

The Messenger

First Presbyterian Church
Cookeville, TN 38501
www.firstprescookeville.org

May 2009

Pentecost is Coming

Pentecost doesn't get the press that always accompanies Christmas and Easter. We are all so excited about those holy days and holidays that we often overlook the day of Pentecost. It certainly isn't as exciting as the birthday of a baby nor is it as dramatic as Christ's victory over death. I have mixed feelings about the world's reaction to this feast day of the church. I believe that it is a very important day for Christians and should be recognized as such. On the other hand, I am relieved that Pentecost hasn't been turned into just another commercial celebration, with cards and gifts appropriate for the occasion. Actually, I'm not sure what kind of cards or gifts would be appropriate for Pentecost. With the right marketing plan I might make a fortune.

Pentecost was already a Jewish holy day. It landed fifty days after the Passover and celebrated the first fruits of the new harvest. After a long season without fresh vegetables and bread, the Jewish people celebrated the new crops with an offering to God, bringing their first fruits to God, before enjoying anything themselves.

For the followers of Jesus, Pentecost was the arrival of the Holy Spirit just as Jesus had promised. For weeks, the disciples had stayed in Jerusalem, waiting for the Spirit to come and bring them gifts of wisdom and power. It had to be a time filled with anticipation and anxiety. When will the Spirit finally come? Is the Spirit really coming? I wonder how patient I would be if Jesus had given me those instructions.

Fortunately, the Spirit came at just the right time. The city of Jerusalem was once again filled with pilgrims and other tourists. The gifts of the Spirit included the sudden ability to speak in many languages and the disciples were able to communicate with Jewish people from all over the known world who had come to Jerusalem for the festival. I imagine that many of those people, though certainly not all of them, would have heard about Jesus and been made aware that the people speaking to them were his followers. It certainly was quite an event and people had a wide variety of reactions. I sometimes wonder whether the disciples were able to continue speaking in other languages or if that was a one day gift that expired at midnight.

In any event, Pentecost is considered the birthday of the Christian church. The disciples were empowered to communicate and proclaim the gospel. The community of faith began to take shape and emerge as its own entity, the body of Christ. Pentecost sets in motion the acts of the Apostles that will build the church into a force for spreading God's word and doing God's work. It really cannot be underestimated for without the coming of the Spirit, the church simply would not have developed, quite a sobering thought.

We will celebrate Pentecost on the last Sunday of May. Of course, we can never recapture the excitement of that original experience but we can claim our heritage. We have received the Holy Spirit and we have been empowered to help change the world in our own time. Let's not allow the Easter feeling of resurrection to fade away but build on it and share the good news of God's love. Get excited about what we can do with the gifts God has bestowed upon us. Often, the colors of flame, bright yellow, orange and red, are associated with the flames that signaled the coming of the Spirit. I invite everyone to wear bright colors that morning as a sign to the world that we are still on fire for our faith. I may have to wear sunglasses.

Peace,
Pat Handlson

VBS

By Erin Angel

Mark your calendars because Vacation Bible School is on its way to First Presbyterian Church. We will be having VBS on Monday, June 1, Tuesday, June 2 and Wednesday, June 3 from 5:30p.m. until 8 p.m. each night. We will begin each night with a light meal then proceed to break into age groups for time in Bible study, arts and crafts and music. There will be classes for ages Pre-Kindergarten through sixth grade and adults. Our theme is *On the Move: God's Grace from Place to Place*. Using a Biblical standard, the program focuses on how God's Spirit gave momentum to the Civil Rights Movement in different places, drawing the people of God towards greatness in soul through blessing, justice, truth and reconciliation. The VBS community will listen, pray, move and ride the bus to freedom in Jesus Christ in lessons that promote God's power for life in building up the community, as persons are reconciled to one another and to Jesus Christ. Please be in prayer as we prepare for VBS 2009.

Wednesday Night Bible Study

Wednesday night Bible study will continue through the month of May. We will be studying various lessons that have to do with the Holy Spirit. Most Christians are very familiar with God the Father and God the Son but God the Holy Spirit is still a mystery to many of us. This study will take a closer look at the third person of the Holy Trinity. Bible study classes meet in Fellowship Hall people from 6:30-7:30pm.

We also share a time of food and fellowship from 5:45-6:30pm. Bring a brown bag supper and eat together with other church members and friends. Drinks and desserts are provided.

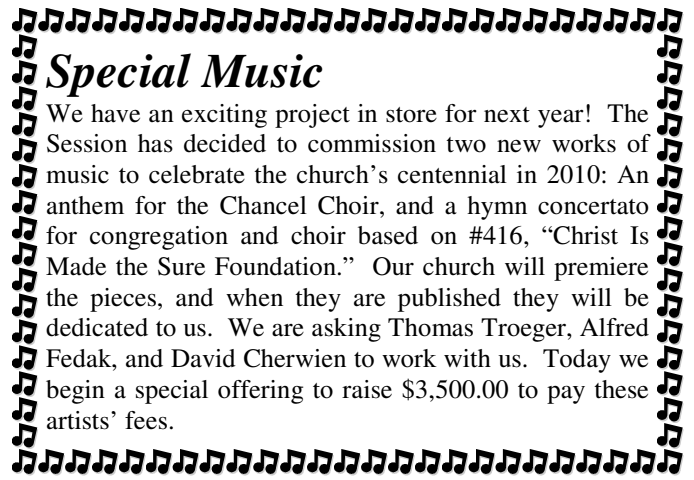
Elder Training

A training meeting will be held for elders who want to know more about their responsibilities as leaders in the church. This special meeting will be held in Crossville on Saturday, May 2, from 9am-2pm. Elders from Presbyterian churches throughout the Cumberland region have been invited to attend. Lunch will be served and there will be fellowship time so that we can get to know each other better. We will carpool from the church. Talk to Pat Handlson if you are interested in being a part of this experience.

Congratulations Tech Graduates

Congratulations to Katy Long and T. Wes Moore on their graduation from Tennessee Tech. Both of these students have been active in the life of our congregation over their college careers. T.Wes has sung in the choir, directed handbells and served as an elder. He is on his way to SMU in Dallas for graduate work in sacred music. Katy has been active in Sunday school and played the piano during worship. She spent a year abroad in Austria and will be doing graduate study in Europe this fall.

PSA students who are graduating this year include: Stephanie Hixson in journalism; Josh McQueen in agriculture; and, Katie Lewis and Lindsay Watts in nursing. Everyone who has worked with the PSA or brought supper to the group on a Tuesday night has gotten to know these students and we wish them well as they graduate and continue on their life's journeys.



Special Music

We have an exciting project in store for next year! The Session has decided to commission two new works of music to celebrate the church's centennial in 2010: An anthem for the Chancel Choir, and a hymn concertato for congregation and choir based on #416, "Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation." Our church will premiere the pieces, and when they are published they will be dedicated to us. We are asking Thomas Troeger, Alfred Fedak, and David Cherwien to work with us. Today we begin a special offering to raise \$3,500.00 to pay these artists' fees.

Holy Week Mission Recipients

Holy Week services were very successful this year. Long time members and friends said that attendance may have been the best ever. There was good preaching, good music and good food as we joined together for worship and fellowship. We also exceeded our goal of \$2,500 and raised nearly \$2,700 dollars for our two mission recipients: Helping Hands and Meals on Wheels. Many thanks to everyone who worked so hard to make the week a success. Next year, we will do it again, March 29- April 2.

Holy Week Luncheons

On behalf of my two co-chairmen, Brenda Smith and Sylvia McGee, we would like to thank all of the men and women of First Presbyterian Church who so graciously gave of their time and energy during Holy Week. So many people pitched in and cooked, cleaned, set tables, carried out trash, handed out programs, collected money and purchased flowers to decorate our fellowship hall and sanctuary. We are so fortunate to have a church family like ours who want to serve the Lord and help our community at the same time. We are thrilled to announce that we collected \$2,695 which will be equally divided between the Meals - on - Wheels and Helping Hands programs.

Marilyn Aitken

Mission Matters

by Jeannette Volpe

Our congregation is fortunate to have many opportunities to participate in mission/outreach activities. A portion of our pledges goes to support the general and global missions of the PCUSA. Some of our local church's mission work involves special events (e.g., the recent work trip to Houma, LA, special collections like OGHS, Souper Bowl Sunday, etc.) and some of our projects are ongoing.

One such continuous activity is our church's support for over 10 years of Creative Compassion, Inc. CCI is a community housing development organization whose purpose is to develop affordable housing and homeownership opportunities for low and very low income families. Last year CCI established the "Nehemiah Project," a special account for emergency assistance to the elderly, disabled, special needs or others who don't have the necessary funds for emergency home repairs. We have supported this outreach project with the sale and reloading of Kroger Gift Cards. Kroger returns 4% of our sale and reloading amounts. In 2008, FPC contributed \$3400 to CCI from the use of Kroger Gift Cards and from personal contributions of very generous donors.

For more information about CCI, visit <http://www.ccihomes.org/>. For more information about or to purchase Kroger cards, see Katie or Jennette at One World Market before worship on Sunday or see Carolyn in the church office during office hours.

Don't forget our second Sunday collection for Helping Hands. They can always use toilet paper, diapers and powder laundry detergent. Listen for other special needs.

Dinner Out

By Kaye Craig

Come join the Dinner Out Group on Saturday, May 16 at 5:00 pm at the Dipsy Doodle Drive-Inn, home of the Giant Burgers and Mile High Pies, 2331 West Broad Street. Sign up sheets are by both doors at the church. If you have questions, call Kaye Craig at 537-3714.

Please save old garden gloves or winter gloves for VBS finger puppet making. We will cut off the fingers, so gloves with holes are still useful! We need 400 fingers for 400 Ecuadorian children who I will teach during a medical mission trip the end of July! Thank you! Questions? Diane Glasgow 526-7854

Learn wheat weaving at the Joy 'N Stamping Club on Sunday, May 17 from 1 to 3 pm in Fellowship Hall. Contact Pat Wilhelm 526-3419.

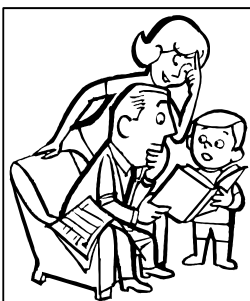
Girl scouts will have a yard sale in the church parking lot on Saturday, May 9. Talk to Lisa Dollar for more information.

Worship on our Web Site

We have heard good reports from people who have listened to worship on the web site. If you miss Sunday worship or want to invite a friend to learn more about our church, go to our web site www.firstprescookeville.org. Once you are at the web site, click on the audio link. That will take you to a page listing Sunday services by date. Click on the date you want to hear and you will see a bulletin from that Sunday. Click on the portion of the service you are interested in and it will begin to play.

I want to thank everyone for their thoughts and prayers during my illness and confinement. Thank you so much for all the cards, phone calls, visits, and gifts of food and other items. The Easter lily is particularly beautiful. Bruce and I certainly appreciate everyone associated with First Presbyterian Church. Thank you so very much.

Virginia Throckmorton



Read Anything Good Lately?

By Thelma Johnson

See You In A Hundred Years by Logan Ward.

A couple living a high-powered life in New York City decide to chuck it all and move to a rural area where they can live the way people did in 1800 for one year. No electricity, no indoor plumbing, no automobiles. For those of us who can still remember such a time, this book is an amusing story of their struggles and inventions in dealing with everyday chores, such as pumping water, making a garden, milking goats, chopping wood, canning food, and generally trying to survive in a primitive setting. They brave blisters, sunburn, calluses, city visitors, swarms of grasshoppers, and other plagues that could have sent them back to the city. They stick it out, and learn the value of the simple life, but when their year is up, they happily embrace the conveniences of modern industry. An easy read

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BIRTHDAYS

- 1 — Marie Overstreet
- 8 — Rachel McCormick
- 9 — Pat Handlson
- 9 — Mary Ann Neil
- 11 — John Grant
- 11 — Gail Luna
- 11 — Burl Smith
- 11 — Emily Thurmond
- 13 — Emily Hansen
- 15 — Mike Pumar
- 17 — Bill Klug
- 24 — Jerry Overstreet
- 24 — Nathaniel Harrison
- 25 — Jessie Lee Lamb
- 27 — Whit Whitaker

ANNIVERSARY

- 15 — Angelo & Jeanette Volpe
- 23 — Ernest & Lucille Robertson

In Our Prayers

IN OUR PRAYERS: PERSONS HOMEBOUND: Mary Martha Bush, Nancy Jarrell, and Jessie Lee Lamb.

IN NURSING HOMES OR ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES: Beulah Doran, Dorothy Grant, Edith Jared, and Frances Snyder.

Keep in prayer also: Dick Armstrong; Helen Copeland; Nancy Dixon; Lonnie Hester; Don Medley; Merlin Miller; Virginia Throckmorton; Ted Hayes' mother, Ann Hayes; Eli Covington who is doing mission work in Nicaragua; and the people in the armed services, especially Benjamin Crawford.

Church Office:

Mon.-Fri. 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

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(phandlson@frontiernet.net)

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Next newsletter deadline is May 23. Phone Debbie Handlson at (536-5486) or e-mail (phandlson@aol.com) with any information.

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