



The Celtic Cross

February 2010

From the Co-Pastors

Dearly Beloved:

Sometimes the *Celtic Cross* just cannot contain all of the news and all of the ministry that is taking place around here! This month, we not only have a full newsletter, we have two inserts. We hope that you will read it all—otherwise you might miss...

- An important letter from the Session concerning the recent Porter Trust gift to this congregation (see the insert). As announced at our January 31 congregational meeting, the gift gives us a great opportunity to make a difference now and to lay an even stronger foundation for future generations to build on, just as we have built on the labors, sacrifices, and gifts of previous generations. With this gift, come special challenges and responsibilities. We are so grateful that a special 2004 Taskforce from this congregation gave us a blueprint to follow. We are excited now for what comes next with the “mission tithe.” May we be guided by God throughout this transition so that we might prove worthy of the trust God has placed in us.
- An introduction to a new international partnership we are entering through “Living Waters for the World” (see the insert). A small team has been trained and we look forward to sending them and other volunteers to Honduras to install a filtration system to bring clean water to a village. What an ingenious way to improve the lives of others.
- An update from Haiti from representatives of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, as well as how you can make a special contribution if you would like to do so. Not long after the first headlines appeared about the earthquake, emergency assistance was being sent down to Haiti because of the contributions we and other congregations have made for “The One Great Hour of Sharing” collected every Easter.
- News about the Ash Wednesday Service and the programs available for all ages this Lent on Wednesday.
- Information about “Financial Peace University,” a spiritual financial educational program that has strengthened the lives of many individuals and families

And that does not include all of the rest—potluck suppers, Seekers’ events, Sunday School breakfast receptions, puppet shows, the New Orleans mission trip and the other ways that ministry takes place in and through this congregation. Read and enjoy—and commit to following in Jesus’ footsteps with the rest of the motley crew of Christian pilgrims gathered here, and throughout the world.

May God bless you all.
Carter and Kerry

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Worship Matters

Sunday Morning Schedule:

9:15 Sunday School for all ages
 10:30 Service of the Lord's Day (*in the sanctuary*)
 11:45 Fellowship Time (*in the Fellowship Hall*)

Upcoming in Worship

February 7 – Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
 Scout Sunday (Cub Scout Pack 146 will be joining us)

February 14 -- Service for the Lord's Day
 Cherub Choir Sings

Wednesday, February 17, Ash Wednesday Service
 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room. See p. 3 for more details.

February 21 – Service for the Lord's Day,
 Commissioning of New Orleans Mission Trip Participants

February 28 – Service for the Lord's Day
 Celtic Choir Sings

Music Notes

February is a month of many musical flavors for the Chancel choir. We begin the month with an appropriate communion anthem, "Bread of the World." On the 14th, Valentine's Day, the choir will sing a new anthem, "How Great His Love." The third Sunday in February ushers in Lent and the stunning "Kyrie Eleison" ("Lord, Have Mercy"). And on the last Sunday, the choir will comfort you with a lovely new anthem by Lloyd Larsen, "I Am Not Afraid." The Handbell choir will play The "Gift of Peace" on Feb. 21st. They are already working hard to learn "The Palms" for Palm Sunday in March.

Ash Wednesday service (Feb. 17th) will include Leanne Campbell on flute and vocal quartet: Beth Ann Straub, Kathleen O'Hara, Chip DePrefontaine, and Jesse Shutt .

If you would like to sing with the choir this Easter, now is the time to come to choir rehearsals. We meet at 7:30 on Thursday evenings in the choir room. —Diane Land, Director of Music

Invite a Friend Sunday, March 21

Who first invited you to come to church—a parent, a spouse, a friend? Aren't you glad they did? On Sunday, March 9, the Membership Committee will once again sponsor "Invite a Friend Sunday." More details will follow, but we want to give you an opportunity to think—and pray—about whom you might invite. Of course, every Sunday is "Invite a Friend" Sunday, but on March 21 there will be a few extra welcoming flourishes.

Let us invite others to "come and see" what God is up to through this branch of the vine!

Lent at First Presbyterian Church

Ash Wednesday Service: February 17, 7:30—8:15 p.m.

During Lent, we prepare ourselves for Christ's death and resurrection. We begin the season on Ash Wednesday with a quiet time of reflection and worship in the Community Room. We will mark ourselves with ashes, the sign of our human weakness and mortality, and we will remember God's unfailing grace and mercy shown to us in Jesus Christ.

Wednesdays During Lent (beg. Feb 24)—"Sacred Journeys, Sacred Paths"

There are two tracks for adults and two offerings for children:

Track One: Sacred Journeys

How did we come to faith? How has God been at work in our lives? How did we get to where we are now? Join us as we hear from others' journeys and reflect on our own.

Feb. 24 Speaker: Dr. Paul Mojzes, who grew up in Communist Yugoslavia.

Track Two: Sacred Paths

Building on last year's Lenten experience, we will explore creative ways to pray. (Space is limited and there is a \$20 fee but scholarship assistance is available).

Feb. 24 Jennifer Alexander—"Christian Yoga" The class is open to adults and Seekers and will be designed for all levels of flexibility. "Chair participants" welcome. Bring a mat.

For Children in Grades 3-5: Sacred Path

Children in grades third through fifth will explore and deepen their understanding and experience of 'upstairs' worship (on Sunday mornings in the sanctuary).

For Children age 4 through Second Grade: Sacred Journey

Our younger children will take a sacred journey through the season of Lent and learn about its signs and symbols along the way.

Childcare available for children under 4; Homework room will be available for Jr/Sr. Seekers

Evening Prayer at 6:00 p.m., Dinner at 6:20 and Program 7—8 p.m. Please sign up!

Pine Forge Academy/Teacher Apprec. Breakfast—Sun., Feb. 21.

Teachers, Advisors and Children and Worship volunteers, we are eager to thank you for all of your time, service to, and love for the children of our congregation. Please join us at 9:15 so we can celebrate you with food and stories. During the breakfast the children will have the privilege of watching the Pine Forge Academy Puppet Team. This will be their third visit to our church and we eager to hear them perform for us again!

Pot Luck Dinner and Hymn Sing, Sunday, February 21, 5:00 p.m.

The Fun and Fellowship Committee and the PrimeTimers are sponsoring a pot luck dinner and hymn sing on Sunday, February 21 in Fellowship Hall. Fun and Fellowship will provide drinks and desserts. Please bring a meat dish, casserole or salad, etc. to share. Following dinner, we will have a hymn sing. Sign up on the bulletin board, or by filling out the form you can find in the Sunday bulletin—and let us know what hymns you would like to sing! Neighbors and friends welcome!

Christian Education Opportunities

Adult Education Opportunities

- **Forum Class (Community Room)**

February 7: **Bridging the Generations: Perspectives, Issues, and Challenges that Older Adults Face'**

A panel will lead the discussion for our final session in this series.

February 14: **Financial Peace—An Introduction**

Rob Wade gives a preview of a special seminar to be offered to interested individuals and couples in the congregation and community dealing with faith and financial matters. More information about the entire seminar is provided in this newsletter.

February 21: **Living Waters in India**

Karen Keiser and Rick Moyer will talk about their recent mission trip to India to provide clean water for a village.

February 28: **Ethics of Aid to the Third World**

Dr. Kelly Sorenson, Ursinus College.

- **Faith and Relationships Class (Library)**

Topic: To be announced. Teachers: Sharon Trevoy, Debbie Remelius, and Debbie Remelius

- **Men's Sunday Mornings (Pastors' Conference Room).** Teacher: Bernarr Rhoades

Topic: "A Perfect Life That Changed Eternity" - a study of the Passion of Christ.

- **Sacred Space for Women (Mary Ann Yost Room—110)** Teacher: Amy Shutt

Topic: "That's What the Man Said." A study and devotional commentary by Maxie Dunham on some of the most important words of Jesus, sayings that can guide and strengthen us as we attempt to live with purpose and meaning.

Weekday Opportunities

- **Thursday Women's Bible Study:** Meets February 4 & 18 from 9:30–10:30. Teachers: Ron Gower and Max Creswell

- **"Sisters of the Way" Bible Study:** 9:15-10:45 a.m. every Thursday. Teacher: Kerry

- **Evening Bible Study:** 7:30—8:30 PM on Tuesday, Feb 2 and 16. Teacher: Carter

- **Moms' Group:** Meets Wednesday, February 17, 9:15-11:00 a.m. Location: to be determined. Teacher: Kerry. Bring your children!

- **Praying the Scriptures Group (Lectio Divina):** Tuesday, February 9 and 23 at 7:30 p.m. Join Kerry and others for a quiet hour of praying the Scriptures.

- **Theology Reading Group:** Monday, February 22 at 7:30 at Carter and Kerry's house. Check with Carter for this month's reading.

Pick up your Lenten Devotions written by church members Feb. 17

Music and Recreation for Children

The Honduras Project has been completed and you all did wonderfully! Thanks for all your hard work! Music and Rec will continue through the Spring as we learn more songs and play some new games. Come join us on Wed. from 4:30 to 5:45!



Confirmation

Sunday, February 14: When Jesus is Lord of My Relationships: Part I at 5 p.m. Bring \$3 for pizza between confirmation and Junior Seekers.

Sunday, February 21: When Jesus is Lord of My Relationships: Part 2 at 4 p.m.

Junior Seekers, Grades 6-8

Sunday, February 7(7 a.m.—9:15 a.m.): Hoagie Preparation
Join us for a wake-up breakfast and then we will man the assembly line for our hoagie fundraiser. We will finish in time for you to go to Sunday School. (RSVP Liv)

Sunday, February 21– The Winter Wii Olympic events (6:30-8:00 p.m.)
Athletes: You. Event: Wii Olympic games. Host: First Presbyterian Church .
Theme: with Glowing Hearts. Preparation and Training have prepared you for this day. Come win the Gold! **(RSVP the Lees)**

Advisors: Ken and Holly Lee (610-574-1563), Mike and Mindy Lipsky (610-323-5616)

Senior Seekers—Grades 9-12

Sunday, February 7—Hoagie Preparation
Join us for a wake-up breakfast and then we will man the assembly line for our hoagie fundraiser. We will finish in time for you to go to Sunday School.

Saturday, February 20 — Skiing/Boarding/Tubing– your choice
We'll be headed to the mountain for some winter fun. Details with price, times, and Mtn. will be sent out soon.

Advisors: John and Lisa Livezey (610-326-0490), Chris and John Macdonald (610-987-0529), Donna and Gary Rhoadarmer (610-327-8157), and Tricia and Dave Weller (610-970-6481).



Fellowship Opportunities

PrimeTimers

Sunday, February 21, 5:00 p.m.: Pot Luck Dinner and Hymn Sing.

See p. 3 in this newsletter for all of the details.

Friday Evening, March 19: West Side Story at Boyertown High School

Join us to see "West Side Story" at the Boyertown Area High School at 7 p.m. We will carpool from the church. Cost of the ticket is \$10 and 30 tickets are available. More details will be available on the PrimeTimers bulletin board or contact Sara Grim or Tom Hudson.

Tuesday, May 18, 2010: "Joseph" at the Sight and Sound Theatre

We will carpool from the church leaving at 11:15 a.m. The show begins at 1:00 and we will have dinner after the show. Our seat assignments will not be given to us until all of the money for all of the seats is received. Please bring a check for \$54 as soon as possible. We have 25 tickets.

For the March and May trips, please indicate on the sign up sheets on the bulletin board outside the church office if you plan to attend either one. Make your checks payable to the First Presbyterian Church with a notation, "PrimeTimers," and give your check to Ron Gower, treasurer of PrimeTimers.

Men's Breakfast—Saturday, February 13, 8 –9 a.m.

Join Carter and the guys for breakfast, fellowship, and fun.

Deacons' Bench—Cluster Outreach Center Feinstein Challenge

Each year in the months of March and April our local Cluster Outreach Center is involved in a fund-raising activity. It is called The Feinstein Challenge. It is set up for non-profit organizations to 'earn back' money contributed by The Feinstein trust and the amount 'earned' is dependent on how much the local group takes in during March and April. All donations (monetary and food) are counted in this drive. There is \$1 million to disperse among all participating groups nationwide so the Cluster receives a percentage depending on what they have received in donations. But...every little bit assists the Cluster in helping the needy in our community.

If you can make a monetary donation or contribute food during March and April, it would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Sandy White (610-287-7852) or the Church office with any questions. THANK YOU!!

Church Family News

Please keep in your prayers the following members who have been ill, injured, or hospitalized lately: Bob Grim, Ginny Bleyer, Trystian Hernandez and Evan Temple.

We send condolences to the family of Sally Prizer who passed away on January 26.

We give thanks for the fine work of Jane Barndt as Clerk of Session. We give thanks for the height-defying work of Dave Kyler, Dick Clark, and Dave Duncan replacing lights in the sanctuary. Thanks to Leigh Chancler, Jenn Drago, the Worship Committee and all who helped to undecorate" the sanctuary on January 6.

Coming in March—Financial Peace University

Financial Peace University—Classes Begin March 7, 2010, 3pm.

Preview: Forum Class Feb 14 (9:15 am)

Preview: Sunday, Feb. 21, 2010, 3:00 pm

Where: The Community Room

What is Financial Peace University?

75% of people in this country live paycheck to paycheck, and many of those are saddled with tremendous debt. You might be, silently, one of them. Or, maybe you're getting by, but you are worried about making ends meet and saving for college or retirement. You want ...peace. FPU might be the most important step to changing your financial future, or the future of someone you love. It is a 13 week Total Money Makeover Program that takes the knowledge from God and turns it into real action in our lives through a step-by-step process taught by best-selling author and financial counselor Dave Ramsey. This program, a combination of video presentations and small group discussion, empowers and teaches you how to make the right money decisions to achieve your financial goals and God's plan for your life. The course includes practical lessons on eliminating debt, building wealth, giving like never before, and much, much more!

Who is Financial Peace University for?

It's for EVERYONE!...from the financially secure to the financially distressed. Over 650,000 families and individuals have attended Financial Peace University. Applying God's Word radically changes your life. On average, FPU graduates have paid off over \$5,300 in debt and saved \$2,700 during the 91-day program! This program is both for members of the congregation and friends, neighbors and members of the community.

What Will I Learn?

In this potentially life-changing program you will learn, among other things:

1. Step-by-Step Cash Flow Planning

Luke 14:28: "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it."

2. Debt Snowball Plan Technique to Eliminating Debt

Proverbs 22:7: "The borrower is slave to the lender."

3. How to Invest Wisely

Ecclesiastes 11:2: "Give portions to seven, yes to eight, for you do not know what disaster may come upon the land."

What Does It Cost?

The cost is \$100 per family unit (husband and wife; couples engaged to be married within the year; or single individual)—plus the willingness to spend some time dealing with the problems that keep you and your family from having peace. Learn more by attending the preview(s); or by talking to Rob Wade, who is our church coordinator for this program.

Session Digest

The Session met twice in January. At a special meeting on January 11, the Session discussed the Martha Porter Trust gift and made decisions that are summarized in the insert to this newsletter. At its regular January meeting, the Session:

- Shared joys and concerns.
- Reviewed the Officers' Retreat held on Saturday, January 16 at Camp Innabah.
- Approved including a "Reaffirmation of Baptism" for the congregation in worship on Sunday, January 31. Kerry reported on plans for the service.
- Heard that the minutes and records of the Session have been approved "without exception" by the Presbytery. The Session expressed its appreciation to Jane Barndt for her fine work as Clerk of Session.
- Received the report from Treasurer Michelle Thompson regarding the 2009 Treasurer's Report which showed that the church was able to meet all mission commitments and end the year with a positive balance for 2009 thanks to very generous giving in December.
- Received the wonderful news from Stewardship that resident members of the congregation increased their pledged giving by 8% for 2010.
- Approved the budget for 2010 which will be presented to the congregation at the congregational meeting.
- Approved paying for installation of a surge suppressor protection system, as recommended by the Admin. Committee at a cost of \$7500 using funds from the Martha Porter gift.
- Approved setting aside funds to conduct an energy study by the Energy Task Force at a cost of \$5000, using funds from the Martha Porter gift.
- Received the report from John Genther and the Nominating Committee about the slate of officers to be presented at the congregational meeting.
- Postponed action on the recommendations of the Child Safety Taskforce until February.
- Approved the motion that the congregation enter into a covenant relationship with Living Waters for the World.
- Received reports from Stewardship, Administrative Committee, Endowment, Fellowship Committee, Christian Education Committee, Nominating, Mission, Hospitality, and Worship Committees, and the Deacons and Clerk of Session..
- Please keep in your prayers:
 - Hospitality: For "Invite a Friend Sunday"
 - Worship: For our Lenten worship.
 - Fun and Fellowship: For enthusiastic participation in our new activities.
 - Administrative: Thanksgiving for the resources to support our ministry.
 - Christian Education: For Liv.
 - Personnel: For our dedicated Staff.
 - Endowment: Thanksgiving for all of those who have made gifts to the Endowment and prayers that members of the Committee can be prudent stewards.
 - Nominating: Thanksgiving for those who accepted the call to serve.
 - Mission: For the safe return of Karen Keiser and Rick Moyer from India.

Financial Highlights from 2009

Budgeted Giving and Other Receipts in 2009:	\$465,564
Actual Giving and Receipts:	495,546
Budgeted Expenses and Other Disbursements:	465,564
Actual Expenses and Other Disbursements:	455,506
Surplus for 2009:	40,040

Comment:

By the grace of God, some unexpected contributions enabled us to meet all of our expenses and mission commitments and build up our cash reserves to a more prudent level. Thanks be to God! The 2010 budget will be presented at the congregational meeting.

Branches of the Vine—Reaching Out to Make a Difference

Helping in Haiti

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is coordinating its efforts with our ecumenical partners in the relief work in Haiti. PDA sent \$100,000 to Haiti for emergency supplies immediately after the earthquake from funds on hand from the “One Great Hour of Sharing” offering that members of our congregation and congregations across the denomination contribute to every Easter. More money has been since then for emergency supplies. Now the focus is on providing emergency shelter. PDA and its partners are seeking to bring in 20,000 tents to Port-au-Prince in this next week for the one million people estimated to be without shelter.

Presbyterian mission co-workers stationed in Haiti, Mark and Jenny Hare, recently wrote: “Port au Prince has been deeply wounded. Jenny and I have no answers for any of these problems. Just the reminder...that our God is a God of hope, that despair has already been defeated, and now is the time to face what has happened and to act, act out of that hope and not out of despair. I don’t have any idea what that will mean. But our God is up to the task. Pray for us that we will also be up to the task.”

Please keep the people of Haiti in your prayers. If you would like to make a contribution, you can make your check out to the church and write “Haiti relief” on the memo line.

Living Waters for the World

Our congregation has entered a covenant to send a team to install a filtration system and provide training for a village that lacks clean water through the ministry, “Living Waters for the World.” See more details in the insert to this newsletter. On February 21, come and hear Rick Moyer and Karen Keiser talk about their trip to India with another Presbyterian church (see p. 4).

New Orleans Mission Trip

On Saturday, February 27 and February 28, a team of 18 First Presbyterians are heading to New Orleans. They will stay in the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance village, “Olive Tree” and help residents of New Orleans to rebuild their homes. They return on Saturday, March 6. Tom Zeigler is serving as coordinator. Please keep them in your prayers.

Lectionary Readings

January 31 to February 7:

Isaiah 6:1-8; Psalm 138; 1 Corinthians 15: 1-11; Luke 5: 1-11

February 7 to February 14:

Exodus 34:29-35; Psalm 99; 2 Corinthians 3: 12—4: 2; Luke 9: 28-36

February 14 to February 21:

Deut. 26:1-11; Psalm 91: 1-2, 9-16; Romans 10: 8-13; Luke 4: 1-13

February 21 to 28:

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Phil. 3: 17—4: 1; Luke 13: 31-35

Lent Devotional Materials

Deepen your experience of Lent and gain the benefit of insights and reflections from other members in the congregation. The Christian Education Committee will be distributing booklets with daily readings and devotions written by church members. Pick one up for Lent.

HENS Nursery School Registration Open for Church Members

Church members now have an opportunity to register for openings in the HENS Nursery School for the 2010-2011 school year. If you are interested, or have questions, contact the director (and church member), Jaylee Ferreri, at 610-326-3690.

Soul Feast—News from the Library

Please check your shelves to find all late and overdue books and movies that belong to the church library! Here are some hidden treasures of the Library in the form of **movies**. Remember, we have no fees! Come in and check them out—and this is just a sampling. Look for a longer list next month.

Family: 161 titles

August Rush
 Bridge of Terabithia
 Dreamer
 Kit Kitteredge
 Kung Fu Panda
 March of the Penguins
 Marley and Me
 Nim's Island
 Ratatouille
 Shrek
 Simon Birch
 Wall-E

Religious: 51 titles

A Man Called Peter
 Gandhi
 Jesus of Nazareth
 Luther
 Moses
 Passion of the Christ
 The Greatest Story Ever Told
 The Messiah
 The Ten Commandments

Sports: 17 titles

Bend It Like Beckham
 Chariot's of Fire
 Coach Carter
 Eight Below
 Facing the Giants
 For the Love of the Game
 Glory Road
 Iron Will
 Miracle
 Radio
 Remember the Titans
 Rudy
 Seabiscuit

February 2010

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

	1	2	3	4	6	6
	Cub Scouts 7	Bible Study	M/R 4:30 Evening Prayer 7:15 Committee	Sisters of the Way 9:15 Ladies Bible 9:30 Cluster lunch 12:15 Comm. Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Scouts 7		
7 Seekers 7 a.m. Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 Communion	8 Cub Scouts 7	9 Prayer Shawl Group 7 p.m. Lectio 7:30 p.m.	10 M/R 4:30 Deacons Meeting 7:30 p.m.	11 Sisters of the Way 9:15 Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Scouts 7 Choir 7:30	12	13 Men's Breakfast 8 a.m.
14 Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 5 p.m. Confirmation Class	15 Church Office Closed HENS Closed Cub Scouts 7	16 Bible Study 7:30 p.m.	17 Moms' Circle 9:15 a.m. M/R 4:30 Ash Wed. Worship 7:30 Session 8:15 p.m.	18 Sisters of the Way 9:15 Ladies Bible 9:30 Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Scouts 7 Choir 7:30	19	20 Senior Seekers Skiing
21 9:15 Teacher Breakfast and SS Program 10:30 Worship Confirmation 5 Pot Luck & Hymn Sing 5 p.m. Jr. Seekers 6:30	22 Cub Scouts 7	23 Lectio 7:30	24 M/R 4:30 Evening Prayer 6 Dinner 6:15 Lenten Program 7 p.m.	25 Sisters of the Way 9:15 Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Scouts 7:30 Choir 7:30	26 Pinewood Derby set up	27 Adult Mission Trip leave for New Orleans (and Sunday) Pinewood Derby
28 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship						

