



FIRST and ForMOST

July/August 2010

FROM YOUR PASTOR

“And on the seventh day God finished the work that He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all the work that He had done. So God blessed the seventh day and called it sacred.”

(Genesis 2: 2-3a)

“Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy.”

(Exodus 20: 8)

“Then Jesus said to them, ‘The Sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the Sabbath...’

(Mark 2: 27)

Recently, I presented to your Session a proposal to celebrate the Sabbath after we finish the renovation of our sanctuary and celebrate the completion of the Church Improvement Project on Sunday, September 12, 2010. On that Sunday, all three of our churches will worship together at 11:00 am and celebrate with an “Open House Picnic” to which all of our neighbors in our local community will be invited.

We will celebrate what God has enabled us to do on that very special day. We will rededicate the church with song, Scripture, and the Gospel. We will rejoice together as Christians who come from many different cultures, yet who are still *“One In Christ.”* O, what a glorious day that will be.

But, what will come next?

What are we going to do when the Church Improvement Project is done?

What are our priorities and plans for the next one, three, and/or five years?

What does God want our three congregations to do together to insure that FPCA is able to grow stronger in faith and membership?

What can we do now to insure that our church will be a strong and vibrant witness for Jesus Christ here at 7610 Newcastle Drive, Annandale, 50 or 100 years from now?

I believe that the answer to all of the questions that I have just asked is to start with the Sabbath.

What do I mean?

Well, we have accomplished a great deal in the past five years. We have changed the whole paradigm of ministry here from a more unicultural style to one that is more multicultural. We have formed a strong working partnership with both the First Korean Presbyterian Church of Virginia and the Urdu-Hindi Christian Fellowship. We have nearly completed an amazing

Church Improvement Project. And, we have attracted many visitors and welcomed many new members.

And, all of this has taken a great amount of energy, patience, prayer, and financial support.

Now it is time to rest.

Now is the time to celebrate the Sabbath and keep it holy.

But, how can a church rest?

Won't things fall apart if we rest? Won't everything stop working if we take the time to rest from our labors? Won't all our successes disappear if we slow down and reflect on what we have accomplished together?

Well, quite frankly, the answer to all of these questions is no. If God could rest on the seventh day of creation, then we should certainly be allowed to rest after great achievements as well.

And, let me ask you this. When God rested on the seventh day of creation, did that cause Him to stop being an effective God? A productive God? A successful God? A great and wonderful God?

Absolutely not! Rest itself is a creation of God. We need to rest every night to keep our bodies healthy. We need to rest after great achievements that have involved a lot of prayer, time, personal effort, and expense.

And, believe it or not, even God rests. We know this because God reveals the importance of rest in the Holy Scriptures...even for Himself!

Like God, we need to rest after great acts of creation and achievement. And, we need rest so that we will be able to reflect on what we have achieved and prepare for what is to come in the future.

Thus, I would like to humbly ask all of you to prepare for a period of Sabbath rest and reflection after we complete our Church Improvement Program and have our wonderful and joyous celebration on September 12, 2010.

I ask you to prepare yourselves for rest and reflection because we will all need it...just as God needed it after He had created the heavens and the earth. In other words, if it is good for God, then it has to be good for us!

In the coming weeks and months, you will be hearing a lot more from the elders, deacons, and me about the importance of taking time to celebrate Sabbath in our lives...to rest and reflect on what we have done together...and where we believe God is leading us in the future.

I believe that if we take this opportunity to ***“rest from all the work that we have done,”*** then God will make it quite clear to all of us by the power of His Holy Spirit what we should be doing to serve the Lord Jesus Christ and grow in faith and membership in the coming three to five year period.

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So, let's get this Church Improvement Project done. Let's make our sanctuary as beautiful, functional, and as welcoming as we possibly can. And let's have a wonderful time celebrating God's incredible blessings on Rededication Sunday, September 12, 2010.

Then, let us take some time to rest and reflect on what God has in store for us next. Let us experience the grace and mercy that is so central to a proper and truthful understanding of what the Christian Sabbath really means.

May God richly bless you in all that you say and do.

Your Friend and Pastor,

PREACHING SCHEDULE for JULY and AUGUST, 2010

- July 4, 2010:** Scripture Lesson: **Galatians 6: 11-18**
Sermon Title: **“Watch Out Where You’re Throwing That Knife!”**
Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching
- July 11, 2010:** Scripture Lesson: **Luke10:25-37**
Sermon Title: **“You Could Think Of It That Way?”**
Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching
- July 18, 2010:** Scripture Lesson: **Colossians 1:1-14**
Sermon Title: **“Lives Worthy of God”**
Candidate for Ministry, Susan Ennis, Preaching
- July 25, 2010:** Scripture Lesson: **Hosea 1:2-10**
Sermon Title: **“Extreme Hope”**
Candidate for Ministry, Susan Ennis, Preaching
- August 1, 2010:** ***Special Guest Preacher***
- August 8, 2010:** Scripture Lesson: **Hebrews 11: 1-3 and 8-16**
Sermon Title: **“Being Certain Of What We Cannot See!”**
Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching
- August 15, 2010:** Scripture Lesson: **Hebrews 12: 1-3**
Sermon Title: **“The Gracious Record-Holder”**
Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching
- August 22, 2010:** Scripture Lesson: **Psalm 1**
Sermon Title: **“Choices”**
Candidate for Ministry, Susan Ennis, Preaching
- August 29, 2010:** Scripture Lesson: **Hebrews 13: 1-8**
Sermon Title: **“Looking At Success The Wrong Way”**
Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching



JULY

Todd Anderson ~ July 2
Gene Bedsole ~ July 3
Jo Hickey ~ July 7
Lauren Parker ~ July 9
Rob Parker ~ July 9
Dana Herr ~ July 12
Chris Looker ~ July 12
Mitchell Youmans ~ July 16
Lois Tichenor ~ July 22
Miriam Houseworth ~ July 23
Margaret Mistretta ~ July 30

AUGUST

Richard Graham ~ August 3
Nessell Beekman ~ August 6
Mariam Aster Tariq ~ August 6
Paul Malone ~ August 7
Tyler Young ~ August 9
Madeleine Anderson ~ August 10
Susi Ennis ~ August 10
Chuck Beekman ~ August 16
Carrie Rodrigues ~ August 18
Guy Hunter ~ August 19
Dennis Matos ~ August 19
Tom Martin ~ August 21
Mike Laufer ~ August 22
Diane Malone ~ August 22
Betty Youmans ~ August 24

CHURCH SCHOOL YEAR ENDS IN SONG AND PRAISE

Youth Sunday, which was celebrated on June 13, marked the culmination of the Church School year for the youth of FPCA and FKPCV. All the youth joined together in the worship service. Graduating high school seniors Chris Fuller, Hannah Hwang, Sandra Malone, Kevin Yoon, Sarah Javed and Tyler Young spoke about how growing up in the church has helped to develop their faith. They are now ready to begin their college years trusting in the Lord to guide them.

Special music was an important part of this service. The FKPCV Praise Team played a special musical offering, Andrew Laufer played a piano prelude, and Caroline Yi played a violin solo as the postlude. A Brass Ensemble, Ben Looker, Josh Musih, and Elisha Musih led the congregation in "A Mighty Fortress." And Chris Fuller and Sandra Malone sang a duet, "The Gift of Love."

Kiyong Choi, Mariam Javed, Scott Springston, Sarah Metzel, Sam Looker, Ginna Park, Sean Park, and Keiun Choi also participated in the service. The congregation rejoiced in the enthusiasm of our youth. It was inspiring to see their accomplishments and wish them well as they continue in their journeys of faith.

Stephanie Berg, Christian Education Superintendent

HONORING OUR GRADUATES

Danny DeVera, Annandale High School
Chris Fuller, Annandale High School
Hannah Hwang, Woodson High School
Sarah Javed, Annandale High School
Eddy Kim, West Springfield High School
Sandra Malone, Bishop O'Connell High School
Sean Park, West Springfield High School
Kevin Yoon, Centreville High School
Tyler Young, Annandale High School
and
Christina DeVera, George Mason University
Ruth Metzler, Princeton University
Lee Rodrigues, College of William and Mary

THANK YOU, CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHERS!

ELEMENTARY YOUTH

Genny Looker

OLDER YOUTH – BOYS

Aaron Lee and Chris

Moon

OLDER YOUTH – GIRLS

Tammy Han and Jane

Lee

ADULT CLASSES

Dr. Chris Looker

Susi Ennis

Marta Strada

William Platt (guest teacher)

MANY THANKS!

Thanks so much for the farewell reception, the beautiful rose, the lovely cards, and all the good wishes from our church family. We will really miss the fellowship we have experienced and the many blessings we have received during our time at FPCA.

Our new address is:

1100 Ft. Pickens Rd.

#A-15

Pensacola Beach, FL 32561

Our email addresses will remain the same: egmuller@aol.com and nbaileymuller@aol.com Please keep in touch!

Your friends in Christ,

Ed and Norma Muller

LIVING GREEN, SEEING RED A REPORT FROM THE GULF COAST

By Norma Muller

After two days of driving South we arrived in Pensacola late Saturday afternoon (6/12). As we headed toward the bridge over Pensacola Bay, a large billboard flashed a number to call to report oiled wildlife. Not an auspicious welcome to Paradise.

We had wondered if the oil would arrive on the coast before we did, but were too tired to check it out until early Sunday morning when we walked over to the beach. We saw no evidence of oil or tar balls, and the blinding white sand was as beautiful as ever, but we did see about a dozen workers gearing up in hazmat suits. We speculated that there might be oil coming in with the high tide around 11:30. It was really hot and humid and we pitied the workers who had to wear protective gear in the blazing hot sun.

On Monday we had lunch at a local restaurant that was almost empty of customers. Our condo manager told us that during a normal summer there would be around 14 rental customers in the complex each week. Last week, she said, there were four; this week there are only two. And everyone knows that the worst is yet to come.

A day or so later there were reports of tar and oil on the Sound side of the bay, despite the booms that were placed across the mouth of the Bay. Apparently the oil floats under the surface so the booms don't keep it out. And, there were boaters who thought it funny to speed over the booms, cutting them. By Tuesday the Bay had been closed to fishing, except for catch and release.

The supermarket in Gulf Breeze had a special display of buckets and cleaning products one could donate to local wildlife organizations to help clean the birds and other animals fouled by the oil. On Tuesday, the day of President Obama's visit, an oil-covered pelican was found near a highrise condominium and the toll free number was called, but it took three hours for anyone to come to its rescue!

The newspapers are full of lawyers' ads soliciting clients to sue BP. On TV, local officials blame the Government for providing too little, too late. Congressmen talk tough to oil executives on C-Span. And the people of the Gulf Coast, who were left battered by Hurricane Ivan and the recent economic collapse now prepare for another long, hot summer of economic distress that threatens their very livelihood.

Everyone wants to blame someone else for this environmental disaster, but we are all guilty. Our "addiction to oil" has led us to this sad situation. Our quest to exploit the Earth's resources has befouled one of the richest fishing grounds in America and will likely upset the natural ecological balance for years to come. We must find the resolve and the resources to develop both alternative fuels and alternative ways of living.

To quote an old song by James Taylor:

*Now I used to think that I was cool,
Running around on fossil fuel,
Until I saw what I was doing,
Was driving down the road to ruin.*

How true! Please keep the people and all the creatures of the Gulf Coast in your prayers.

A MESSAGE FROM MARGARET WHITFIELD

To my friends at First Pres.

I would like to express my appreciation for the manner in which everyone at 1st Pres. has welcomed me so warmly. I find our congregation, led by our loving ministers, to be very warm and friendly.

Our musicians, whom I call our "Ministers of Music" have made my position and responsibilities a joy and delight. They are all to be commended for their dedicated service to the church and to God. These talented and devoted people have put in many hours to prepare our music from the pre-Easter season to the present. Many thanks to all of you for adding so much to our worship of our Lord.

Betty Youmans helps our bell choir create beautiful and sparkling sounds, from the balcony. Our gifted choir members are so quick in learning repertoire from Classical to the present. Our vocal and instrumental soloists so skillfully express their creativity and individuality and our Praise Team gives us variety and pulsating beats! The congregation lifts up its voice in joyful singing!

Wonderful!

During these summer months, we will continue to prepare vocal and instrumental solos and ensembles for worship. Also, I am at the present time, selecting Fall, Thanksgiving and Christmas music. It will be fun to see what the future holds for all of us.

When I enter the halls of 1st Pres., think of all that happens here and see Dr. Chris Looker and Susan Hanson exuberantly discussing matters of the church, I am warmed as I think 1st Pres. is a very happy place to be. Thank you, everyone!
:)

In Christ's Love,

Margaret Whitfield
Director of Music/Organist

SUMMER DROP IN BIBLE STUDY FOR YOUTH

This summer FPCA will be offering a Summer Drop In Bible Study for Youth in the activities building. The program is geared toward High School age students and will cover topics such as Decision Making and Dating. We will meet on Tuesdays in July and August at 7:00 beginning on Tuesday July 13. This program is being coordinated by Susi Ennis with help being provided by Rev. Tariq Javed, Youth Elder Kyle Hanson as well as others. If you are interested in being a part of this program, please contact Susi Ennis.

Submitted by Susi Ennis

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

MAY 19, 2010

Deacon Randy Meli opened with a devotion based on questions in connection with Pentecost, like whether the Holy Spirit had been active in our lives.

Dr. Looker and Elder Oscar Alcantara are planning to represent FPCA on the upcoming Summer International Mission Trip to Ecuador, July 21-28, 2010. He asked the Session to pray for the participants from both FPCA and FKPCV on this exciting project to minister to the people and children of Ecuador.

Dr. Looker visited Don Jackson who had to be hospitalized again and needs home health care. He also reported that Vivienne Norton had fallen and broken her hip.

The 2009 Annual Report being finished, a date could be set for the Annual Congregational Meeting of the FPCA Corporation. The Session approved the motion to hold the meeting after worship service on June 6, 2010.

Presentation and Interview of Dr. Stephen Hiemstra, Inquirer for Ministry, National Capital Presbytery: Proposing to provide Continuing Education and Required Presbytery On-Site Training here at FPCA, Dr. Looker introduced Dr. Stephen Hiemstra, who talked about his background. Professionally, he is an economist, and he is very active in his church. In 2003 he felt to be called to ministry. After finishing his report, Dr. Hiemstra departed.

Presentation of the Buildings and Grounds Commission/Decorating Committee Concerning the Sanctuary Refurbishment Project (Phase III of the Church Improvement Project, by Elders Paul Malone and Susan Hanson; after informing the Session that the project will be more expensive than anticipated, and that the pews will be removed for refurbishing after Youth Sunday, Elder Paul Malone made three motions:

1. To authorize up to \$ 15,000 in extra funding so that the Sanctuary Refurbishing Project may be completed,
2. To approve the proposal/bid made by Salem Church Furniture to reupholster, refinish, and refurbish the pews and construct a new pulpit, communion table and refinish and repair the baptismal font,
3. To purchase Trafficmaster Exodus Tiles and materials and authorize active member John Fennig to install said tiles.

The Session approved all three motions.

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Reporting for the **Worship Commission**, Dr. Chris Looker informed the Session that after the pews have been removed, worship in the Sanctuary will be crosswise, inside the entrance, facing Newcastle Ave., and the audio-visual system will have to be moved from its present location.

Reporting for the **Mission Commission**, Elder Susan Ennis reported that plans are being made for the Mission Trip to Ecuador, July 17-31, 2010, and that she planned to take a group to the Montreat Youth Conference, August 1-7, 2010.

Reporting for the **Buildings and Grounds Commission**, Elder Susan Hanson told the Session that, as the contract with the current janitorial services Jan-Pro will expire, the Commission is looking into contracting a different company, having the janitor service Coverall in mind. She also informed the Session that the current trash pickup company, Potomac Disposal Service (PBS), is doing a poor job, and the church should look for a new dumpster.

Reporting for the **Christian Education Commission**, Elder Marta Strada emphasized that the Commission is mainly concentrating on the upcoming Youth Sunday on June 13, 2010.

Reporting for the **New Member and Congregational Life Commission**, Elder Cara Laufer shared the plans for a picnic on Youth Sunday, June 13, 2010, right after worship service.

Marta Strada, Clerk of Session

IRAQI WOMEN FOR PEACE

**Letter fom Near East School of Theology Christian Education Resource Center and
Women's Studies Seminar,
April 12-14, 2010**

Dear Friends and Partners in Ministry,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

It is with heartfelt pleasure that I would like to share with you about our seminar with the Iraqi women.

The theme of the seminar was **"Iraqi Women for Peace."** This was a special seminar where we wanted to tackle the issue of how we as women can be peacemakers and peacekeepers, whether in our homes, churches or communities at large.

The participants came from four Presbyterian churches in Iraq, which were, Baghdad, Basra, Kirkuk and Mosul.

We also invited women from the local churches to participate in this seminar, and many came and participated in the different sessions of this three day seminar.

Our daily schedule started with worship, then Bible Study, after which we continued with our sessions. The speakers were local women leaders and pastors.

Our prayer is that God bless this ministry to our sisters living in Iraq as they endeavor to keep the faith alive and to bring Godly peace to their beloved war torn country.

April 21, 2010

Shake` Geotcherian, Instructor in Christian Education

Director of the Christian Education Resource Center, Near East School of Theology

Contributed by Margaret Anderson

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

July 11 – Mariam T. Javed

July 18 – Nathan Youmans

July 25 – Josh Musih

August 8 – Ben Looker

August 15 – Elisha Musih

August 22 – Sam Looker

August 29 – Mitchell Youmans



ATTENTION!

Deadline for the September issue of FIRST and ForMOST is August 20, 2009. Please e-mail your announcements and reports to the Editor, Marta Strada, LUXI7777@aol.com, or put them in the FIRST and ForMOST drawer in the church office. Thank you.

THE STORY OF THE HANDBELLS

By Marta Strada

Do you enjoy it when our Sunday worship service is enhanced by the bell choir? Perhaps you once played handbells yourself. Perhaps you have enjoyed a presentation of one of the Handbell Ringers societies. Do you know where the handbell came from?

Bells date back to ancient China. Their existence can be traced to the 5th century BC; Chinese bells with handles, dating back to 1600 BC still exist. Bells were also part of Hebrew worship. We read in Exodus 28:34: *The gold bell and the pomegranates are to alternate around the hem of the robe*, and in Exodus 39:26: *The bells and pomegranates alternated around the hem of the robes to be worn for ministering, as the Lord commanded Moses*.

As Christianity spread and was recognized by Constantine, the size of the bells was increased, and they were hung outside the church, and regular tolling began at certain hours to celebrate divine worship. This way people could tell time. In fact, the word “clock” has derived from the Dutch word for “bell”: klock.

Handbells appeared in England when the Romans used them to summon their servants.

In the 5th century AD, the founders of the Celtic church in Britain brought with them bells that looked like the four sided Austrian cow bells; St. Patrick’s bell is still preserved in his shrine in Dublin. It is simple in design and has a small handle at the top with rivets

In the Middle Ages, bells began to be protectors. Bells were baptized, and once baptized, they were seen as having magic powers. They were hung in doorways to protect visitors as well as the visited from evil spirits – when the visitors rang the bell, the evil spirits were driven away! Is this the origin of the present day doorbell? Bells were also believed to drive away the demons that caused thunder and lightning; when a tempest broke out, bells would be rung to clear the storm.

Handbells were also used for very practical reasons. They were played outside the church door to summon people to worship. Also, the pastor kept a bell close by to ring it and awaken anyone who dared to sleep during the service or during his sermon!

Slowly the size of the bells increased, till they got so big that they were kept outdoors. Special towers were built for them – outside churches, monasteries. You see them all over Europe, like the Campanile in Venice near St. Mark Basilica, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, or the bell towers near monasteries in Ireland.

As the towers began to be attached to the church building itself, the large bells continued to be rung there. Handbells used today in Europe and the United States, are descendants of the tower bells in England. By the 16th century the ringing of tower bells became a special art. A set of five to twelve bells was rung in a numerical sequence, called “change ringing.” As this needed a lot of practice, the tower bell ringers spent hours outside, and the people living in the neighborhood started to complain about all that noise. The bell ringers started to practice indoors, using smaller bells.

As time passed, ringing the smaller bells became an art in itself. By the 18th century bell ringing had become more sophisticated. Tune ringing started, the ringing of melodies and simple harmonies, music played for special festivals like Christmas. The number of bells used was increased. Bell ringing became more and more popular, and in schools and organizations tune ringing was frequently included in their programs. At the beginning of the 20th century, when the radio became popular, handbell performances declined. After the second World War, their popularity increased again. In the 1960s local teams performed all over England.

In the United States, handbell tune ringing became popular in the mid-nineteenth century. American impresario, P.T. Barnum, imported the “Lancashire Ringers” from England and called them “Swiss Bell Ringers.” In 1902 Margaret Shuncliff of Boston became the first American woman to ring a complete peal on tower bells in England. She also rang handbells and was presented a set of eight Whitechapel English handbells. Eventually she founded the New England Guild of English Handbell Ringers (NEGEHR). The popularity of handbell ringing spread rapidly all over the country, and in 1954 the American Guild of English Handbell Ringers (AGEHR) was founded. It held its first festival at the Crane Mansion on Castle Hill in Ipswich, Massachusetts.

AGEHR’s primary objectives are to educate and to promote the exchange of ideas relating to handbell ringing. Currently scores of festivals, seminars and workshops are held all over the country.

In Britain, there is a difference between “English handbells” (with leather clapper heads and handles, like the bells made by Whitechapel), and “American handbells” (using plastic and rubber for the clapper heads, producing the same effect, like the bells produced by Malmark and Schulmerich).

FPCA handbells are Malmark bells, purchased in 1977. Our handbell choir loves to play them, the congregation enjoys listening, and I am sure our Lord smiles when we try to glorify him with our bell music.

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PAINTING THE CHURCH

There was a Scottish painter named Smokey Macgregor who was very interested in making a penny where he could, so he often thinned down his paint to make it go a wee bit further.

As it happened, he got away with this for some time, but eventually the Baptist Church decided to do a big restoration job on the outside of one of their biggest buildings.

Smokey put in a bid, and, because his price was so low, he got the job.

So he set about erecting the scaffolding and setting up the planks, and buying the paint and, yes, I am sorry to say, thinning it down with turpentine..

Well, Smokey was up on the scaffolding, painting away, the job nearly completed, when suddenly there was a horrendous clap of thunder, the sky opened, and the rain poured down washing the thinned paint from all over the church and knocking Smokey clear off the scaffold to land on the lawn among the gravestones, surrounded by telltale puddles of the thinned and useless paint.

Smokey was no fool. He knew this was a judgment from the Almighty, so he got down on his knees and cried:

"Oh, God, Oh God, forgive me; what should I do?"

And from the thunder, a mighty voice spoke;

“Repaint! Repaint! And thin no more!”

Contributed by Margaret Whitfield