

Pastor: Clara D. Thompson

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## **MAY 2009**

### **PASTOR'S MESSAGE**

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“What happens next?” is probably the most frequently asked question since I announced a month ago my retirement at the end of June. It’s a great question, and I’ll do my best to answer it. First of all, please be assured that the John Knox Presbytery, through its Committee on Ministry, will guide you each step of the way as you prepare to say “Goodbye” to me and “Welcome!” to a new pastor. Ken Meunier, Interim Associate Executive Presbyter, has already met with our Session, and a representative from the Committee on Ministry will soon be appointed to guide and assist FPC-Oregon as you prepare to welcome new pastoral leadership and as you continue to grow and thrive in service to Christ. Our denomination has a well thought out process for obtaining new pastoral leadership, and with your prayerful patience a wonderful new pastor will be yours!

Some have asked, “Clara, can you worship at the Oregon Church, and can you return for weddings, baptisms, or funerals?” The answer is that, ethically, I cannot. The new pastor needs to be given the privilege of being your pastor – completely – without my interfering in any way whatsoever. If I were to return for any pastoral services, that could undermine the bonds that you and a new pastor should be trying to form together. Please understand that this is not because I no longer care about you, but because I care about you so much that I want you to build a loving and lasting relationship with your new pastor, just as you have with me. The greatest honor you can give to me is that you prepare yourselves to welcome a new pastor with as much care, love, and faith as you have welcomed me and my ministry for the past 30 years.

“What are you and Paul going to do in retirement?” Honestly, we’re not completely sure about that one, except that we plan on going to our favorite spot up north in early July, working on a few construction projects there that are long overdue, and having time to figure out “what’s next” for us. We look forward to more time together, and with our children and grandchildren (not to worry – we’ve already told them that we are *not* moving in with them), and we plan on keeping ourselves open to the possibilities that will come both personally and professionally. Our most important task for this summer will be to help our son John prepare for a wonderful first year of college.

Thank you for all of your wonderful questions! Please don’t hesitate to ask me what’s on your mind, and I’ll do my best to answer.

God’s blessings,

Clara D. Thompson  
Pastor

## **MAY IS VOLUNTEER MONTH**

Everyone is encouraged to bring their calendars to church with them during the month of May. Posted on the bulletin board outside the secretary's office are schedules for Ushers, Coffee Fellowship Hosts/Hostesses, Childcare Providers, Communion Stewards, and Summer Liturgists.

Impressed with the youth who serve as Liturgists during the school year? During May and June YOU (children through adults!) can have the opportunity to help lead in worship. Friendly and helpful training will be provided!

This is YOUR chance to sign up for the jobs YOU would like to do most, on the dates that are most convenient for you. Brief job descriptions are given by the calendars. We are especially encouraging children to sign up to be Ushers ... what a wonderful way to help in worship! You are encouraged to sign-up as an individual or as a family...just sign-up! *Thank you!*

## **CAR WASH on MAY 16!**

Just how dirty is your car??

If your car needs washing you are in luck! The Montreat youth will be holding a car wash on Saturday, May 16 next to Oregon Floral from 1:00 – 4:00 PM. All donations will be used for the trip to the Montreat Youth Conference this summer. Mark your calendars!

## **SUMMER WORSHIP HOURS**

Beginning on Sunday, May 17 worship will be at 9:30 AM. We will gather for worship each Sunday morning at 9:30 until early September. Please be sure to mark your calendars!

## **OUTDOOR WORSHIP – May 31<sup>st</sup>**

Mark your calendar for Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>! The Worship Committee is planning for an outdoor service at our new property ... 5271 W. Netherwood Road. Worship will begin at 9:30, and then we'll move right on into our All Church Picnic. This will be a very fun day for our church family, so come and celebrate what God is doing in our midst!

## **ALL CHURCH PICNIC – May 31<sup>st</sup>**

This year's All Church Picnic will be held out *on our new property* (5271 W. Netherwood Road) on Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, immediately following 9:30 AM worship. Yes, that means that we'll be worshipping out at the new site as well! Beef barbeque, chicken salad, beverages, and tableware will be provided. Please bring a side dish to accompany the meal.

*Everyone* is invited! Come and see the new land, play games in the yard, and catch the vision of where our new facility will one day be!

## **CHURCH OFFICER RETREAT**

Wednesday, May 20

6:00 – 9:00 PM

Dinner will be served

Session and Deacons

At Jo Gregory's home

*and*

Thursday, May 21

7:00 – 9:30 PM

Session only

At church

## **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

If you have not yet enrolled your child(ren) in this year's Vacation Bible School, it's not too late! The date for our VBS is Wednesday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. The time is 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM. The location is our new property at 5271 W. Netherwood Road. A very fun (and educational!) day is being planned around the theme "God's Backyard and Bugs."

Feel free to invite a neighbor or friend, cousins, grandchildren ... anyone who has turned 3 (and is out of diapers) by June 1<sup>st</sup> through this year's 5<sup>th</sup> graders. You may register by calling the church office at 835-3082. The cost is \$8 per child, with a maximum of \$20 per family. All are welcome, and scholarships are readily available.

## **NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED**

The congregation is pleased to welcome a delightful class of New Members this spring! Harry and Joy Bernholdt come to us by Letters of Transfer from People's United Methodist Church in Oregon. Lane and Wendy Dohl become members of our congregation by Letters of Transfer from the First Presbyterian Church of Waunakee, WI. Gary and Nancy Holloway and John and Tana Palmer join us by Letters of Transfer from Covenant Lutheran Church in Stoughton. Kristen Nelson unites with our membership by Re-affirmation of Faith. Our heartiest welcome to these new members as we look forward to growing in faith ... together!

## **ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS**

The Adult Class has just a couple of more weeks before we go on summer vacation. On May 3 Pastor Clara Thompson will conclude a two week course on "Why Go to Church?" and on May 10 Steve Johnson will lead the class on "The Travels of Paul." All adults are welcome! We meet in the lounge, adjacent to the sanctuary, from 9:15 – 10:00 AM.

## **YOUTH GROUP GATHERINGS**

Hello again from the youth group informational writing committee. The last youth group meeting got everyone ready for spring with a fun planting session. We tried to move up God's timing for Spring by planting a bunch of sun loving Dafodills. Everyone got dirty and had a great time. We plan on donating the daffodils when they get a little more height. The plants are all looking quite stalwart, except the 1 that the dog ate. Calvin used the same excuse in kindergarten – I wonder where he got that from...

To wrap up April, we plan on doing a version of "Fear Factor" on April, 29th at 6:30 PM. Who knows what will happen then. Food, good company, a bucket of worms... Best Wishes!  
Jen and Scot

## **SUMMER COFFEE BAR FELLOWSHIP**

The Sunday Morning Coffee Bar will continue throughout the summer. Come early on Sunday mornings for a time of fellowship and coffee and/or juice, or stay after worship for awhile to catch up with each other's lives. This has become a wonderful opportunity for fellowship for our church family, and many thanks for those who have volunteered to provide the coffee and treats! Your generous contributions will help our high school youth and chaperones go to the Presbyterian Youth Conference at Montreat, NC in August.

## **WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR NEWSLETTER ON E-MAIL?**

If you would prefer to receive your Church Newsletter via e-mail, the church office would be glad to provide you with that service! E-mail Karen Detra (Office Manager) at [karenfpc@verizon.net](mailto:karenfpc@verizon.net) and let her know.

## **HOSPITALIZED**

Jack Davis has been in the hospital recently. The church family is asked to keep him in its prayers.

## **SYMPATHY**

The prayers and sympathy of the congregation are offered to those who have suffered loss in recent weeks:

Marge Beers and her family, on the death of her brother-in-law Dennis

Edith Wilimovsky, on the death of her sister-in-law

## **FINANCIAL UPDATE – March 31, 2009**

### **GENERAL FUND**

Amount pledged year to date:	\$33,590.25
Pledges received year to date:	\$20,561.00
Per Capita bill:	\$6,215.75
Received to date:	\$2,507.50

### **BUILDING APPEAL**

Amount committed:	\$809,252.00
Pledges received to date:	\$593,725.15

*Thank you for your financial gifts to the First Presbyterian Church!*

## **NEW MISSION PROJECTS IN COSTA RICA AND GUATEMALA A HUGE SUCCESS**

A total of \$624 was made available for each of our Mission Projects in Costa Rica and Guatemala through contributions to the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, the February Coffee Bar and from the Mission Committee budget. The money will be used to purchase books for an orphanage library in Guatemala and to purchase science and environmental education supplies in Costa Rica. Phillip Hanson and Dolly Ledin are our "on-site" coordinators. THANKS to all who contributed and helped make these projects a success.

In addition to the above, the regular One Great Hour of Sharing received was \$711.00. Thank you for your generosity!

## **EASTER BREAKFAST A "HOPPING" SUCCESS**

The scrumptious breakfast prepared by the men of the church, enthusiastically served by the youth going to Montreat this summer and graciously consumed by many members and friends raised approximately \$675 for this year's Montreat youth trip. THANKS to all who contributed and joined us on Easter morning. A special thanks to Preston Baker who guided the party on Sunday morning and to everyone who helped make this a success. The "men's Easter breakfast" began over 50 years ago when John Black organized the party simply as a way for the men to say thanks to all the Church Basement Ladies. The last 10 years or so, any profit has gone to various youth group activities, with an emphasis on Montreat.

## **DIRECTORY ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

Lane and Wendy Dohl  
811 Bass Lake Road  
Stoughton, WI 53589  
608.843.8505 Lane's cell  
608.220.7645 Wendy's cell

## **DOWN ON THE FARM**

Tables overflowing with bowls of steaming vegetables and platters piled high with tender roasts of beef and pork. Luscious pies filled with apple or blueberry or cherry or strawberry. Remembrances with old friends and lively conversations with new ones. Stories shared of days gone by.

This was the scene at the annual Spring Recognition Dinner on Friday, March 27. The dining hall of First Presbyterian Church was transformed into a rural Wisconsin farm, complete with an old milk can, miniature hay bales, canning jars filled with fresh flowers, and wooden barnyard animals. An antique plow, horse collar, a collection of miniature vehicles added to the charm of yesteryear.

Forty-six guests enjoyed a meal prepared by Head Chef Norm Walmer and his kitchen crew. The wait staff, adorned with festive red bandanas, kept the food dishes filled and coffee cups warmed.

Richard L. Cates Jr. was our guest speaker. From 2001 to 2006, Dr. Cates interviewed senior members of more than 30 families living in and around Arena township, a small community in southern Wisconsin. He asked them about growing up in rural America and their connection to a way of life that is vanishing in the twenty-first century. The result, Voices from the Heart of the Land, is a collection of reminiscences, observations, and opinions celebrating the stewardship of the land and the values of the stewards. Dr. Cates shared several humorous, touching and familiar stories that resonated with the audience, evidenced by many smiles and nods.

The guests departed with full tummies, happy faces and warm memories.  
The Fellowship Committee

## **BUILDING COMMITTEE UPDATE**

*The following update was given by Steve Jenson during worship on April 19, 2009.*

Good morning. As you know, our church owns property on the west side of Oregon, property on which we hope someday soon to be able to begin building a new church. Your Building Committee continues to be very active. In our ongoing effort to have the property annexed into the Village of Oregon so that we can receive Village services, we have had two joint meetings with the Village Planning Staff & Capital Area Regional Planning Commission Staff. These meetings have effectively laid out the path we need to take in order to obtain both Village & County approvals for the annexation.

At this time the Village of Oregon cannot annex additional property into the Village unless the County first approves their request for extension of their existing Urban Service Area. The Oregon Planning Commission has reviewed the initial plans for our project & has no objection; in fact, they are very supportive. We hope to have the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission review our formal proposal in June or July. The DNR will then get a shot at it after which it's back to the Village Board for final approval.

In conjunction with these activities, members of the Building Committee have also been looking at the various projected costs of the project in order to determine how much building we can afford to build in the first phase. We want to build as much as we can without putting the church in a difficult financial position.

Your Building Committee continues to thank you for your patience, your prayers, and your support.

## **MAY 15 IS THE DEADLINE FOR THE SUMMER 2009 NEWSLETTER**

## **ESPN**

### **(Extra Special Preschool/Kindergarten News)**

We had plenty of fun learning about Noah. One Sunday we made boats and floated them in water adding animal crackers until they sank. Then we ate animal crackers – fresh ones not the soggy ones!! We decided Noah was pretty smart to build such a big boat and he had plenty of faith in God.

On Palm Sunday all the Sunday School kids went on a special journey. We visited different stations that taught us about the last week of Jesus' life. Some parts were very sad, but we celebrated the good news that Jesus was alive again!!!

Our teacher is so proud of how kind we are to each other. We are also doing an awesome job of making all the letters in our names. And in case you are wondering – Goldfish and Teddy Grahams are our favorite snacks! Until next time...

## **DOES YOUR WILL INCLUDE THE CHURCH?**

Each of us is privileged to be able to give to the church on a weekly, monthly, or annual basis. We do so because of our understanding that all that we have is a gift from God. Our tithes and offerings are one way in which we give thanks to God for the abundant blessings we have received.

One of the ways we can continue to witness to our faith in Jesus Christ is to include the church in our Last Will and Testament. Ideally, our wills say what we believe ... about family, faith, and commitment. Your inclusion of the church in your will reminds your family of your priorities, and is an opportunity to demonstrate those priorities by a very effective and powerful action.

Our church established an Endowment Fund in September of 2002. All gifts to the Endowment Fund, from estates or living donors, will be kept in perpetuity, enabling the Session to make disbursements from the income, but not the principle, as it deems appropriate in support of projects that reflect the mission of our church. In addition to this general Endowment Fund,

our church also has the College Scholarship Endowment Fund which was established in 1993 to help our confirmed youth with their first year college expenses. Or, you may wish to consider a gift to the Church Building Fund in your estate planning.

If you have already included the church in your will, *thank you!* If you haven't, would you consider it?

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRADUATES!**

*Neil Belanus* will graduate from Oregon High School in June and is looking forward to being a "Pioneer" at UW Platteville where he plans to study engineering. In high school, Neil is a member of National Honor Society, has participated in Mock Trial, orchestra, cross country and track. He is also very proud to be the drummer for the rock band, *Green County Border Patrol*.

Neil would like to thank his church family for their support and for always accepting his antics with smiles and kind words. He is also very appreciative of the many opportunities FPC has offered him to participate in worship, the great youth events, mission trips, and memorable Montreat adventures.

After four years of study, *Kaitlyn Hanson* will be receiving her Bachelors Degree in Nursing from Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. She has enjoyed her college experience and liberal arts education. She has especially benefited from two semesters at Mayo Hospitals and Clinics in Rochester, Minnesota and two January terms abroad in New Zealand 2008 and France & Italy in 2009. College soccer has been her team sport and given her hours of physical exercise as well as many wonderful friends. She is planning on taking the summer off to study for her Nursing Board Exam and then looking for employment in the Fall.

*RJ Mastny* is graduating this June from Stoughton High School. Over his high school years he has attended Badger Boy State, participated in Student Council for 4 years, holding the office of Treasurer one year, German club, attended Trees for

Tomorrow for 2 years, attended Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship Program for Pharmacy Tech Certification, participated in an Independent Study in Germany, KEY club, FBLA for 4 years (Future Business Leaders of America), EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association), works at WSTO and has participated in BMW teen defensive driving school. His future plans are to attend University of Rhode Island where he has been accepted into the doctorate program for Pharmacy. It will be a six year degree. Over the summer he would like to do some traveling and spend some time with his friends. RJ is an independent, motivated, intelligent, caring person who will do well in whatever endeavor he chooses to do. We wish him God's speed and he will really be missed around the home front.

*Kate Mielke* will graduate from Bowling Green State University in Ohio this May with a Bachelor's degree in Music Education-Violin. Before student teaching this semester in kindergarten and 5<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, she gained experience through a program teaching private lessons to inner city Toledo string students who would, otherwise, not be able to benefit from private study. In her spare time, Kate plays in a Blue Grass group, The United Grass Farmers. She plans to further her education in the fall, working toward her post-bachelor certificate in Music Therapy from Baldwin Wallace College in Berea, OH.

*Patrick Mielke* will be graduating from Oregon High School this June. During his high school years, Patrick participated in a variety of activities. He presently plays cello in the high school orchestra as well as Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra. Patrick participated all four years in the school musical, three years in the pit orchestra and this past fall was honored to portray Danny Zuko on stage in the musical Grease. He has been an actor in a long list of musicals with Oregon Straw Hat Players from Brigadoon as a five year old to Finian's Rainbow as a young adult. Patrick was a member of the tennis team for three years and joined the swim team this year as a senior. He also works as a lifeguard at the Oregon Pool and

hopes to continue life guarding while at college. Next fall, Patrick plans to attend UW-Milwaukee majoring in pre-medicine and hopes to one day become a Physician's Assistant.

### **COSTA RICA MISSION PROJECT REPORT FROM DOLLY LEDIN.**

*Here is an update on our activities using the equipment we purchased with the donation from FPC:*

The donation from FPC for weather, soil and forest monitoring equipment is enabling us to initiate long term ecological research on our campus. Our campus is set on 106 acres, once the site of a dairy farm. There are areas of primary forest, secondary forest and pasture. For the past 8 years, our students have planted thousands of trees in the pasture areas to help reestablish the forest ecosystem. This is important for many reasons including establishment of a biological corridor necessary to provide habitat for endangered species such as the quetzal. It is also important for erosion prevention and maintenance of water quality. Up until now, there has been no research on the survival of these trees, the conditions that favor survival or the recovery of other elements of the forest ecosystem, such as soil and ground layer plants.

We are setting up weather stations at 4 sites on our campus at different elevations. We are monitoring minimum and maximum temperature, rainfall, wind speed and humidity. This will be the start of long term climate research on our campus. We can compare the data we collect with past data from other sites in Monteverde, going back to the 1970's. We will keep all our data on a computer data base and ensure that this research continues as a class project each year. Students have been working with Patricia Townsend, a researcher from the University of Washington and her graduate assistant, Michael Perkins to monitor the growth of trees we have planted in our reforestation areas. Students also assess natural regeneration (seedlings) and growth of ground layer plants (exotic invasive vs.

native species). This research is helping us to determine the survival rate of trees, natural regeneration through seed dispersal and the recovery of other important ground layer plants. We can use the weather data (above) to assess differences in reforestation success in different weather conditions. Michael Perkins, a soils specialist, is teaching students how to assess and monitor soils. This will enable us to monitor differences in soils in primary forest, secondary forest, new reforestation areas and pasture, another important element of our study of reforestation. We will learn how the soil has been impacted by past use of the land for cattle grazing and determine to what extent the soil will recover with reforestation. At this point, most of this data will provide a baseline to compare growth and change in future years. This work is an extremely valuable educational experience for our students. They will not learn science as a static body of knowledge to be memorized, but as an active process with more questions than answers. They will be involved in formulating research questions and collecting real data that they can use in making land management decisions. Many of our students have a tremendous amount of knowledge about the plants and animals here in Monteverde. These activities will provide them with a framework for studying their diverse "backyard" and learning how to help preserve it.

Thank you so much for your donation! Dolly