



PRESBYTERIAN NEWS

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw, Michigan

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September 2011

From Tom's Study

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!"
Matthew 7:24-27

I want to continue to use the book, "Unbinding the Gospel: Real Life Evangelism", which the elders and deacons have been studying as a jumping off point for this newsletter article.

Jesus states clearly at the end of the Sermon on the Mount that people who hear and act on His words will be wise while those who don't will be foolish. Leading up to that statement, Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount radically calls us to live a dramatically different kind of life from the culture. It is living in this radical way that Jesus calls wise. To ignore his teaching Jesus calls foolish, foolishness that leads to a great fall.

Jesus' teaching here is central to the process we call discipleship. By calling ourselves Christians we proclaim a desire to hear and follow the teachings of Jesus. Christians are followers of Christ. As Christians we proclaim that Jesus' teachings are wise and life giving. We proclaim that these teachings are worth sharing with the rest of the world because they lead to the healing transformation of our broken lives and our broken world.

If we truly believe that Jesus' teaching is wise it makes complete sense that we would want to share Jesus' teaching with our family, our neighbors, our friends, our co-workers, and strangers near and far. If we truly believe that Jesus' teaching is wise, then evangelism is the natural sharing of how we have been blessed by following this Jesus way of living.

I think Reese states it clearly, "Great evangelism arises out of vivid faith lives." Until we have a sense of why faith (following the ways of Jesus) matters to us, evangelism will never make sense or become a natural part of how we live out our lives.

Last month we read this painful quote from one of the pastor's Reese interviewed, "Well, you know I've been doing this ministry for 24 years now. We've strategized and prioritized and done mission statements that have kicked around the backs of closets. We've never prayed together except to say, 'God, bless this fight.' We've tried everything else; we might as well try prayer. What have we got to lose?"

I appreciate his bold honesty, even though the reality of his remarks breaks my heart. The question is do his remarks describe us? Are we praying for God to work miracles through us, in this place, right here in Paw Paw? Do we have a vivid faith life where miracles are the reality? Do we believe the Jesus way is wise and life giving and thus worth telling others about?

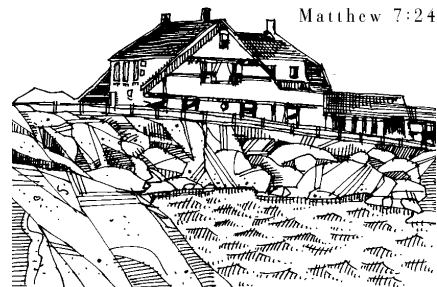
As fall begins there are many opportunities for hearing and responding to Jesus' teaching. There will be a spiritual formation class, one or more groups meeting for prayer, Sunday school, various small group Bible studies. The opportunities are numerous, but do we believe that Jesus' teaching is worth grappling with, digesting, and responding to?

Evangelism, connecting with others about our faith, happens naturally when we love following the ways of Jesus, when we have decided that following Jesus is the wise way to live. Is that the case for you? Is that the case for us as a congregation? I hope each of us will wrestle with that question for ourselves. I hope we will be wrestling with that question as a congregation. I pray we will choose to build our lives and our life together on the rock. I pray we make that our life's priority.

In Christ's Service – Pastor Abbott

Therefore everyone
who hears these words
of mine and puts them
into practice is like a
wise man who built his
house on the rock.

Matthew 7:24



Exciting Upcoming Events

All Church Retreat: Don't miss the 2nd annual all church retreat. Put September 17 and 18 on your calendar. Last year was a blast. Don't miss the fellowship, fun, spiritual growth, and community building. We look forward to being together again out at Van Buren Youth Camp. Registration forms are being sent out and are available at the church.

New Member Class: There will be four weeks of class for people interested in joining the church. The classes will take place from 9:30-10:30 a.m. on Sunday September 25, October 2, 9, 16. We would love to have you join us if you are interested in learning more about the church. If you find yourself wondering about the church give Pastor Abbott a call at 657-3788.

9/11 Community Worship Service: Mark your calendar now for Sunday, September 11. Many of the area churches are gathering together to host a special worship service at the amphitheater by the lake. The service will be at 10:00 a.m. Bring your own lawn chair or blanket. This is Wine and Harvest weekend so please plan accordingly. This will be a great opportunity to invite friends and neighbors as Eastern Van Buren County gathers to worship on the 10th anniversary of 9/11.

Adult Small Groups

Adult Bible Study Class: The adult Bible Study class will resume at 9:45 on Sunday mornings starting, September 25, 2011 - the Sunday we return to two services. We will continue our study of Acts at Chapter 19 verses 8-20. This is the beginning of Paul's third missionary journey. We welcome all who want to study scripture and its meaning for our lives today. Please plan to join us on Sunday mornings.

Attention Men: Men's breakfast will take place on Saturday, **September 24**, at 8:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. All men are invited and we would love to have you join us for this time of food, fellowship, and study.

Diving Deep: Pastor Abbott will be leading a 30 week class on Spiritual Formation beginning the week of September 18. We will pick a date and time that meets the needs of those who desire to participate.

If you want to participate you need to be able to attend all 30 weeks. If you anticipate missing more than 3 sessions then this is not the right time for you to take this class. The cost of the three books for the class is \$42.00. Scholarship money is available. The registration will be limited to 20 participants. If you would like to participate please write a statement about why you would like to participate, why you feel called to make a serious commitment to your spiritual growth at this time in your life, and

how you feel such a class would be helpful for your spiritual journey. Participants will be selected from those who turn in statements. Statements will be accepted from people Middle School age and older.

Worship Opportunities

Sunday Worship Times: We will have one service at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, September 4th. We will have one service at 10:00 a.m. at the amphitheater on Maple Lake on September 11th. We will have one worship service on September 18, at 11:00 a.m. out at The Van Buren Youth Camp. We will return to two services at 8:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, September 25th.

9/11 Service: Don't miss this amazing opportunity to invite friends, family, neighbors to join together in prayer for the healing of our world. 10:00 a.m. at the Lake.

Worship at the Camp: What great memories from last year worshiping together out at Van Buren Youth Camp. Don't miss the 2nd annual worship at camp on September 18th at 11:00 a.m. Rides out to the camp will be available from the church at 10:00 a.m.

Two Services: Don't forget we return to 2 services on Sunday, September 25th. 8:15 and 11:00 a.m.

Invite a Friend: One of the ways we can be a beacon in our community is by simply inviting people to join us in worship. People's spirits are thirsty. Let us invite them to the well that never runs dry. Make sure to offer to pick them up.

Parking on Sundays: If you don't mind walking a bit, we would encourage folks to park on the street leaving the parking lot for folks who have a hard time walking, visitors, and parents with a car full of kids.

Meetings

Commission Meetings: Before attending a commission please check with the chairperson to make sure they are meeting at the regular time.

Administration Commission: Meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. in various locations. Contact Wendy Mickle for details 657-6738.

Education Commission: Meets the Sunday before the 3rd Tuesday after the 2nd worship service.

Mission Commission: Meets the Sunday before the 3rd Tuesday after the 2nd worship service.

Membership/Worship Commission: Meets on the 3rd Tuesday at 6:00 p.m.

Properties Commission: Meets the 3rd Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

Youth Ministry



Meet our new Youth Director, Adam Brown:

Although Adam was born and raised in Southwest Michigan, he only recently returned from eight years spent living in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He graduated with a degree in music from North Central University and has spent the last four years as a professional musician, guitar teacher, and band director for a church. He has also spent five years in a volunteer capacity as a youth leader, both for middle-school and high-school students. Adam's passion for Jesus, youth, and music will make him a great fit at First Presbyterian and an awesome addition for the town of Paw Paw.

High School Bible Study: Adam and Deb are leading a study check your Facebook for weekly time and location.

Young Life: Young Life will start meeting again regularly in September so start checking your Facebook page for information.

Wyldlife: Our first gathering will be at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 18, at Red Arrow Ministries. The fun runs from 4:00-5:30 so don't miss out as we get geared up again.

Children's Ministry

Sunday School: We kick off the Sunday school program out at the camp on September 18 around 10:00 in the morning. Hope you join us.

Sunday School Classes Begin: September 25th classes begin for all ages. Kids and Middle School will begin with a gathering time at 10:00 a.m. High School will begin at 9:45 a.m. Adult classes will begin between 9:30 and 10:00 depending on the class. Please be watching for details.

Teachers Needed: This year teachers will have a partner for a three to four week stint of teaching. If you would be willing to help please contact Danean Baker (657-7803) or Sue Reynnells (674-3195).

Mission Opportunities

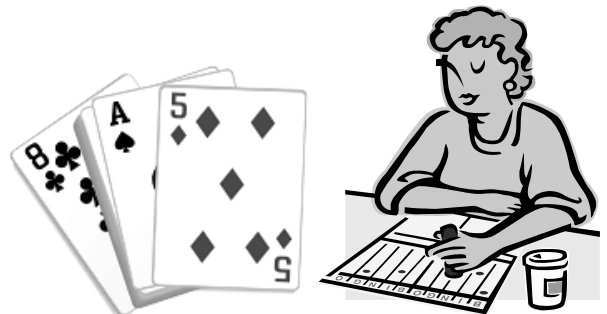
Eleanor's Pantry: Don't forget to shop for the pantry when you are at the store. Or if you are able, help the pantry out with a financial gift. Looking for a gift for that special someone? Make a donation to the pantry in their honor. Everyone will be grateful.

Wings of God: Thanks to soprano Cristina Piccardi and her accompanist, Marcelo for a wonderful event in the Sanctuary and the funds it raised for Wings of God.

Joint Food Pantry: If you have any questions about how you might help with the pantry please connect with Sue Miller (657-4601). I am sure we can find a niche for you.

Tremendous Need: We truly need people who are interested in learning how to run the sound system and the video projection system. If you have such an interest please connect with the church office.

Are you looking for a place to serve? Are you looking for a place to use your gifts? Please be thinking about involvement in these local mission opportunities: *Lunch with Friends, Habitat for Humanity, Restorative Justice, Eleanor's Pantry, The Decatur Shelter and United Christian Services.* If you have any questions about any of these please contact Pastor Abbott at 657-3111.



Pray and Play is back!!

Beginning on Sunday, October 2nd we will resume the Pray and Play program. Stay after 11:00 service in Fellowship Hall until 2:00 (or until the last game is completed...) Play board games or Bingo or cards. A light lunch will be provided. We are encouraging all bridge players, euchre players, chess players and board game players to attend. Rides home will be provided if needed. If you have any questions, or any game suggestions, please contact Pat Conner (657-2705) or Wendy Mickle (657-6738). There will be extra players to fill in at euchre and bridge tables. Hope to see you there!!





- 09/01 Craig* Hess
- 09/01 Don* Vantzelfde
- 09/01 Sheryl Walker
- 09/02 Rachel Pursley
- 09/03 Sharon* Desimone
- 09/05 Jeff* Wells
- 09/05 Daniel* Hulst
- 09/06 Robert Vought
- 09/06 Heather Smith-Johnson
- 09/06 Susie* Deal
- 09/07 Johnell* Cuddeback
Weintraub
- 09/07 Sarah Smith
- 09/08 William* Kube
- 09/08 William* Buhl
- 09/09 Lauren Johnson
- 09/09 Shelly* Imus
- 09/10 Greg* Vantzelfde
- 09/11 Kasmin Guthrie
- 09/13 Wendy* Mickle
- 09/14 Dick* Faul
- 09/14 Alan* Lanphear
- 09/15 Bennett Cooper
- 09/17 Bert* Ogden
- 09/17 Frances* Kubicek
- 09/19 Harold* Schuitmaker
- 09/19 Michael* Major
- 09/20 Richard* Baker
- 09/21 Christopher Kubicek
- 09/21 Daniel McNeil
- 09/22 David* Combs
- 09/22 Jacob Weintraub
- 09/23 Jack* Zabonick
- 09/23 Elizabeth* Baney
- 09/23 Jody Silber
- 09/24 Sally* Brinkman
- 09/24 Andrew LaRue
- 09/25 Joe* Thorstenson
- 09/25 Greta* Taylor
- 09/25 Elyse Burkett
- 09/27 Morgan Baker
- 09/27 Ethan Jahr
- 09/28 Donna* Rook
- 09/29 Chet VanDenBerg
- 09/30 Ann Hague



- 09/01 Nichole & Rick Dunkerly
- 09/03 Linda & Scott Walker
- 09/08 Wendy Mickle & Joe
Thorstenson
- 09/11 Nancy & Rick Boven
- 09/13 Nanna & Per Hagard
- 09/14 Holly & Will Plankenhorn
- 09/19 Jacob & Johnell Cuddeback
Weintraub
- 09/19 Clyde & Jane Maylath
- 09/21 Clint & Elizabeth Baney
- 09/22 John & Billiann Bonter
- 09/30 Gordon & Judy Vliek

The Paw Paw Community Chorus, sponsored by the Paw Paw high School Choirs, will begin rehearsals for its 12th annual Christmas concert. Rehearsals will be at 7 p.m. beginning Monday, September 12 at First Presbyterian Church in Paw Paw. New members will be accepted through Oct. 3. No audition is necessary. If you have any questions, please contact Karen Christensen at 269-539-4089, Gretchen Hudeck at 269-668-2059, or Theresa Vaughn at 269-668-4631.

Thought for the month

Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6-7

Thank you

To Johnell Cuddeback Weintraub, Freida Duringer, Mary Burkett and Sue Martin for folding newsletters last month and to Jim vanWestrienen for folding Sunday bulletins.



Tea and Style Show

Tuesday, Oct. 25
6:30

Tickets \$8.00

Sales open to the public this year so let your friends know. Reserve seating must be by an entire table.

Fashions this year are provided by Christopher Banks, Crossroads

Fellowship

Weekly Fellowship: Stick around and enjoy building relationships with each other after every service of worship. The food is always good as well. This a great time to grab a friend and spend some time in prayer.

Monthly Potlucks: The second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 in Fellowship Hall. Bring a dish to pass, table service and an appetite for fun.

September 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 12:00 Rotary Club	2	3
4 Communion 10:00 Service Fellowship	5 Labor Day Office Closed	6	7 12:00 Lunch With Friends	8 12:00 Rotary Club 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	9	10 3 p.m. Eggleston/Weaver Wedding
11 10:00 September 11th Ecumenical Commemoration at Amphitheater	12 7:00 Bible Study	13 10:00 Sharenet	14 12:00 Lunch With Friends 6:30 Potluck	15 12:00 Rotary Club 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	16	17 Fall Kickoff Retreat at Van Buren Youth Camp
18 11:00 Service Fall Kickoff Retreat at Van Buren Youth Camp	19 7:00 Bible Study	20 6:00 Commissions 7:30 Joint Worship 8:00 Session/ Deacons Mtgs.	21 12:00 Lunch With Friends	22 12:00 Rotary Club 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	23	24 8:00 Men's Breakfast
25 8:15 Worship 9:45 Adult Sunday School 10:00 children's Sunday School 11:00 Worship Fellowship	26 7:00 Bible Study	27 10:00 Sharenet 6:30 Jail Dinner	28 9:30 PW Bible Study 10:30 PW Meeting 12:00 Lunch With Friends	29 12:00 Rotary Club 7:00 Choir Rehearsal	30	

Special Community Service

Commemorating September 11

Our ecumenical community will meet for service at the Amphitheater on Sunday, Sept. 11 at 10:00.

Bring a camp chair.

Also, our church is to supply cookies for the event so please bring your baked goods to the church on Friday by 1:00.

First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw Fall Kickoff Retreat

When: Saturday, September 17th and Sunday, September 18th Registration begins on Sat. at 10:00 am

Where: Van Buren Youth Camp

Why: Kickoff of the 2011-12 Church School Year, fellowship and fun!

Who: Family and friends of First Presbyterian Church of Paw Paw

Saturday activities begin at 11:00am. *Please bring your own picnic lunch for your family on Saturday.*

Available activities include crafts, hiking, games, meditation, group dynamics course and Vespers (led by Tom). Dinner will be served at 5:30.

Sunday: Continental breakfast with Sunday School at 9:30 for all ages. Worship service will begin at 11:00 am at the lodge. Potluck to follow.

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September Sermon Schedule

September 4 – 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time - Communion

Scripture Reading: Psalm 149, Matthew 18:15-20, Romans 13:8-14

Sermon Title: “Wearing an Armor of Light”

Synopsis: What are some ways that we protect ourselves from the trappings of the world? How can we best support one another as we seek to follow the ways of Jesus? How open are we to accountability as a community? How do we put on the armor of light?

September 11 – 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Community Wide Worship Service – Remembering the 10th anniversary of 9/11.

September 18 – 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time - We worship at Van Buren Youth Camp.

Scripture Reading: Psalm 111, Proverbs 2:1-11, 2:20-3:2, Matthew 7:24-29

Sermon Title: “Wisdom for Life”

Synopsis: For you, what is wisdom? Do you seek wisdom for your life or do you simply live moment by moment, day by day? If you were going to look for wisdom to live by where would you look? What if we consider these questions not only for ourselves, but also for the church? As we live together as a family of faith where does our wisdom come from?

September 25 – 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Scripture Reading: Matthew 7:24-27, Revelation 1:4-8, Colossians 1:9-20, Matthew 4:12-5:3

Sermon Title: “Kingdom Living”

Synopsis: “The Kingdom of God has come near.” Do you think about living in the Kingdom of God? What does that mean? What does that mean for our daily life, and for our life together as a community? Paul tells us that we have been claimed by God for Kingdom Living, but do we live that out?

Mission Commission News:

Community Garden

The harvest time is upon us and we need hands in the community garden. The weeds are plentiful but so is the crop. Stop by the garden any time and pick what you can use or pick and take your produce to the community food pantry on Drew Street.

Second Saturday for Service

Second Saturday for service will return in October. Join us at the church on Saturday morning the 8th of

October at 9:00 AM for a time of mission work and fellowship. We have activities planned for the Wings of God house and the Decatur Homeless Shelter as well as food ministry. If you have additional ideas or are in need of this type of help yourself share your opportunities with Tom Shoemaker, Jake Pursley or Deb Abbott.

Be good stewards of the gifts we have been given!

Your friendly Mission Commission reminds you to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Our recycle containers are clearly labeled and easily found in our kitchen area of fellowship hall.

Mobile Health Fair

Our church hosted the Synod of the Covenant’s Mobile Health Fair this summer. Nearly 300 youth and adults from area migrant communities were screened for health related issues and provided free health kits. Our church is the only one in our Presbytery to host a health fair. Thanks to Dave and Jan Wilder for again hosting the health fair team. The mission commission would like to build a reserve of funds for the purchase of additional health kits that could be prepared here on site. If you are interested in contributing to this our would like more information contact Tom Shoemaker.

2 cents a meal

Since changing to the plates of joy way of giving our monthly contributions to the 2¢ a meal program have dwindled. The buckets are in the back of the sanctuary every third Sunday and in need of filling. All the money taken in goes to our local food pantry. Please remind yourself to contribute even though we no longer pass the buckets.

The deadline for the October newsletter is Thursday, September 22. Please be sure to turn in any news to the church office in a timely manner.