



# FIRST and ForMOST

First Presbyterian Church of Annandale

October 2019

## FROM YOUR PASTOR

**“Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts.**

**But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a few cents.**

**Calling His disciples to Him, Jesus said, *“Truly I tell you; this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all that she had to live on.”* (Mark 12: 41-44)**

It is now October and we are entering our 2020 Stewardship Campaign Season, when your FPCA Session seeks to explain the volunteer, financial, buildings and grounds, and ministry needs here at our blessed church. This article is meant to highlight the highest priorities for our church, now that our church is entering its 63rd year of serving the Lord Jesus Christ!

This year, the Stewardship Packets and Cards will be made available to all of our Members and Friends of the Church on Sundays, October 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019, on the table in the back of our Sanctuary. After the worship service on Sunday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019, we will be mailing the remaining Stewardship Packets and Cards to those who were unable to pick them up. Then, we will celebrate Stewardship Dedication Sunday on Sunday, November 17, 2019, when all of the Stewardship Pledges are due so that your Session can finish the Final FPCA Annual Operating Budget for 2020.

In our FPCA 2020 Proposed Budget, your Session has taken into account factors which have changed within the past year. As in the past, we have cut spending in the budget categories where either there is no longer need for funding or a lesser need for funding, based on a review of our church's spending in the past three (3) years **and** changing situations. In this respect, your Session has been very careful to place fiscal responsibility as one of the highest priorities.

In our most recent financial review, we identified that due to our slowly declining membership, the amount of money pledged and contributed by FPCA Members has unfortunately **decreased** by over \$40,000.00 in just three (3) years. We have also held worship services for a growing number of members who have received their heavenly reward of eternal life, thus contributing to a loss in members from 102 to 90. **And, as I have stated in a number of different ways from the pulpit and in articles in our FIRST and ForMOST Newsletter, if these trends continue, then our blessed church...the First Presbyterian Church of Annandale...may be faced with closure within the next decade.**

For the record, I do not believe that this will happen and I am working with your Session to take important steps now that will directly address our current challenges and blessings.

**First of all**, because God has so richly blessed our New FPCA Christian Childcare Center (“FPCA CCC”), this wonderful mission of our church has been able to grow to an enrollment of 42 children and contribute \$40,000.00 in support to our 2019 FPCA Annual Operating Budget. And, while still having the means and the wonderful staffing to grow our enrollment to 60 infants and children (which is our Maximum Enrollment) in 2020, the FPCA CCC has committed to providing \$60,000.00 in support to the 2019 FPCA Annual Operating Budget.

**Secondly**, your Session has restructured the investment of current monies in our Endowment Fund investments and future donations and bequests to our **New FPCA Resurrection Endowment Fund**. With the changes that we have made in investment strategies and an increased number of bequests received from the blessed FPCA members who put our church in their Last Will and Testaments and Trusts, the **New FPCA Resurrection Endowment Fund** has grown from a Principal Value of \$29,000.00 to over \$60,000.00 in just the past 1 ½ years!

In addition to the growth of Principal in the **New FPCA Resurrection Endowment Fund**, every year, FPCA has and will continue to receive a one-time mandatory disbursement of 5% of the value of the **Resurrection Endowment Fund Principal**. Furthermore, each year, a 10% tithing of the one-time mandatory disbursement will go to support our increased involvement in Christian Mission and Benevolence Support. And, all this will be happening while the Edward Jones Investment Firm manages the **New FPCA Resurrection Fund Endowment** to earn an average in Principal Value of between 7% to 9%.

**The five-year goal for growth in our New Resurrection Endowment Fund (in terms of earnings and bequests) is \$600,000.00.** So, if we were able to reach our five-year goal, that would mean that the **Resurrection Endowment Fund** would generate an annual mandatory disbursement of funds to FPCA in the

amount of \$30,000.00, with \$3000.00 of that total designated for **Christian Mission Support**.

**I join our Session in hoping and praying that all of you, our blessed Members and Friends of the Church, will be most generous in your financial support for our Resurrection Endowment Fund in the next five-years...and, if you are so led by the Holy Spirit, to put FPCA into your Last Will and Testament so that FPCA will be able to benefit from your generosity, even after you inherit your heavenly reward. Thank you!**

**Thirdly**, your Session has carefully put together a Proposed FPCA Annual Operating Budget, with a **PLEDGE GOAL** of \$100,000.00. This represents a **decrease** of \$12,000.00 in the amount of financial pledges from our Members and Friends of the church in 2020. We believe that until we are able to attract more Active Members and/or Friends of FPCA who pledge and give to our church regularly, we must not place undue pressure presently on all of you who so generously pledge and give to FPCA now.

**Fourthly**, while the **Annual Operating Budget Pledge** is the most important pledge that any Active Member can make to his/her church, we also have a need to fully fund the Director of Family Ministries Position at FPCA through to June 30, 2020. This is the date when your Session has decided to eliminate the Director of Families Position in order to save money in the 2020 FPCA Annual Operating Budget. It is also going to be an exciting time for Ms. Stella Lee, who will be beginning the process of officially searching for her First Calling to Ordained Ministry (think, the Reverend Stella Lee!) in November 2019, when she passes her final Assessment and is certified by the National Capital Presbytery to seek her first Calling! Way to go, Stella!

Therefore, FPCA still needs to raise \$20,588.00 in the **Seeds for the Future Fund** to fully fund Ms. Stella Lee's position through June of 2020.

**Fifthly**, as you all know very well, money, in and of itself, is **NOT** going to be the saving grace for FPCA. It is very important. But even more importantly, we, as a church, **must** attract more new members to join with us as a Church Family **and** welcome other faith communities to share space with us in our large church facility. For 2020, I would humbly like for all of us to pray for a **NET GROWTH** in our Active Membership of at least ten new members. Let us pray for new members, invite new people, and continue to love those who visit our church with so much love that they won't ever want to leave!

Additionally, we have also begun interviewing a number of Christian congregations and faith communities who wish to rent space (and become Christian Covenant Partners in Ministry) here at FPCA. While no particular Christian faith group has yet been selected, your Session is committed to having

one additional Christian Faith Group (in addition to FKPCV) renting and sharing space with us and serving the Lord together here at FPCA in 2020.

We have found that space within FPCA is worth a great deal in terms of potential income. And, we believe that God has given us this Church (God's House of Worship) for the purpose of sharing, worshipping, serving, and yes...renting to other faith communities. And, just as we have in the past 13 years with our FKPCV brothers and sisters in Christ, simply "**renting**" our space will be combined with a partnership agreement to conduct joint mission work and ministry together.

In addition, with the explosive growth of our FPCA Christian Childcare Center, we are planning one Family Worship Service every month for our FPCA CCC children to attend with their parents, fully expecting that some of our FPCA CCC families will join our congregation as Active Members.

We are also planning for a 2020 Summer Mission Trip which will be open to FPCA members, to the parents of our FPCA CCC children, and to further potential members yet to join our wonderful congregation.

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When the poor widow gave "***everything that she had to live on***" as an offering to God, she did something that very few, if any of us, could ever do. She put all of her faith in God to provide for her welfare. She gave **EVERYTHING** to God and believed that God would save her, if not in this world, then in the world to come.

Imagine that you are sitting next to that very woman in our church and the offering plates are being passed. The plate reaches her and she puts in two pennies...all that she has in the world. Then, she passes that plate to you.

Seeing this...knowing all of the great things that you know about FPCA...and, fully realizing that Jesus Christ Himself is watching...what do you do? What do I do?

And, then, instead of me, imagine that Jesus Christ Himself walks into the pulpit and says this: "***Truly I tell you that the poor widow sitting right next to (put your name here); she has put more in the offering plate than all the rest of you, including your pastor! You...your pastor...they have all given out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all that she had to live on.***"

How does that make you feel? Overjoyed? Angry? Upset? Challenged? Happy? Threatened?

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Your church **really** needs you now...**NOT to give everything that you have**...but to give more than you may have ever given before. Why? Because I believe that God is bringing a Spirit of renewal to FPCA that is filled with children's laughter, new families, wonderful music, exciting worship and mission opportunities, and the opportunity to continue passing on the Good News of Jesus Christ to generations and generations to come!

Yes, Jesus Christ, our Lord, **really** needs you now. His church **really** needs you now.

I humbly ask you to please be as generous as you can be in our 2020 FPCA Stewardship Campaign and to do whatever you can to help build up our Resurrection Endowment Fund.

Thank you for the privilege and honor of being your pastor.

Your Friend and Pastor,



## **PREACHING SCHEDULE FOR OCTOBER 2019**

### **October 6, 2019** *Service of Holy Communion*

**Scripture Lesson: Luke 17: 5-10 (The Message Translation)**

**Sermon Title: "PERFECT HEART OR OPEN HEART?"**

*Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching*

### **October 13, 2019**

**Scripture Lesson: Luke 17: 11-19 (NIV)**

**Sermon Title: "HELP!"**

*Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching*

### **October 20, 2019**

**Scripture Lesson: Luke 18:1-8 (NRSV)**

**Sermon Title: "DANCING OUR WAY TO FREEDOM"**

*Dr. Chris Looker, Preaching*

### **October 27, 2019**

**Reformation and Family Worship Sunday**

*The Rev. Bill Jokela, Preaching*

## PART EIGHT. THE GREATEST LAW THE LAW OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVING

Introduction – I have been writing articles about each of the chapters of Greg Anderson’s book entitled **THE 22 (NON-NEGOTIABLE) LAWS OF WELLNESS; *Feel, Think, and Live Better Than You Ever Thought Possible***. If you have been reading the articles you know that Greg Anderson is a cancer survivor. In 1984 he was suffering from metastasized lung cancer. Surgeons had removed one lung and gave him 30 days to live. He knew that people survive cancer, so he set out to determine how they did it. This book is the culmination of his research and are the principles that he lives by. Today Anderson is co-founder and chairman of **The American Wellness Project**, *which is an effort devoted to the development of total wellness based on many of the ideas in this book*. This last chapter, based on the final law, is called **THE LAW OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVING**. This will be my final article in this series.

My intention is to review the first 21 laws with a brief description of each and elaborate on the final law. The laws are as follows:

- 1, The Law of Esprit – Living life with joy
2. The Law of Personal Accountability – We are responsible for our own wellness
- 3, The Law of Unity – We are body, mind, and spirit
4. The Law of Physical Activity – We need to exercise, to move
5. The Law of Nutritional Frugality – A frugal diet is the secret of longevity
6. The Law of Minimal Medical Invasiveness – Learn the least invasive procedure for a medical problem
7. The Law of Stress-Hardiness – “It’s not what happens to you. It’s what you do about it.
8. The Law of Emotional Choice – Learn to recognize one’s feelings
9. The law of Developmental Motivation – Being motivated to give, to serve, to love
10. The Law of Human Dignity – Learning to respect one another
11. The Law of Win/Win – Looking for the mutually beneficial position in all human relationships
12. The Law of Present-Moment Living – Living focused on the moment
13. The Law of Mindfulness – We have the power to choose where to focus our attention
14. The Law of Creativity – First create a vision then create the work
15. The Law of Lifetime Growth – We can grow and change our entire life
16. The Law of Life Mission – Determining your unique goal in life
17. The Law of Purpose Through Service – Learning to care for others

18. The Law of Stewardship – Living with regard for the welfare of others and the earth

19. The Law of Forgiveness – Freeing ourselves from a life of hate and resentment

20. The Law of Gratitude – Learning to recognize all the good things in our life

21. The Law of Personal Peace – Living a life of serenity based on the understanding that God has everything under control

22. The Law of Unconditional Loving – In this final chapter Anderson “brings it all together”. He maintains that “*The greatest pursuit is not good health, unsurpassed wisdom, economic surplus, political freedom, or even faith that can move mountains. It is the daily practice of the greatest of the non-negotiable laws of wellness, **THE LAW OF UNCONDITIONAL LOVING. Unconditional, nonjudgmental loving. This is our aim, life’s single highest and most rewarding pursuit.***” To live such a life, constantly ask yourself this question in any situation, **What is the loving thing to do?** This is based on the biblical concept of *agapé* love. Such love is more than a feeling; it involves action with the aim of wanting the best for someone or the best outcome in each situation and then taking action to help. Anderson says that we must practice unconditional loving daily, hourly, minute by minute. In doing so, “...we find the great joy of the ultimate call and reap the greatest rewards of wellness.

I have donated two copies of Anderson’s book to the FPCA Church Library. I would encourage you to check one out and read and even meditate on these laws. Put them into practice and, hopefully, experience the wellness he writes about.

Submitted by Bill Jokela, Parish Associate, FPCA

  HAPPY BIRTHDAY!  

## LET THE CHILDREN COME TO ME

Everyone's been back in "real school" for over a month, and our Christian Childcare Center has been back in full swing, too. Everyone has safely returned from vacations and travel. We're grateful for that.

We've enrolled a number of toddlers in the months we've been using the highly-rated Mother Goose Time Curriculum with Christian Emphasis, so it's time to highlight all it has to offer for our new-to-CCC parents and friends.

"Mother G," provides a monthly Teacher Tool Bag which contains a lesson plan, or teacher's guide, for each of four weeks, to complement and explain the 20 daily lessons. The curriculum covers thirty-three essential skills for toddlers, and includes tools for literacy, math, science, and socializing. It includes music and movement lessons and art supplies.

The lesson plans are set up by themes to help preschoolers/toddlers make connections through hands-on experiences. This works far better than having a number of disassociated activities throughout the day, as each area of learning complements the all the rest for each week. Themes integrate colors, shapes, numbers and letters of the month, while providing repetition for better learning retention.

To learn more, see:

[www.mothersgoosetime.com/christian-program/](http://www.mothersgoosetime.com/christian-program/)

I believe you'll be as pleased as we are. We love these children and want to provide the very best care and learning possible for them. Thanks to all the CCC parents for trusting us with your precious little ones!

Jennifer Stoy, (aka Miss Jennie)  
CCC Director

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

Brayden October 4  
Aiden October 9  
Dorothy October 10  
Ms. Teresa October 13



## OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD



Turning THREE is a BIG event when you've been two so much of your life! Last month, our September birthday boy's mom brought a delicious, fluffy-icing cake on the big day, as well as a wealth of Toy Story decorations (see picture) and party favors. She created a truly festive party for her 3-year-old and his CCC friends.

It's impossible to describe only three of them, as this article usually does. Birthday Boy looked alternately awed and dismayed as we sang Happy Birthday. A friend pointed at him and exclaimed, "It's your birthday! You're three!" Already three himself, this was old hat to him.

As the children sat at the party table, they quieted; lavishly frosted cake will do that. Then came the treat bags: two-color globe lollipops, SweetTarts, and two gummi candies! Sheer wealth! Remember those days?

A little blonde girl opened her mini coloring book and directed this volunteer to color the horse red, his hoofs and mane blue. With only two crayons, what great choices.

Once the cake was eaten, treats corralled, and little hands and faces wiped, the party was over. Happy, happy toddlers!

All these CCC toddlers, as well as all the babies, constantly delight this volunteer with their love, antics, and wonder at their world. We here at the CCC are blessed, indeed, to nurture them, and we thank their parents for trusting us in this glorious venture!

CCC Volunteer

## REFORMATION AND FAMILY WORSHIP SUNDAY



**Sunday Worship Service: 10:00 AM, October 29, 2019**

**Children's Event: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM, October 29, 2019**

- **Come, come and enjoy grilled hotdogs and all the fixin's**
  - **MOON BOUNCE** for kids of all ages
  - **Christian Childcare Families are especially welcome!**

Join us for this special worship service on the last Sunday of each month, as we create a worship environment for all ages: from cradle to rocking chair!

## THE POTTER'S HOUSE MINISTRY

Kiara Stewart, professional potter and artist, began teaching her first (first here in the Potter's House, at least) Beginners' Pottery Class in mid-September. A small class in numbers, but huge in terms of individualized instruction. Kiara takes a different approach to teaching from our own Dr. Chris Looker, choosing to focus on detail, detail, detail. The first class session had students practicing wedging/shaping a lump of clay into a ball ready for throwing on the potter's wheel. Kiara demonstrated the process through centering the clay and opening it, ready to shape. That was the lesson for that day.

A second class session found Kiara demonstrating glazing techniques with resultant two-color, or even three-color casserole dishes. The class continues through the end of October, so a number of gorgeous pieces should be produced by then for our upcoming Second Annual Pottery Show and Silent Auction.

This year's show and auction is scheduled for Saturday, November 16, 2019, from Noon to 1:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Mark your calendar!

Potter's House Reporter

## **SESSION HIGHLIGHTS**

### **SEPTEMBER 15, 2019**

Dr. Chris Looker opened the stated meeting on September 15, 2019, with prayer, thanking God for Jesus Christ as the ultimate sacrifice, for the resurrection of the Church, and for our Christian Childcare Center.

CCC Director Jennifer Stoy reported the hiring of 2 teachers and stated that the CCC had passed a surprise official inspection.

Dr. Looker noted that he will attend a 3-day diving class in late October.

The Session passed motions, if the way be clear, to accept an elder care group and a music instructor as renters. It passed a motion to allocate 2 memorial gifts for Joyce Simmons to the Resurrection Endowment Fund, as she desired.

Dr. Looker's closing prayer was that we might be a light into Darkness.

Carol Gage  
Clerk of Session

## **MEET FELLOW CHRISTIANS: HUGH LATIMER**

### **By Marta Strada**

When I was looking for a fellow Christian who was either born or passed away in October, I came across Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. He is still being remembered as a great, dedicated preacher. Let us remember him too.

Hugh Latimer lived from 1487 to the 16<sup>th</sup> of October 1555. This was the time when the main denomination of England changed from Roman Catholic to the Church of England. King Henry the Eighth's son Edward was a committed Protestant, and under his rule the church services were in English, not Latin. But when Edward died, his sister Mary took over. She was a firm Roman Catholic believer, and was determined to punish the Protestants, seen as heretics. She insisted on burning as many heretics as possible. Consequently, during the five years of her reign, she lost the affection of her people, and any chance of a peaceful religious settlement. Of the nearly three hundred people burned under her command, were the Oxford Martyrs who are still commemorated today.

The Bishop of Worcester, Hugh Latimer, was a famous preacher at the time of King Henry the Eighth. He resigned in protest when the King refused to allow the Protestant reforms Latimer desired. In his sermons, Latimer urged men to upright living and devoutness in prayer. Unfortunately, when Mary came to the throne, he was arrested and tried for heresy, and burned to death.

**MEMORIAL SERVICE CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF CHARLES  
(CHUCK/CHARLIE) RICHARD BEEKMAN AND WITNESSING TO HIS  
RESURRECTION**

Chuck Beekman passed away peacefully at his home on September 11, 2019, after a long illness. A memorial service was held on Saturday, September 28, 2019. Senior Pastor Dr. Chris Looker officiated, assisted by Associate Pastor Bill Jokela.

**May You Rest in Peace, Good Friend**

**A BIT ABOUT A BOOK**

An October night.

A howling storm.

A seeming witch blown in on a downdraft.

“It was a dark and stormy night,” begins Madeleine L’Engle’s long-time best-seller “A Wrinkle in Time.” So classic, so traditional a beginning, it catches me by surprise every October, the perfect month to reread a book set in October.

The book’s premise seems simple: 14-year-old Meg and her 5-year-old brother Charles Wallace are caught up in an effort to find their missing father, a scientist doing top secret work. The book’s reality is equally simple: Love is the most powerful force in existence, not only on our earth, but throughout all Time and Space. Meg, Charles, and Calvin, their newly-made friend, are whisked through space by means of “a wrinkle in time,” or a “tesseract,” in which distance is not measured in miles or time, but in what would be the 5<sup>th</sup> dimension.

The three come face-to-face with Evil, or Darkness, in the form of IT, an enormous, and ghastly, living brain. They learn that many beings have been fighting it for centuries. While Christianity is not specifically named, the “Light shining in Darkness” which Darkness has not overcome, is key to the story.

To write more would destroy the mystery of this book. If you delight in a good story, well-told, full of humor, compassion, and, yes, Love, you may want to read it.

Bookworm

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **MEN'S BREAKFAST**

Come one, come all to the monthly Men's Breakfast!  
Saturday, October 12, 2019, 8:30 AM, Room 105  
GOOD FELLOWSHIP, GOOD FOOD, GOOD FUN!

### **BOOK CLUB**

Tuesday, October 1, 2019, 1:00 PM, Library  
We will discuss E. Lockhart's "We Were Liars"  
We welcome new members!

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL: THE WIRED WORD**

Sundays Following Worship, 11:30 AM, Room 105  
Lively study-discussion based on current events  
Sandy Mori, Moderator

### **BELLS CHOIR**

Tuesdays, 7:00 PM, Sanctuary  
New ringers welcome!  
Dr. Betty Clark, Director

### **PRISCILLA CIRCLE**

Wednesday, October 16, 2019, 2:00 p.m., Memorial Chapel  
Join us for "Love Carved in Stone,"  
An in-depth study of the Ten Commandments

### **AFTER-CHURCH REFRESHMENTS**

Volunteers Needed  
Donate light snacks; brew coffee  
Church supplies coffee, lemonade, paper supplies  
Sign-up sheet on table in rear of sanctuary

**THE SEIPP/SHEETS DUO**



**Sunday, November 24, 2019 at 7PM**

The King of Instruments & The Instrument of Kings  
Chuck Seipp, trumpet / Randall Sheets, organ & piano

**ORGAN DEDICATION CONCERT**

First Presbyterian Church

7610 Newcastle Drive, Annandale, VA

**THE POTTER'S HOUSE**

Second annual show and silent auction, Saturday, November 16, 2019, Sanctuary  
Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Proceeds will support local and/or regional missions.

**SHEPHERD'S CENTER EVENTS**

SCAS Lunch'n'Life presents the Olli Players "From South Dakota to Bali Hai"

Thursday, October 24, 2019, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

United Baptist Church, 7100 Columbia Pike, Annandale VA

Call Shepherd's Center, 703 941 1419, for reservation

**Due Date for November FIRST and ForMOST: October 21, 2019. Send submissions to [LUXI7777@verizon.net](mailto:LUXI7777@verizon.net)**