



# FIRST and ForMOST

January 2007

## SHARING TIME AND TALENT

*“Now there are varieties of gifts given to the men and women in the Church, but it is the same Spirit that gives them; and there are varieties of services to perform in Christ’s Church by those who are given Spiritual gifts, but it is the same Lord who leads these men and women to serve; and there are varieties of activities in which to become involved in Christ’s Church, but it is the same God who creates the opportunities to become active. To each (member of Christ’s Church) is given different gifts by the Holy Spirit, all meant to be used for the common good.”*

*(I Corinthians 12: 4-7, Translation by the Rev. Dr. Chris Looker)*

We stand at the beginning of a new year, a new year with new dreams, new goals. Yet our goals will never be reached without the precious help of our volunteers. May the Lord bless the many, many members who donate their time and talent to the church.

We know the time and effort our elders and deacons are giving the church, also functioning as commission representatives, working with other members under the leadership of the co-chairs. But there are many more volunteers working alongside Anne Manning, who has coordinated so many volunteer efforts over the years. To all our volunteers, whose contributions have been large and small, regular and occasional, goes our special thanks and deepest gratitude.

Just let us think of all the tasks that go into celebrating our Sunday Worship. It starts with announcing it on the sign in the front of the church, which has to be changed weekly; continues with the bulletins that have to be folded, a job shared by the members of the Mary Martha Circle, including a Roman Catholic friend, Mary Myers. Sunday morning the greeters make us feel welcomed, the beautiful flower arrangements on the Lord’s Table lift our hearts. Our youth are serving as acolytes. The choir, who sing anthems and lead us in singing hymns, adds to the beauty and worship of the service, enhanced by three participants who are not members of the church: Margot Young, Lois Nashorn, and Bill Jokela, for whom the choir is very grateful. Some services are made especially festive when the bells are being played. Ushers collect our tithes and offerings, which are taken care of with the highest discretion by the counting team and the financial secretary. On Communion Sunday the Lord’s Table is prepared by volunteers, and they never hesitate to help at times Special Services are held.

There is so much more accomplished, day after day, week after week, month after month. Our newsletter *FIRST and ForMOST* is written, assembled, edited, folded by

volunteers. Our website is being skillfully maintained by Debbie Bademian who is no longer a member of FPCA, yet continues to love us and serve faithfully. Our Church School teachers, under the leadership of our superintendent, are all volunteers. Our library is run by a professional librarian free of charge. Volunteers help so much on special occasions, whether preparing for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, editing a new pictorial directory, or helping to set up the tables and preparing the food for Parenting Partnership, participating on clean-up-day to beautify our church buildings. Our youth is serving in mission projects, like raking leaves for some of our members, or helping to fix the homes of people in need.

And this is not all our volunteers are doing. They truly give their love, their time and talent, not only to the church, but even more so to the Lord. We have received our talents from God - the best way to show our gratitude is to use them for His work, for His work at the church, and reaching outside to His other children in their needs. God joyfully watches us working for FPCA. May He bless our future efforts at the time of "Our Joyous New Beginning"!

Rev. Dr. Chris Looker

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Elder Marta Strada

### **MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS**

On Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> we welcomed five new members: **Hugh Iwanicki, Cara Lauler, Tom Martin, Tom and Elizabeth Rockett.** We are pleased to have all of them as part of the FPCA family.

### **SHEPHERD'S CENTER OF ANNANDALE/SPRINGFIELD**

The Shepherd's Center of Annandale is now a not-for-profit, tax exempt, autonomous organization sponsored by a coalition of faith groups committed to the delivery of a network of services and programs by and for older adults. First Presbyterian Church of Annandale has been supportive since the initial investigations into becoming a part of the Shepherd's Center of America. FPCA has donated office space and a telephone line and has a member on its Board of Directors.

This community organization is dedicated to empower older adults to lead creative, productive, meaningful and independent lives, helping them taking advantage of resources already available in the community without duplicating services already in existence. It provides encouragement, friendship, information and referrals. Programs are developed and planned by members to stimulate older adults to keep growing, enlarging their perspective and encouraging the support of the younger generation.

SCAS has held six Lunch n' Life programs, a computer class and one series in the Adventures in Learning Program during the past year. A number of FPCA members have been involved in these program.

Our next Lunch n' Life program will be held at St. Albans Episcopal Church on Columbia Pike on Monday, January 22 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm. The program *Avoiding Scams and Frauds: Warnings, Suggestions, Protections for Seniors* will be presented by the Fairfax County Police Department. Lunch is \$5 per person. If you are 50 or older and would like to spend a few hours meeting new people and hearing an interesting lecture, call 703-941-1419 by January 17<sup>th</sup>.

The Adventures in Learning will have another series of classes on genealogy, history and learning to use the computer beginning January 31 and running through March 14. Topics

include an introduction to archeology, the history of Jamestown, pioneering women in Fairfax, and more. For more information, call the SCAS office or me at 703-698-7475.

### **BIBLE STUDY GROUP**

On Thursday the group meets at 10:30 in the Library, continuing to study the Letter of James.

### **ADULT CHURCH SCHOOL**

8:45 AM: class continues to study Christ: a Portrait of God, led by Marta Strada.

11:30 AM: the class / sermon series will continue, this time Marta Strada discussing Apostle Paul: His Life, His Missionary Journeys (Jan. 7-Feb. 25), complementing our Pastor's sermons. See Dr . Looker's preaching schedules for January / February.

### **BOOK CLUB NEWS**

The Book Club will meet January 22 at 7:30 PM at the church. The book chosen for discussion is Leap of Faith: Memoirs of an Unexpected Life, by Noor, Queen of Jordan. There are many copies of this book in the Fairfax County Library, but take care that you get this particular biography; there are several fiction and non-fiction books with a similar title.

Randy Meli

### **PICTORIAL DIRECTORY**

Thanks to Norma Muller and Nancy Manning we now have an updated pictorial directory. Many hours and much work went into making this project a success. Norma, as chairman, organized and implemented it. Nancy's computer skills and organizational skills complemented Norma's. A great job! And a big round of applause for both!!! We are truly grateful and appreciative.

Betty Beal

### **THANK YOU, FPCA'S YOUTH!**

Leaves are nice in the Spring when they herald a new season. Leaves give shade and clean the air during the summer. Leave are pretty when they turn color in the fall. This time of the year leaves are a mess.

Thanks to each of you who raked, bagged and mulched the leaves in our yard on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November.

Lockie and Sterns Lott.

I really want to thank our "Youth Crew" who dealt so beautifully with our leaves under the able direction of Nancy DeVera and Alan Young. Their help is much appreciated.

With love, Isabelle Fennig

### **THANK YOU MESSAGE FROM DON JACKSON**

Don sends his Church Family heartfelt thanks for all the prayers, for all the love and concern he received at the time of his bypass surgery in 2005. He wishes you all a Happy and Healthy New Year! His wonderful message will appear in the February issue.

### **COMMISSIONS' REPORTS**

#### **Budged and Finance**

Commission met on December 6, joined by the Personnel Committee, to work on the budget, including staff salaries.

## **Congregational Life and New Membership Commission:**

Watch the bulletin for more activities in 2007!

### **Worship Commission**

In January, the congregation will have the opportunity to purchase one or more **hymnals** in memory of or in honor of a loved one. Cost of a hymnal is \$15.00. Look for an order form in the January bulletins.

### **CIRCLES' ACTIVITIES**

While the Priscilla Circle had no meeting in December, the **Mary Martha Circle** enjoyed a wonderful lunch in Anne Manning's beautifully decorated home, followed by studying Abraham and Sarah in Genesis. In January both circles will continue their normal meetings and studies.

### **PREACHING SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY, 2007:**

Starting in January (2007), Dr. Looker will begin a series of sermons based on the wonderful book entitled, ***THE HARD SAYINGS OF PAUL***, by Dr. Manfred T. Brauch (Intervarsity Press, 1989). This sermon series is meant to compliment the special Sunday School Class which will be taught by Elder Marta Strada every Sunday from 11:30 am to 12: 20 pm, from January 7<sup>th</sup> to February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Her class will be entitled, "***Apostle Paul: His Life – His Missionary Journeys***".

**Please note that Dr. Looker will not be teaching a Pastor's Class during this time period and invites all adult members to come and join Elder Marta Strada's wonderful class on St. Paul in Room 105. Thank you.**

### **SERMONS TITLES AND SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR JANUARY, 2007**

**(10:00 AM Worship Service)**

#### **January 7:**

**Title of the Sermon:** "***WILL EVERYONE BE SAVED?***"

**Scripture Lesson:** Romans 10: 4-13

**Focus Verses:** "*For Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.... 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved'*".

#### **January 14:**

**Title of the Sermon:** "***REALLY?***"

**Scripture Lesson:** Romans 8: 28-39

**Focus Verse:** "*We know that all things work together for good for those who love the God and who are called according to His purpose.*"

#### **January 21:**

**Title of Sermon:** "***UP AND DOWN AND ALL AROUND***"

**Scripture Lesson:** Ephesians 4: 1-16

**Focus Verse:** "*But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it is said, 'When He ascended on high He made captivity itself a captive; He*

*gave gifts to His people.’ And when it says, ‘He ascended,’ what does it mean but that He had also descended into the lower parts of the earth?”*

**January 28:**

**Title of Sermon:** “OTHER GODS? OTHER LORDS?”

**Scripture Lesson:** I Corinthians 8: 1-13

**Focus Verse:** “Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth – as in fact there are many gods and many lords – yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.”

## **BOOKS ON APOSTLE PAUL IN OUR LIBRARY**

During January and February, Dr Looker is basing his sermons on the book, The Hard Sayings of Paul. Our Adult Sunday School at 11:30 AM is discussing Apostle Paul, His Life, His Missionary Journeys. So, why not do some background reading? Our library has several books dealing with the Apostle. You will find them under the classification 225.924.

*There are the two new books mentioned in the Sept./Oct. issue of FIRSTandForMOST: **Apostle Paul: His Life and Theology**, by Udo Schnelle, 2005, one of the most comprehensive studies of Apostle Paul’s life and thoughts, demonstrating the relationship between Paul’s theology and missionary work, his letters, and the historical and cultural situation of regions where the churches were located.*

***Saint Paul: His Life and Work**, by Litsa I. Hadjifoti, 2004, a richly illustrated book emphasizing Apostle Paul’s relationship with Greece. The reader can follow the apostle’s steps through Greece as well as Asia Minor, ending in Rome where he died..*

There are also older, but not less educational works on Paul, just to mention some:

***Ambassador for Christ: the Life and Teaching of Paul**, by William Barclay. 1974, giving us a vivid picture of the world in which Paul preached the good news of Christ.*

***The Mind of St. Paul**, by William Barclay, 1958, presenting the main ideas of Paul’s teachings in a simple, down-to-earth manner.*

***Paul**, by Edgar J. Goodspeed, 1947, portraying the apostle as a man of action, a thinker, a welcome guest, a friend.*

***Paul, a Study in Social and Religious History**, by Adolf Deissman, 1957, showing Paul as the New Man, leaving permanent marks on the soul of men .*

***Paul the Man: His Life, His Message and His Ministry**, by Clarence Edward Macartney, 1961, magnifying the ministry of the apostle in an exceedingly meaningful manner, giving a straightforward interpretation of his labors and teachings, influence..*

***St. Paul**, by Arthur Darby Nock. 1963, looking at Paul as a man and as a writer in the context of his times.*

***Toward the Understanding of St. Paul**, by Donald Joseph Selby. 1962, describing the world in which Paul lived, providing understanding of his life, letters, and thought.*

The book which gave food for Dr. Looker’s sermons is classified 227 Br:

***Hard Sayings of Paul** , by Manfred T. Brauch, 1989. When we read Apostle Paul’s letters, we occasionally come across passages hard to understand. In this book 48*

*puzzling statements are examined. The author makes them easier to understand by providing the background to the sayings, putting them in the context of Paul's teachings. We also learn their importance for today's Christians*

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