

First Pres Press

Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church

Skaneateles, New York

Editorial Staff: Joan Tarolli, Peggy Surdam, Skip Plank

July, 2011

Mark Your Calendars

Wednesdays – Bible study Letter to the Hebrews, at 7 PM.

July 10 – final day of Soles4Souls collection

July 11 – Session meeting at 7:30 PM.

July 16 – First Pres sponsorship of Blood Drive at the firehouse. Call Jack Howard to volunteer or donate. 255-1710 or (cell)427-0169

July 18 – CE meeting at 7 PM.

Coffee hour servers for July: July 3 – Judy Gelston and July 17 – the Bernazzanis. Thank you for this important ministry!

Please add your name to the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the Sims Room. This is a great one-shot opportunity to serve your church.

Joys and Concerns

Congratulations to **Robert Frank** for his recent achievement of the level of Eagle Scout and to **Melanie Helmsley** upon the birth of her 2nd grandchild, **Avery Ruth Hicks**, daughter of Erik and Melanie Hicks. Avery and her cousin **Rhys Michael Thomas** were baptized Sunday, July 3rd. Rhys is the son of William and Elizabeth Thomas.

The **Grady family** is thankful for the return from the hospital of **baby Ava**, and the Cross family recently enjoyed a visit from daughter, **Lia** currently living in Hawaii.

Please keep the following in your prayers: **Dave Hummel** as he undergoes and recovers from knee surgery and for his wife, **Cindy** who has been hospitalized for extreme migraine headaches; **Margie and Chuck Crosman** as Chuck's sister Jean and brother-in-law Robert Rumf recently passed away (Margie also had a fall); and **Lew Reid** who, when recently ill was discovered to have an aneurysm requiring surgery. Also, remember our shutins, **The Osbornes, Margaret Evans** and **Mary Ayers**, and our **young people in the military**.

Congrats are in order for the anniversaries of **Ginny and Mark Fennessy**, and **Fine and Dick Beck**, who will be celebrating 57 years of marriage.

Happy Birthday to these folks born in July: **Bev White, Jean Benedict, Helen Glowacki, Beth Santee, Mary Margaret Biss, Kim Poppa, Adrianna Marshall** and **Phyllis Clark**.

Attn: Women of the Congregation

WOMEN OF FAITH will hold its 2011 conference on Friday, November 4th and Saturday, November 5th in Rochester, at the Blue Cross Arena. This promises to be a wonderful spirit-filled two days featuring musical guests, skits and inspirational speakers.

St. James Church has tickets that may be purchased on a first come, first served basis and hotel rooms must also be booked ahead. Act now! Information and registration forms may be obtained from the **office, Claudia Lambdin, Jan Sterling, and Joan Tarolli.**

Manor News

Doris, Earl, Fred, Mary and Pat are making good use of the front porch. What could be nicer on a beautiful summer day than sitting there watching the world go by?

Our neighbor, **Holy Trinity Preschool**, invited the residents to see a Flag Day program that the children put on. These youngsters always make our residents smile. **Thank you HTP.**

The Manor hosted a Zoo to You program that brought some live animals to entertain and a volunteer to explain about the characteristics, behavior, habitat and care of each one.

A Big Thank You to our Sunday servers for the month of June: **Mona Smalley, the Lambdin family, Judy Gelston and Deb McLearn and Ray Crofoot.** The sign up sheet is in the Sims Room for any one who would like to have a great meal and interact with our residents.

PWC

Once again we are collecting new bed pillows to deliver to **On Point For College** in Syracuse. The students begin to return in mid-August to their colleges and orientation, so please bring to them to church, no later than early August so we can deliver.

I can take them in every 1-2 weeks, we have found that the dampness in the pantry storage is not good...especially for pillows!

***Help Us with Kitchen Projects.** There are drawers, cupboards, etc. to be cleaned this summer. Come to the kitchen, select a project on the worksheet, and we'll be finished in no time! **Thanks!**

Mary Phillips was recognized by the PWC as our Church's "**Gardening Angel**" during the June 26th Sunday service. Ann Fey introduced Mary to the congregation as she has been our mystery gardener for some time. Mary volunteered to share her talents and love of flowers with us by tending our side and front beds. She invited anyone to help her pull weeds whenever she was presenting her backside to the street. Thank you, Mary, for all your time, talent and for making our little patch of the village look so beautiful.



Honoring Tom Baker: Choir Picnic Celebration

Members of the Chancel Choir enjoyed a picnic June 12th at the Tarolli's in honor of Tom Baker's 28 years as their director. After a delicious meal, we were led by the Vedders in a singalong (what else?) including this format put together by Carol:

Pieces approved by Worship & Music -for example, this Introit: Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin'

An anthem before the proclamation of the Word: Blowin' In The Wind

And a benediction: When I Grow Too Old to Dream (or Gonna Build a Mountain)

Tom Baker's theme song: I Love A Piano

and as an offertory (since it involves silver): Look For The Silver Lining

Added music during coffee hour: Tea For Two

The choir's attitude is: Anything Goes!

And a special benediction for Tom:
May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You!

Jim followed with A Poem for Tom:
A Poem for Tom
by A. Non

There once was a man named Baker
Who led songs in praise of our Maker
while some fudged their notes
and others told jokes



Tom put up with these musical fakers.
With tempo we'd often agree
Though some tried to be rather art-sy
"it's the right notes and rhymes
at just the right times" -
(His mantra) "you gotta watch me!"

Tom tried to set what our pitches should be
But our intonation was... hard to foresee...
he'd often frown
as we'd drift on down
So that our A-flats really were G's!

Now we do what Tom taught us, hurrah!
In things besides music, aha!
in daily life we apply:
no longer just "Goodbye"
But "see ee ee ee yah!"

While in formal dress or pajamas,
Whether in Syracuse or the Bahamas,
when reading a paper
or a mystery caper,
We breath by inserting commas.

Tom's a pianist uncanny
He can play just one tune or many
he admired Vlad Horowitz
who's as good as it gets,
But Tom was never surpassed by any!

Sandy Hadley and Margy Sutton took candid shots during a rehearsal and at the picnic and then presented them in an album to Tom.

On June 26th, Tom was presented with a purse from the congregation in appreciation of his years of dedication and in recognition of his retirement.

Tom Baker in His Own Words

When I came to First Presbyterian Church in 1983, there were no bell choirs, the whole chancel was thickly carpeted, the choir sang from an acoustically unfortunate corner (also carpeted), the organ was functioning badly and getting worse, and the new choir director knew little about choral music and nothing whatever about conducting. On the other hand, we had a terrific group of enthusiastic, talented, musically literate choir members whose commitment to fine music-making was palpable.

Their commitment was also long-lived: it remains as strong today as it was then. It was strong

enough in the '80's to see me through the tough years as I studied, took courses, and practiced with those wonderful, patient singers, and it will be strong enough to carry you down a long future. The term "volunteers" does not begin to do justice to these people---whereas many members are relieved when they complete a term on a hard-working committee, these people, all of whom have complex and busy lives, are perpetually reborn and recommitted as they surmount musical challenge after musical challenge. They know, in other words, the same thing every professional musician knows: that if music is your favorite language, you are never finished with the joy of learning it.

Some of our current singers were part of the choir before 1983: Bill and Sandy Nichols, Sandy Hadley, Sue Grady, Ann Bradley, Margie Sutton, Jody and Bard Conroe. Quite a few others have been singing with us for nearly as long.

I learned much of my job from these people; most of the rest I learned from Bunt Osborne. With kindness, gentleness, and extraordinary forbearance Bunt showed me the way to be a Presbyterian musician, taught me about the repertoire, never complained, and never let any of us down. Because of him (together with the singers) I was heir to the rich tradition that had been established by Gertrude Osborne and continued by Maureen McCauley. The long overlap among the musicians, both professional and volunteer, is what made all our growth possible. The more recent opportunities for us all to learn from Janet Correll and from Karen Hindenlang have greatly enriched my musical life, the choir's, and that of the whole congregation; and from the beginning the constant wise influence of Sue Grady has been a support, a refuge, and a challenge to excellence.

Is it any wonder that deciding to retire was so hard?

Nevertheless, I have retired---with a heart filled to overflowing. I expect to come back to worship, though not every week. Instead I plan to visit my two out-of-town sons, my grandson, and my niece far more frequently than has been possible hitherto; I plan to spend more weekends in the Adirondacks and other numinous places; I expect to drop into other churches and find out how *they* do music; and I expect to work harder at piano than I have for many years. I hope you'll let me come back and share that with you after a seemly interval.

Thank you all---for everything. -Tom Baker

Christian Education and Rebuilding Our Staff Leadership

In the last year, we have acknowledged the retirement of our Christian Educator and now our Chancel Choir Director. These have been good people who shared their gifts with the Church for 10 years, and 28 years, respectively. Our Session (John Covell, Andy Biss, Judy Gelston, Larry Weiss, John Jackson, Cindy Hummel, Gustav Niebuhr, Dave Rottger, Kari Williams, Bill Nichols, Molly Rhoads, Dick Poppa and Rev. Lindsey) recognize this as a time of change. Consequently, in May, our Session directed that we find a thoroughly trained and experienced leader in Christian Education, to guide the rebuilding of Christian Education and Spiritual development, for the next year. Rev. Lindsey sought out Rev. Debra Thomas, who is a fully Certified Christian Educator, and also an experienced ordained Presbyterian minister, who lives in Baldwinsville, to guide us through this rebuilding. Elder Larry Weiss interviewed her as well, and on the basis of their recommendation, the Session has hired Rev. Thomas, both for leadership of our members in Christian Education and Faith development, as well as in development of this position for the future.

A Choir Director Search Committee composed of Choir member/Elder Bill Nichols; Coordinator of Music/Organist Karen Hindenlang; and Pastor/Worship leader Rev. Dr. Craig Lindsey has been asked to recommend a candidate to Session, hopefully by September.

The reality is that our Church is unique. We are a vibrant congregation, who take faith seriously. But also, Nationally, the Church today is composed of a great majority of congregations of 100 members or less, and a very few which are mega-Churches of over 1000 members. We are the only Church in our Presbytery, and one of the only Churches in the surrounding Presbyteries, that is our size. This means that we can consider possibilities nearly all the other Churches in our area cannot; but also that we cannot afford what some of the Churches in Florida and the deep South are able to do. We are the Church in this place and time, specifically we are the Presbyterian witness in Skaneateles in the 21st Century. Please keep the leadership of the Church in your prayers and support, as we change and plan for the future.

Rev. Debra Thomas: Christian Educator

The Christian Education Committee met in May, and along with our Session, recognize that what we have been providing in Christian Education is not working as well as it should. The children are wonderful, the teachers have done everything possible, but we all agree we need staff leadership which can adapt curriculum and alternative resources to our needs and serve as a central point of contact. Our Church has been without staff leadership for Christian Education for a year now, during which the teachers have cared for, nurtured and taught our children, with only the support of curriculum, pastor and prayer. So, Session has taken action to extend a contract to hire a very qualified part-time (20 hours/week) staff person as Christian Educator, beginning this summer and continuing for one year. This position is a modification of our traditional Christian Education Director position.

Because of our desire for investigation of possible improvements and changes in our CE system we have sought out a uniquely qualified individual; one who can help us investigate new creative possibilities while being responsible for carrying forward continuing activities.

We are fortunate in having a highly competent individual available and willing to help us move forward. Rev. Debra Thomas for the last eight years has served as full-time Solo Pastor of a smaller Presbyterian Church. Recently, she came to the decision that she wanted a break, to do something different than the rigors of a full-time solo pastorate. Her first love is Christian Education and Spiritual Development of all age levels continuing through adulthood. While she is an ordained Presbyterian minister, possessing all the appropriate training and education, our Session is specifically hiring her only for the responsibilities of a part-time staff person in Christian Education. This seems to be a wonderful short-term opportunity, without formal requirements or obligations, both for her and for us to determine what our needs really are in Christian Education and to create the opportunity for the Church to fulfill these needs.

It is important to note several things up front:

Rev. Thomas is being hired by Session as staff for Christian Education & Spiritual Director, not as a pastor. Pastoral care, preaching, weddings and funerals, are not in her Job Description. Our church is never again considering Co-Pastors. As such she should rightly be called "Our Christian Education Director," or "Rev. Thomas" or "Deb", rather than "pastor" as she is not being called as a pastor of this congregation.

We think this will be an exciting opportunity for all of us together to rethink and restart our Christian Education process and curriculum. To get momentum towards next year's programs, Rev. Thomas has agreed to start in the middle of July. Let us wholeheartedly and gratefully welcome Reverend Thomas as our new Christian Education and Spiritual Development Director.

Following is the Description of Responsibilities for our New Christian Education and Spiritual Development Director:

1) We recognize that Christian Education and Spiritual Development is not something focused solely on younger children, but is a process that must continue and strengthen through High School, College age and throughout adulthood. Christian Education and Spiritual Development is a never ending process. To that end, this position will broaden focus to all ages, including Adult. Recognizing we have some programs in place, but some not clearly identified as Christian Education, the New CE & SD Director will coordinate and rationalize existing programs across the Church.

Specifically we will look to this position to:

- Provide leadership in developing and leading Adult and Teen Education and Evangelism programs - in addition to the Pastor's Bible Study

- Develop and implement program for Teaching Our Teachers to assure an optimal teaching environment and experience for our youth

- Develop new programs such as workshops, classes, forums or other appropriate venues which potentially can involve outreach to the broader community as well as our congregation

- Recommend to Pastor ideas for Spiritual Development of Congregation, and carry these forward as directed by Pastor and Session

- Share in leadership of Confirmation Class with Pastor

- Provide CE & SD communication to the congregation via Newsletter

2) Regular Coordination of Sunday Morning Christian Education Program for Children and Teens.

- Work with CE Committee to Recruit Teachers

- Review Curriculum for each grade level in advance making recommendations for Lesson Plans

- Quarterly teach teachers background & concepts related to curriculum

- In contrast to prior practice, this position is no longer tasked with maintaining Student Rolls, infant through College. Other policies, people and procedures fulfill attendance requirements.

- Serve as Single Point of Contact for teacher and nursery concerns. Be sure persons are identified as providers of necessary supplies.

- Create and monitor system for assuring teacher team formation and continuity

- Serve as Floater for Abuse Prevention Policy

- Work with Coordinator of Music on Possibilities of CE Music

- At Pastor's direction, occasionally deliver Children's Moment messages during service

3) We recognize that some Youth Activities are part of Christian Education and others may more appropriately be identified as Mission or Fellowship. Therefore, the CE & SD Director will:

Identify which, if any youth programs are more properly under the direction of a Mission or Fellowship service group, and coordinated with CE rather than being considered a part of Christian Education

Develop and recommend an overall approach to such Youth Activities including staffing of Youth Leaders and planning age appropriate activities such as Summer Mission Trip

4) Seasonal Coordination

Plan and Direct Christmas Pageant

Serve as Church Representative to Ecumenical Youth CE Activities

Serve as Church Representative to planning sessions for Ecumenical Vacation Bible School, and if Term of Service permits, serve as Church representative as appropriate

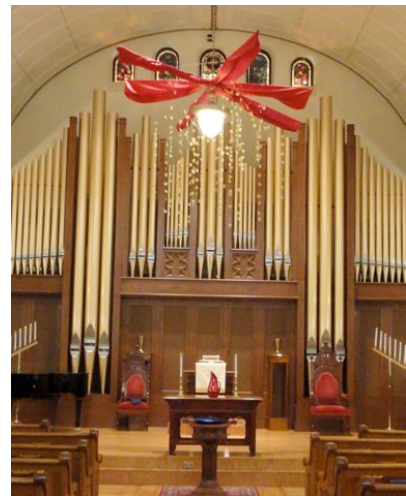
Assist Pastor as needed with Lenten Midweek Program

5) Development and Transition Planning

Guide Session in Development of Permanent Position

Butterflies

On Ascension Day something new was added, as over 300 individual gold and yellow butterflies were suspended from the front Chancel light fixture. These 2" silk butterflies were each individually hand-tied to the suspension. The following week as we celebrated The Day of Pentecost, Red Flames of Passion and Fire were added, making the whole light fixture into a work of art. Just as quickly, everything vanished before the next Sunday. As Dr. Lindsey described, **“Worship has to be surprising and fun!”**



Constant Maintenance Continued

(Inadvertently, last month's newsletter about our Tower steps, lost the conclusion to the article.)

Engineers had bid \$30,000 to study what was structurally wrong, then advise how much more it would cost to repair. Previously, we had dug up and installed drainage along the perimeter of the building, to channel water away from the foundation. We then made assumptions that possibly the drainage was plugged. Ultimately, we had to take the steps apart, to discover that these limestone blocks on which the entire tower was cantilevered, had no foundation underneath. For something less than \$10,000 we were able to take everything apart, pour new solid concrete platforms as a foundation for the limestone blocks, all tied together and into the building with steel reinforcing bar and to put the same stone blocks back into place. How often in our lives, we too react to symptoms and circumstance, or we undergo extensive tests to explore what else could be going on, instead of stopping to carefully take apart an issue, discover whether there is a foundation and whether that foundation of faith is solid. In the

month since this work was completed, not only has the grass returned, and the tower been stable, but all moisture in the basement has been stopped.

Presbyterians and Gay Marriage

Several have asked about recent actions of the Presbyterian Church and New York State Legislature's decision to legalize Homosexual Marriage, so the following is provided as explanation. Over 40 years ago, in 1978, the Presbyterian Church was asked to define the Church's position on Homosexuality. After study and discussion the Church affirmed that our culture is very divided about this issue.

That the Old Testament has several references to Divorce, Homosexuality, the Eating of Shellfish, and Disciplining of Children, which are changing in cultural expectations in North America today. In 1978, the Church acted to state that persons who are divorced and those who are gay or lesbian do not need to confess this in order to believe in God, though our fears and abuses do cause great harm. Earlier this year, the Church emphasized that rather than a person's private life, their faith and beliefs should be the focus of our Ordination as Ministers, Elders and Deacons. But specifically regarding Marriage, the position of the Church is that Marriage, regardless of what the State determines, Marriage in the Church is between one man and one woman, so as a Presbyterian Pastor, in a Presbyterian Church we can only celebrate marriage between one woman and one man.

Summer Music @First Pres

This summer, for the very first time, musicians from the Skaneateles Festival will contribute their talents to our Sunday morning worship.

On August 14th, the Festival's Artistic Directors David Ying ('cello) and Elinor Freer (piano) will offer a movement from Messiaen's extraordinary composition, "Quartet for the End of Time," in our 9:30 service. This work contemplates the Biblical mystery of eternity, and the movement carries a preface from the composer quoting the Gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

In addition, several outstanding local vocalists will lend their voices to our summer services:

- Marie Angus from Wells College on July 3
- Phoebe Glowacki from our congregation on July 17
- Ginny Fennessy from our choir and the faculty of Nottingham High on July 31
- Karen Bartlett-Morse from the faculty Port Byron HS on August 28
- Joanna Manring from the Jane Austen Singing School, on September 4

Selections will include sacred works by Alessandro Stradella, J.S. Bach, and Franz Josef Haydn.

And talented members and friends of the congregation will contribute as instrumentalists:

- Trevor Hinman, violinist, on July 10
- Sam and Maureen Meyer, saxophone duet, also on July 10

- Margie Sutton and Sharon Kirkwood, recorder duet, on July 24
- Carol Vedder and Tom Baker, piano duet, on July 31
- Tom Baker, piano soloist, on August 7
- The Chancel Bells of Skan First Pres on August 21

Offerings are scheduled to include music by Jean-Marie LeClair, Debussy and J.S. Bach.

The re-creative gift of music offered in praise and prayer can lift our spirits and move us closer to the Lord of All Creation. My sincere thanks to everyone who stepped forward to volunteer or suggest participants for our summer music program this year.

~ Karen Hindenlang



A Room FULL of Shoes:

Barefoot Sunday...The congregation was invited to remove their shoes before worship on June 12. Some placed the shoes they wore to Church in the baskets, others carried bags of gently used or new footwear to be shipped to a **Soles4Souls** distribution warehouse later this month. The alter was stacked with sneakers, boots, flip-flops, crocks, and loafers. Although it was Children's Sunday, this was not a youth event. The powerful act of empathy raised our awareness to those who daily, for

whatever reason, are without footwear. We were all reminded that we are not exempt from the possibility of one day finding ourselves shoeless, and how we are currently blessed on a daily basis.

The youth will begin packing the shoes collected on Thursday, July 14 at 4:00 pm. If you are able to join us, invite anyone you think may be interested in helping. Please RSVP via email to either Jill Marshall, marshalljill@verizon.net, or Helen Golwacki, helenglowacki@gmail.com. We plan to have a pizza dinner and fellowship together until about 7:30 pm. If we are unable to complete all the packing at one time, we will schedule an additional date.

If you haven't already seen a "room full of shoes," you are welcome to peek in person. They are being stored in the former Skaneateles Festival office on the basement level of the Church.

News from: Wayne Elsey, Founder and CEO, Soles4Souls

*We recently partnered with students & faculty from Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, PA to distribute shoes to people on Ometepe Island in Nicaragua. The island is located in the center of Lake Nicaragua which separates Nicaragua from Costa Rica. The team distributed 113 pairs of shoes to orphans and workers at the Centro Infantil Cristiano Nicaraguense. The purpose of CICRIN is to change the lives of children living in very difficult circumstances, those who are orphaned, abandoned, or are in danger in their homes. We're grateful to have the opportunity to partner with CICRIN & Susquehanna University in showing **these kids that someone cares about them**. In the end... isn't that what it's all about? So many have experienced so much grief in 2011. I'm honored to represent an organization who is part of the solution to the hurt and pain that comes from loss. To see people be re-energized with a new pair of shoes is almost beyond words. It really doesn't get much better than this.*

Skaneateles Ecumenical Food Pantry

Our Pantry in Skaneateles continues to benefit from donations of food and financial contributions from our community. Eighty-three percent of our budget for the Pantry comes from individual, church and corporate donations. Our various government funding programs help with sixteen percent of our success. To round out all of our success of the Pantry is the donation of volunteer's time. Thank you to the active twelve committee members and the twenty volunteers to regularly come to help out.

For the calendar year of 2010 we received over seven tons of food from the Food Bank and our morning Rotary helped with the shelving and unpacking. Purchasing food from the Food Bank allows us to realize a 127% return on our investment.

The Pantry still benefits from Tops, the Bakery, Top of the Hill for eggs, and personal donations. Our community truly showed their support of the Pantry with the Postal Workers' May Food Drive. Forty bins of food were donated to us. Those forty bins were an all time record.

We are open throughout the summer during regular hours to meet our clients' needs. July first is a new year for us so proof of residency is needed for the first visit after July 1st.

Pantry Hours: Tuesdays 10-11 am, Thursdays 7-8 pm, For emergencies call 685-3512 or 685-5048

The Yost Scholarship 2011

We are proud to announce the recipients of the Frances E. Yost Scholarship this year.

Andrew Chol R. Deng, Onondaga Community College
Trevor Y. Hinmann, Susquehanna University
Allison C. Hinman, Westminster College
Joseph L. Meyer, Susquehanna University

Each continues to actively participate in the activities of the church while pursuing post-secondary education. They will be recognized for their accomplishments during worship on Sunday, August 7th.

Respectfully submitted,
Kendra Witter and Margaret Tiedemann