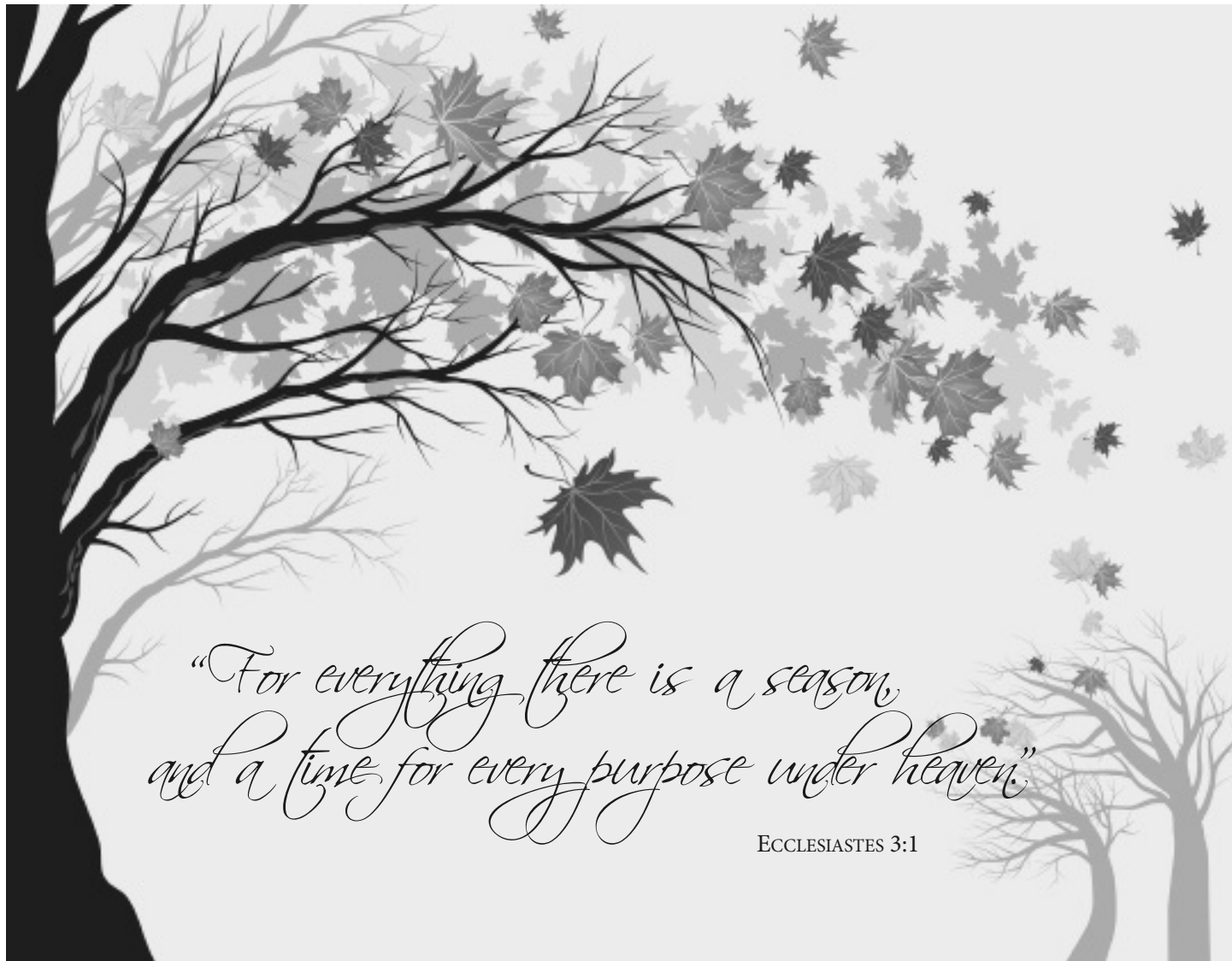


# Epistle *to the Bonitians*



THE NEWSLETTER OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BONITA SPRINGS | SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2011



*"For everything there is a season,  
and a time for every purpose under heaven."*

ECCLESIASTES 3:1

## OUR MISSION

To be a welcoming and nurturing family, committed to helping people grow as followers of Jesus Christ who make a positive difference in today's world.

**First Presbyterian Church of Bonita Springs**

9751 Bonita Beach Road, Bonita Springs, FL 34135 | 239 992 3233 | 239 992 7547 fax | [fpcbonita.org](http://fpcbonita.org)

# Doug's Desk

Dear Members and Friends of First Church,

**I**n my Independence Weekend sermon (given on July 3, to be precise), I reminded the congregation of the wise and foresighted warning of President George Washington as he prepared to leave office. In his 1796 Farewell Address he warned his fellow-countrymen of the dangers of excessive partisanship in government. Certainly his warnings have proven to be prophetic as we watch the tensions and conflicts in our nation's capital, as we prepare ourselves for another yearlong and bitterly divisive presidential campaign, and as we are bombarded by partisan and often-biased news media. Many of us long for the return of a sense of unity and of country-first (rather than "party-first" or "me-first" that we often see in our politicians). A week after you receive this newsletter we will be reminded, through the 10th anniversary observances of the 2001 terrorist attacks, that we as Americans really do have important things in common. Sometimes it takes a disaster to remind us and refocus us.

It's unfortunate but undeniable that churches in America often reflect what is going on in the broader society. Changes in moral values that have occurred in our culture (as demonstrated often in movies, television, popular songs, and the "political correctness" prevalent in many areas of society) have also been embraced by some ministers and churches. It is my conviction, and that of the other pastors and elders of our church, that God's will for our congregation is to not change the teachings of Scripture to conform to the latest fads and trends in society. We are instead called to be faithful to the truths and values passed to us from previous generations. While some voices in mainline Protestantism would argue that the church has to adapt in order to stay "relevant" to a post-modern and secular culture, we believe that changing the core of our beliefs will ultimately make us irrelevant and will spiritually bankrupt us.

The Presbyterian Church USA, the denomination that we have been affiliated with, has certainly had serious problems in recent decades with partisan conflicts (the two "parties" are sometimes branded as "liberal" and "conservative", sometimes as "progressive" and "evangelical"). My entire career of over three decades in pastoral ministry has been served within this atmosphere of competitive denominational politics. It is sad, and it is so often distracting to



Rev. Dr. Doug Pratt

pastors and church leaders, to have to engage in these divisive debates. If only we could focus purely on being devoted followers of Christ! That is what we try to do at First Church. We want our Sunday morning times of worship and the study of God's Word to be spiritually uplifting and practical, not political. The pastors and elders of our church feel a responsibility to keep ourselves informed and engaged in those denominational conflicts that matter (which are ultimately about some very important issues of faith and life). But we do not want to let those external conflicts disrupt our internal life as a church.

I will be leading a series of forums this fall, open to everyone, when we will talk openly about the problems in the Presbyterian Church and across American church life. Our pastors and elders will offer historical perspective, biblical insights, and various strategies and options that are open to us. If you have interest in learning more, sharing your views and asking your questions, we invite you to come to McClure Hall Tuesday evenings in October for a series of "Pastors Chats" on these issues.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Doug Pratt

# Service to Honor First Responders

COMMUNITY SERVANTS RECOGNITION SUNDAY: SEPT. 18, 2011

As a time of recognition and celebration, our worship service on September 18 will be dedicated to honoring and thanking the community servants who are first to respond in times of emergency and crisis. For this annual service, First Church extends an invitation to local fire-fighters, police officers and emergency medical technicians to be our special guests. Please bring your family and friends, too, to spend this special morning with us!

## Help us thank our Community Servants

Members and friends of First Church are invited to help thank those individuals in our community who we depend on most in times of need. Here's how YOU can participate:

- Invite your friends and neighbors... especially those who are active or retired law enforcement officers, firefighters or paramedic/EMTs to come to church with you for the 10 AM service on September 18.
- Express your personal thanks by signing one of the giant "Thank You" cards created by our Sunday school children. They will be located in the Narthex after worship on September 11 and 18.
- Express your gratitude to the Community Servants attending worship with us. During First Stop, be sure to shake hands with a local firefighter who serves our own neighborhood. They will appreciate your words of encouragement!
- Participate in the Cookie Shower being organized by our Deacons. You are invited to bring a special batch of homebaked items to church on the morning of September 18. This could be a dozen or more of your family's favorite cookies, some homemade muffins or cupcakes, or even grandma's fruitbread recipe. If you have no time for baking but still want to contribute, a tin of store-bought candies is also a good idea. (Please avoid pies, cakes, or anything that would need refrigeration.) We invite you to be creative in your presentation—just remember to double wrap. All these wonderful goodies will be delivered by our Deacons along with the giant Thank You cards to our local heroes at the Bonita fire stations and Sheriff's offices on Monday, September 19.
- Be in prayer for our First Responders—that God may keep them safe and alert during times of crisis and grace them with the strength to work under pressure. May God bless them and their families.



Last year on Community Servants Recognition Sunday, Brady Frey (son of Barry and Grace Frey) was very excited to shake hands with "a fireman." He met Lt. Gregory Dewitt of the Bonita Springs Fire Department after the service held to honor our local First Responders. Charlotte Wallgren can also be seen thanking one of our firemen. (Photo used with permission from the Naples Daily News.)

Philharmonic Center for the Arts presents

## In Remembrance:

A Concert to Honor the Memory of the Victims of the 9/11 Attacks

Sunday, September 11 • 4 PM

Philharmonic Center for the Arts in Naples  
(5833 Pelican Bay Blvd.)

On the 10th anniversary of that tragic day, the Naples Philharmonic Orchestra together with our area's most talented vocalists will present a musical memorial to the victims of 9/11. The first half will showcase Mozart's brilliant and haunting *Requiem*. The second half will feature a selection of patriotic favorites conducted by our own Director of Sacred Arts Jeff Faux. Artists will include the Fort Myers Symphonic Mastersingers, the Philharmonic Center Chorale and the Philharmonic Youth Chorale.

Tickets start at \$15 for students and \$30 for adults. Purchase tickets online at [thephil.org](http://thephil.org) or by visiting the Philharmonic box office at 5833 Pelican Bay Blvd., Naples, Monday-Thursday, 10 AM-4 PM. PH: 800-597-1900.

## Sundays

At First Church, our fall schedule includes one Sunday worship service at 10:00 AM. Children's Sunday school is also held at that time. Child care is available for children 6 months through 3 years of age. Our adult Sunday morning classes are held before worship, from 8:45 to 9:45 AM.

Beginning **October 16**, we will offer our 8 AM early morning service in addition to the 10 AM service. "First Light" includes all the basic worship elements of music, message and Scripture—having the same preacher and message as the 10 AM service—but neatly packaged into a 40-minute time frame. Child care is provided. Coffee and refreshments will be available following First Light.

Every Sunday after the 10 AM service, we offer **A Time of Prayer & Communion**—an opportunity to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion and experience a time of healing prayer (except on Sundays when the sacrament is shared during worship). Come to the Chapel where one of our ministers will be present to welcome individuals who wish to take Communion and receive healing prayer.

### WORSHIP

**Beginning October 16**, our abbreviated First Light service is held at **8:00 AM**.

### September 18

Community Servants Recognition

### September 25

Teacher Dedication

### October 2

World Communion Sunday

## Tuesdays

### September 20

6 PM • McClure Hall

Pot Luck Dinner

Pastor Doug Pratt will speak on C.S. Lewis, one of the strongest and most eloquent defenders of the historic and biblical Christian faith in the 20th Century. (For those not attending the dinner, the program will begin at 7 PM.)

### October Pastors Chats

Tuesdays, 7-8 PM • McClure Hall

Tuesday evenings in October will be devoted to a series of Chats led by the pastoral staff addressing the historical roots of Presbyterianism in our country, current issues within our denomination and the future of the PCUSA.

### November 1

7-8 PM • McClure Hall

This Chat will serve as a prelude to the November 15 visit from Gary Haugen, founder of International Justice Mission, as we consider a Christian response to the modern-day realities of human trafficking and exploitation.

## Wednesdays

### Family Night

TWO SESSIONS:

Now through Sept. 21 • 6-7:30 PM

Oct. 19 - Nov. 16 • 6-7:30 PM

Wednesday night is Family Night with programs for children, middle school students and parents!

Our NEON KIDS program features age-appropriate games, crafts and Bible lessons. While the youth attend "The Chat House," parents are invited to the adult class. Childcare is provided for children 6 months through 3 years of age.

For Children: Lil'K and KIDMO  
(See NeonKids on page 14.)

For Students: The Chat House

Students in 6th–8th grade are invited to Café First for a series of faith-based discussions and activities. In this welcoming atmosphere, students will have the opportunity to grapple with real-life questions about their faith.

For Adults: 21st Century Parent

Despite the pressures of today and worries about tomorrow, you can build strong relationships with your children that will help steer them towards a fulfilling life. Forge strong relationships with your children and become the best parent you can be with this new Focus on the Family DVD series featuring insights from Rob and Dianne Parsons. This class will be facilitated by Pastor Dan Oedy and meet in the Lightner Conference Room.

Contact Amanda Zaengle to register  
([azaengle@fpconita.org](mailto:azaengle@fpconita.org) or 992-3233).

## Epistle *to the Bonitians*

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2011

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# Eleventh Hour Vigil

By Pat Russell, Joanne's House Volunteer

I was called one early morning to sit with a patient who was at the end of life. His wife requested that someone be there all morning until she could arrive. Having young children to care for while trying to comfort her dying husband was incomprehensible. Few understood the agony of trying to make those choices.

Arriving at the patient's bedside I saw that he was a young man with AIDS. Looking around the room I noticed several cards on the lamp table; not Get Well cards, but Father's Day cards. I took it upon myself to read them. The messages and prayers told me a little about this dying man.

One card was from his daughters—"You're Appreciated" was on the front of the card, signed "Love U Daddy." A second one signed by his son "With love," that card read "Father's Day was Designed Just for You." The third card was signed by his other children and family members as well as his father, who wrote the message, "Stay strong, son." The cover of that card read "Happy Father's Day to a Great Man on a Very Special Day."

Behind the cards sat a little stuffed Teddy Bear. I know from working at Joanne's House as a volunteer that this was a stuffed bear used for aromatherapy to comfort patients. The bear reminded me of my own childhood when on occasion I was sick in bed, my mom would snuggle my brown bear next to my head and tell me, "Fuzzy will stay with you all night and get you well and in the morning you will be all better." I believed that as a child, and most times it was true. The next morning I would be feeling much better. However, this is not the case with this little Teddy Bear that stands behind these cards—it is not going to do that for this dying patient.

Do we volunteer to do the things we do so God can talk to us in His own way; to bring back memories of our own childhood so we may appreciate the lives we live today? At times like these, do we listen to the voice of God to really hear what He is trying to tell us? Perhaps we do, but perhaps not often enough.

In the 16 years I have been working in a hospital or a hospice facility sitting with patients at the end of life, this was the first time I had experienced the transitioning of a patient who had such a terrible disease as AIDS. It is mental, emotional and spiritual agony that the family feels when they watch as their loved one dies. At the very end, the patient is usually unaware of any physical discomfort as the staff prepares to make them as comfortable and pain free as possible. Regardless of how this disease was contracted, the dying process is still unbearable for the family.

As I prayed for the patient, the house physician arrived. Even though the patient was unaware of his presence, the doctor talked to him and explained that the end was near; that life was coming to a close, much like a dimmer switch on a light going off very slowly. He told the patient that his spirit is aware of the death that is coming and knows exactly where to go—to heaven, where God will not judge him by the things he has done in the past and has forgiven him of all sins. Did the patient hear any of this? I believe he did because the spirit speaks through us and the spirit in this person was aware of those words being said. When the doctor left the room, there was a presence of peace that I had not felt earlier. Spiritual words soothe the soul and are felt both by those who are dying and those who are still full of life.

Being present at a time like this clarifies to me the awareness that we are never in control of our own destiny. We must live each day to the fullest in honor and glory to the One God who created us. I feel blessed to know I am doing what He has called me to do. This calling 16 years ago changed my life. People ask me, "How can you do this, sit with patients who are dying?" My answer: "When we are called to do God's will and do it to His Glory, He gives us the peace and compassion to fulfill that calling and allows us to bring comfort to those who will enter His Eternal Kingdom."

## IN THE FIRST PERSON

### Invitation for Submissions

Do you have a story of inspiration and courage that you would like to share with the congregation? Have you gone through a difficult time and come out the other end realizing God's power and blessings? Has your faith been tried... and God prevailed? You are invited to submit your story of 800 words or less for possible publication in *The Epistle to the Bonitians*. You may submit to the editor by email to [flower@fpconita.org](mailto:flower@fpconita.org), drop it off at the church office or give it to one of our pastors. We hope to hear from you!

# PandaMania Adventures

By Amanda Zaengle, Director of Children & Family Ministry

PandaMania Vacation Bible School was a wild adventure this year, with 97 children attending from our congregation and the community. From July 18-22, a pack of fun-loving pandas (and kids ages 4-12) invaded the church. At PandaMania, children's lives were changed forever as they learned about God's WILD love for them, based on Psalm 139. PandaMania was filled with incredible Bible learning experiences kids saw, heard, touched, and even tasted. Bible Point crafts, team-building games, cool Bible songs, and tasty treats were just a few of the PandaMania activities that helped make faith come alive for the children who attended.

At VBS, kids learned about God's wild love. Each day at VBS children explored a new truth about God's Word—we called this the daily "Bible Point." We focused on one Bible Point per day, so children could easily remember what they learned. Bible Points for the week included: God made you, God listens to you, God watches over you, God loves you no matter what, and God gives good gifts.

At VBS, kids learned to share God's wild love with others. As a mission project for PandaMania VBS, our church joined with Operation Kid-to-Kid in an international mission project allowing hundreds of thousands of kids to help children in Latin America. Kids at our church created special "Jesus Loves Me" backpacks to share God's love with other children. Biblica will distribute these along with Spanish New Testaments to at-risk children in Latin America.

We'd like to say a special thank you to the congregation for your prayers, your support, and your generous donations of snack items. You helped make VBS a great success!



The kids loved their teen Crew Leaders, who gave of their time this summer to lead small groups during VBS. Each leader did their best to help the children under their care, and to inspire and discuss the Biblical truths about God's love for them.

## VBS Volunteer Recognition

We want to offer our sincerest thanks to those who volunteered to serve our children and community during Vacation Bible School 2011. Your commitment, dedication and enthusiasm made every day an adventure for the kids who participated. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

### VBS Co-Directors

Peggy Glatz  
Sarah Zimmermann

### Activity Leaders

Jen Bunt, *Opening*  
Jordan Donini, *Games*  
Jacque Dousson, *Bible Story*  
Rachel Frattarelli, *Opening & Preschool*  
Anita Garvalia, *Bible Story*  
Mike Haddock, *Games*  
Jenny Herrick, *Bible Story*  
Tommy Hillegass, *Spotlight VBS*  
Linda Leonard, *Childcare*  
Dave Nichols, *Photography*  
Kim Ott, *Childcare*  
Sandy Ritchie, *Snacks*  
Jill Sherman, *Crafts & Missions*  
Mary Sundall, *Preschool*  
Ivanys Vasseur, *Crafts & Missions*  
Mia Wheeler, *Chadder's Movie*

### Assistants

Cassandra Camp, *Materials*  
Brian Foley, *Games*  
Karalee Griffith, *Chadder's Movie*  
Ella Gustafson, *Crew Oversight*  
Alexa Harley, *Crafts & Missions*  
Rebecca Harley, *Snacks*  
Joyce Hewitt, *Crew Oversight*  
Maria Karl, *Crew Oversight*  
Clara Minch, *Photography*  
Marleen Munro, *Preschool*  
Joseph Perilli, *Games*  
Gina Provenzino, *Snack & Crew Oversight*  
Sandra Shultz, *Snacks*  
Emily Traut, *Preschool*  
Lori Willis, *Snacks*

### Registration

Joyie Wright  
Sheila Sierts

### Dismissal

Laura Bourdeau  
Elsie Nesbitt  
Nancy Oedy  
Joyie Wright



VBS Co-Directors Sarah Zimmermann (left) and Peggy Glatz

### Set painting and building

Ken Bruce  
Ruth Ann Bruce  
Colton Bunt  
Alyson Foley  
Julianne Jones  
Maria Karl  
Jim Nesbitt  
Roger Oedy  
Chloe Oesterreicher  
Malia Sierts  
Sheila Sierts  
Sophia Sierts  
Devon Zimmermann  
Nicholas Zimmermann

### Crew Leaders

Alyson Foley  
Julianne Jones  
Amanda Kitchen  
Lainie Lindgren  
Meghan Ott  
Malia Sierts  
Alexander Stetson  
Sarah Stauffer  
Monica Stauffer  
Jodi Stauffer  
Laynie Villeneuve  
Hannah Youngblood  
Rachel Youngblood  
Devon Zimmermann

# First Day of School

*By Jenn Boocock, Preschool Director*

As we open the doors of the preschool for the thirteenth year, we know that we will see both excitement and a few tears. These emotions come from both the children and the parents! Wonder Years is very often the first experience that families have of entrusting others to care for their child.

As any parent knows, there is no other “earthly” love like that of a parent to a child. What happens each year is that parents trust Wonder Years with what they value above all else. That trust is extended to their child’s teachers, administration, and First Presbyterian as a whole. With great trust comes great responsibility. We have a responsibility to care for each child’s safety, physical development, social development, cognitive development and spiritual development.

In this upcoming school year we will continue to focus intently on the spiritual aspect of our program and we look forward to integrating the preschool program with the Christian Education of our youth. We are working diligently to build upon the Chapel curriculum introduced by Amanda Zaengle by incorporating its message into our daily lesson plans. In addition, many of the preschool employees will work as “cross-over” staff with the Children’s Ministry with the goal of unifying our mission. We also look forward to working more closely with Pastor Dan Oedy to guide us in staff development and in building a bridge for our preschool families to our church family.



Earlier, it was mentioned that with great trust comes great responsibility. It can also be said that with great responsibility comes great opportunity. We have an opportunity to build lasting relationships with our families. When we meet the needs of a child, assist families through a time of crisis and celebrate special occasions, a unique bond of love and trust is formed.

Abraham Lincoln said, “The strength of the nation lies in its families. As goes the family so goes American society.” When we, as a church, invest our time and energy in teaching Christian value lessons to both preschoolers and their families, we invest in our country. It begins during the preschool years as we provide a positive learning environment with a staff that truly feels called to not only teach academics, but to emulate God’s love. These lessons can continue through First Presbyterian’s Christian Education classes and building upon the foundations formed in our preschool. We feel blessed to be a part of the mission here at First Presbyterian, and welcome both the responsibilities and the opportunities.

## PandaMania Adventures



# Concert Series 2011-2012



## Three Divas & The Dons

November 18 • 7:30 PM

The repertoire of this unique ensemble is surprisingly eclectic, ranging from opera and Broadway to sacred, folk, nostalgic and patriotic. You will savor the heartwarming classics from *Fiddler on the Roof*, the fun of *Die Fledermaus*, the beauty of Lakme's *Flower Duet* and the sizzle of *All That Jazz* presented within a fun venue of "Travelin' on Route 66."

## Paul Saik

December 17 • 3:00 & 7:30 PM

This award-winning singer and pianist has played the piano since the age of three. His concerts are known to inspire with a unique journey through his life as he performs various styles of music. From Broadway to opera to romantic ballads, his performance is powerful and passionate. His talent will leave you amazed!

## 42Five

January 28 • 3:00 & 7:30 PM

Evolving from a street corner barbershop sound and drawing from funk, rock, jazz and blues, this group is blazing new trails with a style all their own. 42Five recreates an entire instrumental band with nothing but their five voices—a feat which has to be seen to be believed!

## The Lettermen

February 2 • 3:00 & 7:30 PM

The 60's and early 70's saw The Lettermen score over 25 chart hit singles, including *Goin' Out Of My Head*, *Can't Take My Eyes Off You* and *Hurt So Bad*. Their signature sound and romantic hits made for nearly five decades of popularity, 18 gold records internationally, and recordings in over 14 languages.

## The Barbary Coast Dixieland Show Band

February 25 • 3:00 & 7:30 PM

February 26 • 3:00 PM

February 27 • 7:30 PM

February 28 • 7:30 PM

Seven talented musicians who play 18 instruments! Rated among the finest entertainers in the Midwest, this band has played everywhere—from the Mississippi paddlewheel boats to Nagasaki, Japan.

Terry Myers Orchestra presents

## A Tribute to Benny Goodman & The Andrews Sisters

March 16 • 3:00 & 7:30 PM

The 17-piece Terry Myers Orchestra will be joined by The Swing Sisters in a re-creation of the Big Band sound that made Benny Goodman a household name. You'll wish we had a dance floor for this one!

## Let's Hang On!

March 30 • 3:00 & 7:30 PM

The nation's premier Frankie Valli Tribute Show is a full blown stage production complete with that Four Seasons sound, crisp choreography, and a live band. Four great guys and two beautiful girls sing and dance their way through some of the best songs of all time in this high-energy production.

*Concert Series ticket and sponsorship information will be mailed on October 15. You may become a Concert Series sponsor for \$100 and receive two tickets per performer as our way of saying thanks, or you may come to the music office 10 days before each performance to pick up free tickets. We know you will enjoy this season's concerts!*

# Serving “Incognito”

By Sandy Ritchie, Event Coordinator

*“Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unaware.” Hebrews 13:2*

For the past few months I have been introducing you to the world of Hospitality here at FPC where we define it as an action—a way of living one’s life with Christian kindness to all.

Some acts of hospitality are openly seen—our greeters at the front door on Sunday morning, the usher helping someone to a seat. But there are some hidden acts of service that go unnoticed by most of us.

Actually, some Christians prefer being “incognito” while supporting the mission of the church. Just as angels labor invisibly to help us do the work of God, so too can you become a “Hospitality Angel” and work behind the scenes in service to others.

## The FPC Membership Committee Invites you to an Information Meeting for Prospective Members

Saturday, October 15 • 9-11 AM • McClure Hall  
Sunday, October 16 • 6:30-8:30 PM • McClure Hall

God calls us to worship Him, to be in regular fellowship with one another, and to serve. You do not need to be a member of our church in order to do any of these—but many have found that formally uniting with a local church body is a commitment that brings to them a sense of belonging, the challenge to grow in their faith, and an opportunity to use their talents and experiences in the service of God. It’s exciting to be a part of something so much bigger than we are!

All prospective members are asked to participate in one of these regularly scheduled classes, led by Senior Pastor Doug Pratt. Even for the life-long Presbyterian, participation in this class is a chance to connect with others who are new, get to know the pastors, and learn about the many opportunities for fellowship and service that are unique to this congregation. The various options for church membership will also be explained, but there is no obligation to join. Choose the session most convenient for you.

If you would like to attend, please sign up at the Welcome Desk on Sunday morning. Child care is available with advance notice.

Within the FPC Hospitality Ministry we find many opportunities for volunteers. Café First, located in our Art Gallery, is a special corner of our church where people can have a hot cup of coffee or tea and a snack, relax, read a book, google on their laptop, fellowship, and listen to Christian music. It is our goal to continue to make the Café a comfortable and inviting place. You could help us with that!

“First Stop” on Sunday mornings is where congregants can catch up with Christian friends, hear the latest buzz, and fellowship over coffee and cookies. Sometimes just keeping the coffee pots full is a daunting task, but that is just one duty of the First Stop crew.

We have a variety of tasks to keep our volunteers busy. And these tasks are not all “women’s work.” Hospitality sometimes involves heavy lifting... like moving those giant coffee pots to and from McClure Hall or the Café. So men are invited and welcome to offer help when they can. And it doesn’t have to be just on Sunday morning. Weekly shopping trips often encompass lifting and carrying heavy items to and from the car, as well as putting these items away in the kitchen area. Another pair of hands would come in very handy!

It is our purpose to support the needs of each ministry for the Hospitality portion of their particular event. Our Incognito Angels can be of great service by helping with set-ups, clean up, and sometimes even serving food during the event. On certain days the kitchen receives deliveries of supplies which need to be restocked. And then, as in every kitchen, there are cleaning projects.

Hospitality even involves some tasks you can do from home. We have “secret” angels who donate cookies to enhance the variety of your cookie smorgasbord for First Stop. Sometimes our tablecloths need to be ironed for a special event.

Between the maintenance of the kitchen, Café First, and Hawk Hospitality Center, weekly events and special events, there is no shortage of service opportunities in Hospitality! A beautiful Hospitality apron is provided for each of our Hospitality Angels (but you may have to tuck your wings inside it).

If you would like to volunteer with our Hospitality Ministry, please contact Event Coordinator Sandy Ritchie at 239-992-3233 x230 or [sritchie@fpcbonita.org](mailto:sritchie@fpcbonita.org). Hospitality Volunteer Forms, which include additional details and task descriptions, are available at the Hospitality office (behind the kitchen) and, beginning in October, at a Sunday kiosk near you.

# Paul's Perspective

Dear Friends in Christ,

**P**ulitzer Prize winning authors Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn state in their current best-selling book, *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*, that the great moral challenge of the nineteenth century was overcoming slavery and that the great moral challenge of the twentieth century was overcoming totalitarianism. They claim the challenge of the twenty-first century is overcoming gender inequality worldwide.

My first exposure to the reality of the plight of women and girls came from a presentation at FPC on Sunday, March 13, by Michele Rickett, founder and president of She Is Safe (SIS). Michele shared some very sobering statistics about the struggle of women and girls living in countries unreached with the good news of Jesus Christ and suffering the worst indices of poverty, where people survive on less than a \$1 a day.

Michele co-founded SIS with her husband, Dr. Daniel Rickett, to focus exclusively on rescuing women and girls from degrading lives, and equipping them to invest their God-given potential. SIS works together with indigenous Christian organizations, local churches, and women in Africa, China, Indonesia, India, Nepal, the Middle East and throughout Asia to achieve their goals of rescuing women and girls from prostitution, begging, slavery and human trafficking. SIS intervenes through practical grassroots programs of rescue, health and hygiene, education, vocational training, micro-loans and spiritual development.

A second opportunity for me to take a close look at the overwhelming challenges many women and girls face was traveling with a SIS team to India for three weeks this past June. This mission trip was led by Dr. Daniel Rickett, co-founder and executive vice president of SIS, and Cheryl Sammons, the South Asia director. It gave me the opportunity to witness the partnership between SIS and four Indian Christian organizations that are concentrating on the prevention of abuse and trafficking of women and girls through the establishment of women's transformation groups.

I witnessed the impact of women's transformation groups which are being formed by these various organizations. Through participation in such groups, women discover an escape route from poverty and the means to create a better future. Built upon biblical values, these groups of 12-15 women meet regularly to learn about livelihood, sav-



Rev. Dr. Paul Fahnestock

ings, stewardship, legal rights, parenting and health. The groups are helping disadvantaged women to discover their potential, restore their dignity, and transform their families and communities. Previously overlooked, illiterate women are now becoming small business owners and influential community leaders. Lifting themselves and their children out of poverty, these women are now a hope for the future.

One of the objectives of the SIS trip was to analyse and research the components, effectiveness, and impact of the women's transformation groups. Dr. Rickett is using this information to complete a study of best practices in these groups which will be published and available by the end of 2011. I hope Dr. Rickett's model of women's transformation groups will help others all over the world to establish such life-changing groups. I know that right here in Bonita Springs we have women in impoverished neighborhoods who would benefit from the establishment of transformation groups.

Here is my challenge to you. Read the Kristof and WuDunn book, *Half the Sky*. If the subject of the plight of women and girls touches your heart and you sense a desire to be involved, please call me at 239-992-3233 and let me know of your interest. I believe this is an area of ministry that FPC should have in focus and as a priority. I would like to talk to you and other members and friends of FPC about how we can organize and be effective catalysts for change in our community and in the world.

Blessings,  
Pastor Paul Fahnestock

# Local Love INC Celebrates First Anniversary

By Ron Watford, Love INC Executive Director



After many months of prayer and labor by a small core group of dedicated volunteers from a variety of church backgrounds, with Pastor Paul Fahnestock as its lead facilitator, on September 7 of 2010, Love In the Name of Christ (Love INC) of South Lee and North Collier communities opened its Clearinghouse doors! To highlight its first year, Love INC will hold a celebration on Monday, September 12, at 6:30 PM in the McClure Hall at FPC. You are invited to come and enjoy some coffee, cake and fellowship while discovering how this dynamic ministry is serving Christ in our community! To RSVP, contact the Love INC office at 239-405-8595.

## Love INC's Mission

As you may already know, the mission of Love INC is *"to mobilize the local church to transform lives and communities in the Name of Christ."* Love INC seeks to accomplish this by operating a phone-in Clearinghouse connecting those with verified needs—the hungry, the poor, the elderly, the physically challenged, and others—to the church ministries, church volunteers, and/or community agencies best equipped to meet those needs.

## By the Numbers

In one year, this ministry partner to the needy and disadvantaged has verified and met the needs of more than 60 families through its 15 covenant partner churches, 59 volunteers, and 35 local community agencies. Also, through

its partnership with Bonita Springs Assistance, Café of Life and Harry Chapin Food Bank in their summer feeding programs, Love INC assisted in distributing food to another 775 families!

## A Love Story

While numbers can be impressive, even more impressive are the individual "love stories" that occur as a result of the work of our Lord through Love INC. One such story is the client who, due to an at-risk pregnancy, required bi-weekly rides to her physician. After locating a church partner closest to the client, Love INC inquired if the church had a volunteer willing to provide transportation to her doctor's office. Without hesitation, a volunteer stepped forward to accept this unique opportunity of service to this couple. Now, as a result of one person's willingness to respond to a need, this couple not only has a beautiful baby but felt led to begin talking to the church staff about getting married! This is what Love INC is all about—*"mobilizing the local church to transform lives...in the Name of Christ!"*

## Looking Ahead

We hope you will consider how you feel led to work with Love INC—we would value your prayers, your time as a volunteer, and/or your donations. If you would like to learn more, we will hold Love INC Orientations the last Tuesday of every month at 2:00 and 6:00 p.m. Please contact me at the Love INC office (239-405-8595 or [rwatford@loveincswfl.org](mailto:rwatford@loveincswfl.org)) with your interest.

## Operation Christmas Child

by Anne M. Price

Summer is ending but Operation Christmas Child (a division of Samaritan's Purse run by Franklin Graham) will soon be gearing up for another year's collection. This fun project of filling shoeboxes with toiletries, school supplies, T-shirts, hard candies and small toys not only meets the needs of children living in dire straits, but also opens the door for the presentation of the Gospel.

With school supplies currently on sale, this is a good time to make purchases for your shoebox. Consider sending more than one box... with the world's population continuing to explode, there can never be enough OCC shoeboxes! Just imagine that a child who has next to nothing is opening your box... see the smile on his or her face?

We invite you to pick up an OCC brochure available in the Narthex literature racks. Our Mission Ministry will have a kiosk for Operation Christmas Child during First Stop on **Sunday, September**

**25 and October 23.** You can choose an empty shoebox to take home and fill, and also pick up additional information on items to include. Drop-off dates for the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes are **October 23 and November 13.**

I personally feel that the best way to change our world is by reaching the children, and I've yet to find a better way than through Operation Christmas Child. I hope you will have as much fun as I do shopping, packing and praying for the child who will be receiving your gift.

If you have any questions concerning Operation Christmas Child, please contact Bethel Baumann at 239-405-5735 or Alice Moser at 239-947-2144.



# Meet Angelik Salazar

*Our Sponsored Student in Compassion's Leadership Development Program*

Compassion International is a Christian child development ministry whose mission is to release children from their spiritual, economic, social and physical poverty and enable them to become fulfilled Christian adults. Members of First Church support nearly 400 children in Compassion's Child Development Projects in 26 of the poorest countries of the world.

We are excited to announce that we are now also participating in Compassion's Leadership Development Program (LDP) which supports a former sponsored child moving on to obtain a college degree. Through First Church's financial support and prayers, we are helping a sponsored child complete her undergraduate degree while developing leadership skills and modeling world citizenship.

Our sponsored student is Angelik Salazar. She is 16 years of age and lives in the Philippines. Angelik was enrolled in the LDP in April of this year and is now attending Far Eastern University in Manila to earn a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Business Administration Accounting. She says

## A Note from Angelik

Dear Friends from First Presbyterian Bonita,

Wonderful greetings from the Philippines and may the light of the Lord be upon us as we continue our life with Christ! My heart overflows with the blessing of the Lord for having you as my new sponsor.

Because of the greatness of the Lord, He chooses me to be included here in this foundation (Compassion's Leadership Development Program), and I thank Him for bringing you all into my life. I also thank you for choosing me to be your sponsored child among the other LDP students from all over the world. Thank you! My heart is filled with so much happiness knowing the fact that there is someone out there who chose to help youth like me.

As a return for your kindness, I will do my very best to do my part in this sponsorship foundation, as well as being your sponsored child. I will study hard and achieve excellence for you, for God, and also for my family. And I promise to update you always about my development.

You will serve as my inspiration as I continue doing my best... and of course I will let God to be the center of it. Again, from the heart, thank you my dear friends! God bless you more and take care!

Hugs and Kisses,  
Angelik B. Salazar



**“Because of Compassion my entire life has become extraordinary.”**

— Angelik Salazar,  
LDP-Manila, Philippines

that many think her course of study may be too difficult, but she is determined and believes this is God's will for her.

“I will continue to pursue what my heart says because I know having God in my life is enough to reach and achieve my goals and letting the will of the Lord be done always!” she said. “The LDP is a big opportunity... I will give my best to be worthy of this blessing and use my life in helping other youth in the country to achieve their goals.”

The annual cost to First Church for Angelik's education is \$3,600, which includes tuition, books, school expenses, housing and transportation costs. These funds are provided from the FPC Missions budget. She will also receive focused Christian Leadership Training and one-on-one mentoring.

Angelik accepted Christ at age 12 at the Compassion Center and admits the program, and Christ, has totally changed her life.

“I really thank Compassion for introducing God into my life,” says Angelik. “They gave me the opportunity to know Christ more and to be a mature Christian. Christ is the reason why my life has been changed and transformed.”

Angelik lives in the Manila area with her family—her mother, grandparents, an older brother, two sisters and a cousin. Although her first language is Tagalog, she does speak English. Angelik describes her passions as reading about God, participating in church ministries and teaching children. She also has a special concern for street kids and volunteers to teach them the Gospel and praise songs.

“I love to teach the children and share my knowledge about God so that at their young age they will know how God really loves them,” she said. “I'm so happy to be used for the glory of God through these ministries because I know time is not wasted when I spend it for Him.”

With a wisdom beyond her years, Angelik humbly gives God the credit for having the most influence on her life and giving her inspiration. She has also achieved much in the area of academics. During high school she served as class vice-president and received awards as *Most Outstanding Student* and *Best in Filipino, Science, Math and English*.

Please be in prayer for Angelik that she may continue to excel in her studies and grow in her relationship with God.

# Bonita Christian Forum, Season 7

What does it look like to “live out” one’s faith in Jesus Christ? This season, the Bonita Christian Forum presents five individuals whose lives evidence a particular resonance with the heart of God—fighting injustice, sharing the Gospel of Christ, extending forgiveness, demonstrating love, saving children. Let their stories inspire you to deeper commitment and action. Every one of us can make a difference.



November 15, 2011

## Gary Haugen

*Seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow. (Isaiah 1:17)*

Imagine a world in which laws are not enforced, police do not protect, leaders oppress, women and children are exploited, families enslaved. This is Gary Haugen’s world—and it is ours. The founder of International Justice Mission, a human rights agency active on five continents, Gary shares God’s compassion for victims of oppression and His call for justice. Come hear the William Wilberforce of our day—one who has dedicated his life to making a difference in the face of formidable injustice.



January 24, 2012

## Lee Strobel

*The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 1:14)*

Lee Strobel was an award-winning investigative journalist for *The Chicago Tribune*—and an atheist—when he embarked on a life-changing two-year investigation of the evidence for Jesus. He became a Christian in 1981, and went on to become a mega-church teaching pastor, television host and author. His books include *The Case for Christ*, *The Case for Faith* and *The Case for a Creator*. His first novel, *The Ambition*, was released earlier this spring.



February 21, 2012

## Louis Zamperini

*Forgive as the Lord forgave you. (Colossians 3:13)*

Troubled teen. Olympic runner. World War II bombardier and POW. Survivor. Christian. All describe Louis Zamperini of Torrance, California, the subject of Pulitzer Prize-winning author Laura Hillenbrand’s 2010 book, *Unbroken*. Louie’s incomparable story of redemption and forgiveness is a true inspiration, especially when shared by this nonagenarian.



March 20, 2012

## Dr. Gary Chapman

*Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.*

*(1 Peter 4:8)*

Dr. Gary Chapman, a relationship counselor, is perhaps best-known for introducing the concept of “love languages” — the means by which we most effectively express love to others and receive it ourselves. His *New York Times* bestseller, *The Five Love Languages*, has sold over five million copies in English and has been translated into more than 40 languages. In addition to his writing and speaking, Dr. Chapman hosts a syndicated radio show and is a pastor at Calvary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, NC.



April 10, 2012

## Wess Stafford

*Whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. (Matthew 18:5)*

Wess Stafford has served as President of Compassion International, one of the world’s largest (and most trusted) Christian child development agencies, since 1993. And it would seem he was born for this. The son of missionaries to the Ivory Coast, Wess credits those early years in the African village with teaching him “everything I really need to know to run a multinational organization” and inspiring his passion for serving the poor, particularly children. His daily radio feature, *Speak Up with Compassion*, is heard on over 800 radio stations in the U.S.



**BONITA  
CHRISTIAN  
FORUM**

Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

I PETER 3:15

# Let Your Light Shine Brightly!

At Neon Kids, our mission is to partner with parents to lead children into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Neon Kids provides quality programs for children ages 6 months through 6th grade. We invite you to visit us on Sunday mornings before the 10 AM worship service. Check in your children for nursery care or Neon Kids Sunday school. You can also visit us on the web at [neonkids.org](http://neonkids.org) to catch up on all the latest news.



## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

MATTHEW 5:16

### Questions?

Contact Director of Children & Family Ministries Amanda Zaengle at [azaengle@fpcbonita.org](mailto:azaengle@fpcbonita.org) or 992-3233.

### Trunk-or-Treat

Monday, Oct. 31 • 6:30-8 PM  
FPC Parking Lot

Families are invited to our annual fall festival. This safer alternative to trick-or-treating will include plenty of treats, including cotton candy, apple cider, popcorn and hot dogs, as well as a bounce-house and music from WAY-FM. (See page 28 for more details.)

### Wednesday Night Programs... for the whole family.

Wednesday night is Family Night with programs for children, middle school students and parents!

#### Session 1

Wednesdays

Now through Sept. 21 • 6-7:30 PM

Lil' K for Preschoolers-Kindergartners (ages 3-6):

In *I Can Follow God*, we will learn that God is the best leader ever! We'll find out how Abram, King Josiah, and Noah followed God.

KIDMO for 1st-5th Graders: It's time to get in shape for game day! Join us for *BLITZ: Bold Living In The Zone*. Kids will learn God's Top Ten plays for life through the Ten Commandments.

They'll score with loving God, loving their neighbor, honoring their parents, and loving God's word. Join Johnny Rogers as he coaches us through with his most outrageous support team yet!

For Middle School Students:

The Chat House

Students in 6th-8th grade are invited to Café First for a series of faith-based discussions and activities.

For Parents: 21st Century Parent

This new Focus on the Family DVD series will be facilitated by Pastor Dan Oedy. (See page 4 for details.)

#### Session 2

Wednesdays

Oct. 19 through Nov. 16 • 6-7:30 PM

Look for information in your Sunday bulletins at the beginning of October.

The Session 2 schedule will be the same, but we will have new lessons and topics!

Contact Amanda Zaengle to register ([azaengle@fpcbonita.org](mailto:azaengle@fpcbonita.org) or 992-3233).

#### Kids Night Out

Saturday, Sept. 10 & Oct. 8 • 5-8 PM

Open to families of FPC; children ages 1 through 12 will enjoy a variety of fun activities at the church while parents have a Saturday evening to themselves. Send \$3 per child for pizza. Please contact Amanda Zaengle to register.

#### Family Worship Sunday

Sunday, Sept. 25 & Oct. 16 • 10 AM

Families are invited to worship together during our monthly Family Worship Sunday at the 10 AM service. After the Children's Message, children three years of age through sixth grade may either attend Neon Kids Sunday school or stay in worship with their parents.

# Adult Christian Education

## Review on the Run

Welcome to a feature new to the *Epistle*! *Review on the Run* is a short book review written and submitted by members of the congregation on a book purchased in our FPC BookCenter. Consider it one way to spread the word about a beloved Christian book and inspire others to read it. You may send your submission of 150-200 words to BookCenter Manager Ed Schick ([schick@fpconita.org](mailto:schick@fpconita.org)) or the *Epistle* editor ([flower@fpconita.org](mailto:flower@fpconita.org)). Your review may be subject to editing.



### **A Reluctant Queen: The Love Story of Esther**

by Joan Wolf  
Genre: Christian Fiction

I loved, loved, loved this book. I didn't want it to end. It is an easy and quick book to

read with intrigue, espionage and romance. The romance, lifestyle and convictions of these Biblical females will amaze most women. Men will be intrigued by the military strategy, loyalty and treachery of the men within its pages. The historical fiction paints wonderful images of life inside the house of royals and harems. The attire, protocol, duties and desires of kings, queens and servants is vividly described, allowing you to close your eyes and see each scene that is brought to life. The plots, religious traditions and the history are so informative that you find yourself wanting to search further into the Bible to learn more about these people and how they changed the history of that region by their culture, their beliefs and their faith. I would love to hear what others have thought of this fascinating story.

— Connie Duquin

## Staying in God's Word

Since May, your Christian Education Committee had been providing a monthly plan to help you continue your personal journey through the Bible. Are you ready to continue this challenge and the study of God's Word?

### **September: A Visit with Abraham and Isaac**

During September we invite you to discover more personally these two great Old Testament characters. The reading schedule will take you through Scriptures to see just how these two men lived out their faith in the Lord. In addition to the handout that will be available (in the Narthex literature racks and the BookCenter), Pastor Paul Fahnestock will lead an enlightening Sunday school class during September.

SEPTEMBER SUNDAY CLASSES

### **Abraham and Isaac**

Price Chapel • 8:45-9:45 AM • Pastor Paul Fahnestock

Abraham was the father of the Israelites who described themselves as the "seed of Abraham." Through faith in God, Abraham lived as a monotheist in a polytheistic society. In the New Testament, Abraham is described as the ancestor of Israel, the Messiah, and the body of believers in Jesus Christ. His faith in God's early promises made him the "father" of Christians as believers.

The birth of Isaac—to Abraham at age 100 and Sarah at age 90—is evidence of God's faithfulness, for He had promised them a child 25 years previously. Isaac was the heir of God's covenant, first made with Abraham. As the first child of God's promise, Isaac was the first to receive the sign of the old covenant—circumcision.

### **October: A Visit with Jacob and Joseph**

During October we will invite people to get to know Jacob and Joseph more personally. Our reading schedule will highlight the lives of these two men—one who, in ancient times, was renamed by the Angel of the Lord as "Israel"... and the other, his beloved son, Joseph. Our informational handout will include background on both these servants of God. Additionally, Pastor Steven Grant will be offering a Sunday school class on Jacob during October.

OCTOBER SUNDAY CLASSES

### **Jacob**

Price Chapel • 8:45-9:45 AM • Pastor Steven Grant

Jacob, an important patriarch of the Hebrew people, was an individual with whom God made a covenant. Son of Isaac and Rebekah, grandson of Abraham and Sarah, the younger twin brother of Esau—Jacob had 12 sons, for which the tribes of Israel are named. As a result of a severe drought in Canaan, Israel moved his family to Egypt at the time when his son Joseph was in leadership under the Pharaoh. Jacob did more than dream of ladders and wrestle with angels; his life story is full of sibling rivalry and family conflict, deception and forgiveness, love and romance, spiritual rebellion and conversion, business successes and failures; it is a timeless endeavor. Studying Jacob's life and experiences is essential to a full understanding of God's covenant faithfulness.

# Steven's Study

Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

**W**hen I was a kid the school year always began the day after Labor Day. I remember how much I always lamented summer vacation coming to an end and I would try so hard to ignore the fact that soon I would be back in the classroom. Like Scarlett O'Hara I would "think about that tomorrow." But the ubiquitous "back to school" sales and the inevitable school supplies I got for my birthday (no, I am not kidding!) on August 30, reminded me that my summer reverie was soon to be kaput. By contrast, in the years since that time it has been so refreshing to anticipate the fall because now the end of summer has come to mean church programs getting started again, symphony seasons getting going and (you knew this was coming) the new football season!

I am very pleased to share with you that I have now come to an amazing combination of "back to school" and end of summer anticipation. How did this phenomenon happen? This summer I was accepted into the Doctor of Ministry program at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. My program began in August. This all happened much quicker than I expected and I must say that though my head is still spinning I have never been this thrilled about "back to school."

For some time now my pastoral colleagues at First Presbyterian Church have encouraged me to work on a Doctor of Ministry (D. Min) degree. I did not take the initiative to do so until it was clear in my mind how such a degree program would be of benefit to the congregation of our church. Though I love to study for study's sake (I have come a long way since high school—see above!), if I were to commit significant time to pursue a degree I wanted to make sure that the D. Min would have a direct impact on the growth of the ministry at FPC. During my last performance review Dr. Pratt shared his vision concerning my future ministry. He expressed his desire that I continue to develop more in-depth adult education courses, suggesting that I pursue a degree combining ministry with my passion for history. Dr. Pratt has a great gift of bringing clarity to a discernment process and he enabled me to identify exactly what I was looking for! My thanks to you, Brother!

As Providence would have it, in February 2011 the President of Westminster Theological Seminary—Dr. Peter Lillback, author of *George Washington's Sacred Fire*—visited our church and offered a lecture. I had the opportunity to



Rev. Steven Grant

share with him what I wanted to do and he was immediately interested. Dr. Lillback was hoping to create a D. Min program at Westminster with a concentration in history. My goal is proving to be an opportunity for him to start such a program and he has offered to mentor me through my study. In July, my wife Nanette and I were in Philadelphia participating in Dr. Lillback's *Faith and Freedom* tour. Before the tour, we met with Dr. Lillback and two other members of the faculty and they gave me the approval to begin! (I am sure you would agree that it must have been the blessing of Nanette being in that meeting that sealed the deal!)

When a seminary designs a Doctor of Ministry degree program, the faculty does so assuming that the students will be in full time ministry. This is in accord with exactly what I was looking for. The faculty intends for all the study to have a direct relevance on the ministry in which the students are involved. As a result, I will not be absent from FPC very often. The reading and paper writing will be done on my own time, and on occasion I will go to Philadelphia for week-long intensive classes. When it comes time to produce my dissertation and final project, it remains to be seen how much time on campus and at other research sites will be required. The whole program could take up to five years. Pray for me!

As for the project, I hope to develop a multi-media curriculum on American Christian Heritage to be used in our church as well as in others. Some of you may remember the series of classes I lead on the subject followed by a sermon I offered during Sunday morning worship called "The Character of Liberty." While that series of classes is not near the level of doctoral material, it can serve as a basis on which to begin. My hope is to gradually share the project with the congregation as the program grows. My course of study starts with some general ministry studies in pastoral theology, counseling, missions and an orientation for dissertation writing. That will be followed by courses that will contribute directly to my dissertation and project.

*continued on page 19*

# Order of St. Luke

## OSL National Conference: Healing Under the Son

“Healing under the Son” was the theme of the 53rd 2011 North American Order of St. Luke (OSL) Conference held at the picturesque campus of San Diego University June 22-25. OSL members Margaret Gieselmann and Judy Wilkerson had the privilege of attending the conference where the Rev. Nigel Mumford, author and director of the healing ministry at Christ the King Spiritual Life Center in Albany, New York, was the entertaining and inspirational keynote speaker.

Having the distinct experience as a drill instructor in the Royal Marine Commandos and most recently being stricken and near death with the H1N1 virus, Rev. Nigel kept over 200 attendees in rapt attention during his five presentations: Power of Corporate Prayer and Personal Testimony, Post Trauma Healing, Scar/Scare Tissue, Doubt & Fear, and Encouragement & Perseverance for Healing.

Between sessions, attendees joined small prayer groups for anointing and healing prayers and a variety of interactive workshops. Margaret and Judy attended separate workshops with the purpose of gathering as much information as possible to share with FPC’s active OSL chapter, Mercy and Grace.

Margaret Gieselmann, an OSL convener and Region 4 treasurer (3 years), attended “Activating Your Spiritual Gifts” led by Rev. Dr. Jack and Anna Marie Sheffield. The Sheffields are popular speakers who helped establish healing centers in San Antonio, TX and Columbus, GA.

OSL member Judy Wilkerson attended “Praying for Patients in a Secular Environment” led by San Diego neurosurgeon Dr. David Levy.

“According to Dr. Levy, lack of forgiveness is the foremost blockage to good health. He led the class in mental exercises combining powerful prayer, forgiveness and faith building.” Judy is reading more about Dr. Levy’s philosophy in his latest book, *Gray Matter: A Neurosurgeon Discovers the Power of Prayer... One Patient at a Time*, endorsed by C. Everett Koop, MD, former US Surgeon General.

Judy also attended Rev. Angela Palacios’ workshop, “Healing by Hearing: Listening to God, Each Other, and Our Inner Selves.” Born in Nassau, Rev. Angela was the first female Bahamian deacon and priest in the Anglican Diocese of the Bahamas, the Turks and Caicos Islands.

“Speaking to a standing room only crowd of predominantly pastors,” Judy reported, “Rev. Angela suggested methods of listening to God for a consistent sense of His presence in our everyday lives. She emphasized the importance of allowing the Holy Spirit to take control of one’s life, which includes one’s health, and concluded with the challenge to strive for behavior that is pleasing to God in all circumstances.”

Additional interactive workshops included: “Lord, Reign in Me: Overcoming Adversity While Resting in Christ” with Rev. Josh Acton; “Soaking



Judy Wilkerson (left) with Margaret Gieselmann at the OSL Conference in San Diego.

(Resting) in God’s Presence” with Gail Duffey; “Healing Gardens - Healing Prayer: the Blending of Soil and Soul” with Rev. John Rice; “Inner Healing: Basic Biblical Principles” with Rev. Dr. Robert Smith; and “Healing the Broken Body of Christ” with Dr. Hal Wiley.

### What is OSL?

The International Order of St. Luke the Physician (OSL) is a non-profit organization devoted to bringing the healing ministry of Jesus Christ to all who are in physical, spiritual, or emotional need. For more than seven decades, OSL has sought to provide Christians of every denomination with the scriptural foundations for belief in the healing power of Christ. Now more than 7000 members strong, OSL continues to work so that the world will be touched with the love of the Holy Spirit.

Mercy and Grace is the FPC chapter of OSL which holds study classes from November through April each year. OSL members are trained prayer team leaders who are qualified to participate in the FPC “Time of Prayer and Communion” held every Sunday after the final church service.

If you are interested in joining in the OSL study, please contact Judy Teasdale at 239-948-8156 or Margaret Gieselmann at [mgieselmann@att.net](mailto:mgieselmann@att.net).

### There’s more to come...

Rev. Nigel Mumford is coming to Bonita Springs on February 18, 2012, where he will present the OSL Healing Ministry Conference at St. Mary’s Episcopal Church (our next door neighbor). Look for more information about the upcoming February Healing Conference in future *Epistles*.

# DISCIPLE Bible

DISCIPLE Bible is a unique experience with Scripture. Classes emphasize disciplined reading and listening to Scripture with a community of other committed Christians. DISCIPLE Bible combines small group fellowship (usually 8-14 persons) with solid Biblical education. This fellowship aspect directed at helping individuals become more dedicated “disciples” of Jesus Christ is as important as the study of God’s Word.

DISCIPLE Bible is a 34-week program that includes private reading (30-45 minutes per day), a structured workbook and a 2½ hour weekly group meeting with video presentations. The course is broken into two 17-week semesters—Disciple IA (Old Testament) and IB (New Testament)—which, together, cover about 70% of the Bible. Studies will start either in December 2011 or January 2012.

Look for more details in upcoming weekly bulletins and on the church website, [fpcbonita.org](http://fpcbonita.org). An organizational meeting will be held soon as we try to accommodate as many individuals and their schedules as possible. Both morning and evening sessions may be scheduled.

If you have any questions, please contact Charley Nevaril, our DISCIPLE Bible Study Coordinator, at 239-290-9641 or [chasnev@earthlink.net](mailto:chasnev@earthlink.net).

## DISCIPLE Leaders Needed

DISCIPLE Bible can always use more volunteer class leaders. If you have completed DISCIPLE I, you are qualified! Remember that DISCIPLE is a group study led by a student, not taught by an “expert.” You also can become a DISCIPLE class leader through a short and comprehensive training course held at First Church. Contact Charley Nevaril at 239-290-9641 or [chasnev@earthlink.net](mailto:chasnev@earthlink.net) for more info.

## Attention DISCIPLE Graduates from Anywhere!

If you have completed DISCIPLE I either here at First Church or any other church, you can continue your studies by joining one of our two ongoing groups. One group will be studying the New Testament segment of DISCIPLE IV on Tuesday afternoons. The other class meets on Monday evenings to study the Old Testament segment of DISCIPLE IV. Sessions span 16 weeks and start in early November. Interested? Contact Charley Nevaril at 239-290-9641 or [chasnev@earthlink.net](mailto:chasnev@earthlink.net).



Maureen and Charley Nevaril

## “Well worth it..”

“DISCIPLE Bible has been a blessing to us and to many over the years. The small group aspect makes it so very meaningful. As we study the Bible, it becomes alive with practical applications in our everyday lives.

“The first year is reading-intense and it’s a definite commitment, but well worth it. Later studies delve in deeper with more time for reflection. DISCIPLE trains one not only in the Bible but in following the footsteps of Jesus Christ our Lord. The relationships with other wonderful Christians have been true blessings.”

— Charley Nevaril

*Charley has served as our DISCIPLE Bible Study Coordinator for several years. He has completed all DISCIPLE courses and taught several. Maureen also teaches DISCIPLE classes. They are a true “DISCIPLE” team!*

## Finished just half of DISCIPLE Bible somewhere else? Finish here at First Church.

This fall there is also a DISCIPLE Bible session continuing the New Testament segment of DISCIPLE I. There are several openings for participants. Please contact Riley Moynes at [rileymoynes@rogers.com](mailto:rileymoynes@rogers.com) or 239-405-8012.

## Behind the Scenes

by Gil Urick

If it appears that we have yet to take our First step Forward on the initiative launched earlier this year, don't be fooled! Behind the scenes we've been hard at work with planning and development... all of which has to be done in good Presbyterian fashion ("decently and in order") to ensure the ultimate success of the project.

Some physical changes have been undertaken in the Family Ministries area (formerly known as the Preschool) in order to better accommodate our growing ministry. Additional alterations will have to wait until the Christmas break or into next summer when the Preschool is not in session.

The most noticeable part of the project, which should be almost underway when you receive this *Epistle*, is the "extreme makeover" of the Learning Center for our alternate worship venue. A "media mezzanine" is being created there to house the equipment and staff necessary to coordinate this extension of our worship experience, which includes not only the video feed to the Learning Center, but also weekly production of the sermon and anthem DVD and posting of a webcast to [fpcbonita.org](http://fpcbonita.org). Attractive ceiling features, lighting, carpet and furnishings, combined with the new audio and video system, will breathe new life into this worship space and ensure a top quality experience.

If we are able to navigate the permit process in a timely manner, we are hopeful to start the construction in September. You will also see some minor modifications in the Sanctuary to accommodate the cameras and other equipment to be used each week during our services.

Providing the necessary equipment and logistics to produce our services on video might sound like a simple endeavor. There are many decisions to make and we want to make sure we have explored all our options. If you don't see progress as quickly as you expected or if our timeline slips by a week or two, don't be alarmed. We are diligently working to accomplish our First Forward goals!

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## Steven's Study *continued*

Nanette and I feel extremely blessed by this opportunity that has come my way and I am in awe of how God has pulled it all together. I covet your prayers. I am full of eager anticipation to watch how my project will grow. I am tremendously excited about the potential that it will grow into something useful for the churches, to our country, and honoring to Almighty God.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Steven Grant

## Single Direction

### Gearing Up for the 2011-2012 Season

by Shirley Kuaile

Single Direction is a Christ-oriented singles group whose mission is to develop healthy friendships built on Christian fellowship. Comprised of men and women 50 years of age and older from our church as well as from the community, we plan and attend activities as a group—which gives us more options, freedom, fellowship and fun than a party of one.

During season, beginning in October, Single Direction holds evening meetings at the church on a monthly basis. Our 6 PM catered meal is followed by a program of special interest to our group—usually a guest speaker on a hot topic.

We hope you had great summer traveling to visit family, friends and new places. It doesn't seem possible how quickly time is passing. As fall lurks around the corner, Single Direction leaders are going into "super drive" to have another intriguing year for you.

Here is our tentative plan for SD activities we hope you will enjoy. We are looking into a Halloween get-together at Koreshan State Park, a Welcome Back Beach Party, and attending a Christmas concert or play in the area.

We hope to have enough interest in a bus trip to St. Petersburg to visit the New Dali Museum on a Thursday during the month of February. In March we plan on spending a day in Naples at the Old Naples Festival. Also on our agenda is a boat trip around Estero Bay and taking in a performance at the Sugden Theater, as well as a few luncheon get-togethers and game days. We can add or subtract activities as dictated by the interests of our group.

Plan to join us for fellowship, food and fun during the coming season. If you have questions or suggestions, please feel free to call or email me, Shirley Kuaile, 937-935-4682 or [saks\\_1@columbus.rr.com](mailto:saks_1@columbus.rr.com).

# Dear Dan...

**T**he conversations concerning the changes in our denomination have continued to swirl. Because of the article I wrote in the last *Epistle* on this issue, I have had the opportunity to engage many of you regarding this topic. This is wonderful; dialogue cannot be undervalued during this chapter in our life together, and I say that with all sincerity. I see that many of us are working diligently to reconcile the issue of homosexuality in our own theological thinking. As we do so, we must be aware of a significant hurdle. As a nation we are so deeply engaged in bi-partisanship that is so “black and white” that we forget that deep theological reflection engages a lot of “grey area.” Orthodoxy does not belong to one group or one individual and it is too big to fit under the “red-state/blue-state” or “liberal/conservative” umbrellas.

Far too often when we attempt to listen to each other we hear a political agenda and assume the rest, filling in the blanks with rhetoric from an outspoken media personality. I think we must all remember, regardless of which “side” you take on this issue, that this issue was forced upon us. Our current reality was handed to us by our denomination, to deal with as a church and individuals. Because of this reality, we are all required—if we are to be responsible to our positions and callings—to determine our stance on the issue. I do not know of anyone at this church who ever wanted to be perceived as anti-homosexual, and I surely hope we are not perceived as such now.

There is no doubt that we are all sinners, and there will never be a perfect individual step into the pulpit of First Presbyterian Church. What makes homosexuality different from other sin is that it is a lifestyle. And if pursued actively, it is an unrepentant lifestyle. Repentance is the act of amending our personal desires to achieve, instead, the life the Lord has called us to. These are just the facts, and I think they are clear biblically. I cannot see how the biblical perspective can be perceived any differently. We could cite extreme scholars on either side of the issue, but a vast majority of responsible scholarship agrees that from a biblical perspective, homosexuality is a sin, and there is a difference between a repentant heart and an unrepentant heart. What is done with this widely accepted position, from this point forward, has tremendous variance.

Every pastor in the PC(USA) took an oath when they were ordained to serve in obedience to Christ and under the authority of Scripture. When we commit sin, the Bible calls



Rev. Dan Oedy

us to repent. To fulfill the role of pastor doesn't mean one assumes oneself to be “sin-free”—that is blasphemy. Rather, it means that one is committed to continually examining their life, and repenting of the sin they observe. We can all see how this presents an inescapable conundrum for an open and practicing homosexual.

So what does this mean? Is there no place for the homosexual in Christ's church? Some of you have written that Jesus calls us to love others unconditionally, and you are absolutely right! We should love them as we would love anyone who walks in the doors of our church.

However, contemporary culture is trying to tell us that love is a blind and universal stance of acceptance, and some are appropriating this definition of love to Jesus' ministry. I would disagree. (CAUTION! ENTERING GREY AREA) Please hear me out. Jesus loves us all and loves us unconditionally, loves us when we are broken from all kinds of failures, in fact he loves us so much—he doesn't leave us broken! There is no one on this planet I love more than my children and while I love them unconditionally, I do not accept them unconditionally. My deep love for them will not allow me to do so, and the Bible affirms this conclusion. I teach them, I train them, I tell them what is right and what is wrong. I warn them about dangers in life and traps and pitfalls; I celebrate with them when they overcome potential threats, and I suffer with them when they experience devastation and failure.

In other words, I invest in them deeply. I think this is the biblical model of love. Yes, Jesus went to the outcasts, the lepers and tax collectors and adulterers (and even those in the places of worship!) and he directly sought them and engaged them; but in loving them, and engaging them, he almost always said something to the effect of: “You are healed/forgiven, now go and sin no more!” (Read: REPENT!) Jesus understood that sin is not an indulgence that love should ignore, but rather, sin is something that separates us from God's will and his pure love.

*continued on page 22*

# Men's Ministry Fellowship

Changing Men's Hearts One at a Time



by Dave Stauffer

We're very excited as we look forward to our new season of Men's Ministry Fellowship at First Church. We warmly invite all Christian men to participate in this outstanding program.

Our first MMF breakfast "kick off" will be held on Thursday, September 8, in McClure Hall starting at 7:30 AM. Besides offering a very nice continental breakfast, you will hear Pastor Doug Pratt lead us in current events and an amazing study of the Holy Bible. Pastor Doug begins our new study with 2 Peter: "The Last Word from the Rock."

In October, Pastor Doug will start a new series entitled, "Moses on the Hot Seat: The 10 Commandments for a Modern World." Besides this Bible study, we will also have a number of guest speakers and fellowship events throughout the year.

Save the date of November 8, 2011 for our Annual Men's Ministry Fellowship Banquet. This catered dinner, held in McClure Hall, will feature an outstanding speaker, great music and men's fellowship. We expect over 200 men to attend this event. Look for specifics and signup details in your Sunday bulletin beginning in October.

As Pastor Doug Pratt states: "In addition to our weekly times of fellowship and study, we also offer special experiences for growth, recreation, challenge and service. It's our conviction that developing relationships with each other around common interests

*"The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out."*

— Proverbs 20:5

**MMF VISION STATEMENT:** To build relationships with men, to mutually encourage them, and bring them closer to Christ through fellowship and discipling.

and values helps us all. And discussing together the issues and concerns of life—from the ever-changing events of our world to the timeless principles of the Word of God—makes us more informed citizens and more effective Christians."

Again, we encourage you to join in the Men's Ministry Fellowship at First Church—a welcoming place for Christian Men.



MMF meets weekly for a unique mix of Bible study and current events led by Pastor Doug Pratt. Fellowship events, such as the spring and fall golf outings, are also a fun way to get to know other Christian men.



## FALL SCHEDULE

We invite you to our weekly MMF breakfast and Bible study beginning **Thursday, September 8.**

For more information, please contact Dave Stauffer at 239-949-4045.

## Dear Dan *continued*

This issue for me is not a matter of sexual orientation. It is a matter of spiritual traps and temptations and the biblical difference between a repentant heart and an unrepentant heart. It is dangerous for the church to ordain into leadership any individual that is entrapped in an unrepentant lifestyle; sin, addiction, narcissism, pornography, materialism. When a Christian leader is engaged in unrepentant lifestyle sin, there are severe ramifications. Not just for their nuclear family, but for the body of Christ. We have seen this reality time and time again, in congregation after congregation, in every denomination, and we don't have to look far to see it is happening around us. I had a seminary professor once say to our class, "Some of the professors at this school are focused on protecting you from the church; I am focused on protecting the church from you!" Christian leaders are called to a higher standard of Christian and ethical living; not perfection, but repentance. There are consequences to Christ's Church when Christian leaders disobey and don't care.

Let me be clear, I don't think anyone should be "discriminated" against, and some of you will wonder how I can reconcile that statement with this article. I think all people should be welcomed in the church, and should be loved by the church, but the church's role should be to understand that Christian love grows people out of self-destructive sinfulness. Christian love doesn't let people erode in self-destruction. I believe submission to God's authority in all matters of life is the definition of a healthy believer. When we as a church don't move people to that conviction, we aren't helping them—we certainly are not loving them. I do not think it is love to let someone self-destruct and my experience is, when people live a counter-biblical life, they are on a path towards self-destruction. People who have an alcoholic in the family plan an intervention out of love, to pull their loved one out of a trap. I believe God outlaws practices in His Word because God understands the dangers of such practices in a way we cannot.

Pastor Dan Oedy

If you would like to send in a question to be addressed in a future edition of "Dear Dan" please email your question to [doedy@fpcbonita.org](mailto:doedy@fpcbonita.org) or share your question with Pastor Dan when you see him next. You can remain anonymous.

## In Our Thoughts & Prayers

### **Our heartfelt Christian sympathy extends:**

to the family and friends of Virginia (Ginny) Caldwell who passed away June 30; to Kathy Gilliland and her family on the death of her husband, George Gilliland, on July 2; to Jean Johnson on the death of her husband, Larry Johnson, on July 10; to Al and Sandy Price on the death of their daughter, Prentiss Price-Evans, on July 12; to Judy Plowman on the death of her husband, Dick Plowman, at Joanne's House on July 13; to Ken and Ruth Ann Bruce on the death of Ken's sister-in-law, Diane Bruce, on July 25 in Pennsylvania; to Maria Karl on death of her father, Hermann Sans, on August 2 in Germany; to Kathy and Glenn Moffett on the death of Kathy's brother, Brandt Bell, on August 7 in Annapolis; to Maxine Mundt on the death of her husband, Bob Mundt, on August 6 in Minneapolis; to Jeanne Brown on the death of her father on August 10 in Wisconsin; and to Janice Croley on the death of her father on August 11 in Ohio.

### **Please pray for our loved ones in the military:**

Nick Abey, \*Steve Adams, Alexis Alvarado, Ryan Bach, \*Adam Bentley, Steven Bourdon, Andrew Bryant, John Bryant, Matt Byington, Amy Nesbitt Copeland, Justin Cramer, Andrew Crawford, John Cuddy, Dave Cullen, Andy Dalton, Hope DiGiusto, Scott DiGiusto, Matthew Edmunds, Brian Eifler, John Eloffson, \*Josh England, Stephen Fox, David Gatoude, David Gilliland, Paul Gritter, \*Seth Guy, Kent C. Hay, Michael Heath, Travis Hilgers, \*Morgan Holden, \*Michael Holmes, Jarrett Hon, \*Michael Jaster, \*Kevin Kath, Michael Kim, Daniel S. Lai, Dave Landymore, Lee Moffett, Kurt Mondlak, Martin Nichetta, Philip Novak, John D. Petro, Mark Potter, Christopher Rhodes, \*Nicholas E. Richardson, \*Daniel Scott, Evan A. Scott, Kimberly Ann Scott, \*Sean B. Scott, Dylan Sipos, Kyle Sisco, Nathan Sitterley, Logan Spachthol, Thayne Stahlacker, \*Travis Sylvester, Trevor S. Thrasher, \*Jeffrey Tolbert, \*Logan Tyler, Kurt Vollmer, Aaron Wasliewski, Alasdair Waterhouse, Sally White, Brian Wilson, Jonathan Wise, Deisy Wolfe, Matthew C. Wolfe, \*John N. Yacos, Kyle York

*\*Indicates military personnel currently deployed.*

If you have a prayer request, you may call the church office (992-3233), our Pastoral Care Line (992-6887), Sherri Feeley (992-2726), or write it on a Prayer Request card found at the Welcome Center and place it in the "prayer box" there.

For special prayers for a loved one serving in the military, please contact Deacon Bill Abey at [babey@comcast.net](mailto:babey@comcast.net).

# My Deepest Gratitude

By Lori Willis, Hospitality Coordinator at First Church

I want to share with all of you in our congregation the wonderful ways in which God has worked in my life, and the life of my family, through you. This past year has seen a great milestone for us: I was granted legal custody of my 10 year old granddaughter, Brianna. Her parents have had many problems, and Brianna's home life was very turbulent and uncertain. For the past year and a half I have been trying to become her parent. On May 30, 2011 I received the signed legal documents. As you can imagine, I am overjoyed. And Brianna is also thrilled. In her words, "I have a permanent home now."

Saying "thank you" doesn't seem to be enough for all this church has done for me. Everyone I have met, come to know and worked with has been so loving and comforting, especially through my dark and uncertain days. You have been a true extended family to us.

I first attended FPC about six years ago. My parents, Bill and Marilyn Calvert, had moved here from Ohio. When I visited them I would come to worship with them in their new church home. My father passed away in September 2008, and my mother had some serious health issues and surgery soon afterwards. The support of the church staff and members for both of them was so comforting. I moved here from Ohio in 2009, and in February 2010 I began my job in Hospitality at First Church. It is amazing how much our church is growing, and how many new ministries and services are developing.

One of the groups it has been my privilege to get to know is the Men's Ministry. Before my father died he would get up faithfully early every Thursday morning to attend the men's Bible study. I never understood what drew him there, but



Lori Willis, Brianna and Marilyn Calvert.

now I do. As I have worked with the men in providing their breakfast—and LOTS OF COFFEE—I have seen first-hand the wonderful fellowship and friendship they enjoy with each other. And I was particularly touched this past year as the men provided a special gift to me to assist with all the legal expenses of the custody process. That helped me tremendously, and showed me how much they cared.

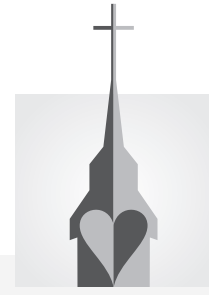
I know I can never express my personal thanks to everyone who has helped and supported me through all the challenges and transition times that I and my family have experienced. I believe that God is working in us and through us. I am excited to be part of the ministry of our church. In some small ways I would like to be used to pass on to others the blessings I have received.

## ART GALLERY New Show in October

The Art Gallery in First Café will change its show on Tuesday, October 18. Come between 10:30 AM and 12:30 PM to either submit your work or pick up your work from the previous show. Art must be framed and wired for hanging. Entry fee is \$5 per piece. Most of the artwork in our gallery comes from the hands of our many talented artists here at First Presbyterian Church. Many pieces are available for purchase, with a portion of the proceeds benefiting First Church. Questions? Contact Sally Grugan (947-6691) or Joan Stobart (948-0979).



# Women of First *Seeking Him First*



## A NOTE FROM NANCY

*"Speak to one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs."  
(Ephesians 5:19)*

Hmmmm, how was that phone conversation this morning? Did we speak to each other with encouraging words? Did we recount the wonderful works of God in our lives yesterday and earlier today? We wanted to do that very thing. My friend reminded me of some of the teachings of Moses where he told the children of Israel that they were to keep the words of God "upon their hearts. Impress them on your children [and grandchildren]. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you rise up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates... be careful that you do not forget the LORD" (Deuteronomy 6).

We probably won't do some of those things literally, but the idea of using some tangible reminders of the Presence of God is not merely an idea from the Hebrew Scriptures. We each have our personal reminders. I wear a necklace with a cross and a charm bracelet with a cross. I listen to worship music and teaching tapes at home and in the car. I send emails with verses from my Bible and receive them from friends. I need all the help and encouragement and reminding I can get! I don't want to forget the LORD, and I surely don't want my family to forget!

I'm saying all of this to get us ready for "season." It's September—time to start an exciting new school year with new books and new clothes and new friends and new resolutions. For me it's almost like a new year—with new

*The mission of the Women's Ministry of First Church is to help women of all ages  
Reach UPWARD to a deeper relationship with Christ,  
Reach INWARD to one another in love and fellowship, and  
Reach OUTWARD to our community and world in service.*

Bible studies, new prayer groups, new programs.

Just as the children of Israel were getting a second chance, a new beginning in a new and promised land, every season at FPC we also get somewhat of a new beginning. We create an environment where "everything old is new again" as we enter a time of new commitment, new resolutions and new opportunities for worship, study, laughter, love and hope.

If you want a fresh start in a familiar and favorite place where we will sing to each other, remind each other

of the words and works of God, a place where life and love will be renewed, restored, reconciled, reborn—many of the things that I may have forgotten over the lovely lazy days of summer—then please come share the wondrous works of God together as we start our own version of writing the words of God on the doorposts of our hearts and home.

Please join us. We welcome you with open arms!

Love from Nancy Heche  
*DIRECTOR OF WOMEN'S MINISTRY*

P.S. Bring your Bible, your new pencils and notebooks!

## Special Events

### A Day Trip with a Friend

Monday, September 12 • 9:00 AM

All women of First Church are invited to come and bring a friend for our day trip to Mercato Shopping Center in Naples! Fellowship will include a tour of Whole Foods, a scrumptious lunch, and "special savings" at the Simply Natural women's clothing store where Hiltrud Passmann, a professional fashion adviser, will greet us. Meet at church at 9:00 AM for fellowship and carpooling. Also stay tuned for details about a special showing at Silverspot, the luxury theater in the Mercato complex.

### PRC Walk for Life & Baby Brunch

Saturday, October 15 • 7:00 AM Walk; 11:30 AM Brunch

Join us for this fun-raiser, fund-raiser and friend-raiser! Pregnancy Resource Center is supported by First Church mission funds and gives hope to pregnant women by offering free ultrasounds. Meet at North Collier Regional Park (south of Immokalee on Livingston Road). Bring a friend or spouse, or bring your whole group (reunion group, lunch bunch, etc.) Show your support by walking yourself or sponsoring a walker... then come to the church for brunch. Our Baby Brunch will celebrate PRC, where new mothers are turning their hearts to Jesus. Questions? Contact Barbara Goff (239-992-6977) or Janet Mustian (239-498-5972).

### Monday, December 5

Save this date for our annual Christmas celebration!

## Opportunities for Study, Prayer & Fellowship

### Women of First Prayer Group

Mondays starting September 12 • 8-9 AM • Sanctuary

All women are invited and encouraged to share this time together in prayer and meditation.

### Manna for Monday

Mondays starting October 3 • 2-3:30 PM • Price Hall Parlor

Join us in discussing *Heirs of the King* by Warren Wiersbe—an 11-week study on the Beatitudes.

### Working Women's Fellowship

Tuesdays starting September 6 • 7-8:30 PM • Price Hall Parlor

Our evening group study will be on *The Pentateuch* (the first 5 books of the Bible) utilizing a DVD and study guide from "The Amazing Collection."

### Wednesday in the Word

Wednesdays: September 7, 14 & 21 • 9:30-11 AM • McClure Hall

We start the new season with a study of the Old Testament *Book of Jonah*—a "fish story" about the man who got away!

Wednesdays: October 5, 12 & 19 • 9:30-11 AM • McClure Hall

In October, we study the Old Testament *Book of Habakkuk*, the prophet who conversed with God about his complaints concerning God's dealings with His people.

### Soul Talk

Beginning Thursday, September 8 • 7:30-8:30 AM • McClure Hall

Join us for an early morning cup of coffee and heart-to-heart with women of First, friends who care and listen. Please come and share this time with us.

### Thursday Morning Prayer Group

2nd & 4th Thursdays • 9:30 AM • Price Hall Parlor

Come meet and pray for the prayer concerns of our church.

For more information on these studies, visit the Women's Ministry kiosk on Sundays during First Stop. Childcare is available with reservations. Books used in our Women's studies will be available for purchase in the BookCenter.

### APPLES OF GOLD

The Apples of Gold program is based on the principles found in Titus 2:3-5. During the course of six weeks, the young ladies chosen as "Apples" meet with their teaching and cooking mentors to share a cooking demonstration, lesson study with discussion, and a delicious meal with more time for conversation and sharing. The fall session begins on September 26. Our teaching mentors will be: Trudy Woods, Coralynn Steffen, Lynne Stauffer, Nancy Heche, Karen Schor and JoAnn Hochstetler. Our cooking mentors will be: Janice Croley, Marcia Wheat, Pam Doyle, Julie Aspegren, Barbara Meier, and Lila Nichols. For more information, contact Sue Longtin, [neanas@comcast.net](mailto:neanas@comcast.net).

## There is a Season...

*"For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven..." Ecclesiastes 3:1*

Pop culture from the '60s gave us much food for thought and insight but none so beautifully woven into song than the Byrds' folk rock version of "Turn, Turn, Turn," whose lyrics are taken straight from the book of Ecclesiastes.

It is this wisdom from King Solomon that took me by surprise on a recent trip to South Carolina for my mother's 90th birthday. Imagining a sullen time dwelling on past failures and personal insufficiencies, I was surprised at how quickly it became an unexpectedly pleasant and transforming experience. Who would have thought that our unassuming dinner party could quietly exhibit the amazing power of God's Providence?

As I watched the "kids table" take shape, I wondered, "Who are these youngsters in their teens and tweens?" The answer slowly emerged as did familiar faces from long ago. One by one, the children of my late Aunt Rita—my mom's only sister—came over for a long overdue hug. (The kids were their children.) More than cousins, these five individuals were intricately woven into the fabric of my childhood. How could I have forgotten?

Their smiling faces resurrected old (very old) memories of holidays, birthdays and summer outings. I felt bombarded with images that seemed only to clarify the wisdom of that old song from 1965. My cousins' familiar voices echoed a Biblical truth I had also forgotten: God's Providence.

The 29 people in that banquet room were two families who—together and apart—had experienced many different seasons of life... marriage, children, divorce, loss, illness, healing, laughter, grief, etc., etc., etc. After five decades of earthly life (and nearly 35 years of disconnect with my cousins), I can now look back and realize the subtle intricacy and deep intimacy of the Father's role in our lives. All through the moments, days, years and seasons of our lifetimes, He continues to form us—deeply and intimately, whether we remember or forget. *"Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed"* (Psalm 139:16).

It took the beaming faces of my cousins (laugh lines and all) to remind me that God's plan is ever in force. The "seasons" He has placed within our hearts at various times all have purpose. Although certain people grow distant from us, our Father does not forget a moment. He may just throw a cousin or two back into your life at His whim.

I call that "God's little finger at work." His love has woven our past and created our present. We can trust in His Providence and the seasons He sends us to bring us closer to our purpose, His purpose.

## Feeling Stretched as a Caregiver?

An exciting new program in Bonita Springs is designed to provide you with the tools you need to take care of yourself.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers is an educational series designed to help family caregivers reduce stress, improve self-confidence, communicate feelings better, balance their lives, increase their ability to make tough decisions and locate helpful resources. It is sponsored by Lee Memorial Health System, Alvin Dubin Alzheimer's Resource Center and Hope Hospice, in collaboration with the Parish Nurse Program.

Classes consist of six sessions held once a week, led by two experienced facilitators (many are experienced caregivers themselves, who have successfully applied the techniques they teach). Interactive lessons, discussions and brainstorming will help you take the "tools" you choose and put them into action for your life.

Participants will receive The Caregiver Helpbook, developed specifically for the class. A donation of \$25 to help defray book cost is suggested, but not required to attend.

Classes will be held on Fridays, September 2 through October 7, from 1:00 to 4:00 PM at Right at Home, 4061 Bonita Beach Road, Suite 208, in Bonita Springs. Class size is limited and pre-registration is required. For more information or to register, call Danielle at 239-343-2751.

## Flu Clinic at FPC

Tuesday, October 12 • 9 AM-12 PM and 4-7 PM

Tuesday, November 9 • 9 AM-12:30 PM

'Tis the season... to get your flu shot! According to *flu.gov* (sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services) vaccination is the best protection against contracting the flu. Seasonal flu vaccines will be available at First Church on October 12 and November 9, administered by the Visiting Nurses Association (VNA). If you choose to come to FPC for your vaccine, rest assured that it will be administered by experienced, professional nurses with reduced waiting times. This year, VNA will be charging the public \$25 for flu shots and \$45 for pneumonia shots which are last year's prices. VNA accepts traditional Medicare Part B, Railroad Medicare and the Part B equivalent through Universal. All others will be asked to pay by cash or check and will receive an insurance-ready receipt they may submit for reimbursement. Tricare Prime will also reimburse with proof of receipt.

## New Support Groups in Our Community

The Alvin A. Dubin Alzheimer's Resource Center is a local United Way organization which provides assistance and support to Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers in Lee County, Florida. The center is sponsoring two new support groups which will meet at their Fort Myers location—10051 McGregor Blvd., Ste. 101.

### ADULT CHILDREN OF ALZHEIMER'S PATIENTS

This support group specifically for adults who have a parent with Alzheimer's disease or a related disorder will meet monthly on the first Tuesday at 6:15 PM, with the next meeting on September 6. Focus is on issues and concerns adult children face as they provide care to a parent with memory loss or strive to learn more about Alzheimer's disease. The group is open to all interested individuals at no charge.

### FAMILIES OF LONG TERM CARE FACILITY RESIDENTS

This support group specifically for families of nursing home and assisted living facility residents will meet monthly on the third Tuesday at 10 AM, with the next meeting on September 20. Its focus is discussing the concerns and questions families face as they cope with placing a loved one in a long-term care facility. The group is open to all interested families of nursing home or assisted living residents at no charge.

For more information, contact the Dubin Alzheimer's Resource Center at 239-437-3007 or visit their website, [alzheimersswfl.org](http://alzheimersswfl.org).

## Medicare Change Date

The open period to change from Medicare Advantage Plan to regular Medicare (or vice versa) and to change your Medicare Part D Plan has been moved to an earlier date than previous years. Between October 15 and December 7, anyone can join, switch, or drop a Medicare plan or drug plan. The change will take effect on January 1 as long as the plan gets your request by December 7. If you get Extra Help from Medicare (contact Stephanie Stec for more details), you can join, switch or drop a Medicare drug plan anytime.

# Church Directory

## PASTORS

Rev. Dr. Douglas G. Pratt Senior Pastor/Head of Staff x245 dpratt@fpconita.org  
Rev. Dr. Paul Fahnestock Associate Pastor x243 pfahnestock@fpconita.org  
Rev. Steven Grant Associate Pastor x226 sgrant@fpconita.org  
Rev. Dan Oedy Associate Pastor x222 doedy@fpconita.org

## PASTORAL SUPPORT

Donabeth Urick Executive Assistant to Dr. Pratt x294 durick@fpconita.org  
Nancy Oedy Administrative Assistant to Associate Pastors x244 noedy@fpconita.org

## PROGRAMMING

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Administrative Assistant-Sacred Arts x232 cbauer@fpconita.org  
Jennifer Boocock Director/Wonder Years Preschool x246 wonderyears@fpconita.org  
Ruth Ann Bruce Biblical Counselor x293 rbruce@fpconita.org  
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Stephanie Stec Parish Nurse x296 sstec@fpconita.org  
Amanda Zaengle Director of Children & Family Ministries x248 azaengle@fpconita.org

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Sonia Feliciano P.M. Housekeeping  
Hector Lopez A.M. Custodian

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First Academy of Music: (239) 992-3410  
First Thrift Shop: (239) 992-0285  
Wonder Years Preschool: (239) 948-6677

## 2011 SESSION

Moderator  
Rev. Dr. Douglas G. Pratt

Clerk of Session  
Trudy Woods

### ELDERS

Lois Bachman  
Kay Brown  
Dee Carter  
Dick Doyle  
Joan Faux  
Carl Johansen  
Stevie Joslin  
Maria Karl

Roger McLaughlin  
Kathryn L. McMichael  
Robin Moore  
David Mustian  
Dave Nichols  
Chuck Vogt  
Bob Wagner  
Jerry Weisenauer  
Chuck Wolfe  
Trudy Woods

Elder Emeritus  
Frank Provenzano

## 2011 DEACONS

Moderator  
Ron Brown

Bill Abey  
Sharon Alspach  
Ron Brown  
Marcia Courtney  
Pat Frye  
Wynette Griffith  
Debra Hashek  
Beth Johansen  
Marlene McLaughlin  
Alice Moser  
Janet Mustian  
Ginger Russell  
Connie Sackl  
Dan Scott  
Paul Sundquist  
Jim Thomas  
Dorn Van Cleave  
Jeannette Vogt

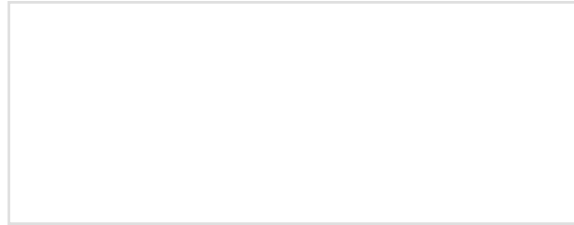
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# Trunk-or-Treat 2011

Monday, October 31 • 6:30-8:00PM

The fifth annual Trunk-or-Treat event will take place on Monday, October 31, from 6:30 to 8:00 PM in the church parking lot. Adults and children from our congregation and the community are invited to take part in the fun! Fall festival goodies will be available for all to enjoy—including cotton candy, apple cider, popcorn, hot dogs, and a bounce-house. There will also be music by WAY-FM, a local Christian radio station.

Trunk-or-Treat is a multigenerational event that brings together many in our congregation and offers a service to our community. It is designed to provide a safer alternative to trick-or-treating. On Halloween night, members and friends of our church gather in the church parking lot where the trunks of their vehicles are filled with candy, ready to pass out to “trunk-or-treaters.” Church members are invited to reserve parking spots near friends and set up lawn chairs to enjoy conversation as they interact with the children. Invite your neighbors, families and friends to this great event!

Trunk-or-Treat is open to the public.

Want to join in the fun? Here's how you can help:

- Sign up for a parking space and distribute candy to trunk-or-treaters
- Encourage friends to sign up with you
- Donate candy
- Invite families in your neighborhood to attend
- Serve as a greeter and pass out maps to those entering the event
- Serve as a parking attendant
- Help serve hot dogs, cotton candy or popcorn

Please contact Amanda Zaengle ([azaengle@fpcbonita.org](mailto:azaengle@fpcbonita.org) or 239-992-3233) if you are interested in helping in any of the above areas. Sign-ups for our Trunk-or-Treat parking spaces will begin in mid-October.

Joan and John Lewis (as Ketchup and Mustard) stand ready for trunk-or-treaters at the 2010 Trunk-or-Treat event.

