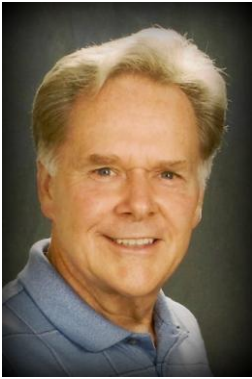


JUNE ISSUE

2011

SAINT TO SAINT... *Winds of Change for the PCUSA*



In Minnesota, “You Betcha!” On May 10, the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area made a decision that will alter the course of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in the coming years. Those Minnesotans voted to affirm an important change to our church’s *Constitution* whereby specific language that posed an obstacle for gays and lesbians to be ordained to church office would be removed and replaced with wording using different criteria for judgment.

The proposal originated with the the 2010 General Assembly (our denomination’s highest legislative body composed equally of ministers and elders from around the country and meets every two years) which approved the change by a vote of 373 to 323. A majority of the 173 presbyteries was needed to approve the change, and the Twin Cities Area presbytery became the 87th, ensuring it would become church law. The new language says,

The New *“Standards for ordained service reflect the church’s desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life. The governing body responsible for ordination and/or installation shall examine each candidate’s calling, gifts, preparation and suitability for the responsibilities of office. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all the requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation. Governing bodies shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.”*

This replaces language first inserted into the *Constitution* at the 1996 General Assembly. That paragraph which was endorsed at the time by both a majority of GA delegates and voting presbyteries said,

The Old *“Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church. Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders or ministers of the Word and Sacrament.”*

Difference One The different wording between these two paragraphs impacts ordination of church officers in two ways : (1) With the old language, a candidate could be considered for ordination only if she or he were chaste as a single person or married to a person of the opposite sex. This effectively ruled out consideration of gays and lesbians involved in long-term, committed relationships... unless they remained celibate. The new language does not eliminate this as a possible consideration but asks that governing bodies instead look to the over-arching principles of the Bible and the historic Presbyterian confessions. There is also emphasis on candidates’ willingness to fulfill the vows of ordination.



Continued....

CLERK'S CORNER
JUNE 2011

The session had their regularly scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, May 17, 2011, with the Rev. Mark Sprowl moderating.

Items approved were:

- Moving the following members from the active roll to the inactive roll:

Betty Sue Angle	Terry Angle	Chad Angle	Debra Artus
Teri Blair Angle	Kelsey Butler	Kelly Knupp	
- Use the organization CCHASM for distribution of our Emergency Aid Fund to Prince George residents.
- Poll the congregation to determine if there is interest in forming an emergency response team to help in time of disaster in the community.
- Buy a banner for the preschool to advertise enrollment information.
- Distribute the preschool staff payments over twelve months.
- Sign an agreement with "Connected Word" to upgrade the Gregory web site.
- Purchase more Welcome Boxes for church visitors.
- Transfer the accrued interest in the Designated Gifts Fund to the General Fund.
- Perform the sacrament of baptism on Carter Hartsell, infant son of Lisa and Ronnie Hartsell, on Sunday, June 5, 2011.

Verne Smith, Clerk

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL... A KALEIDOSCOPE OF ACTIVITY!

Some churches put children's Sunday School on hold for the summer months, but at Gregory we're taking it to the next level. Each Sunday this summer will feature fun and engaging activities that will introduce Bible stories to our K-Fifth Grade children. There will be play-acting, special crafts, visits by Bible VIP's, and even cooking – helping our kids to reflect on God's truths in a variety of ways.

We know the summer is meant to be a leisurely time, but we hope both parents (as the encouragers) and young people will take advantage of this unique... and entertaining... opportunity to build a foundation of faith. Sundays, June 5 through September 4.

VACATION BIBLE CAMP – JULY 5-8

Rising 1st through 5th graders are looking forward to this unique opportunity to have fun and fellowship in a Christian setting this summer at Gregory's Vacation Bible Camp. Running daily from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, July 5-8, the Camp will be led by the experienced staff of our Presbyterian Camp Hanover. The cost of 24 hours of Bible camp experience is only \$20 per young person! To enroll a child, download a brochure from the www.camphanover.org (or obtain one through the church office) and complete the registration form. Send it in with a check for \$20 to Camp Hanover. This day camp opportunity is open to members of Gregory, their friends and families. For more information, call the church office or Tara Foster, 732-1096.



FACILITIES



AN OLD PROBLEM... A NEW SOLUTION!

The problem: how to keep leaves from being blown down the stairwell at the kitchen back door? Not only were the leaves a nuisance; they plugged up the drain and caused flooding downstairs. Lightbulb! The answer: screen in the area to keep the leaves on the outside! Many thanks to the solution men Keith Spain and Bobby Allen for their handiwork in neatly screening this area and solving an old problem!

The Facilities Committee would like to give a big “thank you” to the ones helping us keep our sanctuary clean. It is helping us save a lot of money, also to the youth group for the great job they did picking up trash in the woods behind the fellowship hall. Remember we always have items that need attention concerning our facilities, just contact our committee for information.

MISSIONS

PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION FOR FALL

Places are going fast at Gregory's popular preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds. The program offers wonderful preparation for kindergarten and life in a Christian setting September through May, Tuesday through Thursday, 9:30 – 12:30 am. Led by experienced director, Susie McAllister, the Gregory Memorial Preschool has been a mainstay for families in Prince George for decades. Registration for the fall continues. If interested or if you have a question, contact Susie at 804-704-0584 or gregorymemorialps@hotmail.com or visit their website at www.gregorymemorialpreschool.webs.com.

*Train up a child in the way he should go; even when
he is old he will not depart from it.
(Proverbs 22:6)*



On a Mission!

Have you ever wanted to assist during a disaster, but just weren't sure how to get involved? You wanted to help, but weren't able or willing to travel a long distance? Well, we have a deal for you!!



Gregory is going to organize and train its own **Local Disaster Response Team**. The team would be available to go to locations within the state or local communities to assist the local American Red Cross workers in the event of a disaster of some sort. An optimum team consists of 20 people. Training would be done either at Fort Lee or here at the church. It would entail several sessions of instruction totaling about 12 hours. Topics will include an orientation, introduction to Disaster Services, mass care, and shelter simulation. CPR, first aid, and other types of training are available as well if you are interested.

Currently, Prince George uses several of the schools for shelters. Hopewell uses the Civic Center in the event of an emergency. Not everyone on the team would need to respond, but at least the opportunity to help would be yours.

This is an opportunity for young adults and those of us who are young at heart to serve God and our fellow man as Jesus did. We may not work miracles, but we can make a difference in the lives of others.

Jesus said, "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet." John 13:14

Contact Dianne Overstreet or Sandy Hunter if you can commit to this mission. No dates or times have been set at this time.

Other Events Coming Up

June 4 Trash pickup on Bull Hill Road, 9:00 am
June 12 Pentecost Offering, 11:00 am
July 1-31 Adopt- a- Platoon Collection

OUTREACH

Outreach wishes to thank everyone who helped to make "Singspiration" a great success. Sharing this experience with neighboring churches was truly rewarding. In fact those participating hope that we can make this a yearly event. For fear of omitting someone, I will not mention names. But special kudos go to those who helped rearrange the "furniture" in the sanctuary before and after the performance, transported extra chairs, helped with the sound system, helped with the reception set-up, and donated the wonderful baked goodies for the reception. Thank you! Thank you!! Thanks also to Mark and Jennifer for the programs.

Have you checked out the new banners in the sanctuary? Outreach thought that filling that void in the choir loft would be a pleasing asset to our worship. Our hope is to provide seasonal banners in the future. Your comments would be appreciated.



Be sure to mark your calendar for October 1! We are planning a bigger and better Community Day! Thoughts and ideas from the congregation are always appreciated. Please share with anyone on the Outreach committee - Brenda, Donna, Joan, Dick, Marquita, Lisa or Judy.

Thank you for your support!

WORSHIP

WORSHIP AT SCOTT PARK ON JUNE 26

You won't want to miss our annual *al fresco* worship service at Scott Park on Sunday, June 26. Part camp meeting, part nature excursion, part *koinonia agape* meal (er, Greek for "spiritual potluck"), our time together will feed the spirit and the body!



Sunday School will begin at the usual 9:45 am time. At 10:30 am, we will trek to Scott Park for worship at 11:00 am. The shortened service will be followed by a potluck meal. The church will provide beverages and fried chicken. We're depending upon YOU, however, for your delicious salads, casseroles, side dishes and desserts! Need we say, casual dress is encouraged. In the event of rain.... The Facilities Committee promises to build us an ark!

We wish everyone a great summer and as always thank you for all of your support!

WORSHIP IN JUNE

SUNDAY, JUNE 5 – The Season of Easter ends as Jesus ascends into heaven, but he promises his disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen them. For Rev. Sprowl's message, *Never Alone*, read John 14:15-29. We will also baptize Carter Hartsell, son of Ronnie & Lisa Hartsell, during worship.

SUNDAY, JUNE 12 – We celebrate the "Birthday of the Christian Church" as we recall the coming of the Holy Spirit among Jesus' disciples on Pentecost. Wear red as the color of fire and holy energy and read Acts 2 to prepare for Rev. Sprowl's message, *When the Spirit Says Move*.

SUNDAY, JUNE 19 – What does it really mean to have a three-in-one God? Rev. Sprowl explores the nature of the Trinity in his message, *The Faces of God*. Read 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 and Matthew 28:16-20 to prepare. We will also honor fathers, and our Children's Education team has prepared a special activity for all children during Jr. Church!

SUNDAY, JUNE 26 - WORSHIP AT SCOTT PARK! – After Sunday School, all are invited to this annual service of worship outdoors. Rev. Sprowl will preach on "The Beatitudes," Matthew 4:23-5:12, in his message *Where Discipleship Begins*. Everyone's invited to remain for lunch afterward.

Prayer Concerns

Agnes Bauer (*Riverview*)

Christine Belsches

Helen Cibula

Aida Faries

Alan Foster

June Hawks

Marian McDonald

Peggy Surfield

Matthew Mauger

Katherine Tompkins

Marie Allen (*Dennis Allen's mother*)

Tammy Pelter (*Gladys Vtipil's niece*)

Mary Chadwick (*Dink Armstrong's sister*)

Roberta Harlow (*Robbi Foster's mother*)

Mila Campen (*Ronnie Hartsell's grandmother*)

Virginia Mika (*Sister of Grace and Helen Cibula*)



ANNOUNCEMENTS

HELP NEEDED... NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY!

That's right, if your maid has always done the vacuuming in the past or if your butler's been the one to empty trash... you can now gain valuable cleaning skills as a volunteer janitor at Gregory. We only ask for a commitment of a little light cleaning once in a while our professional janitor does the heavy lifting (bathrooms, mopping floors, etc.) This service saves Gregory \$100's of dollars each year that we can put into church missions.



Right now just a handful of families are shouldering the load. Please help and sign up on the sheet near the sanctuary entrance. Currently the weeks of July 7, July 21 and September 1 are open. Or call the church office and we'll put your name down.

SUMMER TIME CHANGES

Beginning Sunday, July 3, we will worship at 10:00 am. Sunday School will begin at 9:15 am. We return to our regular schedule on Sunday, September 11.

PASTORAL EVALUATION

Many thanks to those of you who submitted surveys on the work of Rev. Sprowl as our interim pastor. The surveys were broadly positive about his ministry with us and were also evaluated by the Personnel Committee. Rev. Sprowl will use the hymns and suggestions for sermon topics in upcoming Sundays this summer and in the fall.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S BIRTHDAY OFFERING

\$166.00 was raised on Mother's Day as we received our annual Presbyterian Women's Birthday Offering. These funds will assist five separate projects chosen by Presbyterian Women to enhance education and economic development relating to the needs of women and children in our country and beyond.

Winds of Change for the PCUSA... continued from page 1

Difference Two (2) The old language created a standard that would apply absolutely to all 173 presbyteries of the church. The new language leaves the decision about whom to ordain and upon what merits to the candidate's local presbytery where presumably the ministers and elders would know him or her best. As our denomination's name suggest, we are, after all, a church of regional "presbyteries" vs. a top-down hierarchy, and now the local presbytery is reaffirmed as the best place for decisions about ordination of ministers to be made (of course, it is the local church that makes decisions about ordination of elders and deacons).

Debate Spans the Years The issue of the place of gays and lesbians within the church and whether they should be eligible for ordination has occupied Presbyterians for many years. Although 1996 marked the year that definitive language became part of the *Constitution*, a vocal minority protested the new language and began efforts to change it. This discussion, of course, has reflected changing views about homosexuality within society at large as well as within other "mainline" denominations. As of this date, the United Church of Christ, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Episcopal Church now permit ordination of gays and lesbians. The American Baptist Church and the United Methodist Church are still debating the issue.

A Complex Issue With this change in denominational attitude, some Presbyterians will say, “It’s about time!” Others, however, will believe our church has now severed its moral and biblical tether: undoubtedly, individual congregations and pastors will leave the denomination. Despite the easy black and white views of those who say, “God said it – I believe it, and that’s that!” or ones who call biblical writers “homophobes,” the issue of how the Christian faith views gays and lesbians is complex.

In my class studying the book, *What’s the Least I Can Believe and Still Be a Christian?* we recently discussed the issue of homosexuality and the church. I began the session speaking as two different preachers – one in support of homosexual ordination and one against – in an attempt to show the class that support could be reasonably found for both positions. I could personally speak to both points of view as I have held each at different points in time.

A Personal Journey In 1996, I voted for the so-called “fidelity and chastity” amendment. In 2010, I voted for the new language. (Interestingly, in our Presbytery of the James, the vote for the measure was a tie, but due to parliamentary rules it was considered a loss.) For me, the 14 years between those two votes charted a theological and spiritual odyssey where I searched the Scriptures, listened to many debates, conversed with folks pro and con, including many gays and lesbians, prayed and sought out the witness of ministers and theologians I respect in the Christian Church.

I find that my journey is somewhat aptly described in a quote from a newspaper article that a church member showed me critical of our church’s decision. The writer quoted the President of Southern Baptist Seminary, Albert Mohler, as saying Presbyterians are “following Jesus while rejecting the Bible.” I don’t know if Dr. Mohler actually said this, but if he did... strangely, I think he’s not altogether wrong.

Focusing on God’s Word Along with my brothers and sisters in Christ on the other side of the vote, I lift up the Bible as the Christian’s ultimate authority. As such, it guides us both in our daily living and as a denomination. We call it “God’s Word,” and yet ultimately it is Jesus who is God’s Living Word: the Bible remains God’s *Written* Word. We worship Jesus... not the Bible.

WWJD? The Bible is a document written by men and women like us – although inspired by God at some level – and declared an authority by the Church. Because of its all-too-human origins, however, I believe that portions of the Bible are sometimes colored by cultural beliefs of the time that we no longer hold to be valid, e.g. slavery, the subjugation of women, etc. So, as we seek God’s will, not only do we need to interpret Scripture through the lenses of history, culture and science, we need to compare everything we find there to the life and teachings of the one we worship, who most truly reveals God ... Jesus Christ, who came to break down the walls that separate us and, who, frankly, never once mentioned homosexuality. So... back to Dr. Mohler’s quote – with this vote, I do believe a majority of Presbyterians have rejected a certain interpretation of the Bible in order to *follow the leading of Jesus*.

With Humility and Hope I don’t view this change with a feeling of triumph or jubilation but rather with fear and trembling. I do, however, sense a quiet hope that this may align us more closely with God’s will, yes, causing some to leave the Presbyterian fold, even as others will be drawn in. Like our Presbyterian Church, ever depending upon the moment-to-moment Grace of God, I pray we have done the right thing. Please keep our Church in your prayers during this challenging time of transition. For those who would seek continuing dialogue about this issue, I would enjoy the opportunity to do so.

Together with you in ministry,

MARK

THOSE WHO SERVE IN JUNE

CHILDRENS MINISTRIES

“Teaching Christian Values for Life”

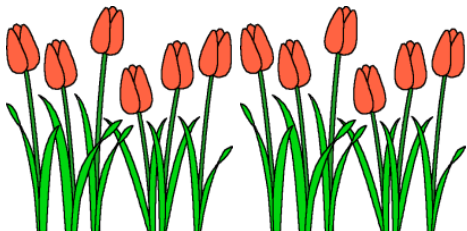


DATE	NURSERY	JUNIOR SERMON	JUNIOR CHURCH
6-05-11	Debra Bailey	Mary K Schroeter	Morgan & Josh Ingram
6-12-11	Ruby Spain	Rev. Sprowl	Virginia Maloney, Jared Smyth
6-19-11	Robbi Foster	Valerie Harsh	Mary B. Coleman, Kevin Foster
6-26-11	Glenda Mayhew	Susan Walker	Valerie & PAmela Harsh

APRIL	June 5	June 12	June 19	June 26
USHERS	Valerie Harsh Pam Harsh Jerry Bond Sissy Smith	Wayne Powers Glenda Mayhew Marguerite Bishop Dianne Overstreet	Keith Spain Ruby Spain Jacob Spain Herb Schroeter	Bobby Allen Donna Allen Velma Allen Rose Scott
ANNOUNCEMENTS	Dianne Overstreet	Pat Hunter	Mary K. Schroeter	Rose Scott
COUNTING	Evelyn Lichvar Sandy Hunter	Morgan Ingram Ron Recher	David Johnson Glenda Mayhew	Verne Smith Rose Scott

Flowers

- 05- Volunteer needed
- 12- Rose Scott
- 19- Volunteer needed
- 26- Volunteer needed



MAY GATEKEEPER

Donald Hunter
733- 8414



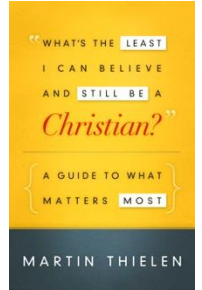
June 2011



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7pm – Choir	2 6pm - Line Dancing	3	4 8:45am Bull Hill Rd. Cleanup 
5	6 2pm - Line Dancing 6:30pm Outreach Missions	7 12:30pm Day Circle 6pm – S&F Cong. Care 7pm Worship Facilities	8 7pm – Choir	9 2-8pm- Cleaning (volunteer)	10	11
12 Pentecost Offering 	13 Noon Widows 2pm - Line Dancing 3:30pm Prayer Group 6pm - CE	14 6:30pm P&O 7pm Evening Circle	15 7pm – Choir Committee reports Due	16 6pm Line Dancing	17	18
19 Happy Father's Day Minute for Mission 5 Cents a Meal	20 10am PG Churches Outreach 2pm - Line Dancing	21 Presb. Mtg. 7pm Session Mtg.	22 7pm – Choir Newsletter Articles Due	23 2-8pm- Cleaning (volunteer)	24	25
26 Scott Park 	27 2pm – Line Dancing 3:30pm Prayer Group	28	29 1pm Boy Scouts Ct. of Honor 	30 6pm Line Dancing		

LAST TWO SESSIONS FOR BOOK STUDY!

We've had a great time discussing the book *What's the Least I Can Believe and Still Be a Christian?* We invite you to join us for our last two sessions which explore the questions, *Can True Christians Believe in Evolution?* (June 5) and *Does Jesus' Death Help Us to Understand Human Suffering?* (June 12). The book is available for \$5 per copy, but it is not necessary to have read the book to participate in the class. We meet Sundays at 9:45 am in the parlor. All are invited!



LAST CHANCE TO ORDER POPULAR BOOK!

We are putting in the last order for the focus of our popular book study, *What's the Least I Can Believe and Still Be a Christian?* The cost is \$5 per copy (\$10.20 on Amazon). Please contact Rev. Sprowl or the church office by Sunday, June 12 to place your order.

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



COME JOIN US!!