



THE BELLTOWER



October 2011

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A SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM REV. ABBOTT....

For sometime I would imagine that many of you are wondering, "What is Presbytery doing to help us?" "When are they going to do something!" "Don't they care about us?"

Well the time has been set for us to ask them personally. We have worked with them and our Session to have them come to a Special Meeting of the Session, at which time we will ask those same questions and give them a chance to help us through this time of an unknown future. There is this reminder in the issue of the Belltower and it will appear in each bulletin up to and including the Oct. 23rd meeting to keep it fresh in your mind. On Oct. 23rd, Dr. John Rickard, our Executive from Presbytery, and Suzanne Finefield, the Chair of the Committee on Ministry will be with us.

In setting up this meeting they asked me if it would be possible to have some time to hear what the congregation has to say and what questions they have. I shared with them our Coffee Hour time after church and thought that it might be the right time for them to open their thoughts. They thought that would be fine.

SO! Here is your chance. October 23rd they will probably worship with us, then join us in the Coffee Hour, and then sit with the Session and see what directions we can agree upon for the future. Set it in your minds, and on your calendars at home.

October 23, 2011 at First Presbyterian Church

10:15am-Worship

11:15am-Coffee Hour

?? - Session Meeting

God's Blessing on this time and opportunity.

See you there.

- Pastor Abbott

Staff

Guest Pastors
In the Pulpit

Director
Of Music Ministry
Paul Johnson

Treasurer
Dan Pitkin

Secretary
Kathie Grazis

Nursery Attendant
Tina Pitkin

SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

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Sept.04, 2011

****NOTE: MINUTES SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT NEXT MEETING ****

Moderator: Rev. Alvin Abbott

Clerk: Mary Elise Burnett

Present: Rev. Alvin Abbott-Moderator, Mary Elise Burnett, Clerk of Session, Thomas Pitkin, Judy Markham, Dan Pitkin, Bonnie Bergeron, and Chris Young.

Absent: Ron Armstrong

Attending: Paul Johnson

Meeting opened with prayer at 11:50am.

Study period reviewing Romans 13: 8-14

Paul Johnson attended to request that new bulbs be replaced when the lighting is done. Also the new bulbs in the theatrical lights need to be replaced. Paul explained that the church has some tremendous resources which are under utilized, specifically the Sanctuary and Instruments/Acoustics. He feels the church needs to be spiffed up before we can start using it to its potential, including fixing the sound system. The speakers need to be moved. Paul is recommending for someone to come in to assess it and would be willing to do the leg work in getting estimates, etc. Paul further advised that once these updates were done, we could get more people in here with concerts, weddings, etc. Session will further review the request.

J. Markham moved and B. Bergeron seconded to approve the minutes of the August 7, 2011 meeting. Passed unanimously.

REPORTS:

Pastor's Report:

1. Board of Pension issue: Rev Abbott reported a lengthy conversation with the Board of Pension Office and that Deborah Harris continued to draw through the end of May. Board advised that nothing received from the church since 1/18/11. This total was \$4,705.92. It is currently over \$6000.00. Dan reports that what he feels they are not taking into consideration is that \$15,909.10 was paid to the Board of Pensions in 2010 when the terms of call were for \$12,281.00. January payment was made in the amount of \$1136.58. Further discussion was held. J. Markham moved and B. Bergeron seconded to send a letter with 6 points of discussion. Passed unanimously. M.E. Burnett to draft letter.

2. Per capita: Per capita has been paid for 2011.

3. gateway Coalition: Martina Rippon advised that she is relocating. Communication received asked for assistance in actively participating. This will be put in the bulletin and Belltower. Discussion held about paying the annual dues which was budgeted for. C. Young moved and D. Pitkin seconded to pay the annual dues. Passed unanimously.

4. Offer from Suzanne Finefield and John Rickard to meet with Session. Rev. Abbott will see if they can attend next Session and if not, what their availability is.

5. *MAP* Report: Discussion held concerning process. Meeting to be arranged with Jonathan Krogh. Discussion was held concerning sending a survey to members who have not been attending. The matter was referred to Worship Committee.

Treasurer's Report/Stewardship and Finance Committee Report: B. Bergeron moved and J. Markham seconded to approve the July financials. Passed unanimously.

Youth Group: Picnic to be held at a date to be determined. Hoping for monthly activities.

Building and Grounds: Revised estimates received for electrical work from Girard and Spenard. B. Bergeron moved to go with Spenard. Passed unanimously.

Discussion held concerning Paul's request. The committee will contact Paul about getting estimates on the audio work.

Discussion held concerning cleaning services. J. Markham will talk with Doborah Heid concerning using John 3:16. Planting plan for prayer garden. Bonnie presented the plan developed by the Master Gardeners. Building and Grounds will review.

Christian Education: C. Young presented a written report on Vacation Bible School.

Adult Education is to start in September with a six week study of Great Figures of the Bible.

The proposal was made to hold Sunday School during church service for children through the 6th grade. M.E. Burnett moved and B. Bergeron seconded that this be tried, always subject to review. Passed unanimously.

Older students would have Confirmation classes at a date and time to be determined.

Stewardship & Finance: J. Markham advised a short meeting had been held. Discussion held.

OLD BUSINESS:

Discussion held concerning the Nominating Committee. The committee needs a Moderator. Rev. Abbott will contact Becky Schiltz.

Discussion held concerning *New Life* mission. Bonnie will take it to Worship Committee.

Discussion held concerning parking lot. The matter will be put on next month's agenda.

B. Bergeron moved and D. Pitkin seconded to adjourn meeting. Passed unanimously.

Meeting closed with prayer at 2:20pm.

Next stated meeting will be Oct. 6, 2011.

Respectfully Submitted by

Mary Elise Burnett, Clerk

THIS AND THAT

As the elderly man lay dying in his bed, death's agony was suddenly pushed aside as he smelled the aroma of his favorite homemade chocolate chip cookies wafting up the stairs. Gathering his remaining strength, he lifted himself from the bed. Leaning against the wall, he slowly made his way out of the bedroom, and with intense concentration, supported himself down the stairs, gripping the railing with both hands. In labored breath, he leaned against the door frame, gazing wide-eyed into the kitchen.

There, spread out upon the newspapers on the kitchen table were literally HUNDREDS of his favorite chocolate chip cookies!

Was it heaven? Or, was it one final act of heroic love from his devoted wife, seeing to it that he left this world a happy man?

Mustering one great final effort, he threw himself toward the table, landing on his knees in a rumped posture, one hand on the edge of the table. The aged and withered hand quiveringly made its way to a cookie near the edge of the table; feeling the warm, soft dough actually made the pain of his bones subside for a moment. His parched lips parted; the wondrous taste of the cookie was already in his mouth; seemingly bringing him back to life.

What, then, was this sudden stinging that caused his hand to recoil?

He looked to see his wife, still holding the spatula she had just used to smack his hand.

"Stay out of those!" she said, "they're for the funeral!"

....and THAT would be my mother I tell you!!!....kg



KIDS & YOUTH



YA'ALL COME NOW!!

Oct. 15th our Youth Group will be going to the *Children's Farm* at the Center in Palos park. Parents will transport their children to and from and must stay to supervise them and purchase their own tickets at a price of \$7 per person. This price includes a hay ride to a pumpkin patch where pumpkins may be purchased if desired, tour of the barn where they can hold and pet animals, a spooky shed, a maze, a hill of hay bales that they can climb, and a giant corn box that they can jump in. Families should also pack their own picnic lunch. We will meet at the church at 9:00am. Families should let either Tina Pitkin at 815-802.1015 or Bernadette LaMore at 815.933.7009 know if you plan to attend.

Come for what promises to be a great time!



COMING ATTRACTION!

COMING IN NOVEMBER

YOUTH GROUP WILL HAVE A DINNER & A MOVIE EVENT.

WATCH YOUR BELLTOWER AND BULLETIN FOR MORE DETAILS.

Worship Volunteers 2011

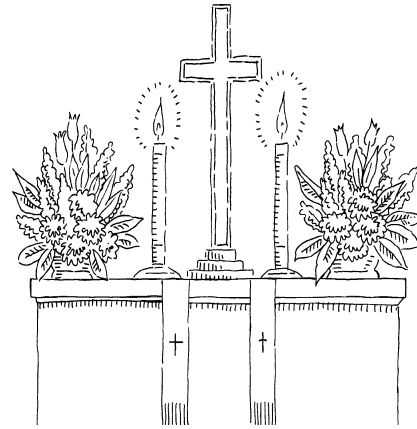
Oct.2- Communion Sunday
Liturgist Thomas Pitkin
Acolyte Alexis Zunke
Ushers Ralph Klein & Ron Armstrong
Communion Dan Pitkin, Thomas Pitkin

Oct. 9
Liturgist Bonnie Bergeron
Acolyte Shay Kosyla
Ushers Ron & Marlene Redenius

Oct. 16
Liturgist Chris Young
Acolyte Sophie LaMore
Ushers Elizabeth Bauer, Judy Markham

Oct. 23
Liturgist Bonnie Bergeron
Acolyte Billy Pitkin
Ushers Doug & Sue Barclay

Oct. 30
Liturgist Kathie Grazis
Acolyte Francis Muchemi
Ushers Bernadette & Sophie LaMore



Worship Schedule

Oct. 2 – Communion Sunday– Rev. Al Abbott in the pulpit

Oct. 9— Rev. Franklin Garton in the pulpit

Oct. 16— Rev. Franklin Garton in the pulpit

Oct. 23— Rev. Franklin Garton in the pulpit

Oct. 30– Rev. Franklin Garton in the pulpit



**Be a part of the
Worship Team!**

Congregational News

PRAYER CONCERNS

Jean Parlin (Heritage Village), **Lorraine Schneider** (Miller Center), **Jack Walters** (In Hospice care at Bickford House), **Nyla Wepprecht** (Bridges at Butterfield), **Jo Ann Alexander ,Charlotte Carney** (Manor Care), **Elizabeth Bauer** (Health Concerns), **Ruth Brooks** (Sue Barclay’s mother), **Trudy Curtis** (serious health concerns) , **Kathie Grazis** (shoulder surgery coming up) **Mary & Don Maddox**, **Lara Plecas** (Jeanne’s daughter, Mother-To-Be), **Jo Ann Alexander**, **First Presbyterian Church**, **our country as our government officials make decisions concerning our financial well-being as individuals and as a nation , all our Military personnel who continue to serve , all of our elderly in our country who continue to struggle with day-to-day life in this economy.**



OLDE ENGLISH FAIRE

At Stronghold the weekend of Oct. 1-2.
discounted tickets available until 5:00pm
Friday, Sept. 30.

GIVING

Total Giving for the Month of August = \$4,232.38
Giving Year-To-Date = \$50,752.93
Expenses Year-To-Date = \$53,668.91



First Presbyterian Church is still looking for someone to be our representative to the Gateway Coalition.

If you are interested in being a part of this worthy organization on the church’s behalf, please notify Kathie in the Church Office.

It will involve just one meeting a month at the Coalition office.

Pray about it.....



MUSIC NOTES
PAUL JOHNSON
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY



Fall is happening around us. Colors changing on the trees (one of my favorite things about Fall) and starting to get cooler outside. Hope everyone gets a chance to enjoy this beautiful time of year.

At the last Session meeting I was given permission to get bids for updating/fixing our church audio system. I've met with one company already and will meet with one more in the next week. The one I met with today has done quite a bit of work at the "flagship" church for our denomination, Fourth Presbyterian in Chicago. I'll present the findings at the next Session meeting and we'll see what happens.

Dr. Garton and I have discussed it, and we would like to do some type of play or "readers theatre" for some upcoming services—in particular, around the upcoming holidays, Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve. Please be sure to contact me if you have an interest in being a part of this.

Also am looking at trying to figure out what to do with our church website—how it can be more useful to people...if you have anything you'd like to see on it, or have it "do", please let me know. If it is feasible, we'll try to make it happen.

That's it for now. Enjoy Fall!

Paul

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**We Are A Bridge-Building,
Peacemaking Church!!**

Session

Class of 2011

Bonnie Bergeron
Mary Elise Burnett
Vacant

Class of 2012

Judy Markham
Dan Pitkin
Thomas Pitkin (1 yr. term) Vacant

Class of 2013

Vacant
Chris Young

Deacons

Class of 2011

Bernadette LaMore
Gina Zunke

Class of 2012

Anne Muchemi
Vacant

Class of 2013

Elizabeth Bauer
Tina Pitkin