

The Messenger

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

September 2009

What's Next?

I have thoroughly enjoyed this summer's sermon series on Calvin and the Ten Commandments. In my role as preacher, I study the texts and dig a little deeper into their history, which gives me so much more information than any of you get by simply listening to the sermon on Sunday. I think it is often the case that the teacher learns more than the students and the preacher learns more than the people sitting in the pews. I consider myself very fortunate to be able to devote so much of my time to study of the Bible and of our heritage.

As I began the series, I really wondered whether people would stay interested for ten weeks on the commandments. I was delighted to learn that many folks were quite engaged in this series. I know that for some, it was uncomfortable and challenging to consider that these old laws still have such meaning and power today. When looked at through the prism of Calvin's interpretation, the Ten Commandments became much more difficult to fulfill. I found myself being amazed at the modern relevance of Calvin's comments, written nearly 500 years ago.

As a final tribute to Calvin's view of the law, I want to emphasize his belief that the church must always be changing to adapt to modern circumstances. Some things in life never change. We can see the same emotions and reactions today that we read about in the Bible from thousands of years ago. We may like to think that we are more advanced than our distant ancestors but, on closer examination, we really aren't.

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distant ancestors but, on closer examination, we really aren't.

At the same time, we have made many technological advances that folks from long ago never imagined, things that have changed the way we look at life and the world around us. I want to be clear that I am the beneficiary of other people's genius. I use a computer and a cell phone without having the foggiest idea how they work. I just know that they do and I am grateful. It's good to know that God's laws and plans are flexible enough to help us through whatever changes occur in society. It is important for the church to remember this as well.

A Calvinist understanding of God will never allow us to be satisfied with the world as it is. We know that everyone is sinful and falls short of perfection. That makes us skeptical and cautious. On the other hand, we have a vision of God's reign that encourages us to work at making the world a better place, a place more in line with God's will and purpose. That makes us bold and unafraid to try new things.

All of these thoughts come back together when I consider our 100th anniversary celebration. We have much to celebrate over the past 100 years. This congregation has been a strong part of the community. I look forward to learning more about our past and sharing some of the stories throughout the coming year. Of course, there have been difficult times in this church as well and we can't ignore them. We must learn from them and grow stronger.

At the same time, celebrating the past loses its meaning if we are not equally determined to dedicate ourselves to the future. We must continue to evaluate our mission and ministry, looking for the best ways to serve God and our neighbors. Each generation faces its own challenges. We must identify our strengths and strive to do even better. And, of course, we are never alone. God is with us every step of the way. Guiding us and protecting us.

One last note, Calvin did not want to be singled out as a leader. He ordered that he be buried in an unmarked grave, to prevent any veneration of himself. Of course, his writings live on as a testimony to his influence, but we are all God's children, equal to one another and called to serve in love and obedience. Let's keep on working

Peace,
Pat H.

Handlson's Hot Dog Day October 10, 2-5pm

315 East 14th Street

1909

By Michael Birdwell

A momentous year, Cookevillians witnessed a number of things. For one, the state of Tennessee went “Dry,” outlawing the manufacture and consumption of alcoholic beverages. This was a costly and controversial move because distilling was the number one industry in the state with over 1500 operations within its borders. 1909 witnessed the opening of the new “pagoda-styled” Cookeville Depot, bringing more people and products to the town. The Tennessee legislature established a public university for African Americans, Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial Institute, (now TSU). That same legislature mandated the creation of four new Normal Schools to train students to be teachers. Jere Whitson sold fourteen acres of land to the Churches of Christ for \$1750 to establish a Christian College at Cookeville, and Dixie College soon opened its doors. At Sale Creek, Tennessee north of Chattanooga, a functionally illiterate visitor to a tent revival, George Wentworth Hensley, started his own church. Due to a misinterpretation of scripture from the book of Mark, he encouraged his congregation to “take up serpents,” adding a little excitement to his services. That same year, in a four-to-one ruling, the State Supreme Court declared that the union of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America was unconstitutional. Though both denominations shared the same sanctuary on alternate Sundays, the anti-unionists were emboldened by the *Landrith v. Hudgins* decision, and demanded that the Presbyterians surrender the property. They did so in October, and in November they purchased from Jere Whitson the property where First Presbyterian Church now sits.

PSA News

Cookout

You are invited! On Tuesday, September 1 at the PSA house we will be hosting our kick-off cook-out to start the semester off. We will join together for a time of food, fellowship and worship at 5:30 p.m. Plan to come and

By Erin Angel

Christian Education News

By Erin Angel

Some of our Sunday School classes took the summer off. They will be resuming their regular schedule on Sunday, September 13. We are excited once again to have a wonderful slate of Sunday school teachers for the '09-'10 school year. For our children, the preschool and Kindergarten class will be taught by Barbara Greeson, the fourth and fifth grade class will be taught by Sharyl Hansen, the sixth and seventh grade class will be taught by Chris McCormick, and the eighth through twelfth grade class will be taught by Lisa Dollar.

For our adults, three different classes will be offered. The Adult Fellowship Class taught by Virginia Lovellette is held in the Library. This class uses the Presbyterian Curriculum called “The Present Word.” The Religion and Culture Class is taught by Michael Birdwell and meets in room 12. This class is currently studying a book by Karen Armstrong titled The Bible: A Biography. The book slated to be their next topic of discussion is titled The Wordy Shipmates by Sara Vowell. The third class offered is titled the Enlightenment and Inspiration class and is held in the Fellowship Hall. This class invites speakers from throughout the community to come and speak on a variety of topics. The speakers for the month of September include the Glasgows on September 13 speaking on their recent trip to Lesotho, Larry Self on September 20 speaking on the Rescue Mission’s new ministry called Step-Upward farm, and Michael Birdwell on September 27 speaking on his trip to Israel.

We hope that you will explore the various education opportunities that are provided by the Christian Education program of this church and find a place where you can be fed and nurtured in your spiritual journey.

hosting our kick-off cook-out to start the semester off. We will join together for a time of food, fellowship and worship at 5:30 p.m. Plan to come and spend some time getting to know the students involved and meeting new students who might be interested in joining our group. If the weather is cooperating, bring your lawn chairs and we will enjoy eating on the back deck and in the back yard.

Meals

Once again we will be providing home cooked meals for the Presbyterian Student Association students on Tuesday nights at 5:30 p.m. We share this ministry with the First Cumberland Presbyterian Church. We will be providing meals for the first half of the semester beginning on September 8th. This is a great way to meet the students and get to know a little about the ministry of PSA. We encourage you to come, provide the meal and stay and worship with us which allows the students a chance to get to know some of our church members. If you are interested in this ministry there is a sign-up sheet outside the sanctuary or you can contact Erin at 265-0481.

Youth Group

By Erin Angel

The youth of the church will once again be meeting on the first Wednesday of the month to complete various mission projects. We will begin meeting on the first Wednesday in October – Wednesday, October 7. Come and join us for a brown bag lunch at 5:45 p.m. then gather for a mission activity at 6:30 p.m. We will meet with Diane Glasgow to make welcome signs for the church entrances. There will be activities for both younger and older youth.

spiritual journey.

Evangelism Sunday

Sunday, September 27 has been designated Evangelism Sunday within the Presbyterian Church. We are all challenged to invite a friend or neighbor to attend worship that day and experience the joy that we share. The vast majority of people who attend and join a church first came because someone invited them. If this church has a special meaning for you and your faith, then take this opportunity to share the good news and invite someone you know to have that same feeling. Wouldn't it be something to see the sanctuary overflowing on that Sunday? It is up to each of us to help make that happen.

Nominating Committee

The nominating committee will soon begin its work of identifying people who will accept leadership positions within the church. We need elders to make decisions regarding all aspects of the life of the church, and, deacons who will watch over the care of our church members and friends. Along with the pastor, these leaders are responsible for maintaining the church as a strong and caring congregation. Please look inside your heart and discover whether you might be ready to take on one of these important roles.

Church Wide Picnic

By Erin Angel

Mark your calendars for Wednesday, September 9 at 5:30 p.m. for the church picnic at the Medley farm. If you would like to carpool to the farm meet at the church by 5:00 p.m. We will return here in time for choir practice. Maps are available at the church entrances for those of you who will be providing your own transportation. Meat and beverages will be provided. Please bring a side dish and a lawn chair. Come out and enjoy the beautiful farm, good food, and excellent fellowship.

Fall Gardening
September 12th
7:30 am to 11 am

By MaryDell Sommers

If possible, bring any of the following: wheel barrows, spades, shovels, trimmers, large garbage bags, any other gardening tools that you like to use.

One job is to remove shrubs along exterior stairs to basement, add amended soil, plant new shrubs, mulch and water. Another is to work a pipe (PVC?) under the side walk and along a shallow trench to accommodate a hose to the sign, break up soil around the sign, add amended soil, place edging, plant, lay a soaker hose, and mulch

Other jobs include: trim tree limbs along the island that appear ready to break off, complete removal of all vegetation along west fence area as this is critical to correct the drainage problems along the wall, place a drainage pipe in a trench along the west fence, apply a sealer to the wall that faces west and then paint the entire wall.

We recognize that not all of these plans can be completed in one work session. They do, however, represent all that needs to be completed by year end.

Mission Matters

By Jeanette Volpe

The Living Waters of the World—Appalachian Network project committee met in August with various activities of this project identified: e.g., survey clean water needs in our area; to work with LWW-AP committees such as field operations, technology, education, development and awareness; to reach out beyond our congregation to inform others of the need for clean water in our region and invite wider participation in this mission work.. The opportunity to participate in system installations in Tazewell, TN is being scheduled for September and in Frakes, KY in November. All interested are invited and encouraged to become involved. For more information, contact Chris McCormick at 537-2317 or Bill Swim at 528-7321.

The Glasgows have returned from their medical mission trip with Ecuadorian and Peruvian crafts that are now available at One World Market. Proceeds from the sale of these crafts will go to purchase vitamins. The mission team can buy 25,000 vitamins, zip lock bags and labels for \$350-\$375, which they then package for people in need. A couple of “one-of-a-kind” special items will be available at a Silent Auction at our second Sunday lunch. Holiday shopping is just around the corner and it would be wonderful if our church could provide a month of vitamins for many of our brothers and sisters in Ecuador.

The new display case in the One World Market is a gift from St. Thomas Aquinas Church. Special thanks to Mike Medley, Angelo Volpe and Mike Birdwell for transporting it to us.

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

Financial Update

At the end of July, church finances remain relatively strong and stable. The 2009 budget calls for just over \$128,000 in income and spending for the first seven months. Actual income has been just over \$135,000, with actual spending just under \$125,000. The difference in income can be accounted for by several families who paid their annual pledges in advance, as well as mission giving above expectations and special gifts for the centennial music programs.

There are several special projects that we hope to complete before we begin our 100th anniversary celebration. These include: an overhaul of the sound system, sealing and striping the parking lot, landscaping and grounds repair, new pew cushions, and, special music for the church. Special offerings for the Centennial Fund will be much appreciated. Thanks to all for such generous support of church mission and ministry.

Wedding Invitation

Alison Anderson and Grant Lovellette invite everyone in their church family to join in the celebration of their life together as they exchange vows on Saturday, September 5; at 3pm. The ceremony will be held in the church sanctuary. A cake and hors d'oeuvres reception will follow in Fellowship Hall. It will truly be a celebration of faith and love.

Thank You International

Student Host Families

By Peggy Kilgore

Thank you in advance for being available and welcoming Tennessee Tech's international scholars who represent hundreds of foreign locations with the planned ice cream social. The second Sunday church lunch, October 11, will be designated as "welcome international students" day. Each Host Family needs to contact his/her student to extend an invitation. Possibly the student would like to attend our church service. Be aware that many students do not have transportation so they might need a ride or maybe carpooling could be arranged. In view of this event, please bring even more delicious food to the lunch than you usually bring. Katie Kumar has encouraged a social gathering as soon as possible after the ice-cream social as these first months are when students are most disoriented and experiencing culture shock. Thank you Katie for all that you do for First Pres and for TTU and thanks again church family for your warm outreach to Tech's international community. We still have need for more host families! Please contact me at plkilgore@tntech.edu

Civil War Film Presentation

The Civil War Roundtable, which meets monthly in Fellowship Hall, has invited our own Michael Birdwell to be the presenter at its next meeting, Tuesday, September 8, beginning at 6:30pm. Birdie will talk about the Civil War in film. He will show some film clips and answer questions about how the Civil War has been portrayed in film over time. Talk to Birdie or Kent Dollar for more information

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BIRTHDAYS

- 7—Dick Armstrong
- 10—Hae Soon Dyer
- 10—Rosemary Haselton
- 17—Tom Powell
- 18—Billie Cameron
- 19—Gloria Thomas
- 20—Annette Flanders
- 21—Dorothy Grant
- 21—Shirley Klug
- 24—Virginia Lovellette
- 28—Peggy Campbell
- 29—Cynthia Boles

ANNIVERSARYS

- 3—Barry & Gail Turner
- 4—Bob & Gail Luna
- 4—Burl & Melba Smith
- 4—Whit & Martha Jane Whitaker
- 6—Bill & Shirley Klug
- 14—John & Sylvia McGee
- 15—John & Juanita Phillips
- 17— Eliseo & Marge Rios
- 29—Ginny & Wayne Langpap

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; Charlie Craig; Nancy Dixon; Lonnie Hester; Don Medley; John Phillips; Anne Rose; Judy Medley's brother, Richard McReynolds; Ted Hayes' mother, Ann Hayes; Eli Covington who is doing mission work in Nicaragua; Lauren, Joey and Ellia Pratt who are in Papua New Guinea; and the people in the armed services.

Church Office:

Mon.-Fri. 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
(931) 526-4424
(firstprescooke@frontiernet.net)
Pastor: The Rev. Pat Handlson
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(phandlson@frontiernet.net)
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Next newsletter deadline is September 23. Phone Debbie Handlson at 536-5486 or e-mail (phandlson@aol.com) or Katie Kumar at 528-7968 or e-mail (KJKumar@tntech.edu) with any information you would like to have included.

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