



# FIRST and ForMOST

May 2011

## PASTORAL MESSAGE

FROM THE ASSISTANT TO THE PASTOR,

SUSI ENNIS

*“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.”* (Acts 2:1-4)

Following Easter Sunday, the next exciting day of the Christian Calendar is Pentecost. Pentecost is from the Greek for Fiftieth Day. The Day of Pentecost is 50 days after Easter. As the first verse tells us “they were all together in one place.” That was because 50 days after Passover a Jewish Harvest festival was celebrated. Jesus’ followers were there together because their Jewish tradition brought them together. And it was there that they were visited by the Holy Spirit. They were together trying to make sense of what had happened to them at the loss of their beloved friend and mentor Jesus. They were together to hear what God had to offer them and to welcome the Holy Spirit into their lives.

This year Pentecost will be in June. That is because Easter was later in April than usual. As we look forward to the new life which sprang upon those early believers at Pentecost we have much to look forward to ourselves.

In May we all welcome Spring. The trees are budding and growing their leaves, the flowers are coming up out of the ground and blooming, the weather is growing warmer. Just as the Early Church experienced the beginning of something exciting, an awakening from slumber; we are excited by our awakening to the changes brought by this season.

In May 2011 we are being awakened in ways that are different from past years. So much has happened in our life as a community together. We will gather on May 15 to welcome home Chris Looker, our pastor. Blog entries over his time away have given us a glimpse into the things he has learned. When we gather in worship this May, Chris will share from those experiences. His plan is to help us to see the excitement which comes from knowing Jesus Christ and recognizing different ways of living into that excitement.

We will also celebrate the opportunities which come before us each day. Over the past several years our session has developed a new identity statement: "An Internationally Welcoming Church and Mission Center." On that first Pentecost there were people of all nationalities gathered in the city; people upon whom the Holy Spirit poured out. They were able to understand these new things in all of the languages present and become new people. It is our hope as a community that everyone experiences the Holy Spirit this year and becomes a part of the community using the gifts granted in grace by God. We have the chance to serve on commission, to reach out in the community, to worship with gladness, to join the choir, to \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank as you are led by God.

Finally, The Holy Spirit of God came into their lives not serenely and quietly, but with the rush of a violent wind. There are times when God enters our lives quietly and serenely. More often than not, however, God comes in with a "rush of violent wind." We are swept up in the joy of serving God. We are swept up in the joy of knowing we can, and should, make a difference. We may have been swept up into some turbulence or turmoil in our lives that allows us to open up to God's changing power.

My hope and prayer for each of you this spring as we approach the Pentecost season, is that you experience the joy of God through the gift of the Holy Spirit in a new way. I pray that you will allow God to use the Holy Spirit in your lives so that you can be the person God meant you to be.

Blessings to all,

Susi

## **THANK YOU REVEREND HARRIS**

Has it really been almost three months since Bob arrived to fill in while Chris is on Sabbatical? Talk about a smooth transition! Bob quietly stepped into the rolls of head of staff, preacher and session moderator/retreat leader, and we haven't missed a beat. More importantly, he has become a member of our family.

Bob, we appreciate your warm, friendly manner and your way of inviting everyone to participate in the life of the church. You have handled with grace the gremlins in the audio-visual system, and turned it into a great joke one Sunday morning. Minister " There is something wrong with this mic." Congregation " And also with you."

You really have learned most of our names, and we will not forget yours. We will miss you, and pray for God's blessings as you continue your semi retirement. We could not have asked for a better back-up quarterback.

*Sandy Mori  
Worship Chair*

## **THANKS!**

*We wish to thank those responsible for the many calls and cards we received during Pat's recent hospitalization. The reminder that we were in your prayers and the get well wishes we received gave us a welcome boost to our spirits.*

*Pat and Jo Hickey*

## PREACHING SCHEDULE for MAY 2011

### May 1, 2011: 2nd Sunday of Easter

Scripture Lesson: I Peter 1: 3-9, John 20: 19-31

Sermon Title: **"PERMISSION TO DOUBT AND REASON TO HOPE"**

Thomas thought the disciples had gone off the deep end in grief when they bombarded him with news of resurrection. Impossible! But look what happened the next week. Think how Jesus gives us permission to doubt and reason to hope.

*Rev. Bob Harris, Preaching*

### May 8, 2011: 3rd Sunday of Easter

Scripture Lesson: II Corinthians 13: 11-13, Matthew 28: 16-20

Sermon Title: **"GOOD NEWS LIVED HERE"**

Sometimes Presbyterians act as if evangelism is a four letter word. Actually, it's two four letter words: "good news!" How do we embody the spirit of Jesus' great commission?

*Rev. Bob Harris, Preaching*

### May 15, 2011:

Sermon Title: **"THE FIFTH GOSPEL - PART 1"**

Scripture Lessons: Selected Passages from Genesis 1 and 2

*Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching*

### May 22, 2011:

Sermon Title: **"THE FIFTH GOSPEL - PART 2"**

Scripture Lessons: Selected Passages from Isaiah

*Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching*

### May 29, 2011:

Sermon Title: **"THE FIFTH GOSPEL - PART 3"**

Scripture Lessons: Selected Passages from the Gospel of Matthew.

*Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching*



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**



**John Fennig - 05/01**  
**Elizabeth Rockett - 05/02**  
**Alissa Anderson - 05/03**  
**Debbie Bademian - 05/04**  
**Judi Reitman - 05/06**  
**Dan Parker - 05/09**  
**Bud Simon - 05/09**  
**Nadine Buckle - 05/10**  
**Phil Rodrigues - 05/11**

**Marianne Artherholt - 05/15**  
**Larry Dronfield - 05/16**  
**Candy Parker - 05/17**  
**Joyce Simmons - 05/18**  
**Christopher Fuller - 05/19**  
**Genny Looker - 05/23**  
**Calvin Reitman - 05/23**  
**Oscar Alcantara - 05/29**

**WELCOME, BEAUTIFUL MONTH OF MAY -**  
**WELCOME HOME, PASTOR AND FRIEND, CHRIS!**

May is here! The good old *Maius mensus* (month of May), the month of the goddess Maia, the “great one”, whom the Romans adored as the goddess of spring, the goddess of growth. The first and fifteenth day of May were dedicated to her, the goddess of May.

Of course, the pagans of ancient Rome have long been gone, and we no longer sacrifice to Maia, but May is still a special month of joy and renewal all over the world. Here in our area we don’t realize that in so many countries May is the month that brings spring, warm weather, spring flowers, blossoming trees, beauty everywhere. It symbolizes a new beginning after the long, cold, dark months of winter. In many countries the first day of May is a holiday – no school, no work – just happy celebration, dancing around the Maypole, playing joyful music on your bagpipe, drinking beer. How you celebrate depends on where you are – but you do celebrate.

Are we going to celebrate the arrival of May at FPCA? In a way, we will. Not because it brings Spring, but it brings back our beloved Pastor Dr. Chris Looker from his Sabbatical, his time of relaxation, rejuvenation, the time when he could do what he loved most – from studying to traveling (by plane, on foot, on a camel’s back....), from resting to scuba diving and fishing. Dr. Looker’s sermons in May, The Fifth Gospel, Parts 1, 2, and 3, will focus on what he learned from his experience in the Holy Land, and how that gives more depth and meaning to understanding the scriptures and helps us deepen our faith.

Our church also enjoyed its Sabbatical – resting from the labor of refurbishing our Sanctuary.

Our Pastor as well as our congregation is ready to celebrate the arrival of May, the month that brings him back to us. We are joyfully ready for a new beginning that may bring us new plans, new activities, a growing congregation.

***Welcome back, Pastor Chris!***

*Marta Strada*

## **ATTENTION!** **Special Request**

The Accounting Teams have a few requests to help them reduce the time spent in counting and recording your donations on the FPCA record sheets.

1. If you use checks, PLEASE use a separate check for each donation (General Fund, Improvement Fund, Mission Fund, Flowers, etc. This will ensure that your wishes are properly recorded on the appropriate FPCA record sheet.
2. It is also very helpful since we have one envelope with 2 separate lines, if you write the contribution amount on whatever line is appropriate for your contribution. The team has to do this if you don't, before they can begin accounting procedures.
3. If you do not use an envelope, please write your contribution designation on the memo line of the check with your envelope number, if you have one. This will save the team the extra time it takes to look up and find your number.

The Counting Team will appreciate your help with these requests.

## **PER CAPITA ASSESSMENT**

Each year all Presbyterian Churches are asked to pay a Per Capita assessment which is based upon church membership. This is an administrative fee which covers the administrative costs of the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. In keeping with this, our session has voted to pay this assessment which is \$34.00 per member. We are humbly asking those who are able and so desire to pay the assessment fee. This way the money which has been budgeted may be redirected to support other areas of need for our church. If you write a check please indicate "Per Capita" on the memo line or use one of the envelopes marked "Per Capita" and place it in the offering plate or mail to the church office.

**THANK YOU SO MUCH!**

*Administration and Finance Commission*

# LISTENING AND CARING SKILLS:

## A Guide For Groups And Leaders

by Dr. Stephen Hiemstra

Because of my age, I have long stated that the most important part of my seminary training was sanctification. How do we best reflect our role model, Jesus Christ? If God is so humble as to speak with a still, small voice, how do we put on Christ's mantle of humility in our own ministry? An important part of my journey this year has been to learn to listen.

John Savage (1996) has written a very practical book that has helped me to listen better. When people share their stories, am I able to listen and hear their anxiety, their joy, and their pain? Am I able to help them articulate it?

Savage's topology of five story types is most helpful in identifying the emotional content of a story. The types are: reinvestment stories, rehearsal stories, anniversary stories, "I know a man who" stories, and transition stories.

A *reinvestment story* is a story of changing allegiances. My own career change, for example, is a reinvestment story.

A *rehearsal story* is a story from the past with current meaning. The addict who talks about a period in his life before drugs, for example, may be looking for a way to give up his habit.

An *anniversary story* marks an important milestone—often with serious emotional content. The man who keeps talking about a brother who died at the age he is now, for example, may be afraid of dying but be unwilling to discuss the matter directly.

The "*I know a man who*" story hides the identity of the speaker from something secret or shameful that they still feel compelled to share. Highly analytical case studies are often really this sort of story.

A *transition story* has a beginning, middle, and end point where the end point may be still yet to come. The patient recovering from surgery is actually living out a transition story. So how will the story end? What does recovery look like?

If you truly hear a person's story, then you can have intimate, sometimes life-changing conversation.

For example, I heard a chaplain tell a story this week about a patient with a failing liver who recounted a story about his brother who he described as an alcoholic. Because liver-disease is a common cause of death for alcoholics, the question arose: is this a rehearsal story (the brother is real) or is it a “I know a man who” story (the brother is imaginary)? If the brother is real, then perhaps the patient is trying to express his fear of death (like the brother). If the brother is imaginary, then the brother is simply admitting that he has been alcoholic—a huge, emotional step which may lead to repentance and healing. Asking a follow up question about the brother—tell me more about your brother—may help clarify which emotion is being expressed.

If you only read one book this year, Savage’s book may be a good candidate.

## Reference

Savage, John. *Listening and Caring Skills: A Guide for Groups and Leaders*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.

## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

**March 16, 2011**

### **THE CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING DEVOTIONS** (*Book of Order G-9.0301b*)

Rev. Bob Harris called the meeting to order with prayer. Based on Spiritual Leadership for Church Officers, by Joan S. Gray, Chapter 3, Rowboat or Sailboat?, Session discussed whether the session members see FPCA as a sailboat church catching the wind, or a rowboat church, rowing hard to make progress. Session decided that, though recently people have joined the church, it is necessary to find a good way to attract outsiders. Is there enough fellowship, are visitors attracted to small group events? Session should be aware of the times when the Holy Spirit has filled its sails, so visitors are excited about FPCA and feel the urge to keep returning.

Elder Susan Ennis reported that she had started the Lenten series as an Adult Church School class on Sundays after worship service, as well as on Thursdays at 3:00 pm.

Elder Ennis informed the Session that she was preaching on March 27, 2011, celebrating the Gift of Women, as well as on Palm Sunday and Maundy Thursday. She will lead a Sunrise Service on Easter Sunday.

Though he was not able to attend the meeting, Student Intern Dr. Stephen Hiemstra reported by e-mail that his CPE work at Providence Hospital was about half over; he has visited with about 200 patients and staff over the past month and a half; and that he is continuing his Hebrew studies. Dr. Hiemstra began a Lenten Study of Philippians for Adult Sunday School.

Reporting for the **Worship Commission**, Elder Sandy Mori shared with the Session that the Pancake Supper was a great success, and the excess amount of money would be put in the budget so it can be used for whatever is needed.

For Wednesday, May 25, 2011, a worship service for the Korean American Clergy Women is being

planned at FPCA; the congregation of FPCA is invited to attend.

Reporting for the **Christian Education Commission**, Elder Marta Strada reported that the Commission was planning to get the young people involved in selling the remainder of Equal Exchange Coffee during Lent, and an Easter Egg Hunt was planned to take place after worship service at 11:30 am on Easter Sunday.

Reporting for the **Buildings and Grounds Commission**, Elder John Belz reported that on February 27, 2011, he found the church doors (outside and inside) propped wide open at 11:15 pm. Unfortunately there is an ongoing problem with security at the FPCA buildings. Rev. Bob Harris plans to talk with Rev. Sung Eun Choi so FPCA and the FKPCV can cooperate in solving the problem.

Elder Belz also reported that the needed tree removal is being handled by Chuck Beekman who has already contacted a tree removal company for an estimate.

The window frames on the side of Newcastle Drive are in bad shape, and the Commission has to find the best way to restore them.

Librarian Marta Strada was asked to make plans for moving the library to Room 107.

Reporting for the **Mission Commission**, Elder Susi Ennis reported informed the Session that plans were being made for the Mission Trip to Charleston, WVA on July 3-8; John Metzler worked on supporting the project in Lubondai; on Easter Sunday special envelopes will be inserted in the

bulletins for "One Great Hour of Sharing" donations, sponsored by Presbyterian Church (USA); FPCA will also participate in helping Japan at this time of disaster.

Reporting for the **Administration and Finance Commission**, Elder Tom Martin handed out a Session Report indicating that at this point the estimated income for 2011 was only \$2,828 less than the estimated expenses, thanks to the members who raised their pledges and the commissions reducing their demands. The Presbytery per capita assessment will be \$34.00 per PFCA member, or approximately \$4,030.00. To be able to fill the gap between projected income and expenses, the Commission recommended that the Session request that our members consider paying their per capital assessment amounts themselves.

*Marta Strada, Clerk of Session*

## **BOOK CLUB NEWS**

**The Book Club will meet on Tuesday, May 17 at 1:00 PM in the church library. The group will discuss the novel, The Help by Kathryn Stockett. Newcomers are welcome.**

## WHO IS THE 2011 PRESBYTERIAN HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP RECIPIENT?

Boy, that is a busy person...

This was the thought of **Tuula Jung**, the 2011 Presbyterian Honorary Life Membership recipient before she realized it was a description of her. Tuula has been a faithful member of FPCA and has participated in activities including Parenting Partners, Book Club, Presbyterian Women, Meals on Wheels, plays and musicals, communion preparation, the English as a Second Language Conversation Group, Vacation Bible School, served as an Elder, a member of the Congregational Life Committee, is a member of the Handbell Choir and is a Deacon, currently serving as Moderator.

The pin presented to the recipient represents the qualities of Tuula. The caring and supportive hands represent women who seek to build an inclusive community. The leaf represents growth of our personal and corporate response to Jesus Christ as we nurture our faith. The dove indicates our work for peace within ourselves and globally. The center of the design is the cross, by which our sins are forgiven and Christ who is the center of our lives. The overall design is the butterfly, a symbol of newness in Christ and the emergence of a new creation – Presbyterian Women.

Thanks be to God for the blessing of Tuula in our lives.

*Barbara Matos*

## YOUTH NEWS!

### YOUTH OUTREACH TO THE COMMUNITY

In March the youth completed a project to benefit OAR (Opportunities, Alternatives & Resources) whose mission is "Rebuilding Lives and Breaking the Cycle of Crime." A total of 25 Personal Care kits were completed and delivered to OAR in Fairfax. These kits are given to people being released from jail, to help them as they begin to readjust as they return to the community.

Another session to assemble more kits will take place on May 22. Additional donations of travel size toothpaste, deodorant, and individually wrapped toothbrushes will be appreciated. The other supplies will be purchased with funds from a generous donation.

Thanks for all your support.

*Stephanie Berg*

## INVITATION TO COMMUNITY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Would you like to participate in VBS with other members of the community?

St. Barnabas Episcopal Church  
Ravensworth Road  
Annandale, VA 22003

Invites you to

### **HOMETOWN NAZARETH**

(ages 4- sixth grade)

July 17-21, 2011

6:30-8:30 p.m.

(a light supper will be served)

Adult and older youth volunteers are needed.

Call Stephanie Berg (703-849-8937) if you have questions

### Acolyte Schedule

5/8/2011 Nathan Youmans  
5/15/2011 Andrew Lauler  
5/22/2011 Scott Springston  
5/29/2011 Sam Looker

6/12/2011 Mariam T. Javed  
6/19/2011 Ben Looker  
6/26/2011 Joshua Musih

### YOUTH SUNDAY!

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR:** YOUTH SUNDAY will be on **June 12, 2011!**

### YOUTH MISSION TRIP

The Youth Mission Trip for those who are currently in 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades are encouraged to join us as we head out to Charleston, WV. We will leave on July 3 and return on July 8. Contact Susi Ennis for more detailed information.

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**HELP MOTHERS!**  
**SUPPORT BETHANY HOUSE**

During May, items will be collected to support Bethany House in its ministry to abused women and their children. The shelter is in need of the following items:

toilet paper,	30 gal. trash bags,
paper towels,	cleaning products (Mr. Clean, Pinesol,
bleach,	Spic & Span),
laundry soap (High Efficiency),	spray cleaners (409),
dishwashing detergent (Dawn or Palmolive	mops, carpet freshener,
liquid),	air freshener
dishwasher detergent ( i.e. Cascade),	

At the end of May all donated items will be delivered to Bethany House. Your generous support is needed.

Items may be place in the collection barrel in the back of the sanctuary.

Call Stephanie Berg (703-849-8937) if you have any questions.

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**LIFE LINE SCREENING**

**Don't' forget! On Monday, May 16, Life Line Screening will be performed at FPCA. For details, check the April issue of FIRST and ForMOST.**

**DOES YOUR CAR NEED A BATH?**

**Good news! There will be a CAR WASH in front of the church on May 21, 2011, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm! Bring your car and make it happy! Tell your neighbors to bring in theirs! Our young people will work hard to make the cars look bright and shiny. A donation will be appreciated.**

**More good news! We will also have a BAKE SALE at the same time – so, while your car gets cleaned, you can fill your tummy!**

**The income will help finance the Mission Trip to Charleston, W.VA, planned for July 3-8, 2011.**

*Thank you, from the Christian Education Commission*

## PICTURE DIRECTORY

**DON'T FORGET!!!**

**Olan Mills** will take our pictures on **May 12, 13 and 14**. Hopefully you have signed up! Margaret, Marta Strada's photographer daughter took pictures of our refurbished, beautiful sanctuary – on the weekend as well as during church service, which will appear on the first 4 pages of the picture dictionary. If you want to add some pictures of a special event, we are sure we can squeeze it in!

Do you have time to help????

**Volunteers are needed to assist the photography team during the scheduled times of photography!**

The schedule is the following:

**Thursday, May 12: 2 pm – 9:20 pm**

**Friday, May 13: 2 pm 9:20 pm**

**Saturday, May 13: 9:30 am – 5:10 pm**

Any questions? Your contact person is Marta Strada, [LUXI7777@aol.com](mailto:LUXI7777@aol.com) (707 354-6650)

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**Serenity and joyfulness are the Sun under which everything thrives!**

*Jean Paul Sartre*

 **ATTENTION!**

**Deadline for the June issue of FIRST and ForMOST is May 19, 2011. Please e-mail your announcements and reports to the Editor, Marta Strada, [LUXI7777@aol.com](mailto:LUXI7777@aol.com), or put them in the FIRST and ForMOST drawer in the church office. Thank you.**