

The Messenger

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

February 2010

The Great Ends of the Church

As we move through our 100th anniversary year it is very appropriate that we spend some time contemplating and discussing the purpose of the church. It was at the same time that our congregation came into being that the denomination wrestled with that same question of meaning. Out of that discussion came the Great Ends of the Church which included: the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

For 100 years Presbyterians have tried to understand and practice these great ends or purposes of the church. It has always been a tremendous challenge to maintain integrity and faithfulness in the midst of a changing society and today is certainly no different. In fact, many could argue that our society today poses a greater challenge to our collective faith than previous generations have faced. In some ways the world seems more divided and dangerous than ever before. Some among us still remember two world wars and the cold war that followed. Many of us lived through the very real threat of nuclear war between super powers. The Viet Nam war opened a divide between generations. Today we are divided along so many different lines: ideological, religious, economic, racial and cultural. It makes my head spin just trying to keep up with all the threats to our safety, our peace and prosperity, much less our spiritual well

Today we are divided along so many different lines: ideological, religious, economic, racial and cultural. It makes my head spin just trying to keep up with all the threats to our safety, our peace and prosperity, much less our spiritual well being.

All of that leads me to believe that the church is more important than ever before. The church cannot solve all of our problems, as individuals or as a society. But, what the church can do is provide us a safe place to think about the world, a framework for understanding our place in the world, a community of support to face our own problems, and, resources and strength to help us to make a positive difference in the lives of many. Of course, the church is not without problems of its own and our reputation sometimes suffers because of the words and actions of people claiming to be speaking or acting in God's name. Nevertheless, we shouldn't give up or give in just because we sometimes falter. That is only being human. When we open ourselves to God's spirit, we can overcome a great deal of adversity and accomplish much.

As part of our Wednesday night studies, we are currently examining the Great Ends of the Church and trying to see how our particular congregation, at this particular time, can live out these great ends. The discussion has been lively, and I hope that it will lead to a greater clarity in our vision and focus for the future. I also hope that it will serve as a catalyst for all church members and friends to become more involved in the life of the church, growing in faith and discovering ways to put that faith into action. I have said many times that this is an exciting time to be part of this congregation. I am impressed with the deep level of commitment of so many who call this their church home and to the eagerness of newcomers who are joining the effort. I look forward to our continued growth.

On a final note, I want to raise again the challenge to increase your personal involvement in the church. There are many ways to contribute and make this an even better church. Whether your interest is in worship, education, fellowship and nurture, mission or stewardship; there is a place for you. There are also new ideas just waiting to be heard and tried. Perhaps one of them is yours. Find your niche. As I have said in several recent sermons, there are many gifts and each of us has been blessed by the Spirit. When we are willing to take risks and encourage one another, our limits melt away. Keep praying for strength and guidance; great things are ahead.

Peace, Pat H

Clean Water Project to Tazewell by Ginny Langpap

Our first installation will take place mid-to-late February, at a small Baptist church. Our second will be at a private residence sometime in March. Both are in Tazewell, TN. A model of the system is on display in classroom #15.

We met recently with a group from the Pleasant View Baptist Church, and they are very enthusiastic about ridding the church of the strong sulfur smell presently in their water system. We look forward to working with these fine folks, and have been told they'll be providing us with a "thank you" lunch with the congregation.

The woman who owns the home where we'll install a new filtration system is also looking forward to having clean water, free of contaminants and sand. We also plan to replace the cover that leads to her cellar, where we'll be installing the new system.

We'll be working with the people from Living Waters on the first few installation, then we'll be on our own with two more families assigned to us in the same Tazewell area.

We're looking into projects closer to home and assessing the need in nearby counties, besides our own. Already we've felt being part of this mission team has been rewarding, for we've met some wonderful people and have truly enjoyed working together. We've assembled a good team, but are always looking for more people who can help us help others. Please keep our work team and the recipients in Tazewell in your prayers.

Blood Donations to Blood Assurance

If you are still in the giving mood following Christmas, remember that February is one of the lowest times for people to

Annual Meeting of the Congregation

The annual meeting of the congregation will be held following worship on Sunday, February 28. There will be reports from the pastor and session, as well as elections to create the next nominating committee. It will be a good opportunity to celebrate what the church has done over the past year, as well as an opportunity to discuss the direction of the congregation. Most people will agree that this is a good time in the life of this church. One of the ways to make sure we continue on that good path is to stay involved in the discussion and planning process. The more open we are in our communication, the more likely we are to stay on track.

Financial Update

At the end of December, 2009 church finances remain strong and stable. The 2009 budget anticipated income and spending of just over \$220,000. As the year came to an end, we received just over \$238,000 in income and spent just over \$230,000. Most of the increase in receipts and in spending are the result of extra offerings for special mission projects, illustrating the generosity and increasing commitment of the congregation to helping those in need. Thanks to all for

If you are still in the giving mood following Christmas, remember that February is one of the lowest times for people to donate blood but it is one of the highest times for people needing blood and supplies are always low after the holidays. We are fortunate to have a Blood Assurance office just a few blocks from the church. The donation process takes only about half an hour and is well worth the time spent. Give the gift of blood this month.

Recycle and Reuse in Appalachia!

Please save: colorful used tissue paper, leftover ribbon or fabric, miscellaneous beads, or popsicle sticks.

We will take them to Appalachia to celebrate clean water by making a faux stained glass banner, necklaces, Mad Hatter creation hats, bandanas, and water wands!

Questions? Contact Diane Glasgow 526-7854

tion to helping those in need. Thanks to all for your generous support of church programs and mission.

Tom Aitken will present a program on the 2010 budget at the Sunday school hour on January 31. The group will meet in Fellowship Hall, beginning at 10am. All are invited to see what plans have been made for 2010 and ask any questions.

Nursery Rotation

We are always in need of people to help out in the nursery. Anyone who would be willing to be part of a rotation to make sure that the nursery is covered every Sunday and staffed properly on occasions when it might be extra busy is asked to call the church office.

Read Anything Good Lately?

THE SPIES OF WARSAW by Alan Furst.

by Thelma Johnson

For those of us who like really good spy novels, the several books by Alan Furst are a rare find. Ken Follett, John LeCarre, and Len Deighton, for example, have produced novels dealing with espionage during and after WWII and the Cold War. Add Alan Furst to the list. All have notably introduced fully-developed characters who seem the opposite of Ian Fleming's James Bond. They have domestic lives and entanglements; their work is frequently mundane. It is always intriguing.

The Spies of Warsaw takes place in Poland and France in the days before WWII, and involves a French soldier who is given the job of assessing German ordnance and its ability to invade bordering countries. He helps a Jewish couple escape and falls in love. What more can we want in a good spy story?

Our Response to the Haiti Earthquake

Within the first two weeks of the devastating earthquake in Haiti, Presbyterians donated nearly one million dollars in emergency assistance. Our congregation has certainly played its part as we have received nearly \$2000 for the relief effort. We can rest assured that 100% of our offerings are already being used for precious supplies such as clean water, food and medicine; and, our contributions are being distributed by mission workers who were already in Haiti and know how best to use our gifts. If you want to follow the work being done in Haiti you can go to the connections page of our website and click on the links to the Presbyterian Church USA, or Living Waters for the World.

Ash Wednesday Service

Lent is a time of reflection and repentance. We will begin the Lenten season with an Ash Wednesday service on February 17. The service will be held in the sanctuary; beginning at 7pm. At the end of the service there will be an opportunity for people to have ashes placed on their foreheads, symbolizing the sacrificial death of Jesus and recognizing our responsibility for and participation in that sacrifice.

Souper Bowl of Caring

Since the Souper Bowl of Caring began in 1990 with one youth group, the youth of America have raised more than \$60 million for food banks, soup kitchens and other charities across the country. Now it's our turn to fight hunger in the event that is transforming Super Bowl weekend into the nation's largest youth-led week of giving and service. We will sh

Kitchen Help Needed

We have several special lunch and dinner events planned for our centennial year, including hosting the Presbytery meeting in July. The special events, along with our regular weekly activities, means that the kitchen will get quite a bit of use during the coming year. We are in need of a thorough examination of the equipment and organization of the kitchen and pantry area. It would be great to have a team that would take on this project early in the year so that we can be fully prepared for all the celebrations that will be coming our way.

March Work Trip to Montgomery, WV

After three years of working in the gulf area, our spring work trip this year will be to Montgomery, WV. It is a small, impoverished city south of Charleston, located along the Kanawha River, which experienced devastating flooding last year. The preliminary cleanup work has been done and now the area residents need help making their homes habitable again.

The work will be basic carpentry and construction. The time of the trip will be March 7-13, 2010 and will hopefully be a combination of students and church members. The time to make a commitment to this trip is now. To learn more, contact Pat Handlson.

IT'S EASY!

Last year more than \$2,000 was donated to the local

event that is transforming Super Bowl weekend into the nation's largest youth-led weekend of giving and serving. We will observe this day on Sunday, February 7th.

New Members Welcomed

Jeannie Mills is a Program Assistant and Advisor in the TTU Interdisciplinary Studies. She works also on the popular on-line degree program. Her special talents and interests involve cooking, gardening, traveling, reading, and mission work. Two college-age children contribute to her busy life.

Coming from the Midwest, Andy Smith is a TTU Instructor of English, teaching freshman composition and American Literature. Some other university activities include hosting a weekly radio show, editing departmental publications, presiding over the AAUP, and serving as faculty senator. His interest in education and music led him to "deanship" of The Academy at the Bonnaroo Festival. We will appreciate his award-winning talents and enthusiasm in his activities at the church.

IT'S EASY!

Last year more than \$2,000 was donated to the local mission, Creative Compassion, because of those who used Kroger cards when they bought food and gas! If you shop at Kroger, the process is simple:

- Purchase a Kroger card at One World Market or the church office. There is no extra charge. The purchase of your first \$20 card is your first card credit.
- Use the card as you would a debit card.
- Reload the card at the checkout before your purchases are recorded. (Of course a larger reload would mean fewer reloads.)
- All expenditures from the cards purchased at the church will provide a 4% donation from Kroger to the mission program of our church.

If you buy **anything** at Kroger, please consider helping the church mission program by shopping with a church card. It's amazing how fast it adds up!

Warm Hands and Feet Appreciated

Sharyl Hansen reports that Genesis House has gratefully acknowledged the receipt of 114 (!) socks, mittens, slippers and scarves. They said these gifts were especially needed this year. Our thanks to Sharyl and the Middle Sunday School Class for their coordination of the Advent Sock and Mitten Tree.

Dinner Out Group

Come join us on Saturday, February 20 at 5:00 p.m. when we dine at the Gondola Restaurant, 1156 South Jefferson. The Gondola has been newly renovated by the original owner and has a varied menu of both Italian and Greek entrees at very reasonable prices. Sign up sheets are available at both doors of the sanctuary. For more information please call Kaye Craig at 537-3714.

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BIRTHDAYS

- 1 — Edith Jared
- 3 — Jennette Volpe
- 4 — Lenora Hester
- 6 — Julia Reno
- 11 — Robert Sommers
- 11 — Rick Woods
- 18 — Kent Dollar
- 19 — Cleao DuBey
- 20 — Judy Medley
- 20 — Ann Turner
- 21 — Marge Rios
- 24 — Mary Armstrong
- 26 — Karen Hansen
- 26 — Marilyn Ledbetter
- 28 — Jon Dugle
- 28 — Sam Glasgow

ANNIVERSARIES

- 20 — Pat & Debbie Handlson

In Our Prayers

PERSONS HOMEBOUND: Mary Martha Bush 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; Paul Burgess; Helen Copeland; Charlie Craig; Myrna Estes; Lonnie Hester; Wayne Hogan; Linda Hurt; Don Medley; John Phillips; Dave Riddell; Ted Hayes' mother, Ann Hayes; Grace Anna Sine's brother, Don Green; Eli Covington who is doing mission work in Nicaragua; and the people in the armed services especially Giles Evans and Lorelei Hammond..

The next newsletter deadline is February 20. Please send your information to:

Debbie Handlson at (536-5486),
e-mail (phandlson@aol.com)

or

Katie Kumar at (372-6197),
e-mail (kjkumar@tntech.edu).

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