

The Amen Almanac

First Presbyterian Church, 721 Church St., Jefferson City, TN 37760

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Rev. Andrew C. Whaley, Pastor

From the Pastor's Desk...

In her book *Spiritual Leadership for Church Officers*, the Rev. Joan Gray describes why people agree to serve on their church Session. She recounts a story from her own pastoral life:

The elders were trying hard to concentrate, although many were weary after a long work-day. The topic of the annual session retreat plans was next on the agenda. When I finished my report on retreat plans and asked for comments, John, the chairman of the building and grounds committee, said, "One of the reasons I became an elder was I thought it would bring me closer to God, but the opposite as happened." For a long moment no one moved or spoke. Then others began to share similar feelings and longings. That night I became aware that many elders are looking for something more than business as usual from their term of service. They are looking for a deepened relationship with God.

I believe Rev. Gray is absolutely correct, that people agree to serve in leadership roles in the church from a heartfelt desire to grow in their love of God and to help the church to love the world in Jesus' name more faithfully. Our session has taken steps toward trying to foster our life together as a body of discerners, who listen for God and respond in faith to God's call.

In January of this year, your session gathered for a morning work day. We opened with a time of worship, where we sang, read scripture, and prayed together. Then we discussed a TED talk and an article everyone had read on the lifecycle of churches. It was a time to listen for God's Spirit, to assess where we are as a church, and who God is calling us to be into the future.

After that work day, the session covenanted to read the book of Acts, one chapter each day, before our February meeting. At that meeting we discussed organizational and spiritual characteristics of the early church that might apply

to our own task of discerning God's future for First Presbyterian. Believe it or not, the "business" portion of the meeting took only fifteen minutes! We spent the other hour and fifteen minutes discussing scripture and reflecting on our life together.

From February into March your session reflected on what our unique identity is as a congregation in Jefferson County, and what values we want to guide our common life together. We looked at our mission statement and considered ways to define more clearly the mission of Jesus we strive to live out in our community. This was a time to think about who we have been that is of great value, and it was a time of aspirational hope, to consider how God is moving us along.

Part of that conversation has to do with our congregational staffing. In February I mentioned that we had received some "seed money" to incorporate an associate pastor into our life together, if the session felt that God was calling us into a form of ministry that could utilize the gifts of an additional ordained pastor. Does this fit with the vision God is revealing to us through our collective worship, reading of scripture, and analysis of our mission?

As part of that process, session wants your input too. The church is only faithful when we listen: to God, to scripture, and to one another. In this newsletter you will find information about opportunities to join in a "Congregational Listening Session." These groups are organized by demographics in the congregation and will deal with questions related to our identity and mission in the community as well as the ministry challenges and possibilities we face and how an associate pastor might help us reach beyond our current witness together. Two elders will conduct each of these sessions, and each group will be asked the exact same questions. The elders will compile minutes from those meetings and reflect on your comments as they have with scripture, their own readings, and their conversation with each other.

So join in! Find a way to share your heart with your session, and may we discern together where God is guiding us in these days ahead.

Gratefully,
Andrew

Announcements



Women's Bible Study

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

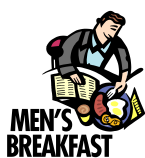
On Thursday, April 3rd, the Women's Bible Study group will meet at 6:30 p.m. at The Creek. If you have any questions, please see Rebecca Whaley.



GOING-ON GROUP

The Going-On Group will be going to Amis Mill Eatery in Rogersville on Thursday, April 10th.

They will be meeting at Fred's in Morristown at 10:45 a.m. See Debby Rinehart for questions.



MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

The Men's Prayer Breakfast will be on Saturday, April 12th, at 8:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

WOMEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

Women's Prayer Breakfast will be held on Saturday, April 12th at 9:00 a.m. We will meet at the home of Debby Rinehart (6980 Harmony Circle, Talbott).



SMOKY MOUNTAIN HIKING CLUB

The Smoky Mountain Hiking Club will meet on Saturday, April 19th, at 8:00 a.m. and hike to Porters Creek.

SIT 'N KNIT GROUP

On Friday, April 25th at 7:00 p.m. we will be having the Sit 'n Knit gathering at Libby Moser's house (217 Fieldcrest Dr.).



CARD-MAKING CLASS



Martha Sanders will be having a Card Making Class at her home (1132 Arthur Rd., Jefferson City) on Friday, April 25th, from 6:00-9:00 p.m. and Sunday, April 27th, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. If you have any questions, please contact Martha at 210-834-1323.

PRAYER CONCERNS

SPECIAL CONCERNS:

Hunter Dillman & family, friend of Allison LeClercq, whose mother died from surgery complications

Rylee Gentry, newborn daughter of David & Stacy Gentry, who was born with multiple heart defects

All members of the military and their families, especially those stationed overseas

The unemployed

ILL AND RECOVERING:

Randy Gross, Angela Minnick's father, undergoing third round of chemo at Duke on April 1st

Jim Collins, Joc Collins' father, who has recurring skin cancer

Adam Smith, friend of Phil Williams, who has been diagnosed with terminal colon cancer

Evan Burchell, son of Dianne Reagan's & Martha Sanders' friend, who is travelling to New York for testing

Margie Hensley, Kay Rutherford-Williams' sister, who will be underwent back surgery on March 21

Ralph, Anne Smith's stepfather, as he deals with end of life concerns and has pneumonia

Don Watkins, friend of John Zirkle, who had surgery for a malignant brain tumor

Alyssa Mirrada, niece of Gary Bates, who was in a car accident on Christmas Day and is in recovery

Rhonda McClanahan, Donna Jenkins' daughter, who is undergoing chemotherapy

THOSE UNABLE TO BE WITH US: Lucille Tinsley

IN RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES:

JEFF. COUNTY NURSING HOME: Elizabeth Felknor

DARBY HOUSE: Betty Wolfe CHANDLER HOUSE: Argie Saylor

THE HERITAGE CENTER (Morristown): Bonnie Young

YOUTH GROUP

On Sunday, April 13th the Youth will be meeting at begin Youth Sunday Planning. Dinner will be provided. Youth Sunday planning.



On Sunday, April 27th, an afternoon activity will be planned, please watch your bulletins as the date gets closer for more details. If you have any questions, please contact Andrew.

the home of Andrew and Rebecca Whaley (828 Rebecca Lane) to Additionally, during Sunday School on April 20th and 27th there will be

be planned, please watch your bulletins as the date gets closer for

CONGREGATIONAL LISTENING SESSIONS

On Sunday, April 6th from 9:45 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

- Middle and High School youth - large youth classroom
 - Parents of Preschoolers - upstairs orange Sunday school room
 - Parents of K-5th grade children - Church Library
 - Parents of 6th to 12th grade children- Pastor's Office
- A lunch date to be set by the elders when those under 40 years-old, who are not parents, are able to meet.

On Thursday, April 10th

- Going-On Group - over lunch at Amis Mill

On Saturday, April 12th

- Men's Prayer Breakfast-9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall
- Women's Prayer Breakfast - 9:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. at the home of Debby Rinehart

Sunday, April 13th from 9:45 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

- Other adults and those unable to make the other sessions - Church Library & Pastor's Study

Please make an effort to join these conversations, as the elders value your input in this time of prayer and discernment.

ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT & LUNCH

On Sunday, April 13th we will have our Annual Easter Egg Hunt and lunch. Following worship, everyone is invited downstairs to the Fellowship Hall for a special hot dog lunch with the kids, followed by the egg hunt. All the children (5th grade and un-



MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE/FAMILY NIGHT SUPPER



Our April Family Night Supper will be on Thursday, April 17th at 6:30 p.m. We will follow dinner with our **Maundy Thursday Service at 7:30 p.m.** The Maundy Thursday service is one of meditation & partaking of the Lord's Supper. It is a time to remember Jesus as he humbly washed the

GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

Please join us for our Good Friday service on Friday, April 18th at 7:00 p.m. The Tenebrae Service is presented by our choir and features a series of Scripture readings, narrations, and music which focus on the final hours of Jesus' life. The service ends in darkness and silence, symbolizing the death of Jesus as well as the hopelessness of the world without God.



ATTENTION COLLEGE STUDENTS!

The Christian Education (CE) committee would like to invite all college students in our congregation to consider applying for the Judy Sites Memorial Education Scholarship. Judy Sites was an educator in the Jefferson County School system and believed strongly in the value of education to shape and change young lives. Following her untimely death, Tom Sites established this scholarship fund to seek to reward applicants that are of good character, perform well academically and are active in the community. Given the area of career specialization of Mrs. Sites, special consideration will be given to those with special needs, or those who are planning a course of study pertaining to the provision of education or other services to those with special needs. If you are interested in applying for this scholarship, simply write a letter to the CE committee expressing how you meet the criteria for the Judy Sites Memorial Education Scholarship summarized above. The committee will notify you of the award and set up a date this summer to present the scholarship to you in worship.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
			Stewardship & Finance 6:30 p.m.  Nancy Romine	Women's Bible Study 7:00 p.m.  Nancy Romine		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Sunday School 9:30-10:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:45-11:45 a.m.  Kathy Juroff		 Stacy Kirkpatrick	Fellowship & Evangelism 5:30 p.m. Session 6:30 p.m.	Going-On Group 10:45 a.m.		Men's Breakfast 8:00 a.m. Women's Breakfast 9:00 a.m.  Robert Gowan John Neal Scarlett
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Sunday School 9:30-10:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:45-11:45 a.m. PALM SUNDAY EASTER EGG HUNT/ LUNCH Youth Group 5:00 p.m.			 Mary Winslow	Family Night Supper 6:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service 7:30 p.m.	Good Friday Service 7:00 p.m.	Hiking Club 8:00 a.m.
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Sunday School 9:30-10:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:45-11:45 a.m. EASTER JV Cline	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE		Christian & Education 6:30 p.m.		Sit 'n Knit Group 7:00 p.m. Card Making 6:00-9:00 p.m.	
27	28	29	30			
Sunday School 9:30-10:30 a.m. Worship Service 10:45-11:45 a.m. Youth Group Event Card Making 2:00-5:00 p.m.		 Pat Patton	 Dallas McCash			