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**OVER 80
BIRTHDAYS**

October 5
Lois McKaig
October 5
Ethel Whittemore
October 25
Beverly Jones
October 25
Jane Sprague

A NEW VIEW

For those of you who haven't seen the new view since the Youth House came down, here are a few pictures to fill you in!



Larry Pierce going to work



The new view from the street

HOMEWORK CAFÉ NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

First Presbyterian Church has been supporting Jenny F. Snapp Middle School in the UE School District for over a decade, and this year will continue that tradition. The school has an after-school program to assist students with homework called "Homework Café." Students who need extra help stay at school from 2:30pm until about 3:50pm to work on the next day's homework with assistance from teachers and volunteers one-on-one. The program is 'voluntary' and selection is based on recommendations from teachers and parents. Usually students need encouragement and some structure to complete their assignments. Students are 6th, 7th and 8th graders with English, math, science, social studies, and language assignments. The program will begin in mid-October as teachers and students recognize who needs help the most. Volunteers need some basic skills in the subjects they may be confronted with, but mostly they need to focus the student and help them look up the material in the text books the students will have related to the questions being asked. If answers can't be found fairly easily, the teachers available can be consulted. The process can be fun and one gets a feeling for what an eighth grade education includes. Homework Café is held on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday unless there are days off for holidays; these exceptions will be included in our church bulletin the Sunday before the school week. The school district does have a volunteer form that needs to be filled out by each volunteer including name, contact information and names and phone numbers for references. If you would like to participate in this program please contact Justin Park at 748-4192. We will have the forms available in the church office or from Justin in early October. We will be able to work out how your skills and availability fit with the needs and get you started. Volunteers can work one, two, or three days a week. Our goal will be to have at least two volunteers each day or more if the workload demands it.

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

Instead of regular business, a majority of the September Presbytery meeting was devoted to worship and personal evangelism, led by Evangelism Coach, Chris Walker. Whenever Presbyterians talk about evangelism, we always seem to start with our reservations about evangelism or our bad experiences with evangelists. So, Chris let everyone get that off their chests first, and then we began. Evangelism is, after all, "good news." And we have some VERY good news to share with those around us— news about a God who is both holy and gracious, just and merciful. A God who has not left us hopeless in our sin and brokenness, but has provided a way back to him and to abundant life.

Chris began by looking at the story of Matthew, the tax collector, found in Matthew 9:9-14. In that story, he pulled out particular phrases that speak good news:

⁹*As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew.*

Take hope in the fact that Jesus saw Matthew. He also saw you . . . even before you saw him.

⁹*And he said to him, "Follow me."*

What would make anyone respond to that kind of invitation? It is the Holy Spirit who prepares a person, creating a restlessness, in order to be able to receive the good news when it is presented.

⁹*And [Matthew] got up and followed him.*

What does it mean to be a follower of Jesus? It is more than intellectual assent, having a Christian background, or being part of a church. A Christ-follower's life is centered on Jesus, it is a life of active gratitude and response.

¹⁰Matthew couldn't help but gather *many tax collectors and sinners* to bring them to meet Jesus.

Chris asked this provoking question:

If our hearts have grown cold to evangelism,
what does it say about our relationship with Jesus?

Hints about sharing the good news with others:

- Start with the good news, not the bad news.
Genesis 1 (we were created to be in relationship with God) before Genesis 3 (the fall).
- Share what God has done in *your* life.
- Engage people who are willing, not hostile.
Look and listen for signs of spiritual thirst (the need for forgiveness of sins, removal of guilt, belonging, physical healing, emotional healing, guidance, internal peace).
- Think of evangelism as a process: it is not just the proclamation of the gospel, but also everything that leads up to it.
Discern your place in the story: are you helping to plant, water, or harvest seeds of faith?
- Listen to and follow God's leading— a nudge from God, spiritual heaviness, a strong impression.
- Don't rush- God is sovereign and working on both sides.
When the fruit is ripe, you don't have to yank it off the vine.

Take a moment to watch and celebrate one example of how our sovereign God is working in people's lives when the good news is shared: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnKkw5F8drc>

WHAT'S NEW AMONG OUR PEOPLE?

– NATHAN JACOBS

As fall comes about, for many of us, the year kicks back into high gear: the school year begins, the church year really begins, and many ministries resume their work after summer hiatus. Please keep Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, Small Group Ministry, and the Nursery School in your prayers, as well as the following individuals who were brought to our attention this last month:

- MaryAnn Scott, who spent some time in the hospital, with follow-up testing.
- Bob Thomas, who needed medical attention a couple of times this month.
- The Atkinsons, who grieve the loss of Val's mother.
- The Preisendanz family, who celebrated the marriage of Eric (Carolyn and Pete's son) to Brandy Wyatt on Saturday, Sept. 13, in Ashburn, VA.
- The Tandi and Naik families, as they grieve the passing of Saima's mom. Brown Naik also lost his mother-in-law.
- Jon Yerger, who was transferred to Susquehanna Nursing Home for rehab.
- Pastor Nissi, whose mother had a heart attack and who is personally facing health concerns.
- Ralph Tallman, who was able to return home after a hospital stay.
- Lindsey Baumann, daughter of Sharon and Carl, who moved to Seattle.
- The Landon family, who celebrated the birth of their first grandchild, Kamden.
- Roberta and Wayne Hunsinger, who celebrated their 67th anniversary and Roberta's birthday on September 7.
- The Pasquale family, who celebrated the marriage of Lou and Terry's daughter, Karissa, to Stephen Jones.
- As a follow-up concern, Terry Pasquale, who broke her wrist dancing at her daughter's wedding.
- Linda Glajch's mother, Janet, as she regains mobility and strength following surgery.
- The Rundle family, as they mourn the death of Al's mother, Beverly J. Rundle. A service of witness to her resurrection was held at FPC on Monday, September 22.
- Bill and Janet Bittner, who were hit in a head-on collision and continue to heal.
- The family of Cindy Wintersteen, who passed away unexpectedly on September 21.
- Fran Ebbers, who has been diagnosed with cancer. We give thanks that all three children have been able to come for extended stays.
- Richard Thomas' mother, who had surgery.
- Jason Mitchell, who was hospitalized for a serious infection.
- Patti Stillings, as she grieves the loss of her son, Larry, who died peacefully on September 24 after battling cancer.
- Helen Jephson, who had a procedure to do a skin graft on her leg following a serious fall.
- Susan Meza's sister, Aubrey, and her daughter, Reagan, who was born three months prematurely.
- Jessica Santacrose, who is struggling with some health issues.
- Jim Santacrose, who was awarded "Humanitarian of the Year" for "improving the lives of persons with disabilities."
- Pastor Nissi's grandson, Jeremiah, who was in a serious car accident in South Carolina and sustained many injuries.
- James Hogencamp, who lost his stepfather, Bob Kellogg, on September 30.
- Roberta Hunsinger, who spent time in the hospital this last week.
- Josh Bennett, who was in a mountain biking accident and was hurt badly. He is ok, and recovering, but in pain.
- Alice Loudon, who celebrates a second great-grandson, Sawyer Leigh Loudon, born in Nashville on 9/29/14.
- The Tandi family, as they celebrate the joy of Hemant's mother arriving for an extended visit.

FPC FPC Youth

FPC Youth Events

CHOOSE FROM MANY OPPORTUNITIES
TO CONNECT

REGULAR EVENTS:

Sunday School

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

FPC Youth Nights

Sundays
6:00-8:00pm
Locations TBA

Ignite Bikes

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

SPECIAL EVENTS:

FPC Youth

SMALL GROUP Informational Meeting

Sunday, September 28
5:00-5:45pm
@ The Warehouse

Fall-Fest 2014

Sunday, October 26
3:00-8:00pm
Details ----->

TurkeyBowl'14

Sunday, November 16
3:00-6:00pm
Meet @ FPC
Tailgate Party to follow the game!
Dress for success

FPC Youth Christmas Party

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

JACKSON'S FARM

6425 STATE ROUTE 17C
ENDICOTT, NY 13760
607-754-4819
WWW.JACKSONSPUMPKINFARM.COM

Fall-Fest Extravaganza

It's that time of year again. October is here and we are excited about the adventures it brings

Here are the details:

- 3:00pm** - Carpool from FPC to the farm
- 3:30-5:30pm** - Maze & more @ the farm
- 5:30pm** - Carpool to The Warehouse
- 6:00-8:00pm** - Hotdogs, S'mores, & games

Fall-Fest 2014

Sunday, October 26

Youth and families (6-12 grades) are invited along for the adventure.

Bring \$5.00 per person. Dress warm and pack a snack to share. Invite friends!



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!

TAKE THE CHALLENGE TODAY!



“I stand alone on the Word of God, the B.I.B.L.E!” As kids, many of us sang those familiar lyrics week after week with the ease of childlike faith. What about now? What does it mean to stand solely on the Bible?

To be able to declare that the Bible is my authority in life starts with knowing what it says. So, we are learning verses. Lots of verses. We want them in our families hearts and minds. We want God's Word to direct our paths!

If you haven't signed up for the challenge and gotten your free supplies to help you succeed, please stop at the Memory Verse Mania table in the gathering space. Then learn verses with your family as you ride in the car, eat meals, or whenever you choose!

Memory Verse Mania Celebration

Sunday, November, 16

6:00-8:00pm

SKATE ESTATE

Read these stories with your kids today!

October 5 - Nehemiah Builds the Wall (Nehemiah 1-7)

October 12 - Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9)

October 19 - The Man Who Built for More Grain Storage (Luke 12:13-31)

October 26 - Elisha and Rich Woman from Shunem (2 Kings 48-17)

November 2 - Jesus Builds the Church (Matthew 16:13-20)

November 9 - The Builder Who Did Not Finish (Luke 14:25-50)

November 16 – **FAMILY DAY** – *Stewardship Sunday*

November 23 – **HILLTOP VISIT**

November 30 - **Thanksgiving Weekend** - NO Sunday Morning Children's Ministry

CONNECTING THOUGHTS FOR OCTOBER — SHARON EARLY

From Consumerism to Community ...**From Couch to Community ...**

Why these two phrases? Because both are a call for the local church to be very concerned that we don't become too comfortable with our needs and wants over reaching out into our community. Consumerism is a very real issue in America; we often don't even realize how insidious it is in our culture. We can quickly become so inward-focused that we miss a community around us that is hurting and in despair. As we continue to wrestle this fall with what it means to "Be the Church," the series will move from our "We are the Church" kick-off and 'church family' reunion, to "You are the Church," called to move out and reach out to the community around you. We are setting aside the last Saturday in October, Oct. 25, to move outward together and serve others through our **Serve Day 2014**.

There will be a variety of ways you can serve on that day:

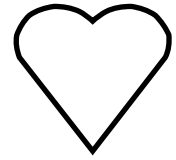
- Building in the Community
- Assisting the Nursery School with their Fall Fest
- Writing letters of encouragement to our college students and those serving in the military
- Other Developing Service Projects

Those are just a few of the service projects we are putting together. **Serve Day 2014** is sponsored by Small Groups and individuals who are using their gifts and talents to glorify God by serving others. We serve others by demonstrating God's love in practical ways, by caring for the felt needs within our community and spheres of influence. Simple and practical acts of kindness can open hearts to the love of Jesus for both those being served and those serving. We want every person who is passionate about helping others to find the right opportunities to effectively use their gifts to build up the body of Christ and extend the Kingdom of God. Mark your calendar and watch for sign-ups coming mid-October!



*As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another,
as good stewards of God's varied grace:
whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God;
whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—
in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.
To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

1 PETER 4:10-11 (ESV)



NEW MEMBERS IN OUR NURSERY SCHOOL FAMILY
- RONNE SISCO, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION



Miss Jenna Mauro
1-on-1 Aide



Mrs. Kristin Cioci
Speech Therapist



Mrs. Tiffany Ferrell
Teacher of 3s & 4s/UPK



Mrs. Pamela Harvey
Teacher of 4s/UPK



Miss Christina Bassano
Teacher of 4s/UPK



Mrs. Marcy Luffman
Teacher of 4s/UPK



Mrs. Brenda Mariano
Substitute Teacher of
4s/UPK



Miss Domenica McKeon
Teacher of 4s/UPK



Mrs. Lillian VanArsdale
1-on-1 Aide

Please join us in welcoming nine dedicated and compassionate professionals to our staff here at Endicott First Pres. Their warmth and passion for early childhood education is of such benefit to our children and parents. We are honored to have them.

We'll be proudly marching in Union-Endicott's Homecoming Parade on Saturday October 4th at 11am. Come cheer us on as we bike and scoot our way down Washington Avenue!

SPOTLIGHT ON THE STAFF: WILLIAM JENKINS

- PERSONNEL COMMITTEE



This month's Spotlight on the Staff is on our Sunday Custodian, William Jenkins. William has a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Franklin and Marshal University in Pennsylvania. Currently William is taking Master's level courses at Binghamton University, studying Computer Science. For the last year and a half, William has taken on the duties of our Sunday Custodian in a professional and caring manner. Williams's typical Sunday duties include opening up the church early in the morning and preparing the building for the day's services and ministries. What most people may not realize is all the work that is done before they arrive at church. William opens the doors, turns on the lights, starts the fans or turns on the heat to make the church comfortable. In the winter, he is out shoveling snow and ensuring the walkways are clear for people to arrive. He also starts the morning coffee in the gathering area and methodically reviews the entire church to ensure we are

prepared as a congregation to worship God. A highlight is his duty of lighting the candles in the sanctuary in preparation for worship. After services are complete, William cleans and tidies up the sanctuary by policing the pews, vacuuming the common areas, and making sure the restrooms are ready for Monday. William wraps up his day by doing a security sweep of the church and ensuring all the doors are locked and the building is secured.

Again, most people may not realize the work of our Sunday morning custodian- and that is just fine with William. He embodies humility and service to others in his role as our Sunday morning custodian. He also likes seeing the impact of his work with the operations of the church running smoothly every Sunday. We are truly blessed with such a professional and caring servant in our midst.

Please take a moment the next time you see William to stop and thank him for the work and service that he provides First Presbyterian Church of Endicott.

SESSION UPDATE

-JANET FREDERICK, CLERK OF SESSION

No matter what else is going on in the life of the church, there is always “business as usual” to be transacted at our monthly Session meeting. At our September meeting, some of the actions taken were as follows:

- Approved a recommendation from the Mission and Stewardship Committee regarding the process to be followed when a request is received for a new church-sponsored mission trip or project.
- Acted on a proposal to replace laptops for two of our staff members.
- Approved the request to remove Lois McKaig from the active membership roll after receiving a request that her membership be transferred to Damascus Manor Pres. Church in PA. Lois moved there last year to be near family.

We spent time discussing more specific plans for the upcoming congregational conversations, and the next Narrative Question:

**How is the idea of ministry as the joy and calling of every disciple evident in your congregation?
How are you equipping people to represent Jesus more effectively in their respective professions?**

This is not yet an intentional focus of training/nurture at FPC and is an important element to incorporate in being a missional church. A number of examples were given which were anecdotal and shared by small group leaders, elders in their own workplaces, FPC members in their spheres of influence:

- *We know of at least one individual who leads a small group at their workplace.*
- *When we share joys and concerns with each other, we often mention co-workers and neighbors with whom we have a special relationship where we can share our faith.*
- *If we’ve been involved in mission work or trips, we are frequently asked about our efforts by people outside our church family.*
- *The Lenten studies have provided us with tools to share the Good News.*
- *If we are studying scripture, learning in study of the scripture and engaged in living our faith, this is bound to be reflected in our everyday life..*
- *A men’s small group curriculum focused on living their faith in the world through “Winning at Work and at Home.”*
- *“Be The Church” Youth Breakfast meetings to help students to be a witness in their schools*
- *Attending conferences, such as the national FOP/ECO Gathering, challenge us to represent Jesus in our everyday lives.*
- *One of our elders is in the military reserves and is involved in their formal spiritual training on a regular basis.*
- *We have an alliance between the church and the nursery school that meets in our church five days a week, giving us an opportunity to be witnesses on a regular basis.*

Convicting Question:

- *In the last month, can each of us recall at least one time when we have shared Jesus with someone outside the church?*

The summer was a busy time for the work of the House Committee. We recognized Larry Pierce’s generous donation of his equipment and work on the demolition of the Youth House at 27 Grant Avenue and the garage in the alley behind the church. To do the repairs on the stained glass windows, Dave Youngs announced that Cumberland Stained Glass has been selected to do the work needed. The new

SESSION UPDATE CONT.

-JANET FREDERICK, CLERK OF SESSION

technology booth in the back of the sanctuary is completed and working out well.

We also heard a report on the summer tennis program that we did with the Boys and Girls' Club and U-E. The feedback was very positive, Josh Bennett was recognized for the good job he did in leading the program, and an invitation was issued to repeat the program again next summer.

Fall means that many of the activities that took a break this summer will be starting back up. On September 7, following the joint worship service, a luncheon was served, with all of the food being donated by Larry Wilson of Moe's Restaurant. Both adult and children's Christian Education Sunday morning classes were scheduled to start up again on September 14. Although it's hard to believe, this month is also the time when Treasurer Art Davis looks for feedback from staff and ministry heads regarding their needs for the 2015 budget.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Scriptures for Today

If you would like to learn more about the Bible and how scripture can apply to your life, then please come to the Scriptures for Today class, which meets each Sunday morning from 9:30 to 10:30 AM in the Library. This class looks at readings from the revised common lectionary, shared by millions of Christians around the world, and reflects on how the word of God speaks into our lives today. If you have any questions about this class please talk to Gordie Pollard or David Jenkins. All are welcome, so grab your favorite Bible and join in!

Fellowship Luncheon

Please join us for a Fellowship gathering on Friday, Oct 31, at 12 noon in the church dining room. Lunch will be provided and Doug and Liz Kerr will share the work they are doing with their foundation in Kenya. Please RSVP to Charlie and Maxine Waughtel at 625-4693.

New Member Classes

If you have been attending worship at FPC and believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior, you are invited to come and explore the possibility of membership as we talk about who we are as a congregation, what we believe, and the values we pursue because we believe they have great worth. Increasingly, the desire to formally belong to institutions and organizations is waning. While you can certainly be active at FPC without being a member, membership gives people the opportunity to have a voice and vote in directions that are set and decisions that are made. Classes are scheduled for Sunday, October 30 and Sunday, November 2, from 2-5 pm. The alternate date, if needed, is Sunday, November 9. Please contact Jan Devine or the church office to let us know of your interest so we have materials for participants. After attending these two classes, you will be able to decide without pressure if this is the right time and place to commit to doing life and ministry with others here at FPC.

2015 Mission Trip to Kenya

FPC will take its sixth trip to Kenya in the beginning of February. If you have any interest in learning more or participating, please speak with Jan Devine and plan to attend the next organizational meeting on Sunday, October 12, at 12:00pm in the lounge (feel free to bring a bag lunch or snack).

FPC DISCERNING PROCESS SESSION FOLLOW-UP TO FEEDBACK FROM SEPTEMBER 2014 CONGREGATIONAL CONVERSATIONS

During the week of September 14, the Session held a first set of four “Congregational Conversations” to explain why the Session feels it is time for the congregation to engage in a period of study, prayer and dialogue to discern whether FPC should remain in the PC(USA) and differentiate where needed or realign with the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians (ECO). If you would like to speak to someone to learn more about how FPC has responded to denominational concerns in recent years, or if you would like to receive hard or digital copies of the updates that have been provided to the congregation, please contact the church office or the Clerk of Session.

Many legitimate questions were posed during these conversations, and the Session believes it is important to continue to give truthful answers and complete information to the whole congregation. Therefore, below, we have tried to recap many of the questions asked and offer answers as we are presently able.

Why has Session decided to enter into a period of discernment?

The answer to this question is multi-faceted:

- Session is gravely concerned about both ongoing shifts and recent decisions regarding theological, missional, and organizational issues within the denomination. These concerns increasingly impact ministry/mission at the local level, as well as the convictions and integrity of the Session and many in the congregation. An overview of those concerns has been shared with the FPC congregation in the July 2014 letter to the congregation and the September 2014 Congregational Conversations.
- Recent decisions within the denomination have changed long-standing positions that once united PC(USA) congregations; each local church and/or presbytery is now responsible for studying the issues to determine its own theology/practice about essential tenets, ordination standards, marriage, etc. The Session takes this responsibility seriously.
- We must recognize as a congregation that a discernment process is already happening informally within the membership of FPC. It is better for us to go through the process openly and together.

What is a “discerning process” and how long will it take?

Many churches throughout the denomination have or are going through a discerning process, but it is breaking “new ground” in our presbytery, and therefore, is a work in progress. The goal is to develop a plan that does not unduly rush or delay a decision by the congregation. Simultaneously, the goal is to be careful, thorough, thoughtful, and above all, God-honoring, as this congregation discerns how it can best be faithful, hold together, and pursue our purpose “to reach more people and together grow in Christ.”

FPC DISCERNING PROCESS CONT.

- For FPC, we want enough time for the whole congregation to engage in careful Bible Study, intentional prayer/fasting, information-gathering, and mutual dialogue. We will also be working with Presbytery and ECO to understand and respond to the expectations of each entity.
- FPC leadership has set up three different teams to:
 - ◊ Promote Theological/Biblical Dialogue and Communicate General Education/Information within our congregation.
 - ◊ Work through the process with the Presbytery.
 - ◊ Work with ECO to understand the implications of realigning, the application process, and practical matters such as medical and retirement benefits for staff.
- In 2008, General Assembly urged each presbytery to develop a Dismissal Policy, which would spell out the process a congregation and its presbytery must follow and the financial implications of dismissing a church that is seeking to realign with another Reformed denomination. Because our presbytery has been in transition, no policy or guidelines for a Dismissal Policy has been developed. A Presbytery team has just been formed to draft a document, which Presbytery has advised will not be ready to come to the Presbytery for approval before the end of the year. Until that document is in place, FPC will not know for sure the expectations and/or requirements the Presbytery will have us follow. Presbytery representatives have given assurance that they will work with FPC as we develop our own careful discernment process.

Has Session talked to other churches that have already gone through a discerning process?

- Yes. While no church or presbytery (and therefore, no process) is identical, there are many people and resources available to the Session, and Session is making use of them.
- At the Congregational Conversations, Presbytery representatives gave FPC permission to continue with our discernment process even though there is not yet a formal Presbytery discernment/dismissal process in place. This has given Session permission to begin planning more specifically- prayerfully and purposefully.

Has the Session counted the emotional cost of a split? Why can't those who are upset find a church where they are comfortable?

- This possibility is being discussed widely and informally throughout the FPC congregation by people on all sides of the issues. In light of this reality the Session is trying to chart a course that maintains the possibility that the FPC congregation can hold together. However, not dealing with these critical issues is not an option.
- The assumption by some people in the congregation is that we can weather the loss of a few members who aren't happy with the PC(USA). In fact, enough people have indicated that denominational issues will force them to make a hard decision (even if our church does not), that the loss of these people will severely impact the vitality, ministry and mission of this church. The same may well be true about how those committed to staying in the PC(USA) will respond if we realign.
- If the congregation does not find a way to hold together, this church will be a shadow of what it has been and should be in the future.

FPC DISCERNING PROCESS CONT.

- It is unfortunate that a few people who are not happy with the discernment process have already indicated that they are leaving before the congregation has even had a chance to discern together. The Session grieves their decision and hopes that our brothers and sisters at FPC will have the patience and commitment to remain in, and contribute to, the process.

Why is ECO the only denomination the Session is currently considering?

- The PC(USA) will only release a church to another Reformed Body. We will still be Presbyterian, sharing the same Book of Confessions, if we realign with ECO. We have compared and reviewed information on several Presbyterian denominations and believe that, at this time, ECO most closely aligns with who we are and how we want to continue to grow. In 2013 FPC joined the Fellowship of Presbyterians (FOP), which is an affinity group of PC(USA) congregations. FOP and ECO share the same Core Beliefs (Essential Tenets of Faith) and Core Values, so theologically this alignment would be natural for FPC.
- While all “systems” are flawed, being part of no system is also dangerous. ECO is committed to creating a structure that is more flexible and proactive in pursuing its missional and relational priorities.
- The theological and/or organizational foundations of other Reformed bodies, such as the Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) and Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC) are not as closely aligned to that of FPC.

How is Session assessing the will of the congregation?

- Session will be making use of different ways of gathering information throughout the process, including informal conversation, surveys, congregational gatherings, visits to small groups, etc.
- Session welcomes suggestions from FPC on other and different methods of gathering information from the FPC family.
- Session will make a recommendation to the congregation, but the final decision to realign or not can only be made by the congregation. As part of the discernment process, the Session will use the information we receive from the congregation to help determine whether it is wise to bring the process to the point of a congregational vote or whether FPC will develop some other option.

Will FPC’s theological stands keep people from coming to our church and to faith?

The Living Word (Jesus Christ) and the Written Word (Bible) both command Christ-followers to hold grace (love) and truth in tension, without compromising either (John 1:14, Ephesians 4:14-16). We are all on the journey of becoming more Christ-like, and it is God’s Holy Spirit that convicts each of us of our disobedience, opens our hearts and minds to truth, and draws us to the Father through Christ (Hebrew 4:12-13, John 6:44).

Would we be able to keep our church/properties if we realigned with ECO?

The building and assets of a local Presbyterian Church (USA) are owned by the church *in trust for the PC(USA)*. Therefore, each presbytery must decide the terms of dismissal, including what

FPC DISCERNING PROCESS CONT.

happens to the building and assets. While our presbytery does not yet have a dismissal policy, we do not have any indication at this time that our assets are in jeopardy.

Representatives of the Presbytery have expressed their commitment to work with FPC in good faith.

- A dismissal agreement may have some financial implications in recognition of the historic relationship of FPC with the presbytery and the impact that our realignment would have on the presbytery. The Session of FPC is committed to work through these issues if they arise.
- While the tangible costs of either decision might seem daunting, it is Session's prayer and hope that the FPC congregation will make a decision based solely upon our collective sense of God's leading, because doing what is right before, and honoring to, God is the singularly most important factor.

Do we have legal representation?

Yes. This congregation has been blessed to have within its membership lawyers who have generously offered legal counsel. For decades, Bob Thomas shared his time, wisdom and resources. Stephen Atkinson is now willing to help during the discernment process so that the congregation understands issues related to the Religious Corporations Law (RCL), the PC(USA) Book of Order, and on a more personal level, questions such as, "How would a change in our denominational alignment affect decisions we have made to include our local church in our last Will and Testament?" We are deeply grateful for the service of both of these men.

Thank You!

The Session of FPC would like to thank the entire congregation for their support of the recent congregational conversations about denominational concerns. The turnout for the meetings was good, and the feedback from the surveys submitted will be helpful as the Session looks carefully at your responses and prayerfully discerns God's calling for FPC.

Many questions were asked about whether there is a timeline for the process going forward. Below is a tentative plan for continuing our education on this important matter:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| October 2014- | Provide a written response to congregational concerns expressed in September conversations; Session members will go in pairs to small groups for discussion, as invited. |
| November to
December 2014- | Provide times for intentional Bible study and information sharing regarding ECO, including extending an invitation to an ECO representative to meet with Session and the congregation. |
| January to
February 2015- | Provide times for intentional study and information sharing on PC(USA) issues, such as church property/finances and the dismissal policy (dependent on Presbytery's completion and approval of a policy). |
| Late Spring 2015- | Congregational vote |

Please continue to pray for FPC as we continue in the discernment process together.

FPP Calendar

October 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:00 am Men's Group 7:00 pm Session 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	2 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	3	4
5 Worldwide Communion 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) 6:00 pm FPC Youth 6:30 pm GPMO 6:30 pm Mystery Dinner Rehearsal	6 6:00 pm Membership Team Meeting-Library 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	7 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper 7:00 pm Deacons	8 6:00 am Men's Group 7:00 pm Session Budget Meeting	9 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	10 3-6 Youth at Rock Mountain Fall Overnight	11 Mission Affinity Group gathering
12 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) 12:00 pm Kenya Trip Planning Meeting 6:00 pm FPC Youth 6:30 pm Mystery Dinner Rehearsal	13 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	14 12:30 pm Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper 7:00 pm M & S Committee Meeting 7:00 pm Nominating Committee Meeting	15 6:00 am Men's Group 1:30 pm Women's Circle III 6:30 pm Mystery Dinner Dress Rehearsal 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	16 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	17 6:30 pm Mystery Dinner Theatre	18 6:00 pm Mystery Dinner Theatre
19 Guest Preacher- Jeremy Finn 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) 6:00 pm FPC Youth	20 1:00 pm Women's Club Board Meeting 6:30 pm Parent Council Meeting 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	21 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper	22 6:00 am Men's Group 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	23 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	24	25 Serve Day
26 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:45 am Music Appreciation Sunday- ATOB 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) 2:00 pm New Member Class 3:00 pm FPC Youth Fall-Fest 2014	27 1:00 pm Women's Club 3:00 pm Relevant Group 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	28 12:30 pm Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper 7:00 pm Worship Ministry Team	29 6:00 am Men's Group 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	30 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	31 12:00 pm Fellowship Luncheon	

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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