



FIRST and ForMOST

November 2011

FAREWELL, GOOD FRIEND

In 2007, Susi Ennis called me on the phone. She introduced herself as a Wesley Theological Seminary student who needed to complete one final academic year (seven months) of “Field Education” in a local church. Having trained Seminary students before, I knew exactly what she was talking about and asked her to have lunch so that we could talk it over.

At lunch, we talked about her faith journey, seminary classes, and the Preparation for Ministry Committee (“PMC”) of the National Capital Presbytery. From what she said, the Preparation for Ministry Committee wanted her to complete one academic year of practical ministry training under an ordained pastor at a church other than John Knox Presbyterian Church (“JKPC”) in Falls Church, Virginia. She told me that she had done some Field Education at JKPC. However, since she had been an Active Member at JKPC for 40 years, the Preparation for Ministry Committee thought she should do some Field Education at a more “objective” location. So, as she explained it to me, she needed to find a church where the current pastor hadn’t been her pastor for the past 30 years, where she didn’t know or wasn’t related to EVERYONE, and/or where people would NEVER give her objective constructive criticism because they loved her too much and didn’t want to hurt her feelings!

Well, as we talked, I could see that Susi was a truly remarkable person. She was intelligent, personable, funny, kind, articulate, and friendly. In addition, her smile was so genuine and bright. I said, **“Welcome to the FPCA staff”** and arranged for her to be presented to the Session. At the next Session meeting, our Elders saw the same wonderful characteristics in Susi that I had seen as they interviewed her and she was unanimously approved as the Assistant to the Pastor for the next seven months, beginning in September of 2007 through June of 2008.

Well, if we fast forward to the present, Susi’s **“7 months”** has turned into 4 ½ wonderful years! If I were someone who believed in luck (which I am not because I am a **“Predestination Presbyterian”**), I would say that we are the luckiest church on the face of the earth because we have had Susi Ennis serving as one of our pastors for the past 4 ½ years.

That’s right, I said it. Susi has been just as much of a **“pastor”** here at FPCA as I have been. And, as I often have said, **“If we were in a denomination where the pastor and a few elders could lay their hands on a person, say a prayer, and that’s all it took for the person to be ‘ordained,’ then I would have done that in the very first year that she was here!”** But, we don’t have that kind of denomination and it took another church (in Poplar, Montana...Brrrrrrrr) to finally realize how fantastic a person and pastor Susi Ennis really is to finally get her ordained.

So, on November 13, 2011 at 4:00 pm in our newly remodeled sanctuary, Elder Susi Ennis...Candidate Susi Ennis...is going to become the Rev. Susi Ennis! Hooray! It is truly going to be a wonderful and celebrative day!

But, I have to say that Susi's ordination is just the icing on the cake. What I mean by this is that I have given her the opportunity to do EVERYTHING an ordained clergyperson does on a regular basis. And, she has done it all so beautifully and professionally that adding a title to her name won't have much of an effect on what I think of Susi. Her preaching has been excellent. Her ability to plan and carry out major activities at the church was always impressive. She was always willing to listen to anyone and offer excellent pastoral guidance and care. And, she was always a friend to everyone.

And, that's what I'll miss most about Susi...her friendship. To my two boys, Ben and Sam, she will always be "**Aunt Susi.**" To my wife, Genny, she will always be one of her best friends. And, to me, she will always be "**my adopted sister.**"

And so, I would never say "**Good-bye**" to Susi. Rather, I'll just say, "**Farewell good friend.**" We'll be seeing each other again soon. I just know it.

"Hey, anyone up for a 2012 or 2013 Summer Mission Trip to Poplar, Montana?"

Dr. Chris Looker

SUSI, MY BUDDY

I first met Susi Ennis in December 1999, in the lunch room of the Nextel facility at Old Meadow Drive, OMD as we called it. I can't recall how our conversation started but I do recall discussing macaroni and cheese. By the time I met Susi, I had worked for Nextel for a whole four months after serving in the Navy for twenty years.

Susi and I had a lot in common. We were close to the same age with children in high school. Both of us had been in the workforce for a long time and had experienced similar situations in life. We hit off immediately. She helped me a great deal when it came to understanding a civilian workplace culture.

Both of us ended up on the same Nextel Operations Team, Next Day Analysis (NDA). Our job involved analyzing network alarm data and determining the impact of outages to Nextel customers. We worked for the same manager, Gerry. We supported neighboring regions in Operations, Susi the Midwest, I the Northeast. We even sat across from each other! This caused much confusion with a "Susi" and a "Susan" on the same team. Our manager would call "Sue" and both of us would pop up in our cubicles and answer. Visiting directors and managers would ask for "Susan" when they wanted "Susi" or vice versa. We really relished this, it made work fun! I trusted Susi to handle the Northeast if I was out and she trusted me to handle the Midwest when she was out. Both of us could count on each other to know exactly what happened in our regions. This was important since our team was responsible for a daily report that went out to all national and regional executives and needed to be absolutely correct.

During these years at Nextel, Susi made a life changing decision. She decided to become a minister. I felt shock at this but then the light bulb came on in my head, Susi was the person everyone went to with their private problems. She was the steady, calming voice of reason when chaos erupted. Susi was already acting like a minister.

Susi started her road to ordination by attending night classes at Welsley Theological Seminary. Susi and I would take a trip to Welsley during our lunch hour so she could complete school business when the offices were open. The two of us would then stop for lunch on the way back.

Yea, it got us out of the office; however, both of us made sure all our work was done prior to the "Wesley Run." Susi left Sprint/Nextel (the Sprint and Nextel merger occurred by this point) in 2006. She reached a point in her studies where the classes she needed were only available during the daytime. I lost my best buddy.

During Susi's studies, I supported her by going to hear her preach. I felt the the least I could do for my friend was to hear her sermons. I heard her preach at Knox Presbyterian several times. Susi arrived here at First Presbyterian Church of Annandale as a seminary intern in 2007. As was my custom, I came to hear her preach. I did not have any intention of joining FPCA. I was not looking for a church, but God wanted me here and I was drawn back to FPCA every Sunday. I ended up working here after I lost my job at Sprint; working with my buddy Susi all over again in the church office. Just like old times still confusing people between "Susan" and "Susi"!

Now, I watch as Susi achieves her dream of ordination. A dream she has worked toward since our days at Nextel. Thank you, Lord, for bringing Susi and me into that lunch room to talk about macaroni and cheese.

Susan Hanson

SUSI, A PRECIOUS HUMAN BEING

Susi came into our lives when studying for ministry. She was a busy student, but always found time to be active in the church. She always found time to talk to people, help people, act as a future pastor.

When she finished her studies, she was still with us. In fact, she became a member, and increased her activities. One of them was being part of the Christian Education Commission. Susi loves children, and so many times she has come up with great suggestions, plans for projects. She is also running the Mission Commission – without her, the group will be lost.

But Susi does not spend all her time for FPCA – a little bit is left for other fun. She loves to go camping with her brother -- she enjoys watching car races, she plays Treasure Madness on Facebook where participants pick up the role of treasure hunters, visiting different islands and digging up treasures like gold, food, or puzzles.

Susi loves to practice German with me (and I love to have a chance to talk in my native language which does not happen very often).

Susi has a positive outlook on life. Her family situation may bring her to tears – but she loves them all. She overcomes her tough times, copes with difficulties bravely. And she is patient – she endures problems longer than the average person.

Why can she do all that? The answer is simple: she trusts God deeply. No matter what happens, she is convinced that God has a plan for her. The best example is her patience in waiting for a call – she waited for years – but she always said that God will show her the right place. And she was correct. God did have plans for her. She is the ideal person for serving a church within the Indian reservation in Montana. Her love, her ingenuity, her patience will be just what they need.

Marta Strada

BIBLE STUDY CLASS FOR ADULTS

The Bible Study class for Adults just started on October 30, 2011! It covers the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, and will last for 13 weeks. Susi Ennis will be teaching on October 30 and November 13; on November 20 Dr. Chris Looker will take over and continue through completion.

PREACHING SCHEDULE FOR NOVEMBER 2011

November 6, 2011 *Susi Ennis' Final Sermon at FPCA*

*With A Special Reception and Presentation of Farewell Gifts in the
Activities Building immediately after the Morning Worship Service*

Scripture Lesson: **Joshua 24:1-3, 14-25**

Sermon Title: **"DECISIONS, DECISIONS"**

Elder Susan Ennis, Preaching

November 13, 2011

Scripture Lesson: **Matthew 25:14-30**

Sermon Title: **"TO RISK OR DIE, THAT IS THE QUESTION"**

Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching

4:00 PM **The Service of Ordination of Susan Ennis to the Office of
Minister of the Word and Sacrament
-Reception to Follow-**

November 20, 2011

Scripture Lesson: **Ezekiel 34:11-16**

Sermon Title: **"THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEP"**

Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching

November 23, 2011 - 7:30 PM **The Annual Community Thanksgiving Eve
Worship Service**

November 27, 2011 **The First Sunday in Advent**

Scripture Lesson: **Mark 13: 32-37**

Sermon Title: **"GET READY 'CAUSE HERE HE COMES"**

Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



Pat Fuller ~ November 2
Jeannie Scott ~ November 8
Alan Young ~ November 11
Sara Schmoyer ~ November 13
Brenda Johnson ~ November 15

Loraine Reitman ~ November 18
Stuart Beal ~ November 20
Larry Young ~ November 24
Yong Ping Iwanicki ~ November 28

WANT TO ENJOY A CONCERT?

The Prince Georges Choral Society (PGCS), conducted by Ron Freeman, will present a program at FPCA on Sunday, November 20, 2011, at 4:00 pm at our church.

PGCS is celebrating its 50th anniversary and will present a mixed program of sacred pop, folk and jazz choral music. Please join us for this concert. *Ron Freeman*

IT IS TIME TO GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD!

November 24th, the day of Thanksgiving is just around the corner! The poor turkeys are already looking at the calendar and are shivering with fear. Families are making plans to get together, traveling to meet their loved ones and cleaning their homes for the big gathering. And then comes the big feast – the turkey sitting in the center of the table, waiting to be consumed. The family and friends sit around the table, holding hands, giving thanks for the Lord's blessings.

Let us gather to give thanks as a church family. We do not need a table to sit around. We do not need a turkey as a centerpiece. We can give thanks to our Lord spiritually. There is so much for which we can be grateful! We started this year celebrating the fact that the Lord gave us the means and ability to refurbish our sanctuary and improve our audio-visual system. This made it possible for us to emphasize the beauty of God's house and make our worship service more meaningful. In the Spring the Lord made it possible for our Pastor to go on Sabbatical to the Holy Land where he could renew his mind and body by studying, participating in discussions, praying, and traveling. The Lord guided us when we hired Ron Freeman to be our choir director and Felipe Dominguez as our organist. They both add to the beauty of our worship services with their skills. And we can also thank the Lord for our fellow congregations, the First Korean Presbyterian Church of Virginia, and the Urdu/Hindi Fellowship with whom we work in partnership. But, most of all, we thank the Lord that we have our great Pastor, Dr. Chris Looker, who loves this church and uses all his gifts and talents to lead us into a blessed future.

We can't thank enough for God's blessings!

Marta Strada

MULTICULTURAL MINISTRY: IT'S DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN!

Dr. Stephen W. Hiemstra, Elder and Inquirer

If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? (James 2:3-4 NIV)

In 1938 the Central Reformed Church of Oskaloosa, Iowa (www.CentralOska.com) did something innovative: it held worship services exclusively in English. After two generations (born in America), the Hiemstra family was fully integrated into American society. My grandfather was the first generation in the family that spoke primarily English, not Dutch, at home

One in five (19.7%) Americans spoke a language other than English at home in 2008. Shares are higher in the largest states, California (32.3%), New York (29 %), and Texas (33.8%). Shares are lower in the Washington area (District of Columbia (14.4%), Maryland (15.1 %), and Virginia (13.3 %)). Most striking is the growth among young people. When I interned as a chaplain in Providence Hospital in Washington this spring, for example, roughly three out of four births in the maternity ward were to Hispanic mothers.

America is becoming more ethnically and linguistically diverse. My own children grew up speaking Farsi to mom and English to dad. While my own kids struggle with their cultural identity, God has graciously blessed us. We have noticed, however, that identity crises are

amplified when your spiritual compass is shaken. Many culturally diverse families end in separation and divorce.

How has the church responded to these challenges? The old model of multicultural ministry was for the “big church” to share church space with an ethnic church that would meet on Sunday afternoon. In effect, the relationship was landlord to tenant and everything went smoothly so long as the lease was not violated. Typically, no attempt was made to integrate ministries or share services.

The newer multicultural model is to encourage churches-within-the-church. The idea is that while everyone wants a taste of home when they attend church, they also want to become full participants in the wider church. Young people attend the same English-language Sunday school helping them to integrate into society. Adults worship in their mother tongue—a kind of linguistically focused small group.

A number of examples of collaborative, multicultural ministries are found in National Capital Presbytery. First Presbyterian Church of Annandale, First Korean Presbyterian Church of Virginia, and the Urdu-Hindi Presbyterian Fellowship, for example, are currently banding together to form the Presbyterian Center, a partnership that will coordinate ministry and share a common worship service a couple times each year. By contrast, Riverside Presbyterian Church has offered worship services in both English and Spanish for about six years.

Pentecost reversed the Tower of Babel experience. At Pentecost the disciples were given the gift of languages, not to separate themselves, but to promote unity among all people. If we think in those terms, then the challenges of multicultural ministry become opportunities for fellowship and growth.

MEET FELIPE DOMINGUEZ, OUR ORGANIST/ACCOMPANIST!

First of all, I want to thank everybody for the warm reception. I have been inundated with love and kind words since the moment I walked through the door of the Church for my audition. Thanks for your kindness.

I am originally from the city port of Talcahuano, near Concepcion, Chile. I was raised in a non-musical environment, and I did not become interested in music until I was 15 years old. At that age, I taught myself to play the piano, and the next year I received a scholarship to study piano for one year at the Concepcion Conservatory of Music. A few months after studying at the Conservatory I was hired to teach music theory classes and to be the bass section leader of the symphonic choir. There I had the chance to learn the music of Bach, Chopin, Schumann and Mozart and to sing works like Mozart's Requiem, Orff's Carmina Burana, Bach's Cantata 4 and 196, etc.

One year after having begun my studies at conservatory, I took a trip to Santiago (Chile's capital) to attend a conducting seminar with German organist and conductor Roland Boerger. There I was introduced to the organ by the organist of the St. Augustine Cathedral, maestro Edgardo Campos. I immediately fell in love with the instrument and knew that the organ would be part of my life. Santiago was about 8 hours from Concepcion, so during my junior and senior years in high school I traveled about once a month to the capital to take lessons with him.

After I graduated from high school, I served as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints for two years in Buenos Aires, Argentina. While

my schedule as a missionary was demanding (we worked 12 hours a day, seven days a week), I found some time to put together a couple of Christmas programs with a choir of American missionaries, I accompanying them at the piano. We performed in theaters all over the great Buenos Aires.

After my mission I came to the United States to study organ at Brigham Young University, in Provo, Utah. I studied under Douglas Bush and Don Cook. During my undergraduate studies in organ I also studied Political Science. After obtaining my Bachelors in Music and Political Science, I completed a Masters degree, also at Brigham Young University.

During this time, I met Brandi, who is now my wife. We have been married for four years and have a beautiful daughter, Elli, who is 7 months old.

I am currently pursuing a Masters Degree in Legislative Affairs at George Washington University.

Felipe Dominguez

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SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

September 21, 2011

The meeting was started with a “Time For Spiritual Growth,” during which Elders Susan Ennis, Ruth Sutton, Marta Strada, and Sandy Mori reflected on the Transforming Congregations Workshop they had participated in, mainly on Friday, September 16, 2011, when Rev. Anthony Robinson talked – and made the participants think about leadership through change.

Dr. Chris Looker reported that FPCA had welcomed Ron Freeman (Choir Director) and Felipe Andres Dominguez (Organist/Accompanist), who had joined the staff. Also, the Rev. Bill Jokela will join the staff as Assistant to the Pastor, as Susi Ennis will be leaving in November 2011. The Rev. Bill Jokela will be preaching, visiting, and teaching.

Next, Dr. Looker presented a quick review of the Post-Sabbatical Suggestions he had shared with the Session during the summer of 2011, including

* Adoption of a common name for the ministries at FPCA/FKPCV/FPCA Urdu-Hindi Fellowship, and “At The Cross” Ministries: “The International Presbyterian Center of Annandale, Virginia (IPC).” He explained that the “At the Cross Ministry” was for the young people of the Korean church, led by Pastor Henry. Session, however, has not yet made a decision on what to call the “Center” of the three churches working together.

* Plan for using the Activities Building as Youth Center.

* Progress on preparing for Sleepy Hollow’s leaving: The First Korean Presbyterian Church of Virginia has generously offered to contribute to making up for the FPCA’s loss of income when Sleepy Hollow will no longer pay the rental fee. However, it is still uncertain how big the loss will be, as use of the utilities, etc. also have to be considered, and Session asked the Administration and Finance Commission to work more on this problem.

Elder Susan Ennis shared with Session that her ordination would take place at FPCA on November 13, 2011, at 4:00 pm. The Presbytery Yellowstone had approved that she will be installed as pastor in the First Presbyterian Church of Poplar, Montana.

Reporting for the **Worship Commission**, Elder Sandy Mori shared with Session that this year the Thanksgiving Eve service will take place at FPCA, and members of our congregation will be the hosts. She also informed Session that there will be a Christmas banner, using the back side of the new banner, and that Choir Director Ron Freeman's Prince George's Choral Society in Maryland would like to perform at our church.

Reporting for the **Buildings and Ground Commission**, Elder Jack Belz moved that FPCA purchase a new step ladder, as one is badly needed. Session approved the motion unanimously.

Reporting for the **Nominating Committee**, Elder Tom Martin informed Session that the slate of deacons and elders was full, but it is still uncertain who would be Youth Elder. It was decided to have the Congregational Meeting to elect new officers on October 16, 2011.

Reporting for the **Mission Commission**, Elder Susi Ennis Chair, emphasized that the commission will need to recruit new members and a chair due to her leaving.

Elder Ennis also made the following motion: the Mission Commission asks that we extend the use of Rooms 105 and 108 by Northern Virginia Family Services one Saturday a month through June 2012. Session approved the motion.

Marta Strada, Clerk of Session

THE AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR IS HERE!

We now have the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) at FPCA, which was generously donated to us by the Cheney Cardiovascular Institute at George Washington University. It will be placed in a prominent place in our foyer. The AED is a device used to restore the heart's natural rhythm following a sudden cardiac arrest; it also includes instruction for CPR if necessary (all this while waiting for an emergency medical team to arrive). Several of our members have been trained in its use. We are ready, but let's hope we never need to use it.

Tuula Jung

FPCA LIBRARY CORNER

This time we added only one book to the collection, thanks to Punch Jackson's gracious donation. I am sure you will be interested in reading it:

The Help, by Kathryn Stockett. New York: Berkley, 2011. *This book is the story of an African American maid and her friend, and a white socialite in the 1960s. As different as the three women are in character and habits, women on the opposite sides of the racial divide, all three have one thing in common, hope for a better future. The New York Times praises the book: "In The Help. Kathryn Stockett's button-pushing, soon-to-be wildly popular novel ... the two principal maid characters ... leap off the page in all their warm, three-dimensional glory. Book groups armed with hankies will talk and talk."* Thank you, Punch, for giving it to our library!

Your Librarian, Marta Strada

BOOK CLUB NEWS

The Book Club will meet on Tuesday, November 15 at 1:00 PM in the church library. The group will discuss the novel Mister Pip by Lloyd Jones. Newcomers are welcome. *Randy Meli*

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

11/13/2011	Josh Musih	12/11/2011	Sarah Metzler
11/20/2011	Garrett Youmans	12/18/2011	Nathan Youmans
11/27/2011	Elisha Musih	12/25/2011	Mariam T. Javed

WHY DO WE HAVE CANDLES IN OUR SANCTUARY?

We take it for granted that candles light up the Lord's Table during worship services, that our Acolytes come and light them every Sunday, but do we think of why we have them? We don't need candles to lighten up our Sanctuary, our Pastor does not need them to make it easier to read Scriptures, our choir does not need them to read their music, right? Is it just tradition?

Using candles in a church goes way back to Roman times, when the Pagan Romans used them not only for necessary lighting, but to venerate the gods of the dead and of the emperor. Early Christians used candles during evening prayer, at funeral processions, at the tombs of the dead. In the 4th-5th century they started using candles in front of sacred images; they started using candles around the Lord's Table to add to the splendor of the church. In the 7th century they started carrying candles in procession at the beginning of worship services, chanting the gospel. They were placed around the Lord's Table. Only in the 11th century did they start to be placed on the Table itself.

Today we still use candles in Christian churches – Roman Catholic churches as well as Protestant ones. They are there to symbolize the Light of God, the Light of Christ! Yes, Jesus brought light to this world when he gave up his life to save us and rose from the dead to be with us forever. No, we do not need candles to make it easier to walk into the Sanctuary, easier to read our Bibles – but we do need them to remind us the Christ is with us and brings radiant light to our lives.

Marta Strada



ATTENTION!

Deadline for the December issue of FIRST and ForMOST is November 16, 2011. 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.