimmy Carter, called for a boycott of the Olympics to protest Russia's invasion of Afghanistan. Because of Russian president Putin's onerous crackdown on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender citizens, many today are calling for a boycott of the Sochi Winter Games. How sad it is when something that celebrates unity and commitment to common goals is dragged down because of politics and what divides us. While I do not agree with Russian President Putin, I also do not agree with those who are calling for a boycott. 1980 taught us that boycotts only hurt the athletes who have been training for years for that moment. It did not change politics or how the world gets along.

The true spirit of the Olympics is recognizing that the people of the world have more in common than differences. God created within all of us gifts and talents that we can use to encourage and help others. God did not create the world and put up boundary lines to separate the countries. We are all one people who come from different cultures and speak different languages, but we are all one people, all the same in the eyes of God. That's why when I watch the Olympics I don't necessarily cheer for only the U. S. Olympians. I like to see everyone do well and feel good about what they have done. This whole medal count business we see during the Olympics is totally against the Olympic spirit and God's wishes for humanity. I would not even mind getting rid of the flag ceremony and national anthems that are played when the medals are given out.

So, let's huddle around our TV's and have fun watching the athletes of the world do their best. Let's marvel at what these athletes can do with a little determination, a lot of practice, and the gifts and talents God has given them.

See you in Church!

Tom



Worship Services and Scripture Passages for February

February 2, 2014

- *Epiphany 4A*
- *Sacrament of Holy Communion*
- *Ordination & Installation of Officers*
- *Non-Perishable Food Collection*
Micah 6:1-8; Psalm 15;
1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12

Did You See the Moon-Walking Bear?

February 9, 2014

- *Epiphany 5A*
Isaiah 58:1-9a; Psalm 112:1-10;
1 Corinthians 2:1-12; Matthew 5:13-20

Secrets and Transparency

*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.*



February 16, 2014

- *Epiphany 6A*
Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 119:1-8;
I Corinthians 3:1-9; Matthew 5:21-37

Laws and Regulations

February 23, 2014

- *Epiphany 7A*
Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18; Psalm 119:33-40;
I Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23; Matthew 5:38-48

No Boundaries?

**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 Congregational Meeting

The Annual Meetings of the Congregation and Corporation of the First Presbyterian Church of Stirling were held on Sunday, January 26th. Annual reports of the committees of the congregation were received; Bill Combs was re-elected to a one-year term as financial secretary; Kai Ihringer was elected to a three-year term as Elder; Terry Griner was elected to a three-year term as Deacon; the 2014 Nominating Committee members were elected; and the 2014 church budget, which was approved by Session, was affirmed.

Per Capita Apportionment

 This year the Per Capita amount we are assessed per member is **\$32.22**. For several years now we have paid less than half of this amount. In the past, it has been included in the budget; but for 2014, it is not in the budget; We will send in only what we collect. This money enables the Presbyterian Church (USA) and its Councils (Presbytery and Synod) to do their work. The Presbytery is required to send the total money owed; therefore, when we do not pay our full amount, we are hurting our presbytery because they have to make up the difference. Please help out by paying the \$32.22 for each member of your family who is a member of the church. Please use the Per Capita envelope in the front of your offering envelopes box to help the church in meeting this requirement. Thank you.

Pastor's Coffee Klatch



The February Coffee Klatch will be held on Sat., February 1st. Rev. Peters will be at the Stirling House Diner at 9:00 a.m.

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.

Christian Education Committee

- Lore Pateman

Souper Bowl Collection, February 2nd

- Tom Parziale

In 1990 in South Carolina, a simple prayer: *"Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat"* inspired a youth-led movement to help hungry and hurting people around the world. Once again, our church youth will be participating in this program. **They will be collecting donations on Super Bowl Sunday, February 2nd**. The money they collect will be donated locally as decided by the youth. Last year, they collected \$211, and they elected to split the donation 50/50 between the Market Street Mission in Morristown and the Community Foodbank of New Jersey in Hillside.

The youth of our church take this responsibility seriously. They will be collecting your donations as you exit the sanctuary following morning worship; please consider supporting this worthy cause.

You can learn more about Souper Bowl of Caring at: <http://www.souperbowl.org/resources>.

Adult Education

- Debra Sprague

Fourth Sunday Focus, February 23rd

- 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 **February 23rd**. If you have a topic you'd like to discuss, please contact Tom Parziale.



Worship Committee**- Janet Parziale****Non-Perishable Food Collection, February 2nd**

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.

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

Our next commitment date for preparing 40 lunches is: **Friday, Feb. 7th, 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: March 7th, April 11th

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

Our church is responsible for hosting *Family Promise* on **Thurs., February 27th** at the Shrine of St. Joseph. Please help with this important on-going mission of our church — in our 25th year of participation. Specific information about what help is needed is noted on the sign-up sheet in Pollard Hall, or you can speak to Chris or Phyllis. Please help in any way you can in this much-needed and personally rewarding program.

“Road to Bridges” Program

Our new Mission program is Road to Bridges. The *Bridges* organization provides meals for homeless people in New Jersey and New York. Our church provides 40 lunches per month, and donations to this program will help defray some of the costs of the project. We hope you will participate with your usual generosity. Please look for the collection cannister in Pollard Hall or the Church office. Thank you.

Blankets & Baby Food Collection**- Jean Hoffman**

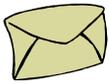
We continue to collect blankets and baby food for St. Joseph's Social Services in Elizabeth. These items are very much needed and appreciated. Please place items on the pew inside Pollard Hall. Thank you!

Deacons Corner**- Katherine Ihringer**

It has come to our attention that most people in the church are not aware that there is a gluten-free option offered during communion. We do not want our gluten-free members or visitors of the church to feel uncomfortable during communion. If you are gluten free, please take the bread on the cupcake tinfoil.

Another issue that our church continues to face is that there are not enough signups for ushers, liturgists, and coffee hour. The same people are continuing to do these multiple times. Coffee hour does not have to be elaborate; a box of cookies, juice, and coffee is all that is needed! Please sign up for the upcoming weeks.

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 will be a pitcher of water and cups available in the Church narthex in case you need a drink during worship, especially during the winter months when the air is very dry. Please feel free to help yourself or signal an Usher to bring it to you.

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*.

"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 formore than 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 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 MacDonald House to help fund their programs for hospitalized children and their families. There is a collection canister in the church office. Thank you.

**Fellowship**

Note from the Editor: There will be a *Recipe Sharing Corner* in future Stirling Stuff issues, as space permits. Debra has started it off with the recipe for her Preacher Cake. I've decided to put this new feature under the "Fellowship" heading - seems appropriate. If you would like to share a recipe, please be sure to submit it by the newsletter deadline.

Wow! When my mother-in-law posted a recipe for **Preacher Cake** on her Facebook page recently, I thought it sounded like something good to try - appropriate, too, since we had signed up for Fellowship Hour. Anyway, I made it, and people seemed to really enjoy it! At least 6 people asked me for the recipe, so here it is.

- Debra Sprague

"This recipe was given to me by someone in Central Illinois. It could be made in a hurry when the housewife learned at the last minute that the preacher was coming to visit."

Preacher Cake**Ingredients:**

- 2 c. sugar
- 2 c. unsifted flour
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 c. chopped nuts (optional)
- 1 (20 oz.) can crushed pineapple with juice



Mix all together and put into a 9x13 pan. Bake in a preheated 350°F oven for 30-45 minutes. Frost if desired.

Cream Cheese Frosting for Preacher Cake:

- 1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese
- 1/2 stick butter
- 1 3/4 c. confectioners' sugar
- 2 tsp. vanilla
- 1/4 tsp. salt

Mix together cream cheese and butter. Beat in sugar, salt, and vanilla.

This is an extremely moist and very delicious cake. Enjoy!

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: \$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
March issue of Stirling Stuff to:
jsomers17@hotmail.com
by **February 20th**. Thank you!

Stirling Stuff is the newsletter of the

First Presbyterian Church

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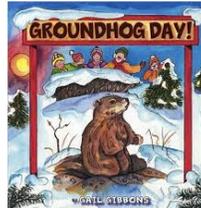
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Our Mission

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.

Why not invite a friend to church?



First Presbyterian Church of Stirling
Feeding Those Who Hunger