



The Celtic Cross

Summer 2013

Letter from the Co-Pastors

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Letter from
Wheelers

Dearly Beloved:

Some musings and some news that we would like to share with you this month.

“Buy local” is an ongoing campaign in many communities across the country, including Pottstown. Why? Because “buying local” supports local businesses and employers and keeps more jobs and dollars in the community. “Buying local” also strengthens community connections and reduces the environmental impact since locally owned businesses can make more local purchases requiring less transportation. Local businesses are also more likely to invest in the community in which the business owners. Of course, things are never black and white and there are many national and global businesses that are good employers and corporate citizens contributing to the communities in which they operate. But on the whole, there is a lot to be said for trying to buy local wherever possible.

That is particularly true for Christians and congregations. At a practical level, we have a vested interest in doing all that we can to promote the healthiness of the communities in which we live and worship. But there is a theological dimension as well. As we are told in the prologue to the Gospel of John, in Jesus Christ, the “Word became flesh.” Literally, the Greek means that the Word “pitched his tent” among us. We worship and follow an incarnational God who chooses to live among us mortals. And so we are called to follow in Jesus’ footsteps as the “body of Christ” sent into the world to be Christ in the flesh for our communities and neighbors. We are called not only to buy locally; as Christ’s followers, we are called to live locally.

On another note, for the first time in more than 20 years, a child of this congregation will be ordained to the ministry in the Presbyterian Church. We speak as proud parents as well as pastors: Kate has been called to serve as Associate Pastor at Second Presbyterian Church in Richmond, Virginia. She will be ordained in a special service here in our sanctuary on the second or third weekend in October, before being installed in a separate service in Richmond in late October. She joins others who have come out of this congregation to serve in the ministry including Barbara Lucia, Tim Bathurst, Keith Jones, and Max Creswell. Thank you for being such a faithful cloud of witnesses for Kate and the other children and youth in this congregation. We hope that you will be able to join us in her service of ordination.

See you Sunday,
Carter and Kerry

P.S. Now you can “like” First Presbyterian on Facebook or “follow” us on Twitter @FPresbyPtwn. But it is even better to be together “in the flesh” in worship!

Worship Matters

Worship in the summer is at 9:30 a.m.

Sunday, August 4 — Service of the Lord's Day
Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Sunday, August 11 — Service of the Lord's Day

Sunday, August 18 — Service of the Lord's Day
Blessing of the Backpacks

Sunday, August 25 — Service of the Lord's Day

Service of Thanksgiving and Caring for Creation With a Blessing of the Animals Thursday, August 15, 7 p.m. in the Peace Garden

You don't need to bring an animal to come but all God's creatures, great and small, are welcome—as long as they are on a leash, or in a carrier. Bring a blanket or folding chair. Lemonade, cookie, and kibbles 'n bits, following. Families and friends welcome! **This is a *fair weather* event. In case of rain, check the website or call the church office.**

Blessing of the Backpacks, Sunday, August 25 in Worship

As we turn towards a new school year, we invite children to bring their backpacks to worship on August 25. We'll ask God's blessing upon those who carry them as they do the work of learning throughout the year.

Mission Mornings for Junior High Seekers, August 12-16

Those who have signed up should have received a mailing with all of the details. This year, our rising sixth, seventh, and eighth graders will work and serve, play and have fun together at five "mission sites:" Downtown Pottstown, Camp Kirkwood, Pottstown Training Center, the Mennonite Distribution Center in Ephrata, and our very own First Presbyterian Church. There will be a night "manhunt" game, and a pool party at the Grims' house on Friday to wrap things up. The days start at 9 a.m. with pick up varying day by day. If you have not signed up yet, or need further information, contact Sandro or Rosie Roseo.

Confirmation Journals—Can you help?

Would you like to help our confirmands in their journey? If you can sew, cut, or iron, you can help make journals for this year's class. Jane Barndt will lead you in creating cloth journal covers in Fellowship Hall, Thursday, August 22 from 9 a.m. to noon. The technique you will learn can be used for personal journals, photo albums, and anniversary books—the list goes on and on. Please call the church office to sign up. Any questions, call or email Jane Barndt, 610-469-9165 or barndthj@verizon.net.

Family Bible School: Backyard Blessings in August

All ages welcome!

Thursday, August 8: God Saves, 6-8 p.m., Fairview Cemetery, Boyertown

Bring sandwiches, picnic blanket, dryer sheets, and a picture of someone you love who has died. We gather at 6 to eat (snacks and drinks provided), with a program to follow. We end at 8 p.m. Cancelled in case of rain.

Saturday, August 17th at 7 p.m.: Family Lock-in/Campout at the Church

Camp out or sleep inside—or participate in the evening activities and then go home and sleep in your own bed. We'll prepare to lead worship on Sunday and watch a movie under the stars.

Valley Forge Carillon Concert, Wednesday, August 14 (rain or shine)

Join the Prime Timers to hear a free program, "Music of the British Isles," featuring the Carillon and the Irish Thunder Bag Pipe Band. Please bring your own picnic dinner, lawn chair, drinks, and outdoor spray. Those interested in carpooling, please meet in the church parking lot at 5 p.m.

"Broadway: Now and Forever" at the American Music Theater, Lancaster, September 25, 2013

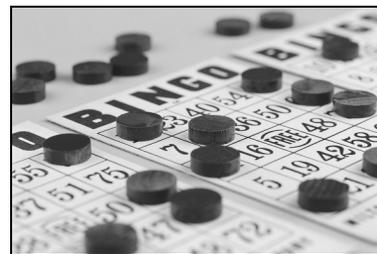
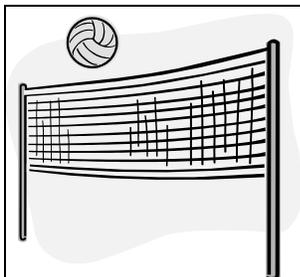
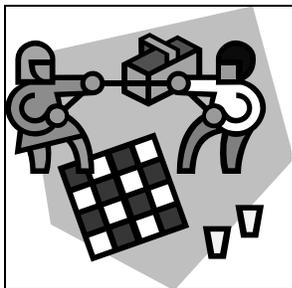
Join the Prime Timers to travel to Lancaster for music from Broadway past and present. We will leave the church at 12:45 p.m. and enjoy dinner on the road after the show. Tickets are \$27 each (payable to the church) and the deadline for reservations is August 28.

Annual Church Picnic

Sunday, September 8

4:00 – 7:00 p.m.

**Good friends and fellowship
Great food (and lots of it!)**



Games for all ages!

Please bring a side dish to serve 8 people. Deacons will supply chicken, dessert, and beverage. The picnic will take place rain or shine!

Branches on the Vine: First Presbyterian in Mission

Save the date—2nd Annual Fundraising Dinner for the Cluster, Oct. 4

The 2nd Annual Fundraising Dinner for the Cluster, "Wish Upon a Star", will be held on Friday evening, October 4, 2013. Once again it will be held at Berean Bible Church in Pottstown and will feature another great meal from Bause Catered Events. New this year will be entertainment from the "Sounds of Sunnybrook Dance Band." For more information and/or tickets please contact Doreen Duncan.

Cluster Summer Pantry Needs

Please keep in mind those in our community who need food assistance. Especially needed by the Cluster Pantry this summer are: dry cereal, oatmeal, canned pasta, baby food, juice, stew, peanut butter, jelly, baked beans, canned fruit, soy baby formula. The Cluster Outreach Center is located at Franklin and King Streets or you can bring your donations to the church.

Letter from Tim and Gloria Wheeler from Honduras

Those who have traveled with the church mission teams to install water systems in Honduras have greatly appreciated the partnership we have formed with Tim and Gloria Wheeler, Presbyterian mission workers in Honduras as well as representatives of Heifer International. Included as an insert is their annual report that is included in the *Presbyterian Mission Yearbook*.

Report of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee

We have received approximately one hundred PIFs (resumes) from the CLC. All have been reviewed and six were selected as meeting our qualifications and interview-worthy. All were contacted and interviews were scheduled. One candidate, who is currently employed, withdrew his name from consideration due to personal reasons (small children and relocation).

Five interviews were held in June and July, three "in-person" and two *via* Skype. The Committee unanimously selected the top three candidates who have been invited to Pottstown for a second interview that will take place in early August.

We have felt the guidance of the Holy Spirit throughout this process and pray that our search will find the one that the Holy Spirit has already selected for us.

Thank you for your continued prayers,
The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee

Please remember the church with your giving this summer

We hope you have a wonderful and relaxing summer. Please remember the church this summer by keeping up your giving as you are able, because our expenses do not stop for this summer.

Session Digest:

At its June meeting, the Session:

- Heard the joys and concerns of the congregation.
- Approved celebration of the Lord's Supper on the youth workcamp on July 19, 2013.
- Funded Caroline Remelius' participation in a youth leadership training event at Lancaster Seminary from the "Taste of Ministry" fund.
- Agreed to empower the Personnel Committee and Co-pastors to hire a part-time interim staff person for up to 10-15 hours a week should the committee and co-pastors deem it advisable pending the hiring of a new permanent staff person.
- Ratified the Moderator's appointment of Sharon Sgriccia to chair Fun and Fellowship Committee with Don Grim and Ron Gower to serve as Session liaisons.
- Reviewed the Treasurers' Report through May 31 and approved the monthly mission allocation and allocation to the Capital Improvement Fund.
- Received an update from the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee from chair, Bill Campbell.
- Received written reports from the Administrative and Spiritual Formation Committees and the Deacons.
- Please keep in your prayers the following prayer requests:
 Admin. Committee: thanksgiving for the resources to do needed projects around the church.
 Spiritual Formation: for Rally Day plans and the Family Vacation Bible School.
 Worship: for new folks to replenish the committee.
 Fun and Fellowship: for continued progress and growth in support of the fellowship events.
 Hospitality: that visitors to the church will continue to feel welcomed.
 Mission: for guidance for the future direction of the partnership with Barth Elementary.
 APNC: prayers for guidance and discernment with the upcoming interviews.

Is God calling you to serve in a new way in FPC's ministry?

Is God calling you to help welcome visitors to our church or teach a children's Sunday School class? Are you interested in becoming more involved with the mission efforts of the church, or with the ongoing need to manage our property and finances? Would you like to make a difference through the Worship Committee or by helping to plan fellowship events for our church family? If you are interested, or have questions, contact Carter or Kerry. August is a time for recruiting and replenishing some of the volunteer openings in the church. Gratefully, many serve and we are blessed that the work is shared. What is God calling you to do?

Counters Corner

Head Counter for August: Hank Phillips except for Aug. 25 when it is Fred Remelius.

Counters for August: Dee Phillips, except for August 25 when it is Horace Fletcher; Sharon Holloway, Gina James (Aug. 4 only) and John Genter (August 11, 18, and 25).

Lectionary Readings

July 29 to Aug. 4: Hosea 11: 1-11, Psalm 107: 1-9, Col. 3: 1-11, Luke 12: 13-21

August 5 to 11: Isa. 1, 10-20, Psalm 50: 1-8, Heb. 11: 1-3, Luke 12: 32-40

August 12 to 18: Isa. 5: 1-7, Psalm 80: 1-2, Heb. 11: 29—12: 2, Luke 12: 49-56

August 19 to 25: Jer. 1: 4-10, Psalm 71: 1-6, Heb. 12: 18-20, Luke 15: 10-17

August 26 to Sept. 1: Jer. 2: 4-13, Psalm 8: 10-16, Heb. 13: 1-8, Luke 14: 1, 7-14

Church Family News

Please keep in your prayers the following people who have been ill, hospitalized or in special need of prayers recently: Brenda Hatfield, Ron Gower, Polly Gower, Lorraine Reidenouer, Dottie Melchiorre, Jean Sweeney, Flossie Schumacher, Don Grim, Jane Barndt, and Dick Clark.

We are grateful for our sanctuary volunteers who come in each week to “tidy up:” Kathy Benning, Jane Marshall, Barb Lisi, Jean Sweeney, Deb Schonely and Suzanne Fritsch.

Thank you to Mike Ferreri, Peg Calvario, Gwen Allen, and Eric Whitlock for helping us to get started on Facebook and Twitter, and continuing thanks to our “webmaster,” Jim Osborn. Thank you to Sandro and Rosie Roseo for organizing Mission Mornings and to Mike Deegan for organizing the kayak outing.

Condolences to Chris Macdonald and family for the death of her father and to Debbie Remelius and family for the death of her step-father.

We rejoice with Laurie Buckley for the birth of Davyn Mae Falini on August 3, 2013.

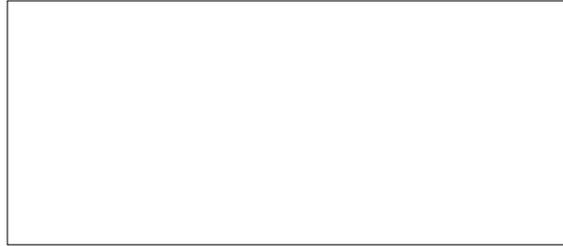
Baptized recently was Vanessa Claire Davis, child of God and daughter of John and Julie Davis.

Financial Report (through May 31)

Budgeted income for the year:	539,176	
Budgeted income through May 31:	224,657	
Actual income through May 31:	213,623	
Income this time last year:	217,139	
Budgeted expenses for the year:	539,176	
Budgeted expenses through May 31:	224,657	
Actual expenses through May 31:	196,589	(reflects vacant staff position)
Expenses this time last year:	209,804	
Surplus after Mission and Cap. Improvement allocations paid:		\$8,136
Surplus this time last year:		\$1,491

August 2013

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Comm Meals 5:00 p.m. FBS 6 p.m.	2	3
4 9:30 Worship-Communion Canoe/Kayak Trip 3 p.m.	5 .	6	7 Bloodmobile 4-7 p.m. Walk-ins Welcome	8 Community Meal 5 p.m. FBS 6:00 p.m.	9	10
11 9:30 Worship	12 Mission Mornings to Downtown Pottstown	13 Mission Mornings. to Camp Kirkwood	14 Mission Mornings to Pottstown Training Center PT to Valley Forge Concert 5 p.m.	15 Mission Mornings to Ephrata 5 p.m. Community Meals Animal Blessing 7 p.m.	16 Mission Mornings here and swim party at Grim pool Youth Advisors planning @ Lesters' 6:30	17 Family Lock-In 7 p.m.
18 9:30 Worship	19	20	21	22 Conf. Journals 9 a.m. 5 p.m. Community Meals	23	24
25 9:30 Worship Blessing of Backpacks 10:45 a.m. Teacher Orientation	26	27 HENS Board Meeting 7:30 p.m.	28 SS Teacher Orientation 7 p.m.	29 5 p.m. Community Meal	30	31



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