

The Messenger

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

August 2010

Health Care Becomes Personal

I came home early from my bike ride this morning because I had taken a nasty spill. I was going too fast as I tried to make a turn, slipped on something and lost control. I scraped my right knee and foot, and, bruised my back. Don't worry, I'm ok. It only hurts when I look at it. I did wreck my bike and tear up my shoes. I will most likely be grounded for at least a few days. Fortunately, Jack Matson was right there with me and he took care of me and got me home. It's nice to have good friends. I am also grateful for helmets and gloves. Now, if I could only learn to be more careful.

When I got home, Debbie reminded me of all the times I have been to see one doctor or another this year. Mercifully, I had blocked many of those trips from my memory but I was forced to admit that I have probably spent more time at doctor's appointments this year than in the last five years combined. I know that I have spent more money on medical care this year than in the last ten years combined.

As an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church USA, I am fortunate to have relatively good health care coverage. Each church in our denomination pays into a fund that supports ministers and other church workers, along with options to cover family members. Each Presbytery has a relationship with a particular provider. In our case, health insurance is provided by Blue Cross, Blue Shield. We get annual updates on the kinds of coverage we have, as well as the latest rules and procedures we must follow to make sure that it is there when we need it.

There are limits to that coverage, a point brought home to me during my recent trip to the emergency room when I was suffering from what would later be discovered to be a kidney stone. I am supposed to call for pre approval any time I make a non routine visit to a doctor or hospital. In the case of an emergency, I have 48 hours to call for approval after the visit. My coverage is generally an 80/20 split. That means the insurance company pays 80% of the cost and I pay 20%, after an initial co-payment. What many people don't know is that the insurance company pays 80% of what it deems an appropriate amount for the procedures involved.

In my particular case, the costs for treating me in the emergency room that morning have totaled about \$3,000 so far. Blue Cross informed me that the emergency room cost should have been about \$2,400. That makes their reimbursement about \$1,900, leaving me to pay the remaining \$1,100. Fortunately, I can afford that, though not too many times (I am still receiving bills and the kidney stone is still with me so I have no idea what future costs may be). And, at the time I was being treated, I was in pain and I wanted it to stop. I was in no position to make any kind of wise decisions, regarding either my health care or my finances.

I think back on the many times I have waited in an emergency room with church members or people being helped by the church. It can be a long and tedious process even when you feel good; how much more exasperating when you are in considerable pain. I also think about the many people who cannot afford to pay an extra \$1,000. For many it might mean choosing between paying the medical bill and the rent or utilities. For others, it's not even an option. It simply puts them further behind, with little hope of ever catching up.

I know there are many different opinions about the state of healthcare in America today. It may be the best system in the world for some people but it is not for everyone. From my personal experience and from what I have seen through the eyes of many others, there is no doubt in my mind that we must continue looking for ways to reform and improve our system.

Peace,
Pat H.

A Moment in History

By Michael Birdwell

The New Sanctuary (part 1)

At the annual congregational meeting January 26, 1955 the Building Committee delivered a revised budget, concerning revamping and modernizing the sanctuary. The Akron Plan Auditorium would be obliterated. They announced it would cost only \$9,000 to renovate the sanctuary and take two months to complete. Upon hearing the report, the congregation "voted unanimously to instruct the Building Committee to proceed immediately.

Dero, Clemma, and Ted Darwin designed the new sanctuary and Roy Phillips acted as master carpenter, electrician, welder, plumber and painter. Sounds of shrieking nails filled the air, as men took crow bars and loosened the sweeping curved pews from the floor. Removal of those original pews marked the beginning of the work. The church sold the old pews to the Oak Grove Baptist Church in Livingston and to Knight's Chapel Freewill Baptist Church for \$520, "which is probably what they cost 45 years ago." The sanctuary was completely stripped of furnishings dating back to 1910. Once gone, the sloping raked floors were ripped up, and the remainder of the basement excavated before installing the new level floor. Phillips used "an escalator to load the dirt from the basement directly on trucks outside." Once completed the congregation deemed that it "would no longer be proper to refer to it as a "Basement" so it was rededicated as a "Fellowship Hall."

Carpenters cut and nailed new joists into place on March 21. On March 28, the congregation recommended redoing the ceiling and the lights. April 3 was set aside as "Building Fund Sunday," and all the money collected went directly toward paying bills associated with the new construction. By April 10 new hardwood floors were in place. In order to offset the cost of new straight pews, members were encouraged to buy a pew in memory of a former member or loved one. By May 1, electricians improved the lighting in the sanctuary, and a week later workers installed duct work for a new heating system. Craftsmen from Rock City Construction Company of Nashville crafted new furniture for the chancel on May 15 as construction neared completion. Hall Barrett reported that "Dero Darwin, our talented architect, brought his rulers, squares, saws and hammers and worked for weeks with the carpenters to see that everything was as near perfect as human hands could possibly make it. He did take one day off to go to Alabama to buy a store!"

The kitchen doubled in size and "filled with the latest gadgets, two wall ovens, center island with built in stove, counters of Formica [sic], etc. Now all our members are entreating their husbands for similar kitchens at home!" C.P. Snelgrove, the church's treasurer kept a watchful eye on every aspect of the renovation, and soon realized that Phillips's estimation of \$9,000 was faulty. By the May Session meeting he glumly reported that the project had gone over budget to the tune of \$12,000.

While the church underwent renovation, the congregation met in the Methodist's Fellowship Hall, "where with two services in the same building at the same time, the pastors had an understanding with each other, that if one congregation started singing, 'Will There Be Any Stars In My Crown?' The other would not sing, 'No, Not One!'"

Dinner at the Rescue Mission

We will be serving supper at the Cookeville Rescue Mission on Thursday, August 5, beginning at 5pm. We will need to meet at the site about 4:30pm to set up and serve. We will eat with the residents and clean up after the meal. Anyone interested in helping out with this meal, please contact Pat Handlson.

Centennial Calendar

Speakers Series

Hosted in Conjunction with the Friends of the Cookeville Museums
August 5— Ben Nance, "Prehistoric Tennessee: Archaeology of the Cumberland Plateau"

September 16—Fred Prouty, "Civil War Sesquicentennial in Tennessee"

November 4—"The Tennessee Maneuvers and Cookeville"
All events at 7p.m.

Art Shows

October 4-December 31— Nancy Dixon Retrospective

A Successful Presbytery Meeting

Thanks to everyone who helped make our hosting of the Presbytery meeting a huge success. From parking and registration, through worship and lunch, to the closing gavel, every aspect of the day went off without a hitch. Our guests truly appreciated their experience in our facility. The choir was magnificent, Fellowship Hall was spectacular, and the food was outstanding. We set a high standard for ourselves and we exceeded all expectations. See what we can do working together in service.

Financial Update

At the end of June, the church's finances remain strong and we are moving through the summer months with confidence. Church income for the year to date has totaled just under \$148,000, with expenses coming in at just under \$115,000. Several substantial memorial gifts account for much of the difference at this point. The session is now discussing spending priorities for rest of this year. One potential difficulty has been a problem with the air conditioning, which could have a significant impact on future spending. Please remember to keep up your pledges through the summer months. Attendance at church levels off during the summer but expenses remain steady and even rise a bit due to the hot weather. Thanks to all for your generous support of church programs and mission.

Dinner Out Group

By Kaye Craig

Come join us on Saturday, August 21, 5:00pm at Casa Luna Italian Restaurant, 125 Churchill Drive, Sparta. Casa Luna has many Italian specialty dinners, pizza, sandwiches and burgers. Look for their menu with the sign up sheets. Sharyl and Jerry Hansen have graciously opened their home for dessert afterward. Sign up sheets are at both doors of the sanctuary. Please call Kaye Craig 537-3714 or 239-6160 with any questions or if you are unable to attend this event and you have signed up for it.

Come ToGather or C2G

By Andy Smith

A small committee of church members and friends are pleased to announce the commencement of Come ToGather, starting August 29th and meeting weekly on Sunday nights in our Fellowship Hall. We hope to create an inviting space in our church that's spiritually and culturally inclusive as we come to gather for a creative, contemporary, and casual worship experience at 6pm, featuring weekly communion and followed by weekly potluck supper and conversation. Other evening activities might occur after dinner as the experience evolves and as members of the new community desire.

Grounded in generosity and grace, we seek a daring and dynamic time of friendship and fellowship where everyone feels at home and is inspired to grow in mindfulness, spirit, and togetherness. One feature of the new service will be creative presentations -- including but not limited to testimonials, "questimonials," "Ask The Pastor Q&A," creative poetic, musical, or dance performances, lessons from other cultures, or whatever members of this new experience bring. While the services will provide a clear Christian message, not all participants will necessarily be Christian. After each week's preaching and teaching message, there will be a brief period for community questions or responses before the community prayer.

Come ToGather (or simply C2G) sees itself as part of a larger "emergent church" movement within the PC-USA calling itself "Presbymergent." The website presbymergent.org offers itself as an online space "for Presbyterians to engage the conversation surrounding the new emergence of church in the 21st century." Already, there are 15 churches, 14 "worshipgatherings," and more than 50 bloggers calling themselves "presbymergent."

We will meet in fellowship hall to create a more relaxed space than our Sunday morning services. Absolutely all ages are encouraged to join us, especially high school students, college students, and young families, including young children accompanied by their parents. A quiet play space will be provided in the same room as worship.

Our core committee includes our pastor Pat Handlson and other church members, but we invite all to come and participate, regardless of affiliation. Leadership duties will rotate among many. Local musicians will take turns leading us in inspired singing. Please contact Pat Handlson or Andy Smith (professor.andy.smith@gmail.com or 615-869-9705-cell) if you'd like more information, wish to join our core committee, or want to help with any aspect of making this new experience a joyful success.

Changs to Give a Helping Hand to Helping Hands of Putnam County

Philadelphia might have had the former Sec. of State and the Queen of Soul do a benefit for a non-profit in that city, but they have nothing on Cookeville. Wei Tsun and Seanad Chang and Friends have graciously offered to play another concert for HNPC on August 15 at 3:00 in Wattenbarg Auditorium.

When asked about this year's concert Seanad had this to say, "This year's concert should be even more fun than last year's. Once again, we've chosen music from the classics that are familiar to people who don't think they know chamber music. We're opening with Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 6. It is for Two Viola Solos; mellow and gorgeous, with a theme some may recognize from Public Radio. Next, to celebrate Wei Tsun's Brazilian heritage, we'll be performing 3 Brazilian tunes, including the Carmen Miranda favorite "Tico-Tico". Maybe we'll get Wei Tsun to de-

monstrate the *samba* for us. To close the concert, we are playing Mendelssohn's brilliant Octet in E Flat major. Imagine two string quartets dueling to the finish.

We are so touched that our musician friends from Nashville have once again generously donated their time and talents to this very worthy cause. We weren't shy about asking the best players, and the best players enthusiastically accepted our invitation. A good time will be had by all! Please spread the word."

We sometimes take living with world class musicians for granted and forget how lucky we are to have them here. You don't want to miss this opportunity to hear this performance. Tickets are \$25 and may be bought at the door or see Debbie Handlson.

Read Anything Good Lately?

Spies of the Balkans, by Alan Furst

Review By Thelma Johnson

This latest book, hot off the press, is for all us WWII junkies who are addicted to historical events in Europe leading to the Nazi behemoth that devastated a large section of the globe. Our hero, Zannis, is a policeman in Salonika, Greece. He is a good man, honest, practical, good at his job, loyal to his country and his extended family; but is caught up, through friends of his, in a network taking German Jews to safety through a route in eastern Europe ending in Turkey. First the Italians invade, to be driven back, and then the Nazis arrive, and Zannis realizes the decision is already made: he manages to get his family to Alexandria and his lover Demetria to Izmir, but he will be part of the Resistance Movement aided by the British. Furst's characters are solid and real, but the atmosphere and settings are a shadowy character pervasive and foreboding. The underlying fear, the temporary pleasures of food, drink, and love-making, the little hardships and the foolish extravagances--they are all here and the reader feels what it must have been like to be a man whose job is to protect other people, and to know that he can no longer do it.

Major Pettigrew's Last Stand By Helen Simonson

Review By Seanad Chang

Major Ernest Pettigrew (retired) is the unlikely hero of Helen Simonson's debut novel. The Major lives a quiet life in the little village of Edgecombe St. Mary, but his brother's death sparks an unexpected friendship with Mrs. Jasmina Ali, the Pakistani shopkeeper of the village. Drawn together by their shared love of literature and the loss of their spouses, the Major and Mrs. Ali soon find their friendship blooming. With courting curmudgeons, wayward sons, religion, race, and real state in a petty and picturesque English village, "Major Pettigrew's last Stand" is an intelligent and amusing comedy of manners.

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BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Ted Haselton
- 3 Lucille Robertson
- 5 Kay Powell
- 6 Chynna Crawford
- 6 Bill Dyer
- 7 Kenneth Turner
- 11 Albert Wilhelm
- 12 Linda Hurt
- 12 John McGee
- 12 Malcolm Williams
- 14 Carolyn Medley
- 18 Brenda Lundholm
- 20 Helen Copeland
- 26 Ginny Morton
- 28 Kat Bullard
- 30 Melba Smith
- 31 Patsy Williams

ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 Linda & Tom Hurt
- 12 Gary & Virginia Lovellette
- 14 Sam & Diane Glasgow
- 16 Mike & Carolyn Medley
- 17 Kenneth & Ann Turner
- 26 Dave & Donna Johnson
- 30 Charlie & Kaye Craig
- 31 Tom & Marilyn Aitken

In Our Prayers

Persons Homebound: Jessie Lee Lamb.

In Nursing Homes or Assisted Living Facilities: Patricia Elsensohn, Edith Jared, and Frances Snyder.

Keep in prayer also: Dick Armstrong; Mike Birdwell; Charlie Craig; Helen Copeland; Joyce DuBey; Myrna Estes; Wayne Hogan; Don Medley; John Phillips; Hugh Piercey; Mary Smith; Wesley Henry; Jennette Volpe's uncle, Turner Boyd; Grace Anna Sine's brother, Don Green; Jean Metz; Dr. Jim Bolton; Royce Harris; Tammie Davis; and the people in the armed services especially Giles Evans, Lorelei Hammond and Josh & Ashly McClellan.

Hot Dog Day

It will soon be time again for the Handlsons to celebrate the end of summer with a day of eating and fellowship. Our annual Hot Dog Day will be on Saturday, September 11, from 2-5pm. Come over to the house and enjoy hot dogs with all the fixings. Mark your calendars now.

**Next newsletter deadline is
August 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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