



FIRST PRES. PRESS

MARCH 2015


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OVER 80 BIRTHDAYS

- March 7
Florence Ludlam
- March 22
Lois Wadman
Ken Wadman
- March 27
Jean Whittemore

BASICS -NATHAN JACOBS



BASICS

READ. PRAY. SING. BLESS.

Join us for a midweek worship time. We will read Scripture, sing praise, pray for the Church, and offer an opportunity to be prayed over. Let's get back to BASICS.

Time: Thursdays 8:30pm
Place: The Lounge

By the time you read this, we will have met for the first time for BASICS. BASICS is a time that we are setting aside midweek to worship God in community and intimacy. The driving force behind beginning this new event is twofold: first, that we would gather together more frequently to worship corporately; and second, that we would be able to offer an intentional time of extended prayer, both individually and corporately. We want to use the tools that God has given us (Scripture, prayer, music, community) to glorify Him and to build each other up. Thursdays will be simple, without much structure, and will focus on just "the basics."

They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. - Acts 2:42

PASTORS' PAGE**- JAN AND TIM DEVINE, CO-PASTORS****1968****2014**

In 2014, more than 45 years after the universal handicap symbol was created, Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed into law a measure to make our state the first in the nation to replace this familiar visual with a new, more active and engaging symbol.

Sometimes it's helpful to take a fresh look at the symbols we use, to reexamine what something that has become so familiar to us really means. The cross is one of those symbols that has been taken for granted, misused, and misunderstood. It is found everywhere— from the top of a church steeple to the neck of a singer spewing violent or vulgar words. It is so pervasive that it can mean everything. . . or nothing at all.

It wasn't always so. Wearing a cross around your neck in the first century Roman world would have been like someone wearing a gold guillotine necklace in 19th century France or a diamond-encrusted electric chair today. It was a symbol of a terrible death reserved for the most dangerous criminals who deserved to die.

And then, early Christians began to use the cross as the primary symbol of their faith. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 1:18, "*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*" For those who do not understand, the cross is a symbol of all that is weak, irrelevant, useless. But what is considered weak and useless by many is a sign of what saves those who believe (1:21). The ancient symbol of death has become a symbol of life.

How do we restore the deep meaning of this symbol in a world where for so many it has become nothing more than a fashion accessory? It will only happen if the power of the cross is demonstrated through the witness of the people who follow the One who died on the cross. The power of the cross is not shown by what hangs around our neck, but by what shines through our life and conduct.

This past week, volunteers had to use the church snow blower to carve a path through the drifts and set up the Lenten crosses on the corner of McKinley and Monroe. Three large, lighted, wooden crosses stand there as a visible sign of hope- light in the midst of seasonal and spiritual darkness; new life in the midst of death. The cross is no longer a symbol of shame, but rather of our participation in the victory of Christ over all that separates us from God.

"The cross stands as God's eternal 'no' to the power of death,
as well as God's eternal 'yes' to humanity." *

* Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* (Abingdon, 2008), 47.

WHAT'S NEW AMONG OUR PEOPLE?

– NATHAN JACOBS

I lift my eyes unto the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth.

– Psalm 121:1-2

Through it all, through it all, my eyes are on you. Through it all, through it all, it is well with me.

– “It Is Well,” Bethel Music

As you pray, think on these words and please keep these particular people who have been brought to our attention in your prayers:

- Dave Youngs, who received a promotion to 1st Sergeant.
- FPC women in the wake of the IF:Endicott women’s retreat.
- Christy Williams and Maureen Schmidt, who helped lead a mission trip to Haiti with Seton High School students.
- Andrea Wade’s family, as they celebrate the birth of Andrea’s second grandchild, Leah Cirillo.
- Leah and Joe Roberson, who moved to be closer to family upon retirement.
- Doug Kerr and Mary Nkamany, who served on a medical mission trip to Kenya.
- Laura McKeown, who spent January in New Zealand through Lafayette College.
- Bob Thomas’ son, Jeff, who has been able to transfer to a rehab facility after four weeks in the hospital.
- Lou Pasquale, who had hand surgery.
- Missy Goetz and Jeff Shafer, who are both dealing with back problems.
- Connie Stanton, who had hand surgery.
- Gordie Pollard’s sister, who continues her treatment for breast cancer.
- Gloria Johnson’s son, Kevin, as he adjusts to a change in his living situation.
- For Lynn Barsigian’s sister, Barb, and brother-in-law, Steve, as Steve had a sixth serious brain surgery.
- Janet Weber, who was hospitalized for pneumonia and is in rehab.
- Sabrina, a member of the youth group, who could use prayers in the upcoming months.
- Carole Cockrell, who had a knee replacement.
- Anna Beers, who had knee surgery.
- Billy Beardsley, as he adjusts to the side effects of new medication.
- Tina Mitchell’s mother, as she heals following surgery for cancer.
- Easton Kamper and his parents, as Easton underwent testing.
- Stacey Rundle’s sister, as she heals from surgery for cancer.
- Jessica Clement’s mother, Michele, who had a mild heart attack and was successfully treated by angioplasty/stents.
- Carole Cockrell’s sister, Ellen, as she heals from surgery and continues treatment for a malignant tumor on her spine.
- Ellie Taylor, who had surgery for a broken hip and is in rehab.
- Margerry Berriman, who fell and broke her pelvis and is now in rehab.
- Eric Eiche’s father, Phil, who has had a setback following surgery.
- Erin Schrader’s father-in-law, who is in hospice care.
- The family of Rev. Vince Earley, who passed away.
- Jan Devine’s family, upon the death of her father and as her brother-in-law fights cancer.
- The Shafer family, upon the death of Laura’s mother.
- The Santacrose family, upon the death of Norma’s aunt.
- Jessica Clement, upon the death of her grandfather.
- Rob (husband) and Elsa (daughter) Siegers, and their extended family, upon the unexpected death of Jennifer.

FPC Youth News

FPC Youth Events

CHOOSE FROM MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT

REGULAR EVENTS:

Sunday School

Sundays
10:45-11:45am
@ Monroe House

FPC Youth Nights

Sundays
6:00-8:00pm
Locations TBA

Ignite Bikes

Saturdays
CLOSED FOR THE WINTER
Meet @ The Warehouse

SPECIAL EVENTS:

WinterWeekend2015

March 13-15
@ The Loft Camp
Susquehanna, PA
INVITE FRIENDS
LOCK THIS DATE INTO YOUR CALENDAR

NO FPC YOUTH

Sunday, March 22

FPC Youth Gaming Night

Sunday, March 29
PS4, XBOX ONE, & Board Games
Food, Fun, & Friends
@ The Bridge
143 Baldwin Street
Johnson City, NY



WinterWeekend2015

It's that time of year again! It's time to head to The Loft. Make sure you do what is necessary to save a seat on the bus.

Join us as we play, eat, and dig into the Bible. This year our theme deals with our surrender and obedience to Jesus entitled:

"EVERYTHING"

Our key Scripture is found in Hebrews 10:32-39.

WinterWeekend2015

March 13-15

@ The Loft Camp

FPC Youth Winter Weekend is a great opportunity to get away with PURPOSE.

For more details

CONTACT:

Jeremy Finn
607-743.4511



IGNITE BIKES

CLOSED FOR THE WINTER
Meet at FPC - 10:00am
Return to FPC - 12:30pm



SMALL GROUP

FPC Youth Small Groups will be relaunching soon.
Contact Jeremy for more information.



WINTER WEEKEND 2015

The Loft Camp - Susquehanna, PA
March 13-15
Lock it in and stay tuned for details!

summer plans

PICK UP your information packet for Rock Mountain Bible Camp MINI-CAMP (Ages 6-10 with parent - June 26-28) and JR. CAMP (Ages 8-12 - July 12-17) at the Registration Station today! Get the early bird rates and register your kids before April 1.



FAMILY DAY - **Sunday, March 15**

SUNDAY, MARCH 22

HILLTOP VISIT

286 Deyo Hill Road, Johnson City
Meet at J.G. Johnston Nursing Home
@ 10:45am

SUNDAY, MARCH 29

PALM SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Meet in Tree House Room 10:30am
Wave Palms & Sing 10:45am

The "Romans Road" is simply a way to remember the Gospel. It starts with our "issue" and ends with God's great "result." Try to memorize these verses so as you and your kids live "LIFE on a MISSION" you can share your story and incorporate these life changing truths!

WHY WE NEED SALVATION

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God."

Romans 5:12 "Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man (Adam), and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned."

Romans 6:23a, "For the wages of sin is death;

HOW GOD PROVIDED SALVATION

Romans 6:23b, "but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans 5:8 "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

HOW WE CAN RECEIVE SALVATION

Romans 10:9 "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

Romans 10:13 "for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

RESULTS OF SALVATION

Romans 5:1 "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 8:1 "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Romans 8:38 - 39 "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

CONNECTING THOUGHTS

— SHARON EARLY

Since I am writing during the first week of our Lenten study, *Life on Mission*, I am not really able to talk yet about our Lenten groups. However, I do feel compelled to discuss why we put so much emphasis on being in small groups and on the process of discipleship, which is our focus in Week 5 (*Grow*) of the study.

Concerns have been expressed recently that FPC will become very judgmental as we continue to pursue becoming more defined by aligning with a set of core values that lifts Scripture up as the authoritative Word of God that teaches all that is necessary for faith and life.

In light of that concern, our challenge is this: how do we live and speak as Christ, who was full of both grace *and* truth (John 1:14), but did not compromise either? Knowing that all of us *have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23), how do we care for people and invite them to learn about and grow in Christ, while still upholding biblical values? That is where the beauty of small groups can come into play.



People come to faith when they recognize their own sinfulness, and at the same time see that God, and those who represent Him, love them no matter what their lives look like. However, that is never the end of the story! The recognition that we need a Savior cannot be separated from the commitment to spend the rest of our lives learning how to submit to Jesus as Lord. Jesus doesn't call us to be one-decision converts; he calls us to be life-long disciples.

That life-long journey of discipleship is extremely difficult unless we are in a community of faith where people teach, challenge, nurture, and pray for each other. I would not be in ministry today if I did not have my Christian community surrounding me with prayer and walking with me as I decided "what's next?" when my job at IBM was eliminated. Leading up to this, God had been working on my heart through studies we had done with small groups, as I learned that everything I have (family, job, "stuff") is not mine, but God's. Could I give up my professional identity, trusting that my true identity is in Christ, and He had something greater in mind?

That is just one example. We have also walked alongside individuals and couples who are struggling with their marriage, parenting decisions, work that becomes too consuming, deaths, life not being "fair," and many other life struggles. Within a small group, one is not "judged" in a negative sense, but rather is exhorted and encouraged by others to live God's way. "Growing" side-by-side with other Christians is all part of living "Life on Mission."

Psalm 139:23-24 says, "*Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*" I am learning to welcome that my small group helps me see where God is opening my eyes to offensive ways within me, so that I might become a better witness for God!

EXCITING TIMES

- RONNE SISCO, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION



Scenery? What scenery? How 'bout THIS snow drift outside one of our second story windows?



One of our four year old students nibbles at his hibernating Teddy Graham in a muffin during our hibernation unit.



February 19 marked the celebration of the Chinese New Year! We were treated to some of the language, traditions and clothing by one of our very own students and his mother! Welcome to the Year of the Sheep!

Leaping ahead... The 3rd Annual Nursery School Scholarship Golf Tournament will tee off on Saturday, June 6 @ Traditions at the Glen. A fun challenge for a great cause! \$90/golfer includes dinner, door prizes, and an after party with a live band! Contact Derek Washburn ((607)748-1744 / Derek@FirstPresEndicott.org) for more info on joining a team, sponsoring a hole, or donating an auction item!

If you are a parent of a three to nine year old, treat your child to a week at our Summer Program here at Endicott First Pres.! Monday, June 29-Friday, July 10. More details and registration form in next month's FPP!

SESSION UPDATE

-JANET FREDERICK, CLERK OF SESSION

Since our last update only took you through the end of 2014, this update will summarize what happened at several different meetings. The first was a regular Session meeting on January 14. Although the evening included breaking fast with the Presbytery Discernment Team, examining incoming officers, planning for the annual meeting, and adopting a budget for 2015, we also took care of some regular business. Action items included: 1) electing church officers for the coming year, 2) acting upon two requests to remove people from our membership roll who have not been active at FPC for quite a while: Dave and Mary Jenkins and Barbara and Karel Simeon, 3) approving a change in our internet provider, and 4) giving permission for a youth overnight retreat in March.

Our annual meeting of the church and corporation took place on January 25. We began the meeting by asking the congregation and ministry team leaders to share “wins” from 2014. It was good to listen to the many ways in which the congregation felt God working in and through our church. Session members then gave a presentation that addressed three of the most frequently asked questions we’ve heard about the discernment process (see the announcements in the bulletin and in this newsletter for ways you can get a recording or written resources from this meeting in case you missed it). The rest of the meeting dealt with the financial status of the church as of the end of 2014 and the challenges we face in 2015. Following the February Session meeting, the minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting will be posted on the bulletin board.

On February 4, Session met again for our regular monthly meeting. As we ended our time of prayer/ fasting with a simple meal, each person had a chance to share where/how we sense God leading in the discernment process. Regular business included approving minutes of the January Session meeting and Annual Congregational Meeting, evaluating recent changes to the united worship service format and the events of the Annual Meeting Sunday, approving summer camp opportunities through Children’s Ministry, and responding to invitations from Presbytery (open to all) to attend a pre-Presbytery information session and to pray/fast before the February 28 Assembly votes on amendments from G.A., a Dismissal Policy, and Sexual Misconduct Policy.

AN INVITATION TO PRAY AND FAST

Session members have committed to a 24-hour period of prayer and fasting prior to each monthly Session meeting during the discernment process. We invite all of you to also engage in an intentional time of prayer, Bible study, and fasting (from food or an activity) preceding the March 4 Session meeting.

DISCERNMENT PROCESS UPDATE

– JEN HUNT, RULING ELDER

Since last summer, we have all been actively discerning God's will for FPC and how we can best fulfill our mission "*to reach more people and together grow in Christ.*" The question to be answered by FPC at the end of the discernment process is this: do we believe membership in the Presbyterian Church (USA) or ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians will best help us fulfill our calling from God? The elders have continued to set intentional periods of prayer and fasting and have encouraged the church to join us in this process.

During the congregational meeting in January, we celebrated the many ways that God has been at work within our church over the past year. We also reviewed the concerns that led us to begin this process, what will change or remain the same if we become members of ECO rather than the PC(USA), and how the rest of the process should unfold. There was an opportunity to respond to God's Word by expressing our prayers for the church, which were written and offered trusting that as we go through the discernment process together, God "*is at work within us*" and "*able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine*" (Ephesians 3:20). The following are prayers that were offered and represent the hopes of the congregation:

- ◆ I pray for clear direction; that God's will be done during this time of unrest in the church; that God's people would hear His voice and be willing to accept whatever it is that He says.
- ◆ I pray that we would be faithful to Christ as a witness here on the corner of Grant and Monroe.
- ◆ I pray that each person will experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and believe the truth of God's Living Word. In Jesus' name, Amen.
- ◆ Lord, bring my children to Jesus.
- ◆ Prayers that we at FPC continue to grow missionally within ourselves, in our neighborhood, and in the world around us.
- ◆ Dear Lord, help our church be unified in love for You and all of your people, and to keep You at the center. Help us to overcome our differences and make the best decision as a congregation to help us fulfill your will.

Lord, hear our prayers.

Upcoming Discernment Sessions:

- ⇒ **March 8 Discernment Session:** Pending approval at the February 28 Presbytery Assembly, Presbytery representatives and Session will review and discuss the implications of the Presbytery Dismissal Guidelines at two sessions (10:50am and 12:10pm). Light refreshments will be served prior to the second session.
- ⇒ **March 15:** Informal Q&A with Elders (in the chapel between services)

Completed Discernment Sessions:

- ◆ **November 16:** ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians
- ◆ **December 14:** Hermeneutics: Why we believe what we believe about Scripture
- ◆ **January 18:** Listening Session
- ◆ **January 25:** Annual Meeting and Discernment Overview
- ◆ **February 1:** Informal Q&A with Elders
- ◆ **February 8:** FPC's perspective on the biblical practice of our sexuality
- ◆ **February 15:** Informal Q&A with Elders

For access to written and recorded materials from the congregational presentations to date, contact Nathan in the church office (748-1544 or office@firstpresendicott.org).

COMMUNITY**Thank You**

We would like to say thank you to the congregation for all your prayers, support, communications, and for those who were able to attend the service for Jan's dad. We thank the Session for allowing us to take the Sunday off on the weekend that our family and friends gathered in Syracuse to celebrate the witness to the resurrection. We are grateful to be recipients of your care.

In Christ,
Tim and Jan
(Job 19:23-27)

Homebound? Traveling? Missed a Sunday?

Just a reminder that we livestream our services on Sunday morning. If you would like to view our services, contact Nathan at office@firstpresendicott.org to get set up. Also, if you missed a Sunday or would just like to view past sermons, they can be found online at:
www.vimeo.com/channels/fpcendicottsermons

2015 Easter Lily Order Form

Please PRINT clearly! This information will be used in the bulletin. The deadline for orders is *Monday, March 30*, and must be accompanied by payment. No phone orders please!

This lily is donated by:

(Check one) in honor of in memory of

(Check one) cash check

Amount enclosed: _____

Price per plant is \$13.00. Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church of Endicott.

FPP Calendar

March 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 2nd Sunday of Lent 9:09 am Worship Service 10:45 am Worship Service 6:00 pm FPC Youth	2 2:30 pm Homework Café 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	3 12:30 pm Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper 7:00 pm Deacons	4 6:00 am Men's Group 2:30 pm Homework Café 6:00 pm Session Breaks Fast 7:00 pm Session 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	5 2:30 pm Homework Café 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 8:30pm BASICS	6	7 Don't forget to set your clocks ahead!
8 3rd Sunday of Lent Daylight Savings 9:09 am Worship Service 10:45 am Worship Service 10:50 am Discernment Session- Presbytery 12:10 pm Discernment Session- Presbytery 6:00 pm FPC Youth	9 2:30 pm Homework Café 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	10 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper	11 6:00 am Men's Group 2:30 pm Homework Café 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	12 2:30 pm Homework Café 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 8:30pm BASICS	13 Winter Weekend 2015	14 Winter Weekend 2015 10:00 am American Guild of Organists Workshop
15 4th Sunday of Lent Winter Weekend 2015 9:09 am Worship Service 10:30 am Children's Ministry Family Day 10:45 am Worship Service 6:00 pm FPC Youth	16 2:30 pm Homework Café 6:30 pm Parent Council Meeting 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	17 12:30 pm Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper	18 6:00 am Men's Group 1:00 pm Women's Circle III 2:30 pm Homework Café 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	19 2:30 pm Homework Café 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 8:30pm BASICS	20	21
22 5th Sunday of Lent 9:09 am Worship Service 10:45 am Worship Service 10:45 am Children's Ministry Hilltop Visit	23 1:00 pm Women's Club Board Meeting 2:30 pm Homework Café 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	24 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper	25 6:00 am Men's Group 2:30 pm Homework Café 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal 7:00 pm House Meeting	26 2:30 pm Homework Café 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir 8:30pm BASICS	27	28
29 Palm Sunday 9:09 am Worship Service 10:45 am Worship Service 6:00 pm FPC Youth	30 1:00 pm Women's Club 2:30 pm Homework Café 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	31 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper				

VISION STATEMENT

(What God wants to do)

We believe God wants to transform our community through the saving love of Jesus Christ and calls us to share that hope with the world. To be an agent of hope, our congregation must work together and rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to follow Christ, whatever the cost.¹ This commitment, which is grounded in a deep love of God and neighbor,² sends us out to share the Good News of Christ through our words³ and our actions.⁴

¹ *The Great Commitment*, Matthew 16:24-26

² *The Great Commandment*, Luke 10:27

³ *The Great Commission*, Matthew 28:18-20

⁴ *The Great Compassion*, Matthew 25:31-40

MISSION STATEMENT

(What God wants us to do)

We believe God wants us to share the life-changing power and love of Jesus Christ in such compelling ways that more people become fully devoted followers of Christ.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

(The reason we exist)

To reach more people and together grow in Christ.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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