

FIRST and ForMOST

May, 2007

IS GOD IN YOUR WILL? **(BECAUSE YOU CERTAINLY ARE IN HIS)**

Recently, I went to a Financial Planner and asked him to take a look at our family's financial well-being. As you may guess, he told me that I didn't have enough of this and enough of that. And, then he asked me a question that I never expected to hear. He said to me: "*Since you're a pastor, have you put God in your Will?*"

I have to be honest. My first reaction to him was that he was crazy!!

PUT GOD IN MY WILL!!! **WHY WOULD I DO THAT?**

I guess he noticed the odd look on my face and then said, "*Don't you think that you should put God in your Will? After all, you certainly are in His!*"

Talk about the preacher getting caught with his guard down!! I have preached about God's Will for our lives and for creation for 20 years and never once did I ever consider that it had any relationship with my own Last Will and Testament!

Instantly, I began to ask myself these questions:

If I really believe what I preach every Sunday (that I am bathed in God's merciful, loving, forgiving, and complete Will every single second of every single day of my life) THEN WHY IN THE WORLD WOULDN'T I LEAVE GOD SOMETHING IN MY WILL?

What harm would it do to designate 10% of my estate to Christ's Church? After all, God has designated 100% of His amazing Will and Grace to me? What in the world was I doing in return...to thank Him...to praise Him...to honor Him?

And, if I designated only 10% of my estate to the church, there would still be 90% left for my children and other charities!

And, what about my life insurance policies? Why couldn't I designate 10% of my life insurance policy to the church? That would still leave 90% for my wife and children if I would die before they do?

And, what about all the other ways I could show God that He is in my Will?

The questions just kept coming! And, by the time I was done questioning myself, I felt like St. Paul when he wrote these words in Romans 7: 24, "*O wretched man that I am!*" I felt guilty. I felt ashamed. I had NOT put God in my Will!! And, I was not being the kind of model of the Christian faith to others that I should be as an ordained Christian pastor.

But, I'm not going to let the guilt that I feel over this issue get the best of me!

This year (2007), I'm going to review all that God has given me and done for me. I'm going to look back on all the wonderful experiences that I've had and blessings that I have received. I'm going to review all of my finances. I'm going to review and update my Will.

AND, WHEN I'M DONE, I'M GOING TO MAKE SURE THAT FROM NOW ON GOD IS IN MY WILL!

As you know, like most churches today, our church has struggled to meet its basic expenses in the past few years. And, also like most churches today, in order to make sure that we are able to pay the bills, we have had to do things like cut the amount of money that we give to Christian Missions to do it.

WOULDN'T IT BE GREAT IF FPCA NEVER HAD TO WORRY AGAIN ABOUT HAVING ENOUGH MONEY TO MEET EXPENSES, SUPPORT CHRISTIAN MISSIONS, AND CONTINUE HAVING A FULL-TIME PASTOR?

One way for our church to take a giant step toward making this dream into a reality is for each and every one of us to **PUT GOD INTO OUR WILL.**

Believe me, as I am now finding out, there are literally hundreds of ways to increase your giving to Christ's Church **WITHOUT** putting your standard of living, financial welfare, or your estate in danger! As a matter of fact, in some instances that your financial planner can tell you about, we can actually improve our overall financial welfare by giving more to our church! It's amazing what opportunities are out there...if we only take advantage of them.

Won't you join me in looking for ways to put God into your Will? After all, we know that we're in God's Will, now and forevermore.

Thank you.

Your Friend and Pastor,

Dr. Chris Looker

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DR. CHRIS LOOKER'S
SERMONS TITLES AND SCRIPTURE LESSONS FOR MAY

May 6, 2007 (10:00 AM Worship Service)

Wills Emphasis Sunday

Sermon Title: *"IS GOD IN YOUR WILL? (BECAUSE YOU ARE CERTAINLY IN HIS!)"*

Scripture Lessons: Proverbs 3: 5-10

May 13, 2007 (10:00 AM Worship Service)

6th Sunday of Easter and Mother's Day

Sermon Title: *"WHERE DOES PEACE COME FROM?"*

Scripture Lesson: John 14: 23-29

MAY 20, 2007 (10:00 AM Worship Service)

7th Sunday of Easter

Sermon Title: *"THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION"*

Scripture Lesson: Luke 24: 44-53

MAY 27, 2007 (10:00 AM Worship Service)

The Day of Pentecost

Sermon Title: *"RECOVERING OUR CONNECTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT"*

Scripture Lesson: Acts 2:1-21

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

**M...is for the million things she gave me,
O...means only that she's growing old.
T...is for the tears she shed to save me,
H...is for her heart of purest gold;
E...is for her eyes, with love-light shining,
R...means right, and right she'll always be.**

--Howard Johnson (c. 1915)

The Story of Mother's Day

The earliest Mother's Day celebrations can be traced back to the spring celebrations of ancient Greece in honor of Rhea, the Mother of the Gods. During the 1600's, England celebrated a day called "*Mothering Sunday*". Celebrated on the 4th Sunday of Lent (the 40 day period leading up to Easter), "*Mothering Sunday*" honored the mothers of England.

During this time many of the England's poor worked as servants for the wealthy. As most jobs were located far from their homes, the servants would live at the houses of their employers. On Mothering Sunday the servants would have the day off and were encouraged to return home and spend the day with their mothers. A special cake, called the *mothering cake*, was often brought along to provide a festive touch.

In the United States Julia Ward Howe wrote the Mother's Day Proclamation in 1870, as a call for peace and disarmament. An excerpt follows:

Howe failed in her attempt to get formal recognition of a Mother's Day for Peace. Her idea was influenced by Ann Jarvis, a young Appalachian homemaker who, starting in 1858, had attempted to improve sanitation through what she called Mothers' Work Days. She organized women throughout the Civil War to work for better sanitary conditions for both sides, and in 1868 she began work to reconcile Union and Confederate neighbors. In parts of the United States it is customary to plant tomatoes outdoors after Mother's Day (and not before.)

When Jarvis died, her daughter, named Anna Jarvis, started the crusade to found a memorial day for women. The first such Mother's Day was celebrated in Grafton, West Virginia, on May 10, 1908, in the church where the elder Ann Jarvis had taught Sunday School. Grafton is the home to the International Mother's Day Shrine. From there, the custom caught on — spreading eventually to 45 states. The holiday was declared officially by some states beginning in 1912. In 1914 President Woodrow Wilson declared the first national Mother's Day, as a day for American citizens to show the flag in honour of those mothers whose sons had died in war (with specific reference to The Great War, now known as World War I). Nine years after the first official Mother's Day holiday, commercialization of the U.S. holiday became so rampant that Anna Jarvis herself became a major opponent of what the holiday had become. Mother's Day continues to this day to be one of the most commercially successful U.S. holidays.

[copied from the Internet]

EDITOR'S NOTE

Your editor plans to be touring France at the time the June issue has to be assembled and mailed out to you. To gather material for another article in this newsletter is a good excuse for spending precious time traveling, isn't it? She feels it is high time to thank all her helpers for making the publication of *FIRST and ForMOST* possible.

You won't be able to receive a June issue without the help of Betty Beal who is her back-up editor and is willing to take over this job next month. Of course, this issue will have to be proofread, just like all the others, a responsibility carried out by Betty McCown. In addition, with her past experience, Barbara Matos is a willing and able back-up for both, editing and proofreading, and will pitch in when needed.

You would never receive any newsletter without the help of the "folding team", members of the Mary Martha Circle, under the leadership of Anne Manning. Without their help there would only be the compiled text – no newsletter issues ready to be mailed out to you.

Last but not least, Nancy Manning supplies birthday lists, makes up the calendar, puts up with the copier being taken over for hours once a month to have the 230 copies of the newsletter printed, and takes 3 boxes full of newsletters to the post office for mailing.

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO ALL OF YOU, WONDERFUL HELPERS!

Your Editor, *Marta Strada*

COME AND JOIN IN THE CELEBRATION OF FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

On Sunday, June 17th (Father's Day) there will be a special Worship Service **and** Picnic to praise and thank God for the wonderful gift of Family and Friends! It's going to be a GREAT day of celebration, fun, fellowship, picnicking, and joy! After the worship service, we're going to have a picnic on the front lawn of the church for one and all to enjoy. Our brothers and sisters from the First Korean Presbyterian Church of Virginia **and** from Emmanuel Indonesian Presbyterian Church will be joining us for the picnic, games, and food after the worship service.

Please mark your calendars for this joyous event!

PLEASE PLAN ON STAYING AFTER CHURCH FOR A PICNIC LUNCH, GAMES, AND LOTS OF GREAT FOOD AND FUN. And, don't forget to bring the kids (because rumor has it that there will be a MOONBOUNCE and maybe even a "DUNKING MACHINE" so that we can "DUNK THE PASTOR"...(that's Dr. Looker, of course). There will also be other games set up for kids and adults alike.

YES, IT'S GOING TO BE A GREAT DAY FOR ONE AND ALL!

Watch next month's newsletter for even more details.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Our session has adopted an ambitious Faith Budget for 2007 setting forth important programs that our church wishes to continue to support. This budget is based upon receipt of 100% of pledges which the Congregation has made for 2007. These pledges come in two forms: the annual pledge, and the special three year New Ministry Pledge which we committed to before selection of our pastor. Through the first quarter of 2007, we have received \$28,756.50 in annual pledges, which is about 8.6% below our goal for the period. We have also received \$5,186.00 for our new Ministry Pledge, which is 15.6% less than our goal for the period. Please remember to indicate on your pledge envelope what portion of your donation goes to the New Ministry Pledge. Unless otherwise indicated, your entire donation is credited against your annual pledge.

Jan Reitman

2007 Pledge Status

Pledge Goal - \$125,778

	Goal	Actual
Jan	\$10,482	\$9,258
Feb	\$20,963	\$17,892
Mar	\$31,445	\$28,756

2007 New Ministry Pledge Status

Pledge Goal - \$24,594

	Goal	Actual
Jan	\$2,049	\$2,003
Feb	\$4,099	\$4,019
Mar	\$6,148	\$5,186

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A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL OF YOU!

John Fennig	05/01	Nadine Dingess	05/10
Elizabeth Rockett	05/02	Phil Rodrigues	05/11
Alissa Anderson	05/03	Marianne Artherholt	05/15
Debbie Bademian	05/04	Larry Dronfield	05/16
Judi Reitman	05/06	Candy Parker	05/17
Dan Parker	05/09	Christopher Fuller	05/19
Bud Simon	05/09	Genny Looker	05/23
		Calvin Reitman	05/23



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

March 2007 Session Meeting.

The meeting was called to order and Elder Sandy Mori led the devotion based on *Isaiah 58: 5-9* suggesting Lent is a time to reflect, repent and renew.

At its meeting March 21, 2007, the following took place:

- First Annandale will have three commissioners to Presbytery for the rest of the year. Hugh Iwaniki, Bill Johnson and Ruth Sutton will be the commissioners in March. Permanent commissioners will be sought.
- Elder Tyler Young reported that the youth will have a Laser Tag party with the youth of FKPCV.
- Meadowkirk information will be made available to the youth by Elder Tyler.
- Session will have a retreat at Meadowkirk on May 12..
- Elder John Metzel reported that initial steps have been taken to establish a sister church relationship with the Lubondai Presbyterian Church in West Kasai Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo and that research continues regarding the community's interest in restoring their hydroelectric dam.
- Elder Sandy Mori indicated that the new hymnals have arrived and after bookplates are put in them, they will be placed in the pews
- Liturgists will have training sessions so they can take larger roles in the worship service.
- Session passed the following motion from Building and Grounds Commission:
 - As part of the ongoing inventory of the property and possessions of the church, all non-cash donations must be cleared through the Building and Grounds Commission before they are brought to the church in order to make maximum use of the church facilities.
- Bill Jokela has donated a new video player that can be used with both VHS and DVD.
- Youth Sunday will be June 10, 2007.
- Cara Laufer has donated books and CDs to the library. They will be catalogued and put on the shelves soon.

Margaret Anderson, Clerk of Session



COMMISSIONS' ACTIVITIES

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS COMMISSION

Thanks to all who helped with the spring clean-up. We cleaned inside and out, and the results of the hard work of both congregations show!

We continue to maintain the property and this includes repairs and replacements that most folks might not notice – but that is why we have this Commission. The members work countless hours to keep God's House in order.

If you see something that might need repair, replacement, or just to be checked out, we ask that you notify either Barb Matos, Chuck Beekman or Jack Smith.

If you use kitchen supplies and use the last of something, or notice that the supply is low – we ask that you write that information on the message board in the kitchen so we can make certain the necessary supplies are always available.

We also ask that, if you use something, you put it back in its proper place. Thanks!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMISSION

The Commission was happy that David Koo from the Korean Church School was able to join us again.

FPCA's Sunday School will stop its regular classes for both the children and adults on the first Sunday in June, followed by Youth Sunday on June 10. We are hoping to celebrate a combined worship service with the Koreans, and to finalize the plans by Memorial Day.

An evening of bowling is planned for May 4, from 7:00-9:00 PM, open to the young people from both congregations, and friends.

Plans for preparing carnations for Mother's Day, and the Mission Trip in July are explained in more detail in the Youth News on p.10.

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE/NEW MEMBER COMMISSION

The Congregational Life/New Member Commission needs your help! We would like to hear what types of fellowship activities the congregation would like to have. A survey sheet will be included in the Sunday bulletins so that you can tell us what you would like. Please fill them out and put them in the basket at the back of the sanctuary. **We need your input!** If you prefer, a survey sheet, which can be returned to the church, is included in the *FIRST and ForMOST*.

Mark your calendars for May 3rd. This will be the last Soup Group meeting until September. Come and enjoy delicious soup, bread, fruit, cookies and, best of all, fellowship. The group meets at 12:30pm in room 105. See you there!

MISSION COMMISSION

Elder Sam Hwang and Mrs. Song from FKPCV joined the elders from FPCA.

It was decided that the Cumberland Mission Trip planned for July 22-27 should be advertised beginning now, with the help of Tyler Young who will approach the young people from both FPCA and FKPCV about participating, and about fund raising to help with the expenses.

Elder Metzger brought the Commission up to date regarding our initiative in the Democratic Republic of Congo:

- Mr. Andre Eric Muebelayi has gone to Lubondai to determine the interest of the community in restoring the hydroelectric dam, and has secured positive response.

- The minister at Lubondai has received a letter from Dr. Looker regarding our interest in establishing a sister church relationship with the church there. The letter expressed Dr. Looker's conviction that we are being led by God to become more involved in international Christian ministry, which includes our partnership in Christ with FKPCV, reaching out in love to the members of the Emmanuel Indonesian Presbyterian Church, involving our church in the International Student Program Ministry, and, hopefully, developing a loving partnership with one of our sister churches, the church at Lubandai. Dr. Looker emphasized: "*If the people from our church could be blessed by God to actively*

and personally participate in the repairs that would bring water and electrical power to Lubondai, we would truly feel blessed by God..

- The Commission made the motion to submit a proposal to provide funds for rebuilding the canal and generators at the hydroelectric dam at Lubondai to the National Capital Presbytery Global Mission Endowment and other funding sources; a motion approved by the Session.

WORSHIP COMMISSION

The Commission discussed the liturgists' participation in the worship services to a somewhat greater extent than has been done for some time. That plan was accepted, and will appear in upcoming services.

A desire has been put forth for a celebration of family and commitment. The calendar and content of such a celebration will be coordinated with other Commissions.

In response to requests to sing from the red Hymnal, the Commission put forth the following plan: The red hymnal will be used for the Sundays of July this year both for a sing-along starting at 9:45AM and for the selection of hymns for that month. The Pastor and the Organist will both be consulted about this plan, and it will be submitted to the Session for their meeting on April 18.

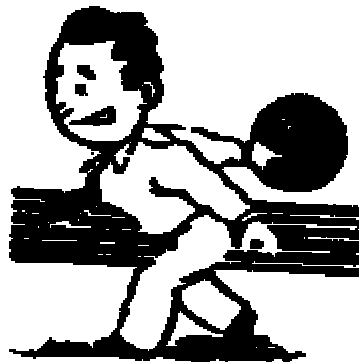
THANK YOU!

I want to thank everyone in this congregation who cleaned, mulched, threw away, and organized things here at the church in advance of the Presbyterian Women of the National Capital Presbytery's Spring Meeting. Everything looked great! Many thanks to Anne Manning, Betty Beal and Tuula Jung who co-chaired the group that planned and served the breakfast as well as the women of the Circles, Nancy and Paul Manning and Rev. Looker who played the bagpipes. It was a wonderful event thanks to all of your efforts.

With love and gratitude to all of you,

Margaret Anderson

YOUTH NEWS



Bowling is Here! We will join the FKPCV youth on Friday night, May 4th to go bowling. Please meet at 7:00 p.m. at the church, and bring money for bowling/snacks. Transportation will be provided.

We have also been invited to help make carnations for Mother's Day. This is tentatively set for Saturday, May 12th. Watch your email or expect a telephone call about this event, and come help make your mother's, and other mothers' Special Day even better.

Youth Sunday is coming on June 10th. Please mark your calendars. We will have a planning meeting in May in order to get organized.

Finally, mark your calendars for July 22-27 for the Cumberland Mission Trip! We hope all can attend and participate in this fun and worthwhile project

Genny Looker

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***Happy moments, praise God.
Difficult moments, seek God.
Quiet moments, worship God.
Painful moments, trust God.
Every moment, thank God.***



ATTENTION!

Deadline for the June issue of *FIRST and ForMOST* is May 18, 2007. Your editor will be leaving for France on May 14. If possible, PLEASE send her your contributions not later than May 11. After this date, please send them to Betty Beal, esbeal70@verizon.net, before the deadline, if at all possible.

Thank you, Marta Strada