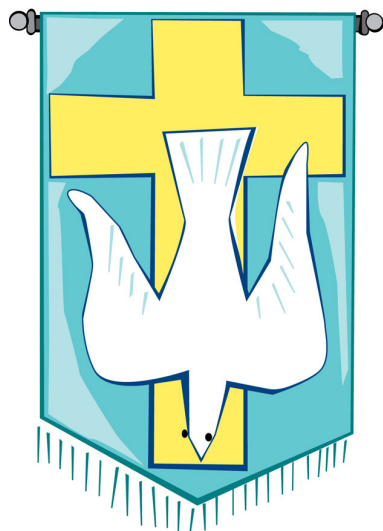


Tower Views

Volume 23, Issue 5

May 1-31, 2011

Confirmation Sunday May 15, 2011



Please join us at the
10:00 a.m.
worship service as the
Confirmation
Class of 2011
confirms their faith and
leads us in worship.

We strive to be a vibrant Christian community that is loving, nurturing, open, sustainable and renewing, and one that inspires people of all ages to live in the Christian faith and serve the world.

Emily Bourgoin
son of Patty &
Randy Bourgoin

Ryan Erhart
son of Yvonne &
Rich Erhart

Jacob Kaisler
son of Sheri &
Tom Kaisler

August Lee
daughter of Syd & Bill
Lee

Lee Nelson III
son of Rachael &
Lee Nelson, Jr.

Noah Ross
son of Melissa Gooder
& Devon Ross

Christine Rud
daughter of Jennifer &
David Rud

For Your Information

First Presbyterian Church

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www.fpcssp.org

"All Are Welcome Here"

Office Hours:

Monday through Friday
8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Pastor Katie off on Monday;
Pastor Tom off on Friday

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Pastor Tom Watson

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Mary Love

Administrative Assistant
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Linda Kachelmeier

Director of Music
lindakachelmeier@yahoo.com

Kendra Brodin

Organist and Director of Bells
kendrabrodin@yahoo.com



In a pastoral emergency
outside of office hours:

Pastor Katie

651/457-1080 (home)
651/442-2126 (cell)

Pastor Tom

651/487-7760 (home)
612/718-1785 (cell)

Staff Notes

A little over thirty years ago, John Lennon and Yoko Ono made their final album together. Three weeks after its release, John was shot four times in the back by Mark David Chapman at the entrance to his apartment building, The Dakota, in New York City. He was pronounced dead less than 30 minutes later in the emergency room at Roosevelt Hospital. One of the songs written by John on that final album is "Beautiful Boy (Darling Boy)." It begins with him comforting his young son, Sean, from what is presumably a nightmare and develops into John passionately describing the love he has for his son and the joy Sean gave him. It also includes the now famous lyric that "Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans."

We all carry in our minds some sort of vision or picture of how our lives are supposed to unfold or at the very least how we hope they will unfold. We make plans and lists and lists of all our plans to help remind us of our dreams and goals and keep us motivated toward realizing them. We talk about creating a life or building a life together, but what if life is what happens to you while you're busy making all those other plans? What if the life you are supposed to have, the life you deserve, the life you planned for, the life you envisioned unfolds in some other way, some other direction? How well do we embrace the changes that reveal the arrogance of our need to be in control?

I may not be an expert on change, expected or unexpected, but I can certainly speak from my own experiences of life, of God disobediently ignoring my plans, my visions of my future. Change happens. The difficulty occurs not

necessarily from the change itself, but in how we relate to it. Do we resist it? Deny it? Resent and complain about it? Or do we embrace it? How we relate to change says quite a bit about our faith in the goodness of God's providence and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Do we truly believe that God is with us providing for all of our needs and desiring peace and wholeness for us? Or do we believe that we can do it better ourselves and that God is messing everything up?

With change also comes the need to grieve the loss of our hopes and our planned future, and grieving is almost always painful and messy. As God's Spirit moves among us, molding and remolding us, we need to be sensitive to the hurting of others and reach out with compassion and kindness. As Flannery O'Connor wrote: "All human nature vigorously resists grace because grace changes us and change is painful."

In the 100+ years of our congregation, change has occurred and more than once. Pastors and parishioners have come and gone. Locations have moved and additions been built. Mission statements and congregational surveys have been produced and filed away. Times have changed. Priorities have changed. Expectations have changed. And continue to change. These changes are not our enemies and our denying and complaining about them only brings us down and tears us apart. It is not a case of we must change or die. We will change. It is inevitable. The question is will we work with it or against it? And our answer will tell us exactly what kind of God we believe in.

Worship Schedule

May 1, 2011
Communion / Baptism
 8:30 a.m. Education For All
 10:00 a.m. Worship Celebration
 11:00 a.m. Coffee and Fellowship
 11:00 a.m. Senior Brunch

May 8, 2011
 8:30 a.m. Education For All
 10:00 a.m. Worship Celebration
 11:00 a.m. Coffee and Fellowship

May 15, 2011
Confirmation Sunday
 8:30 a.m. Education For All
 10:00 a.m. Worship Celebration
 11:00 a.m. Coffee and Fellowship

May 22, 2011
 8:30 a.m. Education For All
 10:00 a.m. Worship Celebration
 11:00 a.m. Coffee and Fellowship
 11:30 a.m. New Member Class

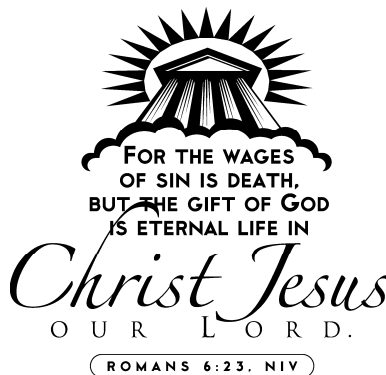
May 29, 2011
 10:00 a.m. Worship Celebration
 11:00 a.m. Coffee and Fellowship

New Bible Study—Romans

After taking a brief break in May, the Wednesday Bible Study will begin again the evening of June 1 at 7:00 p.m. We will be studying Paul's Letter to the Romans for 14 weeks which will take us exactly through the end of August. Called 'the most influential letter ever written', these words to the Church in ancient Rome echo still with energy and power. In this real letter to real people, we witness Paul wrestling dynamically with enduring issues: justification and grace, sin and salvation, a vision of unity and the faithfulness of God. Encounter theology in the making, to inspire our faithful living today.

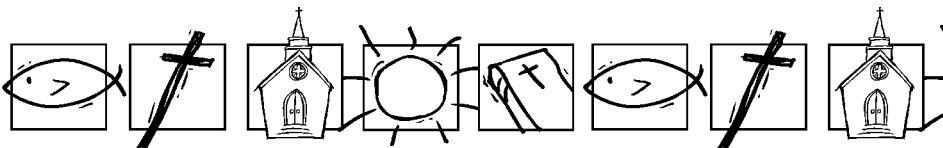
Do not feel that you need to be able to attend all 14 sessions (or even 13) to be a part of the group, it is

summer after all. Each participant will receive a resource book that they can follow along with if they have to be away and as with past courses we will ask for a free will offering to help cover costs. Please let Pastors Tom or Katie know if you are interested and they will make sure there is a book and a place for you.



Adult Education

Spring is a time of freshness, new beginnings and re-acquaintance with the world that we haven't seen over the long winter. We are looking for and building ways to heighten our enjoyment of the short summer. Some of us have been feeling vaguely dissatisfied with areas of our life and may not even realize that we are searching for practices to help us live in deeper relationship with God. Adult Education during May will explore different "tools for our tool kits" that will add mindfulness to our spirituality practices. Some use "sacred movement" such as labyrinth prayer, Christian Yoga and Qigong, a practice of simple movements, mental flow, breathing and meditation that will enhance ones spirituality, some use medical healing while helping us to live in deeper relationship with God. Included in the series will be contemplative prayer, Lectio Divina, labyrinth prayer, and Spring Forest Qigong, a practice of simple movements, mental flow, breathing and meditation.



Terrific Teachers and Super Students

They've practiced the stories and brought snacks, helped with glue and produced more than a few crafts, engaged

us in discussion and shared their own faith—we love our Sunday school teachers! And then there's the students: open, ready, full of song and prayer, encouraging their parents to get them here, eager to add their quarters to the offering, learning and growing and sharing in ministry—we also love our students!

A special End-of-Year Party is planned for Sunday, May 22 for students and teachers and families in our children's Sunday school



program. We'll begin at 8:30 a.m. with a spectacular breakfast of eggs, pastries, fruit and beverages. At 9:00 a.m. we'll enjoy a fun "movin' and groovin'" musical experience for all ages" by singer/guitarist Mary Hall. She brings us a Christ-centered message with plenty of audience participation and loads of laughter.

After her show, we'll present a gift to all of our dedicated teachers and celebrate another wonderful year of Sunday school. Don't miss it!



Confirmation / Session Brunch

While we will recognize and celebrate in worship our most recent group of confirmands on Sunday, May 15, they will officially become our newest members of the church on Saturday, May 7. On this day they and their families will meet with the elders for brunch at 9:30 a.m. in the North Commons. At this called meeting of the Session they will tell the elders some of the things they have learned over the past two years and read their Statements of Faith. The Session will then ask them the questions for membership and receive them. As you see on the cover, we have seven wonderful people who have made the decision to confirm their faith. Please

congratulate them when you see them because there are certainly less time-intensive ways to join the church than to spend one hour every Sunday for two years with Tom, Katie, Jan Mahoney and Pat Angell.



Confirmation Class Bonfire

The Confirmation class is invited out to the Rud home in Inver Grove Heights for a bonfire and other fun and delicious stuff on Friday, May 20 at 6:00 p.m. It is not mandatory



that you be there, but we will be showing everyone the secret Presbyterian handshake, so you decide. The good news is that

since you are now full members of the church you no longer have to wait on Pastor Tom, though it sure would be nice, Jacob.

Clearwater Camp Is Calling You ...

The campfires are blazing, trails are cleared and the canoes and kayaks are ready for us: it is almost time for summer camp at Presbyterian Clearwater Forest in Deerwood, Minnesota. Twenty-two children and youth are registered from our congregation so far, but there is room for more, so if you haven't sent in your forms yet, get them to the church office soon! Schedules and details about summer camp for children entering third through twelfth grade is available at www.clearwaterforest.org.

Two other opportunities are available to families at Clearwater — Family Camp weekend is June 17-19 and Grands Camp Weekends are set for June 22-25 and July 6-9. Both of these short camps are a great way to spend time with your family or grandparents! See the Clearwater website for more information or call the church office.

Cheese Curd Fundraiser

Attention all senior high youth! The weekend of May 20 -



22 is the annual cheese curd fundraiser at the The Church of The Epiphany in

Coon Rapids. Contact Libby Huettl to sign up for your shift. We need all of you to make this a success!!

Amendment 10-A

On Tuesday, May 10 the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area will meet at Peace Presbyterian Church in St. Louis Park where representative Presbyters will vote on proposed Book of Order Amendment 10-A which replaces G-6.0106b. If this Amendment passes, sexual orientation will no longer be a litmus test prohibiting ordination of Elders and Ministers in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

As part of our becoming a More Light Presbyterian congregation we adopted a Statement of Inclusiveness that among other things states: "We are aware that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) excludes openly gay and lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people from positions of ordained leadership. Refusing to condone this discrimination, and working toward changing this policy, we join with other churches to be a More Light Presbyterian Church." For this reason, we share the consensus opinion of the PC(USA) General Assembly Church Orders and Ministry Committee on this question that the current language of G-6.0106b elevates the Book of

Confessions over the authority of Scripture and note that Jesus said nothing on the issue of homosexuality specifically. We find, with the Committee, that the New Testament is quite ambiguous on the issue, offering a wide range of interpretations. Thus, we believe this issue is best left to God, and that the present text of G-6.0106b mars the otherwise Christ-inspired and intentional inclusiveness of our Polity.

Below is a copy of the Book of Order text that will be stricken and its italicized replacement if Amendment 10-A should pass nationally.

Current G-6.0106b

Those who are called to office in the church are to lead a life in obedience to Scripture and in conformity to the historic confessional standards of the church.

Among these standards is the requirement to live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman (W-4.9001), or chastity in singleness.

Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which the confessions call sin shall not be ordained and/or installed as deacons, elders, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

Amendment 10-A

Standards for ordained service reflect the church's desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (G-1.0000).

The governing body responsible for ordination and/or installation (G-14.0240; G-14.0450) shall examine each candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of office.

The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.4003).

Governing bodies shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.

Book Club Selection for May

The Book Club will meet on Saturday, May 14 at 8:30 a.m. in the Library to discuss *A Million Little Pieces* by James Frey. Books are available to check out in the church office. For questions, please contact Julie Vigness-Pint.

For as long as he can remember, Frey has had within him something that he calls "the Fury," a bottomless source of anger and rage that he has kept at bay since he was ten by obliterating his consciousness with alcohol and drugs. When this memoir begins, the author is 23 and is wanted in three states. He has a

raw hole in his cheek big enough to stick a finger through, he's missing four teeth, he's covered with spit, blood, and vomit, and without ID or any idea where the airplane he finds himself on is heading. It turns out his parents have sent him to a drug rehab center in Minnesota. From the start, Frey refuses to surrender his problem to a 12-step program or to victimize himself by calling his addictions a disease. He demands to be held fully accountable for the person he is and the person he may become. If Frey is a victim, he comes to realize, it's due to nothing but his own bad decisions.

His lump-in-the-throat contained intensity, wherein he neither sobs nor howls with rage but appears a breath away from both, gives readers a palpable glimpse of the power of addiction and the struggle for recovery.

James Frey and his publisher represented *A Million Pieces* as a pure memoir and when Oprah discovered parts of it were fictionalized it all made for a spectacular media-élite street brawl. Oprah and Frey have since resolved their dispute.

Our Zambia Connection

Dustin and Sherri Ellington, who now reside in Zambia after many years in Cairo, Egypt, are so grateful for their move. The community has been more than welcoming and even though many things are different in their daily lives, such as food and culture, Dustin's teaching at the college is filled with enthusiasm and excitement.



The students have a deep commitment to their ministry to work with the

overwhelming poverty and AIDS problems in their part of the world. Both Dustin and Sherri ask for our thoughts and prayers as they prepare Zambian young students to make a difference in the lives of their people.

Eat 3 Pancakes; Support a 3-Day Walker!

Please mark your calendars now for a special pancake breakfast on Sunday, June 5 in the Fellowship Hall both before and after worship. "Team Mahoney" (including Shannon & Pat Mahoney) are hosting this fundraiser breakfast to support their participation in the Susan G. Komen 3-Day for A Cure



walk in August. All proceeds go to breast cancer research, and enable Shannon & Pat to walk 60 miles over three days to honor and remember those who battle this disease—please help by coming to eat pancakes and encourage their effort.

Water For All Begins Here

African women and girls often spend hours each day carrying water ...

In much of Africa, the work of finding and carrying water is backbreaking and time-consuming. Done entirely by hand in the largest containers possible, it is still far from enough and leaves no time for the women and children who shoulder the load to do anything else. It's also dangerous. Leaving the familiar village or family compound behind for a trek for water makes a woman or girl more vulnerable than ever.

"I used to walk more than six miles to bring back four gallons of dirty water," says Regina Kioka from Kaikungu, Kenya.

But communities are building sustainable solutions with the help of Church World Service staff and partners. For example, by constructing water-conserving "sand dams," lives are being transformed. Sand dams are simple yet tremendously successful structures which trap sand in a river channel during the rare but rushing

flood times. The trapped sand then becomes a reservoir, filtering and collecting water underground for use year-round. One costs only about \$6,000 to construct and holds nearly 3 million gallons of water, enough to support a thousand or more people and livestock.



Having enough for everyone not only means there's plenty of clean drinking water, but enough for bathing and overall better sanitation, cutting the incidence of disease dramatically. It also provides the opportunity for every villager to grow their own food, not only boosting their nutrition almost overnight, but also providing income opportunities with extra food for market. Not trekking for water also gives girls the chance to attend school.

Our giving the *End Hunger Now* for the next quarter of April, May, and June, will support CWS Water For All projects around the world.

New Member Class

Have you been waiting for an opportunity to become a member of this fabulous congregation? Feeling guilty for enjoying the spectacular worship services and even better donuts on Sunday mornings without being able to check the member box when the welcome pad comes by? Well now is your chance!

On Sunday, May 22, following the worship service and with enough time to grab one of those delicious donuts, you are invited to come to the Knox Room and learn more about our congregation and active membership in the

Presbyterian Church (USA).

Attendance does not obligate you to join, but will hopefully help you in making that decision. Those people who do decide to become active members will meet with the Session at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 26 and then will be introduced during the worship service on Pentecost Sunday, June 12. If you can't make all these dates you can still become a member. Please be in contact with either Pastors Tom or Katie if you are interested.

Continuing the Conversation With FUMC

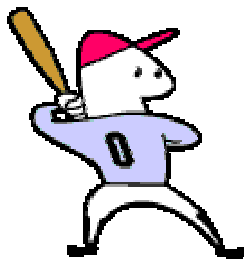
Members of the First United Methodist Church of South St. Paul have visited our worship service ‘officially’ twice (and surreptitiously perhaps more than that), elders and leaders from both congregations have also met twice, and the conversations continue. FUMC is in the process of closing its doors and continuing its ministry in a new place and new way in the next five or six months, and First Presbyterian Church is very much a part of that process. A number of leaders and members from FUMC have indicated a strong interest in joining FPC, while others in that congregation see themselves merging with St. Paul’s UMC in Mendota Heights. This

possible “split merge” has yet to receive approval from all the entities involved, so nothing’s a done deal yet! As we continue the conversation and work out the particulars, we want to assure FPC members that any actual “merger” language in our case would be ceremonial rather than legal. That is, we would not become a union Presbyterian and United Methodist church with individual members retaining their own denominational affiliations, but in receiving members from FUMC we would honor their history and welcome them into full membership in the PC(USA) and our particular congregation. This month provides

some opportunities to consider the assets of that congregation and what might go where, learn together about how the transfers can happen, and further deepen our relationships with a neighboring community of faith that is grieving an end and also trying to anticipate a new beginning. Please do whatever you can to encourage hospitality and inclusion in our own family and faith, and reach out to welcome those who may come to join us in the journey we all share. We want to stop referring to them as “the Methodists” and begin the process of opening our doors to new friends in faith.

Men’s Softball

While I noticed a blue circle on the River of Gratitude giving thanks for a new baseball season, I didn’t see where anyone had mentioned



that it is also a new men’s softball season. We have extremely high hopes this season to not only

finish in second to last place or higher, but to also win our first playoff game. With some of our newer members being a little less age-challenged than previous

incarnations of the team, this looks like a strong possibility. At the time of publication we still do not have a final schedule, but can tell everyone (players and fans) that the first double-header will be on Monday evening, May 2, at Rich Valley Athletic Complex. Schedules will be made available in the office as soon as we have them and all times will be listed in the Sunday morning bulletin. Begging and pleading of all men under the age of 50 will have already begun before you receive this and we will not be taking “But I have to watch my twin girls” as an excuse from anyone this year.

Take Me Out to the Ballgame

April brought a rough start for the team, May might pick up a bit, but surely by *June* they’ll be looking pennant-bound again ... that’s our Minnesota Twins! Outdoor baseball is the way God meant it to be played, so mark your calendars, pack your sunscreen and get ready for the boys of summer again—First Presbyterian Church is going to a baseball game! It’s the Minnesota

Twins playing the Los Angeles Dodgers on Tuesday, June 28 at 7:00 p.m. at Target Field, and all mem-



bers, friends and family are welcome to attend. Tickets will cost \$30 per seat (all ages) and will include bus transportation to and from the game and a special treat. We’re hoping for a big crowd so we can get our mugs up on the Jumbo-Tron! Tickets will be available for sale in the Commons in late May—reserve your seat and plan to be there.



These members and friends of FPC have had surgery, been hospitalized or ill in recent weeks: Bill Beyer, Willard Lee, Pam Davenport, Bona Faye Venburg, Don Finkle, Dorothy Hunter, Duane Roberts, and Marianne Froelke.

**First Presbyterian Church
of South St. Paul**

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Education For All at 8:30 a.m.

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Tower Views

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First Presbyterian Church, South St. Paul, MN

Rev. Katie Estes Collins

Rev. Tom Watson

Pastors

Mary Love

Administrative Assistant

Tower Views Deadline

May 15, 2011

For events taking place June 2011



**Graduation
Sunday
June 5, 2011**

Join us in worship as we honor those students
graduating from high school and post-secondary schools.

If you, or someone in your family, is graduating from community college,
a trade school, college, or graduate school, please let the office know.

We want to be sure to include them in our celebration.