



FIRST PRES. PRESS

NOVEMBER 2014

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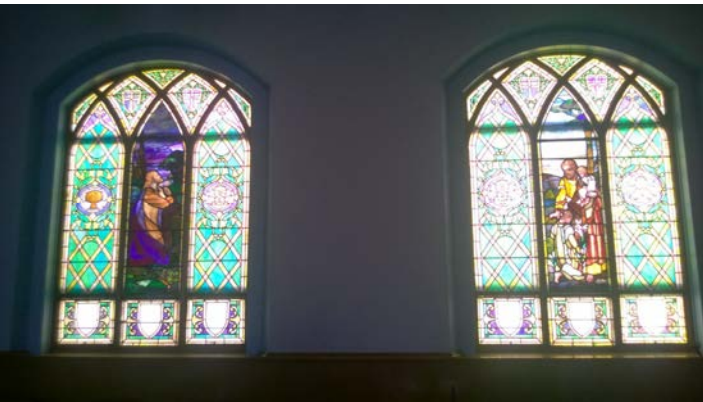
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UPDATE ON STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

-DAVE YOUNGS, HOUSE CHAIR

Review of April 27, 2014 Informational Meeting for Congregation:

Last spring, House Committee held Informational Meetings for the congregation to explain the current condition of the stained glass windows in the sanctuary and the different options they were pursuing to deal with the instability, inefficiency, and structural damage of the windows.



Final Plan:

After ten months, four contractors, and several rounds of proposals, the House committee made a recommendation, which Session approved, to accept the proposal of Cumberland Stained Glass, Inc., from Mechanicsburg, PA. The project will be completed in two phases. During Phase 1, Cumberland will completely remove the two window structures from the north side of the sanctuary in November and cover the openings while the windows are out. These windows require more work than can be completed onsite, so they will go back to Mechanicsburg to be completely reworked in the shop. During Phase 2, the two newly reworked windows will be returned and reinstalled (April / May, depending on the weather). They will then begin work on the rest of the windows onsite, and will work until the project is completed. The whole process for reinstallation and for onsite work is estimated to take approximately 2 to 3 weeks. The entire project will be completed by Cumberland so the work can be time-based and stage-based without trying to coordinate more than one company. Based on the presentation that House gave back in April, we are still within the estimated budget (\$92,250.00 + \$7,750 contingency). So far we have received about \$42,000 given by generous donations. Gifts may still be designated toward this project. If you have any questions you can email me at daveift@yahoo.com or call my cell (607-217-8404), and I would be more than willing to answer your questions. God's work will be done and will provide new light into the sanctuary.

OVER 80 BIRTHDAYS

- November 7
Vignia Ulsh
- November 13
Bob Thomas
- November 25
John Melrose
- November 29
Vivian Tallman
- November 30
Fran Ebbers

A DAY WITH OUR MISSION AFFINITY GROUP (MAG) - JAN AND TIM DEVINE, CO-PASTORS

On Saturday, October 10, we and three elders traveled to Rome, PA, to meet for a second time with Session members from three other churches and practice what it means to be part of an “accountable community.” One of the requirements of belonging to The Fellowship of Presbyterians (FOP) is that our Session willingly submits to the care and accountability of other Sessions as one way to help us become the congregation and the individuals we sense God calling us to be.

We all know that external accountability helps us stay on course. It’s harder to hide or rationalize things when we have to explain to others besides ourselves. Every FOP congregation willingly commits to be part of a Mission Affinity Group (MAG). These groups are made up of 3-5 congregations that are organized around similar ministry contexts (i.e. geography, demographics, ministry goals). We commit to meet together at least once a year and connect in other ways to help one another stay rooted in our biblical/theological heritage and focused on our missional calling.

After an informal time of fellowship and refreshments, we gathered for prayer and worship. The remainder of the morning was spent meeting in small groups to reflect on the answers to our Narrative Questions on the Health of Mission and Ministry in our churches. (Session has shared these questions throughout the year in the church newsletter.)

As we ministers met in our small group, we began with the first question about how the Holy Spirit has been evident in our churches this past year through conversions, growth in the fruit of the Spirit, and in other ways that make disciples of Jesus Christ. In 32 years of ministry, this is the first time we have been held responsible within our denomination to evaluate if people are coming to faith and growing in discipleship through the life and witness of the local church. It was both sobering and exciting to begin the process of holding each other accountable in love and truth.

It was a joy to share about the times that we have lighted the faith candle this past year in celebration of people professing their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. It was also convicting to admit that too much time has passed since the candle was last lit in celebration. Come, Holy Spirit, stir within us all a desire to reach out with the Good News that results in saved and changed lives.

We turned to the second question: “How has your congregation extended itself beyond its bounds through the establishment of new communities of worship and discipleship, expanding the Kingdom of God?” Again, we were left wishing we had more to celebrate now, but hopeful that it can happen. Who might be willing to start a new small group? Whom might we bless and send to form a new worshipping community beyond our walls? How do we take our faith into our school, workplace, and neighborhood?

After lunch, we met as individual churches to share our thoughts and try to discern a next step where God is leading us. Then we gathered again as a whole, listened as each church set a specific goal, and asked how we might hold each other accountable until we meet here at FPC in the spring. The day ended with worship and communion as we were blessed to be a blessing in the world. During our closing time of prayer, it was meaningful to have FPC lifted up in prayer by many of the people there as we go through our time of discernment.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24).

WHAT'S NEW AMONG OUR PEOPLE?

– NATHAN JACOBS

As the leaves come off of the trees and the weather turns, we look toward Thanksgiving and the holiday season. Whether among family at the dinner table or among strangers out shopping, let us remember to give thanks to God for the many blessings he has bestowed. In both comfort and sorrow, we can come before our God in gratitude for His creation, His redeeming work in Jesus Christ, and His ongoing sustenance through the Holy Spirit. As you pray this month, please say a special prayer of thanks or of comfort for these brothers and sisters:

- The Fiaschi family, who celebrated Rebecca's marriage and Ed and Linda's anniversary.
- Chris and Karli Campbell, and the Mansfield family, who welcomed baby Jack on Oct. 6.
- Adele Everett, who was awarded Person of the Year by the Illinois Harness Horsemen's Association.

- The Jenkins family, as Jean's mother passed away.
- Alice Loudon, as she deals with health problems and transitions to a higher level of care at Elizabeth Church Manor.
- The Rynicks, as George is experiencing some health issues and Carleen's mother was hospitalized.
- Val Tokarz, as she traveled to Iowa to care for her father in his last days.
- Rich Thomas' mother, whose surgery was postponed due to other health complications and has been struggling.
- Ella, a friend of Carole Cockrell, whose recovery from hip surgery has been difficult.
- Jason and Tina Mitchell and their children.
- The Santacrose and Darling families, as Norma's youngest brother, Richard Darling, has been missing since the beginning of October.
- Wayne and Roberta Hunsinger, who were both in

the hospital in October.

- Tim Smith, who had successful back surgery.
- Jack Melrose, who tripped and broke his leg.
- Sheila Beblavy and Connie Stanton's father, who was hospitalized last week and will probably have surgery pending.
- Janet Weber, who had a fall last week and is recovering from a cracked pelvis.
- Eileen Keely, who fell and broke her hip; she is now in rehab in the nursing unit at Hilltop, room 108A.
- Jon Yerger, who got his cast off.
- Our Session, as they continue the discernment process.

Be joyful always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

WORLDWIDE COMMUNION CELEBRATED

For those of you who couldn't be here, we celebrated Worldwide Communion on October 5. We are grateful to all those who helped create the visuals for that day to remind us that we are a strong body worldwide, through the redeeming work of Jesus Christ.



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
10:00am-12:30pm
Meet @ The Warehouse

SPECIAL EVENTS:

TurkeyBowl & Tailgate Party

Sunday, November 9
3:00-6:00pm
Details ----->

Family Day @ Skate Estate

Sunday, November 16
6:00-8:00pm
Fun for THE WHOLE FAMILY!
Meet @ Skate Estate
3401 Vestal Road, Vestal, NY
\$5.00 per person (skate rental included)

Loving Hands

Sunday, December 7
4:00-7:30pm
Give back this Christmas!
Event for all ages

FPC Youth Christmas Party

Sunday, December 14
6:00-8:00pm
@ Monroe House



TurkeyBowl & Tailgate Party

November brings with it two very important events - Thanksgiving and the TurkeyBowl & Tailgate Party!

Here are the details:

3:00pm - Carpool from FPC to the field

6:00pm - Return to FPC for pickup

Dress for the weather - we will be outside. Bring a snack to share.

Lock in the date...see you there!

TurkeyBowl 2014

Sunday, November 9

Youth (6-12 grades) are invited to FPC Youth's annual fun, football, and food spectacular.



IGNITE BIKES

Saturdays - Rain or Shine
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 - Great Bend, PA
March 13-15
Lock it in and stay tuned for details!

This fall and winter we want to provide opportunities for families - whether you have toddlers, teens, or your children are already adults - to participate in together. Our hope is to have low cost, strategic, fun family events that all shapes, sizes, ages, and family structures can successfully participate in. What is the goal? The goal is for your family to celebrate faith with other families...to have some fun...and together grow in Christ.

FAMILY DAY & MEMORY VERSE MANIA

Sunday, November 16

10:30am - 12:30pm

Super Duper Pancake Breakfast, make gifts for Hilltop Residents!

Cost: FREE! Feel free to bring your favorite pancake topping ☺

(Let's have brunch so you'll have energy to come to Skate Estate later in the day!)

6:00 - 8:00 pm

Memory Verse Mania Celebration

SKATE ESTATE

Old Vestal Road, Vestal, NY

Cost: \$5.00 per person (skate rental included)

We will be playing only our Scripture Memorization Music.

Awards and Memory Verse Celebration at 7:00pm!

(INVITE FRIENDS! If you don't like to skate, bring a board game of your choosing!)

SUNDAY DECEMBER 7

4:00PM



WE NEED YOU

to participate in

LOVING HANDS!

Loving Hands is an event for every age. We will decorate ornaments, sign cards, fill baskets with all sorts of baked goods, candy, fruit, and other treats, and after eating a slice or two of pizza, we will head out to Christmas carol and deliver our gift baskets.

Please plan to join us!

To sign up to provide goodies, please go to:

www.perfectpotluck.com

Coordinator Last Name: Finn

Event Name: Loving Hands

Password: Hands2014

**SPOTLIGHT ON THE STAFF: PULPIT SUPPLY
- PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Each month, the Personnel Committee has written an article about those who serve FPC as Support and Program Staff. As we come to the end of the year, we thought we would finish by highlighting those who fill in to preach and lead worship while Jan and Tim are away.

We are blessed as a congregation to have a number of people who are willing and capable to bring the Word of God to bear on our lives, corporately and as individuals. We are also grateful for their flexibility, because it is challenging to lead two different styles of worship. On behalf of the congregation, we thank Ed Fiaschi, Paul Everett, Jeremy Finn, Nathan Jacobs, Hemant Tandi, and Bob Heinle.

As we think about worship, how many symbols of the faith can you find in the PC(USA) logo? Answers below.



1. The **cross** represents the incarnate love of God in Jesus Christ through his passion and resurrection.
2. A **lectern or pulpit**, which captures the important role of proclaiming the Word of God.
3. The contour of the **Bible** resting on the pulpit- God's written word.
4. A **descending dove**- a symbol of the Holy Spirit and the role of the Spirit in both inspiring and interpreting the Word of God in the life of the church; a symbol of Christ's baptism by John; a symbol of the peace and wholeness which Christ's death and resurrection bring to a broken world.
5. **Flames**- symbols of revelation in the Old Testament when God spoke to Moses from the burning bush and the "tongues of fire" manifested at Pentecost in the New Testament.
6. A **baptismal font** and/or **Communion chalice** to represent the sacraments.
7. The pattern of three lines to represent the **Trinity**- Father, Son, Holy Spirit.

COMMUNITY

Support the Nursery School

Sunday 11/2 & 11/9: Support the Nursery School by ordering Gertrude Hawk candy. Michelle Beatty will be in the Gathering Area between services to take your orders. The Nursery School is a mission of First Pres., and this is a way we can support classroom enrichment and their scholarship program to ensure that more children are able to take advantage of this important first step in their formal education.

Fellowship Luncheon

The Christmas fellowship luncheon will on December 12, 12:00pm, at Good Shepherd Village in Endicott. Save the date and contact Maxine Waughtel if you can attend.

Succoth Booth

Sukkit, or “Festival of Booths,” is a Jewish festival that originally commemorated the end of the harvest season. We have our own Sukkit (Succoth Booth) in the back of the sanctuary. For several weeks in November, the Deacons will be collecting food to place in Thanksgiving boxes. This is a joint project between the congregation and the Nursery School. Food donations can be placed in the booth at the back of the sanctuary through Sunday, Nov. 23.

The needs in our community are growing each year and hunger is a big problem. Food donations benefit church and Nursery School families. This year’s needs include canned fruits and vegetables, juice, pasta, rice, potatoes, stuffing, pasta sauce, cereal and peanut butter (all in non-breakable containers). Please help us reach out to those in need by bringing your donations to the Succoth Booth.

DISCERNMENT PROCESS UPDATE

We will be using these next few months to learn as much as possible about the issues involved in the discernment process. Please mark your calendars!

November 5: Session meeting –Session members, Deacons and Staff members will be invited to come and hear a presentation about ECO. Jeff Wildrick, Executive Presbyter of the Northeast Presbytery of the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians (ECO) will share information and answer questions via Skype.

Sunday training sessions for the congregation will be presented twice on the Sunday mornings listed: Session 1 from 10:50 – 11:45 and Session 2 from 12:10 – 1:00.

November 16: *The Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians (ECO)*

This Sunday’s session will include segments of Jeff Wildrick’s presentation on ECO that church leaders heard on November 5.

December 14: *Why we believe what we believe about Scripture*

Ed Fiaschi and Jan Devine will lead this study about how we understand and interpret Scripture.

January 11: *Why we believe what we believe about human sexuality*

Alisha and Jeremy Finn will help us understand the biblical practice of our sexuality.

January 18: *Why we believe what we believe about women in leadership*

Co-pastors Jan and Tim Devine will examine scripture with us on this topic.

February 22: *The Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley*

If a dismissal policy is in place by this date, the elders and our attorney, Steve Atkinson, will be present to review it with the congregation.

SESSION UPDATE

-JANET FREDERICK, CLERK OF SESSION

Session met twice in October. Our meeting on the 1st was to take care of regular business and to spend time talking about the discernment process – where are we so far and what should we do going forward? For our Training and Education we looked at a comparison chart of differences and similarities among four Presbyterian denominations. We discussed its importance, its usefulness and possible additional information that would prove to be helpful.

Business items covered at the meeting included:

- 1) Hearing about the Serve/Build Day scheduled for October 25
- 2) Acting on a request from Andrew and Laura Tanis to be removed from the church membership roll and to move Denise Decker from the active roll to the inactive roll since she now lives in California
- 3) Approving the Rock Mountain Bible Camp overnight for 3rd – 6th graders on October 10 and 11
- 4) Authorizing Broome County Council of Churches to redirect unused money originally sent to them by us for flood relief toward a new roof for the CHOW warehouse
- 5) Approving the expenditure of up to \$100,000 for repair of the stained glass windows

The results of the survey completed by about 60 people following the September congregational conversations were reviewed and discussed. Based on these results, the motion was made and approved that we continue the process of discerning whether we should remain with the PC(USA) or leave and align with ECO. We also approved a 4-page response to some of the questions that had been asked by the congregation in September (see that response in the October newsletter). We also approved the timeline for continuing our discernment, which includes plans for studying Scripture to learn what the Bible says about several issues related to our discernment process, prayer and fasting, and hearing from representatives from the Presbytery and ECO. Please watch the bulletins for specific information on these next steps.

On October 8, Session met once again, but this time it was for the purpose of looking at the proposed 2015 budget. We were reminded that the ministries and missions of First Pres. are going to be continuing and will need our support. Later in November, members and active non-members of the congregation will receive information on the stewardship campaign, and we hope you will prayerfully consider what you feel God is calling us to do here at FPC.

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 – this month from Tuesday, November 4, after dinner to Wednesday, November 5, at dinnertime.

WHAT IS BIBLICAL STEWARDSHIP?

– MISSION AND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

What does the Bible say about God’s role in stewardship?

The answer to this question is quite simple and is found in the very first verse of the Bible:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1)

Everything that exists— seen and unseen— belongs to God. That includes the mountains and the oceans. It also includes my home, my stock portfolio, my time, my body, my voice, and my closet full of belongings.

“As the Creator, God has absolute rights of ownership over all things, and to miss starting here is like misaligning the top button on our shirt or blouse—nothing else will ever line up. Nothing else in the Bible, including the doctrine of stewardship, will make any sense or have any true relevance if we miss the fact that God is the Creator and has full rights of ownership. It is through our ability to fully grasp this and imbed it in our hearts that the doctrine of stewardship is understood.”*

What does the Bible say about our role in stewardship?

God is the owner of everything: we are the managers. Again, Genesis describes our role:

God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:28)

Paul calls us “co-workers” with God in living out all aspects of our life.

“For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building.” (1 Corinthians 3:9)

“Starting with this concept, we are then able to accurately view and correctly value not only our possessions, but, more importantly, human life itself. [Stewardship] is our divinely given opportunity to join with God in His worldwide and eternal redemptive movement. Stewardship is not God taking something from us; it is His method of bestowing His richest gifts upon His people.”*

Most importantly, we, like Paul, are stewards of the divine mystery revealed in Christ. We are empowered and entrusted with the responsibility to proclaim the gospel! (Ephesians 3:2, 1 Corinthians 9:17)

Good stewardship is “more than just the management of our time, our possessions, our environment, or our health. Stewardship is our obedient witness to God’s sovereignty. It’s what motivates us as followers of Christ to move into action, doing deeds that demonstrate our belief in Him.”*

“Stewardship defines our practical obedience in the administration of *everything* under our control, everything entrusted to us. It is the consecration of one’s self and possessions to God's service. Stewardship acknowledges in practice that we do not have the right of control over ourselves or our property—God has that control. It means as stewards of God we are managers of that which belongs to God, and we are under His constant authority as we administer His affairs: we are not our own but belong to Christ, the Lord, who gave Himself for us.”*

The ultimate stewardship question is this: Am I the lord of my life, or is Christ the Lord of my life?

“Sixteen of the thirty-eight parables of Jesus deal with money. One out of ten verses in the New Testament deals with that subject. Scripture offers about five hundred verses on prayer, fewer than five hundred on faith, and over two thousand on money. The believer's attitude toward money and possessions is determinative.”

— John MacArthur

STEWARDSHIP DEDICATION SUNDAY

“What you do with your resources in this life is your autobiography.”

— Randy Alcorn, *Money, Possessions and Eternity*

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2014

“A disciple does not ask, "How much can I keep?" but, "How much more can I give?" Whenever we start to get comfortable with our level of giving, it's time to raise it again.”

— Randy Alcorn, *Money, Possessions and Eternity*

FPP Calendar

November 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 All Saints Communion 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) 2:00 pm New Member Class 6:00 pm FPC Youth	3 2:30 pm Homework Café 6:00 pm Membership Team Meeting 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	4 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper 7:00 pm Deacons 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	5 6:00 am Men's Group 2:30 pm Homework Café 6:00 pm Session breaks fast 7:00 pm Session / Deacons / Staff Meeting	6 2:30 pm Homework Café 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	7	8
9 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) 3:00 pm FPC Youth TurkeyBowl 2014 6:00 pm FPC Youth	10 2:30 pm Homework Café 6:30 pm Parent Council Meeting 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	11 12:30 pm Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper 7:00 pm Small Group Leaders Gathering	12 6:00 am Men's Group 2:30 pm Homework Café 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	13 2:30 pm Homework Café 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	14	15 9:00 am Presbytery meeting
16 Children's Ministry Family Day ECO Presentations 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) 6:00 pm Skate Estate Family Night	17 1:00 pm Women's Club Board Meeting 2:30 pm Homework Café 7:00 pm Kenya Trip Planning Meeting 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	18 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper 7:00 pm Worship Ministry Team	19 6:00 am Men's Group 1:30 pm Women's Circle III 2:30 pm Homework Café 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	20 2:30 pm Homework Café 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	21	22
23 Stewardship Dedication 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) 6:00 pm FPC Youth	24 1:00 pm Women's Club 2:30 pm Homework Café 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	25 12:30 pm Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper	26 6:00 am Men's Group 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	27 Thanksgiving	28	29
30 1st Sunday of Advent 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) 6:00 pm FPC Youth						

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.



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