

Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church 6300 Courthouse Road ~ P.O. Box 182 Prince George, VA 23875

> Phone: (804) 732-1081 gregorymemorialoffice@verizon.net

AUGUST ISSUE

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2011



SAINT TO SAINT ... W.W.J.D. Revisited

W.W.J.D?.... Once upon a time many Christians wore wristbands with those cryptic letters, sometimes followed by a question mark. They, of course, are shorthand for that most classic of questions, What Would Jesus Do? They've kind of fallen out of vogue lately replaced by "Live Strong" and even the brightly colored bands of our Workcamp group, but the guestion remains as important as ever... What would Jesus do?

As many of us have considered our answer to that query, we may have thought about it in terms of relationships, business decisions, and what

kinds of personal behavior might best reflect the example of our Lord. Yet, it's a question that begs also to be asked at the highest level of decision-making within our government and society... W.W.J.D.?... in cases of international conflict, extending aid to needy peoples, determining how we treat illegal immigrants, and, yes, making decisions about our national budget.

Many of our legislators outwardly confess Jesus as Lord, which, I believe, ought to compel them to ask of themselves, W.W.J.D.? as they cast their votes in the House of Representatives or the Senate, yet I'm personally more concerned about the mindset of the Christian voter, people like you and me who elect candidates to office and benefit (or suffer) as a result of the decisions they collectively make.

Despite the fact that, at times, I feel powerless to have any sway in the halls of Congress (and certainly can't ante up the big bucks of political PAC's!), I nevertheless believe it's my personal obligation as both a Christian and as a responsible citizen to ask W.W.J.D.? about the big issues, and, when appropriate, to let my elected representatives know what I think based on how I've answered that question.

As I write this, headlines remind us that no accommodation has yet been made by our national government to raise the debt ceiling which we have been told must be done to avoid long-lasting ill effects to our economy. Despite months of rancorous debate and posturing on all sides and many meetings at the White House and at other venues, no middle ground has been reached. I find this upsetting as do apparently a majority of Americans.

While the question of the raising the debt ceiling is, at a certain level very simple,... Do we raise it to allow the government to continue to pay its bills or not, as we have some 87 times

before?... the issues surrounding it are not. In the minds of many, the debt-ceiling debate raises important guestions about what responsibilities should government legitimately undertake, who should it help?, how do we fund it?, what's the role of the private sector and religious organizations in fashioning how we are to be as a nation? and how do we right a seriously damaged economy? to name a few.



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As we seek to answer such questions for ourselves, it's helpful to listen to the statements of the politicians and the wisdom of the news analysts, yet Christians also need to lend an ear to the teachings of Jesus and the Book that reveals them: *Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me'*" (Matthew 25:40)... 'You shall *love your neighbor as yourself*' (Mark 12:31)... *"Do to others as you would have them do to you"* (Luke 6:31)

And as we explore the witness of Scripture, we find that both the New and Old Testaments commend us to choose generosity over greed, to lift up the cause of the widow and orphan and alien (in ancient society the most defenseless of citizens) and to observe how the prophets roundly castigated their leaders who favored the wealthy and powerful over and against the poor.

In a telling encounter with the Jewish religious establishment hoping to trap him into siding with the oppressive (at least to Jews) Roman government, Jesus asks his would-be accusers to show him a common Roman coin embossed with the head of the Roman emperor used to pay taxes and then responds, "Give to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." (Mark 12:17) In doing so, Jesus seems to acknowledge the need for faithful Jews to respect authority and to pay taxes while being mindful of our "higher" obligations concerning material wealth.

There are, of course, many more verses to guide us including ones about being wise stewards in the use of our resources (i.e., not spending beyond our means). You may have your own favorites to inform your faith as a Christian citizen, but, whatever they may be, I encourage you, as Paul said, to "think upon these things." Given the Constitutional relationship between religion and government in this country, we cannot and should not expect our leaders to meet national problems with religious solutions, yet I believe all our citizens would hope that the decisions of our national leaders would be shaped by values based upon a consistent moral foundation. As some have said, our national budget is a *moral* statement about our hopes and vision for our nation.

As followers of the one who chose not to stay safely among the angels but descended among us to mix it up with the princes and power-brokers, eventually at the cost of his life, I believe each of us has an important role to play in shaping public policy and especially our nation's budget. To that end, write or call your representative today!

Together with you in ministry,

MARK S.

The Honorable Jim Webb United States Senate 248 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510-4603 202-224-4024 http://webb.senate.gov/contact.cfm

ZIP CODES 23803-05, 23834, 23842

The Honorable J. Randy Forbes United States House of Representatives 2438 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515-4604 202-225-6365 (could not find current e-contact) The Honorable Mark R. Warner United States Senate 459A Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510-4601 202-224-2023 http://warner.senate.gov/public//index.cfm?p=ContactPage

ZIP CODES 23875, 23860

The Honorable Bobby Scott () United States House of Representatives 1201 Longworth House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515-4603 202-225-8351 https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml

CLERK'S CORNER AUGUST 2011 The session had their regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, July 19, 2011, with the Rev. Mark Sprowl moderating. Items approved were: Order of 17 new Books of Order for Session members and incoming elders. Allow the Preschool to have a peanut fundraiser. The interim pastor covenant for Rev. Sprowl for September 15, 2011 through September 14, 2012. New procedures related to the new Form of Government (nFOG) – see list below. Rev. Carole McCann to preach on Sunday, August 6th. Allow Valerie Harsh to use the Fellowship Hall for a Relay for Life fundraiser on Saturday, Oct. 22, 2011. -Verne Smith, Clerk New Form of Government procedures adopted by Gregory Session: 1. Quorum at Congregational Meetings is 10% of active member roll. 2. Two (2) full weeks prior notice for Congregational Meetings. 3. Congregation Nominating Committee to have three (3) members at-large elected by the congregation, Session appoint two (2) elders, one serving on Session. 4. Elders to have three (3) year term with one year off before returning to Session. 5. Session elects clerk for term it decides; clerk needs to be an elder, but does not have to be on Session. 6. Session to have a manual of operations. 7. Session meeting quorum to be 50% at stated and called meetings, except two (2) Ruling Elders plus Teaching Elder for receiving new members. 8. Treasurer and Financial Secretary to be elected yearly by Session.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Camp Hanover's Day Camp was held at Gregory July 5th -8th. Twenty-one campers, from grades 1-5, were led by counselors from Camp Hanover. Campers enjoyed a taste of camp including bible stories, worship, games, arts, crafts, making new friends, nature study, and much more. From making paper to cooking over a campfire, campers learned how "2CU: Finding God in the Everyday." The Christian Education Committee would like to thank everyone who helped make Day Camp a success.

Mark your calendars..."Back to Church Sunday" is September 11th at 9 a.m. Please join us for breakfast and fellowship as we kick off a new Sunday school year.

FACILITIES

Facilities would like to wish everyone a safe and happy summer! Please remember that even though summer is a time for relaxation and vacations, Gregory's Facilities Committee will remain busy and as always we need your help to keep our facility in tip-top shape!



OUTREACH



Get out your poodle skirts, saddle shoes, white bucks and duck tails! Our theme for Community Day will be the Fifties. With your help, October 1 from 10-2 should be a really fun day. Besides a Brunswick Stew Sale, petting zoo, PWOC Bake Sale, White Elephant Sale, a band, food and hopefully a Classic Car Show, many community agencies will be represented. SRMC will be doing health checks. The Bloodmobile will come if we can get 20 people to sign up. Crafters and vendors are being invited to rent a space for \$15. The PG Animal Shelter will bring animals for adoption. There will be more TBA.

In the meantime, Outreach is reaching out to the congregation for ideas, and volunteers to help us make this day a successful event. If interested, please let someone on our committee know. We will be seeking any gently used items for the White Elephant Sale which will be held in the Fellowship Hall along with the Bake Sale and Food Sale. Our next meeting will be on Aug.1 at 6:30pm. So if you have any input for us, we would appreciate it before then if possible. If you know of any crafters or vendors that would like to participate, please have them call Judy (458-3580 or e-mail <u>rjrkr@comcast.net</u>) to reserve their spot. We will not provide tables because we will be using them.

THIS IS AN SOS. On Sunday, July 24th, I attended a Habitat for Humanity home dedication. It is always heart warming to see the new homeowner receive her house key. Currently they have three homes to renovate before November. A \$46,000 grant expires in November. So the money is there but the volunteers are lacking. The Director, Dwight Nave, indicated how wonderful it would be if Gregory could just send workers for one day. And I thought what a wonderful mission and outreach this would be for us. They are very accommodating as to when we would want to work. Of course I doubt that any of us would want to be involved until the weather cools down in September and October. Chester Presbyterian is very actively involved. This is truly a worthwhile mission project close to home with no expense for us but our time and energy. If you feel inspired to participate in this, please let Judy know. There would be jobs suitable for everyone. Now that I've seen the amazing accomplishments of our Work Campers, I know that a work crew from Gregory could

PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) is diligently working to complete the Church Information Form (CIF). This is the form that is submitted to the Commission on Ministry in order to begin the search for our next pastor.

Using the information that you provided on the Congregational Survey as well as other sources of information, we have written and are sharing with you the Mission Statement that is to be a part of this document. The PNC has attempted to relate where we as a congregation see this church today and where we see ourselves striving to be in the near future.

Please continue to pray for the PNC as we seek to do God's will.

Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church Mission Statement

Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church began as a small community church about 125 years ago. Today we have a beautiful brick facility in the heart of a growing, vibrant county within a tricity area.

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We are a church that values caring, loving each other, and striving to be a place of compassion and hospitality in the community. We place much trust in the power of prayer.

In response to God's love for us, we worship God and strive to serve God and our neighbors, to proclaim God's Word, and be an example of Jesus Christ's love to the world. We reach out to others of all ages by sharing the Good News of hope, healing, and salvation through Jesus Christ.

Gregory is devoted to the education and nurture of its youth as they are the future of our church.

Missions are of key importance to Gregory Memorial's service to God. Ten percent of our Sunday offerings are earmarked for local and world missions. Special offerings and hands-on projects are on-going throughout the year. We actively participate in all of Presbytery's special offerings.

Gregory may be small in number, but by God's grace, we reach out to welcome all God's children in our community.

We view our future as mission-oriented, with dedication to our youth, and with a warm welcome for all.

WORSHIP

No Communion this month.

Worship committee wants to thank all the Ushers for their service on Sundays. You're doing a great job! Special thanks to those who watch the side door and stand outside, helping folks up the stairs. Also to the greeters who work inside the sanctuary doors, thanks for your kindness towards members and new visitors. Ushers & Greeters, if you cannot make it on any given Sunday, please let us know ahead of time so that we can find a replacement for you and make updates to the bulletin.

We're still doing Acolyte training. Bear with us; we should have a fuller group as school time approaches.

WORSHIP IN AUGUST

SUNDAY, AUGUST 7 – We are pleased to have the Rev. Dr. Carol McCann as our guest preacher.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 14 – We are pleased to have once again the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Barton as our guest preacher.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 21 – Did Jesus ever laugh? Mark takes a light-hearted look at how the Lord as well as others might have reason to chuckle from the Bible and other sources in his message, *Laughing with God.* Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 and Genesis 17-18 and 21 to prepare.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 28 – Have you ever been frustrated that a prayer of yours wasn't answered in a way you thought best? The Apostle Paul too had deep frustrations in this area. Hear how he found relief in a personal encounter with Jesus in Mark's message, *Weakness 2 Strength*. Read 2 Corinthians 12:2-10 to prepare.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

ELDER & TRUSTEE NOMINATIONS NEEDED

The Congregational Nominating Committee (CNC) is seeking suggestions for active members of Gregory to serve as ruling elder (three persons for 3-year term, one for 2 years) and trustee (3 year-term). These new elders will join five

other elders who comprise the Session which oversees all ministry at the church. The Presbyterian *Constitution* describes elders as "persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world." (G-2.0104).

According to policies at Gregory, elders leaving the Session this year must take a year's respite before they can be considered. Also husbands and wives cannot serve at the same time. The CNC would also like to consider any senior youth to serve a term of one year. Trustees should have qualities similar to those of elder; they act from time to time to serve as legal representatives of the church to sign documents, etc. (by law, their names are on file with the Circuit Court). You may submit your suggestions on the form in the bulletin on Sundays, July 31 and August 7 or contact a member of the CNC: Verne Smith (chair), Gladys Vtipil, Keith Spain, H.F. Scott and Rose Scott.

INTERIM PASTOR ON VACATION

Rev. Sprowl will be on vacation August 6 – August 20. Our secretary, Julie Jacobs, will be happy to assist you Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm. For emergency pastoral concerns during this time, you may call the office during the hours noted above or call members of our Congregational Care Committee Marguerite Bishop, 541-3101, and Glenda Mayhew, 458-7682.

CELEBRATING GREGORY'S ORIGINS

2011 is the 60th Anniversary of the chartering of Gregory Presbyterian Church. Although it had certainly existed as a place of Christian worship and education prior to this time served largely by seminary students, it was in 1951 that the first installed pastor, Rev. Frank Lemmon, was called and the first 53 charter members came on board. We will be celebrating this special anniversary on Sunday, September 11 in worship. We're seeking any photos or other memorabilia from that time. Photos will be copied and promptly returned. For further information, please contact Mark or the church office.

WORKCAMP 2011

Nine Gregory members participated at the Tri-Cities Workcamp this year: Youth – Bradley Cooper, Pamela Harsh, Herb Schroeter and Jacob Spain; Adults – Bobby Allen, Dennis Allen, Debra Bailey, Josh Ingram and Keith Spain. The youth all served at different worksites painting, cleaning and building alongside church youth from all over the East Coast.

In addition to the work, they became friends with the families who occupied the homes they were renovating, studied the Bible, got to know some other kids really well and had fun! The adults often worked alongside the young people and took part in many of the group-building activities. For some it was their first Workcamp; others were old pro's. All found it... the word that always seems to come up about Workcamp... *lifechanging.*

On Sunday, July 17, we commissioned the campers in worship. In the fall, the Workcampers will lead a worship service where they will share their experiences. Many thanks to Gregory members who helped raise funds for the Camp, sent cards to Campers and made visits to the worksites and to the several groups in the church who organized lunches. Photos of Workcamp 2011 will eventually be available at <u>www.tcworkcamps.org</u> (some are printed on the back of this newsletter).



ANOTHER CHANGE TO THE PRESBYTERIAN CONSTITUTION

Earlier this year I mentioned the change about ordination requirements within the Presbyterian Church (USA) that struck down a rule that prohibited gays and lesbians from being considered for ordination in an church. Another very important change was approved to our "Form of Government."

The Presbyterian *Constitution* consists of two parts: The *Book of Order* and the *Book of Confessions*. The latter consists of 11 ancient and contemporary confessions of faith the PC(USA) has chosen to guide the church in its faith and practice. These include the Apostles Creed, the Westminster Confession of Faith and others.

The Book of Order is divided into three parts: Form of Government, Directory of Worship and The Rules of Discipline. As you can tell from their names, the Directory of Worship governs worship practice in the church. The Rules of Discipline apply to cases where members, elders, ministers or church councils have either made mistakes in judgment or have not carried out the provisions of the Constitution and a remedy to the situation must be found.

The *Form of Government* sets out foundational beliefs of Presbyterians beginning with Jesus Christ as Lord and head of the church and continues with policies regarding formation and operation of churches, training and election and ordination of ministers and elders, etc. Acting on the recommendation of the last General Assembly (the national legislative body of the PC(USA) that meets every two years), a majority of presbyteries approved dramatic changes to this first part of the Book of Order.

In an attempt to make it leaner and less restrictive, much language and previous requirements were omitted, leaving more decisions about how to conduct ministry up to local congregations and their leaders. Two changes of note for those familiar with the old language have to do with elder terminology and membership. Previously, ministers were called "Minister of the Word and Sacrament." Now the operative term is "teaching elder." Similarly, lay elders serving on sessions were simply elders or perhaps "active" or "inactive" elders. Now church elders are "ruling elders. This change is actually a return to language used a number of years ago.

This change reflects a desire to remind us all that both teaching elders (ministers) and ruling elders are ordained church leaders with important and similar roles to play within the church. A church's pastor is not a CEO but a spiritual leader who, by dint of calling and preparation in seminary, is in a position to teach and lead others in the faith. He or she is purposely not the president or chairperson of the church's session but a "moderator," suggesting one among equals.

The church elder is a "ruling elder" in the sense that he or she oversees the work of the church at every level. The church's mission, its budget, its property, its worship are all administered... not by the pastor... but by the session through its ruling elders.

In addition, at every level beyond the local church, there is a parity between teaching elders and ruling elders. Each year at meetings of the Presbytery of the James, it's noted that there are many more teaching elders (ministers) than churches represented due to the fact there is a seminary in Richmond, large retirement communities for ministers and the offices of other Presbyterian groups often staffed by teaching elders. In order to ensure a theoretical equality between the number of teaching and ruling elders, the Presbytery permits many churches to send more commissioners (ruling elders) to Presbytery meetings that the *Book of Order* would normally permit.

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Our denominational moniker, *Presbyterian*, means a church governed not by ministers or bishops but by *elders*.

Another interesting change is the elimination in the membership category of *inactive* members. In years past, the *Book of Order*, provided for a kind of intermediate step for individuals who no longer satisfied the requirements for active membership in terms of worship attendance and gifts of time and money in the active life of the congregation. Churches were required to keep inactive member rolls whose length sometimes rivaled that of the active roll! Inactive members could not vote at congregational meetings or serve church office but were to be afforded all the other perquisites of membership including pastor care.

Now, you're either active or you're not! The thinking here is not so much that of an ecclesiastical bureaucrat who desires to toss inactives out in the biblical "darkness with the gnashing of teeth," but of a church that seeks to make clear to its members the importance of being actively involved in their faith community. There are no hanger-oners in the Kingdom of God! The Session continues to be charged with the annual task of sizing up the activity of the church's membership and to "counsel" with those who, for some reason, haven't been in worship, etc. with an eye towards getting them stirred up and active again. Of course, every session understands the special needs of members who are homebound, work on Sundays, tend to ailing parents, etc. and make provision for that.

Like the Sessions of the other 10,000 Presbytery churches, we continue to learn about new interpretations of ministry in the *Book of Order* and will pass along other "revelations" as they come about. New *Books of Order* have now been published and are available for order at <u>http://store.pcusa.org</u>. Let the church office know and we'd be happy to obtain a copy for you at \$10 each. All current and new elders will receive a copy of the revised *Book of Order*. If you'd like to see the revised *Form of Government* often referred to as nFOG ("n" for new), you can see it at <u>http://oga.pcusa.org/pdf/proposed_amendments.pdf</u>. The Presbytery motto says it all, "Reformed and Ever Reforming." – *Mark S*.

TO THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT

Agnes Bauer passed away on July 8. She was the mother of Evelyn Lichvar and celebrated her 100th birthday this year. A memorial service was celebrated at Gregory on July 12. Our prayers are with Evelyn and other members of her family. Many thanks to members of the Congregational Care Committee and their helpers for the gracious reception that followed the service.

CONGRATULATIONS!

To Matt and Jessica Mauger on the birth of their new son, Jase Russel, born July 19, weighing in at 8 pounds, 11 ounces and measuring 21". Also very proud is grandmother Debra Bailey who had to negotiate both Workcamp and the delivery room!

PRAYER CONCERNS

Dick Mann Christine Belsches Aida Faries Alan Foster June Hawks Marian McDonald Peggy Surfield Helen Cibula Katherine Tompkins Marie Allen (Dennis Allen's mother) Tammy Pelter (Gladys Vtipil's niece) Mary Chadwick (Dink Armstrong's sister) Virginia Mika (Sister of Grace & Helen Cibula) Mila Campen (Ronnie Hartsell's grandmother) Mathew Mauger



THOSE WHO SERVE IN AUGUST



CHILDRENS MINISTRIES "Teaching Christian Values for Life"

Date	Nursery	Junior Sermon	Junior Church
Aug 7	Ruby Spain	Pat Hunter	Rose Scott Pam Harsh
Aug 14	Robbi Foster	Mary Kay Schroeter	Mary Kay Schroeter Madison Foster
Aug 21	Glenda Mayhew	Rev. Sprowl	Virginia Maloney Jared Smyth
Aug 28	Debra Bailey	Valerie Harsh	Mary Beth Coleman Kevin Foster

OTHER WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

AUGUST	August 7	August 14	August 21	August 28
USHERS	Bobby Allen	Gladys Wiseman	Sheila Fields	Valerie Harsh
	Donna Allen	Verne Smith	Janet Swinton	Pamela Harsh
	Velma Allen	Debra Bailey	Mary Holc	Jerry Bond
	Pat Hunter	Jessica Mauger	Doug Holc	Debbie (Sissy) Smith
ANNOUNCMENTS	Jerry Bond	Dianne Overstreet	Pat Hunter	Mary Kay Schroeter
COUNTING	Ron Recher	Sandy Hunter	Donald Hunter	David Johnson
	Verne Smith	Rose Scott	Glenda Mayhew	Evelyn Lichvar

Flowers

7- The Hunters 14- The Overstreets 21- Volunteer Needed 28- Volunteer Needed



AUGUST GATEKEEPER Bobby Allen 691-3337



Unselfish

and noble actions

are the most radiant pages

in the biography of souls.

-David Thomas

$\rm AUGUST \sim 2011$



Sun		Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
		1 2:00pm Line Dancing 6:30pm Outreach & Missions	2 12:30pm Day Circle 6:00pm Congr. Care 7:00pm Facilities	3 7:00pm Choir	4 2-8:00pm Volunteer Cleaning 7:00pm PNC	5	6 Rev. Sprowl Vacation Begins	
9:15am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Guest Preacher	7	8 Noon Widows 2:00pm Line Dancing 6:00pm Christian Ed. & CNC	9 6:30pm P&O & Pre-School Board 7:00pm Worship	10 7:00pm Choir	11 6:00pm Line Dancing	12	13	
1 9:15am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Guest Preacher	14	15 2:00pm Line Dancing	16 No Session Meeting 7:00pm PNC	17 Committee Reports Due 7:00pm Choir	18 2-8:00pm Volunteer Cleaning	19	20 Rev. Sprowl Vacation Concludes	
9:15am Sunday School 10:00am Worship Minute for Missions	21	22 Noon Widows 2:00pm Line Dancing	23 6:30pm S&F	24 Newsletter Articles Due 7:00pm Choir	25 6:00pm Line Dancing 7:00pm PNC	26	27	
2 9:15am Sunday School 10:00am Worship 5 Cents-a- Meal	28	29 2:00pm Line Dancing	31	31 7:00pm Choir				
- AGSN -								





Welcome back WorkCampers: Bradley Cooper, Herb Schroeter, Pamela Harsh & Jacobs Spain! We are proud of you and the work you did in the Lord's name in Petersburg. Many thanks also to your adult helpers: Bobby Allen, Dennis Allen, Debra Bailey, Josh Ingram & Keith Spain.

Gregory Memorial Presbyterian Church 6300 Courthouse Road ~ PO Box 182 Prince George, VA 23875-0182



COME JOIN US!!