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**OVER 80
BIRTHDAYS**

September 1
Janet Weber
September 7
Roberta Hunsinger
September 11
John Hinton
September 16
Helen Jephson
September 25
Sandra Tillotson
September 29
Dorothy Melrose

FALL KICKOFF 2014- WE ARE THE CHURCH!

Join us for our Fall Kick-off on Sept. 7! This fall we will be looking at the theme of "building," beginning on Sep. 7 with "We Are the Church!" There will be one united worship service that day at 10:00am. At 9:30am, there will be a brief time for fellowship/food in the gathering area prior to the service. Following the service, we invite you to enjoy fellowship and a luncheon catered by Moe's Southwest Grill in the dining room, where you can BUILD your own taco, burrito or salad! If you plan to attend the luncheon, please consider bringing a dessert to pass from your favorite family recipe. To RSVP for the luncheon and let us know what dessert you will bring, please email Jamie Jacobs at jjacobs@rigger.com or call the church office.

CONGREGATIONAL CONVERSATIONS



You are invited and encouraged to be part of one of the two "Congregational Conversations" scheduled on Sunday, September 14, following the second worship service and Monday, September 15, at 7:00 pm in the Dining Room.

Light refreshments will be served before the Sunday gathering.

GOALS OF THE GATHERINGS:

- 1) Session will recap where we are, what brought us to the point of seeking congregational discernment, and what we know about next steps in the process.
- 2) The congregation will be invited to offer feedback and ask questions.
- 3) A short, anonymous, written survey will be distributed to provide a way for everyone to participate and to get a better sense of the views of the congregation.

These are congregational conversations, NOT congregational meetings: there will be no votes taken and no decisions made at either gathering.

PASTORS' PAGE**- JAN AND TIM DEVINE, CO-PASTORS****CREATED TO CONTRIBUTE, BELONG, AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE
"From Consumerism to Community"**

This past week, we attended the 2014 National Gathering, co-sponsored by the Fellowship of Presbyterians and ECO. It was held in Dallas, TX - a long way to travel and a hot place to visit- but well worth it. We are grateful that Bryan and Sharon Early were also able to attend, because there was far too much information for one or two (or even four) people to absorb and process!

The conference was not a business meeting or a gathering to complain or argue. 1,300 Presbyterians were welcomed with these words: "Our goal, over the next three days, is to create an opportunity for you to encounter the Triune God in worship, expand your mind through stimulating presentations, experience the joy of life together in this community, and enable you to share the good news of Jesus Christ with passion." Theologians, pastors, consultants, church planters, missionaries, evangelists, community leaders, PC(USA) and ECO leaders shared their gifts, knowledge, experiences and passion for 48 hours packed with worship, prayer, study, workshops, challenges, and response.

The premise of the conference is that we American Christians have become more comfortable being consumers of the faith than being a community that is growing within and compelled to go out. The American Church looks very much like the consumer world around us, where Americans are 5% of the world's population, yet consume 33% of the world's resources. Even when it comes to choosing a church, we have a consumer mentality and tend to gather with others around a common interest rather than a common purpose. We choose, as our faith community, a church that has the style of worship we like, or a particular program for our family, or people in a similar socio-economic bracket.

True community is created when Christ's mission becomes our primary purpose — the reason we band together. We are created in God's image, which helps us understand that we are also:

- Created to contribute (work)
- Created to belong (fellowship)
- Created to make a difference (purpose)

A mission-based church, in contrast to an interest-based church, engages its members to be part of creating and building something that has eternal significance.

How timely this was, in light of our upcoming fall series on "Building." In coordination with the Children's Ministry, we will be looking at "building" stories in the Old and New Testaments. Although these stories retell particular events in the life of God's people, they should also lead us to ask bigger questions like:

- What are the building blocks of our own lives and faith?
- In what ways are we, as individuals and as a church, being challenged to build our lives upon God's commands and plan today?
- How are we, as Christ's church on the corner of Grant and Monroe, called to build God's kingdom in our local community and beyond?

WHAT'S NEW AMONG OUR PEOPLE?

– NATHAN JACOBS

This summer has been a busy one. In case you have been away, here is a chance to catch up on what has been happening in our congregation. Please pray especially for those who have been brought to our attention these last two months:

- Al Rundle's mother, Beverly, who is still in the hospital.
- The family of Janet Cook, whose great-nephew, Michael, passed away.
- Pastor Nissi, who is dealing with some health issues.
- Pastor Nissi's granddaughter, Kafi, who is serving in the military and is now stationed in Alaska.
- Pam Holmes, who had an emergency appendectomy.
- Graham Sholett, who had adenoidal surgery on 6/30.
- Dawn Weber, who had minor surgery on her hand.
- Bev and Lans Jones, who moved to a new apartment at Hilltop.
- Campers and parents, for the experiences they shared this summer.
- Bob Thomas, who returned to Good Shepherd Village after rehab.
- Doris Gerard, who fell and broke her pelvis.
- Bev Conklin's daughter-in-law, Barb, as she continues to battle cancer that has spread to her brain.
- The Yerger family, who mourned the passing of Gretchen's mother, Anna Mae Howe.
- Steve Kamper and his family, who grieved the passing of his father.
- The Heinle family, who mourned the passing of B.J.'s father, Thomas Mullen.
- Doris Gerard, who was able to return to her apartment from rehab.
- The Everett family, who experienced God's grace in a very real way when their grandson, Miles, had a medical emergency while they were traveling.
- Emily Preisendanz, who was hit by a car while riding her bike and sustained minor injuries.
- The King family, who lost Grace's father.
- The Preisendanz and Buffington families, who lost Bill Preisendanz.
- The Pierce family, who lost Larry's grandmother.
- Carleen Rynick, who mourned the death of her cousin.
- The Goetz's, who celebrated their 40th anniversary!
- The Fiaschi family, who celebrated Olivia's wedding.
- The Goetz's, who welcomed a new granddaughter, Grace Elizabeth Goetz, on Aug. 5.
- The McKeown family, who remembered Sarah on the anniversary of her death on Aug. 17.
- Gabby Laubisch, two-year-old daughter of Gretchen (a nursery school board member) and Greg, who was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of leukemia.
- The Loughridges' youngest daughter, Annie, who headed to Dublin, Ireland on August 26 to be an au pair.
- Bev Conklin, who lost her uncle, Tom Martin.
- Danielle and Steven Heidrich, who were married on Aug. 23.
- Eileen Slofkowsky, who had cataract surgery.
- June Hayes' son, George, who serves as a policeman in Johnson City and was injured in the line of duty.
- Helen Jephson, who is recovering from a fall.
- Those in our local area who were affected by flooding from the severe storm we had last week.
- Rich Thomas, who has asked for prayers as he deals with emotional stress, and for his mother who is experiencing much pain from issues related to aging.
- Rebecca Fiaschi, who recently became engaged and plans a fall wedding.
- Andrew Landon, who is serving in the Marines, and is being sent to Japan early in September.
- Jon Yerger, who had fall and broke his leg and clavicle.
- The family of Rev. Henry Jameson, Jr., who passed away August 19. Rev. Jameson served at FPC as Ass. Pastor from 1957-1961.
- Ralph Tallman, who is in the hospital with pneumonia.
- Mr. and Mrs. Brendan Flanagan, who were married in France last week.

FPC YOUTH NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2014

FPC YOUTH

FPC YOUTH COMMUNICATION



Improving communication with students and their families continues to be a priority. Our primary form of communication will continue to be a weekly FPC Youth email. I hope the email has been helpful.

Expect emails to start up again in September. If you have not received FPC Youth update emails in the past please email me ASAP at: jmfinn@firstpresendicott.org

As FPC Youth moves into this ministry year we are seeking to make improvements to how we connect with students and their families. We need your help. You will be receiving an FPC Youth update email in September. I will have information for you to fill out about your family. We will be using the information that is collected to update our FPC Youth database.

FPC Youth Kickoff
Sunday, September 21
6:00-8:00pm
The Warehouse
315 Scarborough Drive
Endwell, NY

I appreciate ALL of our families and the effort that they put into their children's spiritual development.

Thank you!



FALLing Into Opportunity

Summer has left as swiftly as it arrived! But don't worry, fall is an exciting time of year. It is a time to reconnect.

FPC YOUTH IS PREPARED TO KICKOFF WITH A BANG!

FPC Youth is revving up this fall, ready to make an impact on families. Our FPC Youth team is excited to reconnect with you. There are some really amazing opportunities for youth and families to plug into this coming year.

SMALL GROUPS BACK IN ACTION

Small groups will be back in action beginning with an informational meeting for PARENTS & STUDENTS on Sunday, September 28. During this meeting families will receive important information. If you are

considering being a part of an FPC Youth small group make sure you block out the date.

BE THE CHURCH BREAKFAST GROUPS ARE BACK IN OCTOBER!

Student breakfast groups will begin the first week of October. Make sure to stay tuned to Facebook and your email for all of the details!

SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS

We will officially begin Sunday School Sunday, September 14. We will start things off with BREAKFAST AT the MONROE HOUSE where Jr. and Sr. Highers and their parents can receive IMPORTANT information about the Sunday School year.

Our studies will begin Sunday, September 21.

life groups GO small, GROW **BIG**

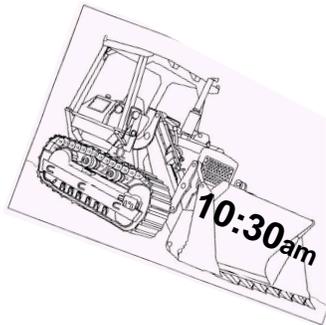
INFORMATIONAL MEETING

Sunday, September 28
 5:00-5:45pm
 @ The Warehouse

PROJECT **ignite**

IGNITE BIKES

Saturdays - Rain or Shine
 Meet at The Warehouse - 10:00am
 Return to The Warehouse - 12:30pm



FAMILY DAY KICK - OFF

SEPTEMBER 14



LET'S BUILD!

Gear up with us as we learn about some awesome building projects found in the Bible! Have you ever wondered how they built towers, temples, walls, and boats without all the technology and equipment we have now? How long did the projects take and what materials did they use? What did they measure with? How many people did it take to accomplish the construction? We will meet some incredible builders and amazing stories like Solomon and the temple, Noah's ark, Nehemiah and the walls of Jerusalem, and the Tower of Babel.

Don't come dressy because we're getting messy!

We will be getting dirty as we design, construct, and compete in all sorts of family building challenges!

Let's Learn Some Verses!

Pick a CD of your choice, snag some verse cards, and join the 8 week FAMILY CHALLENGE!

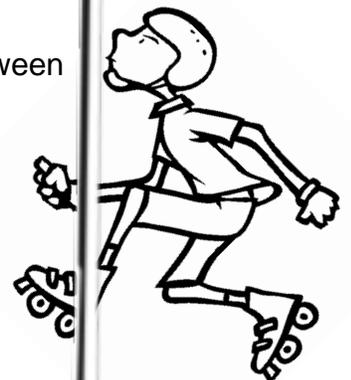
Our church wide goal will be to learn as many verses as we can between Sunday, September 14 & Sunday, November 16.

Then bring a friend, some skates, and join us at the **SKATE ESTATE** in Vestal for our Family Challenge Verse Celebration on

Sunday, November 16

6:00 - 8:00 pm.

If you aren't interested in skating, bring a board game of your choice.



CONNECTING THOUGHTS FOR SEPTEMBER

— SHARON EARLY

Summer and Reunions ... For many, this is a time to reconnect with those we may not be able to see on a regular basis. For our family, we had a number of times we gathered with extended family and friends. Whether for graduations, weddings, or returning to our college, they were a reminder that our families and the various communities we have been a part of all have core values that have shaped us. For our family, we have been blessed to have extended family that places a priority on being there for each other, whether in times of celebration or in trials. During the toast at my cousin's wedding, they highlighted how much our family places a priority on being there for others and serving where needed. It was also awesome to see how many of our individual families have faith as their foundation and how we share the same prayer that our children will pursue their faith as they begin their own lives.

This past weekend we dropped our son and nephew off at the college both Bryan and I attended. It was fun to again walk the campus where we met and developed some of our foundational values, two of which are: being in community and a tenacity to persevere through many challenges we have had in life. It is no wonder that I am such a proponent of being in community—I could instantly feel myself transported back to that time when the campus was a tight-knit community where for months on end we wrestled with life together. (The campus is so isolated up in the northern peninsula of Michigan that for the first 12 weeks of school, it was very rare for anyone to leave campus and parents did not just drop by.)

This summer we were also privileged to attend the national gathering of the Fellowship and ECO churches, which also felt like a reunion because it had been 18 months since the previous national gathering. It continues to refresh my soul to worship with others and be reminded of our joint mission to build flourishing congregations who make disciples of Jesus Christ. The conference topic, "From Consumerism to Community," is an important one for the American Church today and provided much food for thought about how FPC can continue to foster its community.



This summer was also a reminder that although we may have many higher level core values/beliefs in common, all too often our day-to-day living may still be inconsistent with these values. Why am I sharing all of this with you? Because, we are having our own 'FPC Reunion' for our fall kick-off, and I am looking forward to reconnecting with many I have not seen this summer. Part of that connecting will be asking the hard questions of where we need to focus our lives and making it a priority to get our small groups back meeting together regularly.

Our leaders already gathered mid-summer to start wrestling with what their groups will be studying this fall and to discern where they might participate in our upcoming Serve Day in October. We look forward to a fall of new opportunities for this community of faith to come together and to continue to work on building a flourishing church on the corner of Grant and Monroe. Are you part of this community of faith and becoming an active disciple of Christ, or merely an observer? This can be a hard question to answer, but it is a key one for our church's ability to spread the Good News to our community!

**CAN'T YOU JUST SMELL THOSE
NEW SNEAKERS...**
-RONNE SISCO, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION



Teacher: “Boy, did you get dirty.”

Preschooler: “Well, I’m a lot closer to the ground than you are!”

We’re counting down to a new school year and those sweet sounds of three, four, and five-year-old giggles. Along with new **little** faces, we are extremely proud and privileged to be welcoming some new **big** faces as well to our nursery school family. Miss Christina Bassano, Mrs. Pamela Harvey, Mrs. Marcy Luffman and Miss Domenica McKeon have joined us as teachers in our 4s/UPK program, as has Mrs. Tiffany Ferrell, who will also be enjoying a three-year-old class! (Their photos are forthcoming in next month’s edition!) Classes start the week of September 8.

The 2014-2015 school year also brings new officers to our Parent Council: **Co-Presidents:** Mrs. Katarina Fledderman and Mrs. Wendy Bishop; **Secretary:** Mrs. Claire Patterson; **Treasurer:** Mrs. Angela DeNardis; and **Newsletter Creator:** Mrs. Nicole Scott. We’d like to give a **huge** thank you for your upcoming support and generosity. We look forward to the first event of the year for our nursery school families – the Ice Cream Social Mixer - on Friday, September 26th!

SESSION UPDATE**-JANET FREDERICK, CLERK OF SESSION**

“Ruling elders are so named not because they “lord it over” the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders, together with teaching elders, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships.”

From the PC(USA) Book of Order 2013-2015 G-2.0301

I believe most of us on Session would say that we have never felt the weight of the above responsibilities more than we have this summer. With two meetings in July, we tackled a couple of ongoing, serious issues for our congregation.

At the first meeting on July 2, we met to discuss the recent PC(USA) General Assembly and the effects decisions made there could have on First Pres. While we have been talking about these ongoing concerns for many months – and yes, years – the latest denominational gathering moved us to believe that it may be time to respond in some manner, and for this purpose we committed to enter into a time of discernment. In order to keep the congregation updated, we voted to compose and send a letter to all active members and active non-members, informing them of the reason for our concerns and outlining some of the steps we will be taking during this time of discernment. We hope all of you will carefully read the letter and will enter your own period of discernment through prayer and the study of scripture. (Note: If you did not receive a letter but wish to have a copy, please contact the church office.) We also hope you will plan on attending one of the congregational gatherings scheduled for September 14 or 15 (see details elsewhere in this FPP.

We met again on July 9 to review the letter before sending it out and also voted to clarify our position at First Pres. regarding marriage. The statement below will appear in the “Who We Are” section of our church website; our current Wedding Policy also confirms our belief about this important part of Christian life: *In July 2014, the Session of FPC voted to reaffirm its commitment to the belief and practice of the biblical understanding of marriage. In response to an Authoritative Interpretation by 2014 General Assembly, which approved a broader practice of marriage but also preserved the rights of sessions and ministers to determine local practice, Session confirmed that the use of church property for weddings and the decisions of FPC ministers about whom to marry shall remain consistent with our current FPC wedding policy and the 2013-15 PC(USA) Book of Order, W-4.900. FPC’s wedding policy is based on the biblical teachings of:*

- *Genesis 2:18-25, where God created humans as male and female and established the lifelong covenantal relationship between a man and a woman where “a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.”*
- *Matthew 19:3-6, where Jesus affirmed God’s intention and plan when tested by the Pharisees, saying, “Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”*

The wedding policy also includes the expectation that couples will typically be required to have a relationship with FPC, so that nurture and support can continue beyond the wedding ceremony.

Much of the rest of our July 9 meeting was devoted to a discussion about short- and long-term financial realities and projections at FPC. We studied an analysis of giving demographics prepared by Financial Secretary Charlene Gebler and looked carefully at spending patterns using an expense spreadsheet prepared by Treasurer Art Davis. It is important as we go forward that we be especially mindful of both our giving and our spending, and both will be discussed again as we soon enter into budget deliberations for 2015.

COMMUNITY

Don't Do Dunkin

Please join us this fall as the Don't Do Dunkin (Adult Sunday School) class takes a new look at a well-known parable. Timothy Keller, author of the *The Prodigal God*, argues that the Prodigal Son may be Jesus' best known but least understood parable. Keller uses this parable to reveal the central message of Jesus: the gospel of grace, hope, and salvation. Whether you purchase the book and read along in this six-week session, or simply come and participate in the weekly discussion, you will find this study giving you a new understanding of the central message of the Christian faith. We will begin Sunday, September 14. The class meets at 10:45 AM in the Library. All are welcome to come.

School Supplies Ministry

The Deacons want to say "thank you!" for your donations of school supplies. The supplies were delivered to Charles F. Johnson Elementary School in Endicott for students unable to purchase their own.

Saying Goodbye

We will soon be saying goodbye to Jim and Robert Lewis. They will be moving to Tarboro, NC, to be closer to daughter/sister Katie, her husband, Adam, and their two boys. The Lewises have a long history here at FPC. Music was Jim's profession and passion, and he will certainly be missed in the bell choir. Robert used his talent to help cook meals for the Samaritan Supper and also helped Lou with other catering functions. We pray for the Lewises as they make this transition and begin a new chapter of their lives in North Carolina.

2015 Mission Trip to Kenya

FPC will take its sixth trip to Kenya in the beginning of February. The team will be made up of people doing medical work through the Kikuyu Presbyterian Hospital and others who will work with Kenyan Christians to build a church and school. If you have any interest in learning more or participating, please speak with Jan Devine and plan to attend the first organizational meeting on Sunday, September 21, at 12:15pm in the lounge. (Feel free to bring a bag lunch or snack.) Linda and Stu Ross, who host the mission groups through the Outreach Foundation, will be in Endicott this fall to orient participants.

New Member Classes

Membership Classes: If you have been attending worship at FPC and believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior, you are invited to come and explore the possibility of membership as we talk about who we are as a congregation, what we believe, and the values we pursue because we believe they have great worth. Increasingly, the desire to formally belong to institutions and organizations is waning. While you can certainly be active at FPC without being a member, membership gives people the opportunity to have a voice and vote in directions that are set and decisions that are made. Classes are scheduled for Sunday, October 30 and Sunday November 2, from 2-5 pm. The alternate date, if needed, is Sunday, November 9. Please contact Jan Devine or the Church Office to let us know of your interest so we have materials for participants. After attending these two classes, you will be able to decide without pressure if this is the right time and place to commit to doing life and ministry with others here at FPC.

AV BOOTH

If you have been to church recently, you will have noticed the new AV booth in the rear of the sanctuary. The booth was installed to make it easier for the tech team to see what is happening during worship services and to create space for a new video ministry. A big “thanks!” goes out to Lou Pasquale, Carol Smith, Dave Beers, and Nathan Jacobs for their hard work in making the project happen quickly and professionally.



FPP Calendar

September 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 6:00 pm Membership Team Meeting 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	2 12:30 pm Staff Meeting 7:00 pm Nominating Committee	3 6:00 am Men's Group Session 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	4 5:00 pm Nursery School Parent Orientation 7:00 pm GPMO Board meeting 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	5	6
7 10:00 am United Worship Service 11:00 am Congregational Lunch	8 7:00 pm Nursery School Begins Relevant Ministries	9 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper 7:00 pm Deacons	10 6:00 am Men's Group 7:00 pm Mission & Stewardship 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	11 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	12	13
14 9:09 am Children's Ministry Kickoff Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:30 am Children's Ministry 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) 12:15 pm Congregational Conversation	15 6:30 pm Parent Council Meeting 7:00 pm Congregational Conversation 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	16 12:30 pm Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper	17 2015 Budget Requests Due 6:00 am Men's Group 1:30 pm Women's Circle III 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	18 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	19	20 9:00 am Presbytery Meeting-East Guilford
21 9:09 am Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional) 12:15 pm Kenya Meeting 6:00 pm FPC Youth Fall Kickoff	22 1:00 pm Women's Club Board Meeting 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	23 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper 7:00 pm Worship Ministry Team	24 6:00 am Men's Group 7:00 pm Worship Team Rehearsal	25 6:00 pm Mary-El Ringers 7:00 pm Chancel Choir	26 5:00 pm Nursery School Ice Cream Social	27
28 9:09 am Peacemaking Sunday Worship Service (Contemporary) 10:45 am Worship Service (Traditional)	29 1:00 pm Women's Club 7:00 pm Relevant Ministries	30 12:30 pm Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Samaritan Supper 6:30 pm NS Board Meeting				

VISION STATEMENT

(What God wants to do)

We believe God wants to transform our community through the saving love of Jesus Christ and calls us to share that hope with the world. To be an agent of hope, our congregation must work together and rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to follow Christ, whatever the cost.¹ This commitment, which is grounded in a deep love of God and neighbor,² sends us out to share the Good News of Christ through our words³ and our actions.⁴

¹ *The Great Commitment*, Matthew 16:24-26

² *The Great Commandment*, Luke 10:27

³ *The Great Commission*, Matthew 28:18-20

⁴ *The Great Compassion*, Matthew 25:31-40

MISSION STATEMENT

(What God wants us to do)

We believe God wants us to share the life-changing power and love of Jesus Christ in such compelling ways that more people become fully devoted followers of Christ.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

(The reason we exist)

To reach more people and together grow in Christ.



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