

The Good News!

Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church at Dayton

September 2011

Summer always brings a slower pace. With it, many responsible pastors take the time to read through recently released theological texts, or to study trends in the church. I was not a terribly responsible pastor. While I can claim some study of both the PC(USA)'s new form of government and potential changes within our denomination—I must confess that I was shamelessly self-indulgent in my summer reading. In May, I picked up a copy of George R.R. Martin's book *Game of Thrones*, sure I'd never make it through the first 300 (!) pages before I tossed it aside. By summer's end—I had read all 5 books in the series—totaling well over 4,000 pages. I just couldn't seem to stop myself. I got so immersed in the evolving story, that I even started to insert some of the words and phrases particular to the series into everyday conversation.

One of the big things about the series that drew me in was its theme of hospitality. Described as older than time—all people of all classes observe what is referred to as the law of hospitality. When you entered into another person's home, and were invited to share something from the host's table—the law of hospitality provided that no harm would come to you while under that roof. When either friend or stranger entered the central gathering place, they would be greeted with the words "sit, and be welcomed."

Each and every time I read those words (which were quite a few)—sit and be welcomed, I thought about our church – and how in so many ways we live out a story grounded in hospitality. We welcome the friend and the stranger. We invite them to the communion table, and welcome them to a time of



fellowship. And through that welcome, we carve out a safe space for ourselves, and for those who seek community out.

Each week, we print this greeting in our bulletin:

If you are visiting our congregation—welcome! The doors of the Dayton Church will always be open to you. We are a close-knit community of faith standing ready to extend the hand of friendship, remembering that at one time we were all visitors in this place...

This year, may we strive to follow the laws of hospitality treasured by the mothers and fathers of faith, recounted on the pages of the Old Testament—and lived out by Christ and his followers over the pages of the New. Come back to church this September. Sit—and be welcomed.

Rev. Wendi

Homecoming Sunday & Picnic— Sunday, September 11

The summer season is coming to a close, which means the church program year is set to begin. We will launch into the program year with Homecoming Sunday on September 11. Come and worship! Celebrate all the summer months have been, and all the fall promises to be!

We will mark Homecoming Sunday with our annual opening picnic! The Fellowship Committee will be working hard to provide us with hamburgers, hot dogs and beverages. The rest will be up to you! Come to church with either a tasty side dish or dessert to share with everyone.

September Birthdays

Sept. 4	Ginny Trent Brenna Williams
Sept. 5	Jan Bunch Lauryn Strebeck
Sept. 8	Rod Brennan
Sept. 9	Brian Holsten
Sept. 12	Mike Mendenko
Sept. 13	Brittany Perkins Duane Watlington
Sept. 16	Brian Frey Alison Miller
Sept. 21	Sue Scurato
Sept. 25	Sandy Pearce Donna Shumsky
Sept. 26	Amber Hickson
Sept. 27	Ariana Carbone Bonnie Knigge
Sept. 30	Timothy Hickson

SEPTEMBER PREACHING CALENDAR

September 4 Labor Day Weekend
Communion Sunday
Texts: Psalm 149; Matthew 18:15-20
Meditation: Can't We All Just Get Along?

Sermon Series: The Forgotten Commandments

September 11 Homecoming Sunday
Sunday School Begins
Commemoration of the
10 year anniversary of 9-11
Texts: Romans 14:1-12; Matthew 18:21-35
Sermon: Thou Shalt Not Be So Sure You're
Right
After-Church Picnic

September 18 Texts: Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45; Exodus 16:2-15
Sermon: Thou Shalt Not Whine

September 25 Texts: Matthew 21:23-32;
Exodus 17:1-7
Sermon: Thou Shalt Not
Answer Questions with Questions



The First Presbyterian Church at Dayton

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Church Fax: 732-329-6360

Our website:
www.firstpresdaytonnj.org

Our office email:
daytonpres@verizon.net

Rev. Wendi Werner's email:
wendi.daytonpres@verizon.net

Rev. Wendi's office hours:
Tues. through Fri., 10AM to 3 PM

*"Go and make disciples
of all nations..."*

Sermon Series for September

Beginning September 11—we will begin a three week sermon series called—"The Forgotten Commandments." In a wonderful book entitled *In God's Mailbox*, Rabbi Marc Gellman writes a story about Moses receiving the 10 commandments. *"After giving Moses the 10th commandment, God went right on and gave Moses commandments 11-15. Moses didn't know what to do. He had already filled two big rocks with the first 10, and knew that there was no way he could lift three rocks. Moses wasn't even sure he could lift two! But Moses didn't want to tell God to stop, so he kept writing the extra commandments on his sleeves."*

Through scriptures from the Old and New Testament, we will explore together some of the commandments that may have been written on Moses' sleeves, but forgotten over time.

Session Highlights

A special meeting of the congregation and corporation was held following the morning worship service on Sunday, August 7, 2011. The meeting was held so Session could receive congregational approval of the sale of a 1,646 square foot parcel of land on the left side of the back parking lot, on the other side of the fence, to Stephen Sooby to straighten out his property line. He has agreed to pay \$5,000 for this land and has also agreed to pay all costs in connection with the subdivision of our property to make this sale possible. His attorney will handle this matter. The only cost to us will be the legal fee charged by our attorney for his time in reviewing the contract. The congregation voted in favor of selling this land to Mr. Sooby.

A special meeting of Session was held following the congregational meeting so the Long Range Planning Committee could secure Session approval to hire Bill Doran, a local architect, to design an ADA compliant bathroom in the storage closet area of the kitchen in Fellowship Hall and a design for handicap access with a lift at the ground-level entrance which will allow

wheelchair access to both the Fellowship Hall level and the sanctuary. The architect's fee for this plan is \$5,500. \$1,000 will come from Restoration funds and the balance from Access Renovation funds. After this new bathroom is up and working, the old bathrooms will be demolished and another ADA compliant bathroom will be located in the new handicap access foyer. (We have been promised there will be no porta-potties.) After this new bathroom is up and working, the old bathrooms will be demolished and another ADA compliant bathroom will be located in the new handicap access foyer.

Session also approved a recommendation from the Buildings and Grounds Committee to sponsor the local Boy Scout troop/Cub Scout pack. They meet once a month on a Friday. We have a long history of Scouting sponsorship.

Carolyn P. Bryant
Clerk of Session

Sign-Up to Host Fellowship Hour!

Fellowship Hour after church is a wonderful time of gathering for the people who have attended service that day. For some people, the time spent during Fellowship Hour is just as important as our worship service itself, as they have time to catch up with friends and acquaint themselves with new people of the congregation. Here at the Dayton Church we have a wonderful tradition of fellowship and hospitality. Hosting the Fellowship Hour is a part of that tradition. Most times of fellowship include coffee (which our own Kenny Schaub generously gets going for us) and juice for the kids. Beyond that it is anything you want to bring. Paper plates, cups and cutlery are supplied (coffee too!).

In order to volunteer—please call or email the church office, or check the schedule hanging in Fellowship Hall. Open dates are the ones empty.

If the thought of hosting alone makes you uncomfortable, or if you are doing it for the first time and feel nervous—please tell us! We are happy to match you up with another member of the congregation, and/or a member of our Fellowship Committee.



Prayer Requests

Keep the Joys, Concerns & Celebrations of Our Church Family in Prayer

And this is the boldness we have in God's presence: that if we ask God for anything that agrees with what God wants, God hears us. If we know God hears us every time we ask God, we know we have what we ask from God.

1 John 5:4-15

For all those who have lost loved ones:

- Bill Hann and his family, who lost Bill's brother George
- Linda Mendenko, who lost her friend Margaret
- The family of church member Tom Trent, who died on August 7
- Dick Hart, whose sister Marion died after a long illness
- Jan Bunch and Sandy Olson, who lost their son and brother Scott in a car accident

For all those in need of healing:

- Linda's friend Ellen
- June Wood, healing from a fracture
- Nicole Hughes' grandmother Millie, struggling with age related issues
- Marianne Jones' sister Sheila, recovering from hip replacement surgery and, most recently, a broken femur

For all those with cause to celebrate— but most especially:

- Ginny and Ray Trent, celebrating 50 years of marriage
- Richard and Carol Hague, celebrating 47 years of marriage
- Ken and Sandy Pearce, celebrating 33 years of marriage

Directory Updates

The following are changes of address for your directory:

Jane Duchak

459 Revere Way, Monroe Township, NJ 08831
609-619-3710

Email: jsduchak@comcast.net.

Victoria Ledingham

37 Kendall Road, Kendall Park, NJ 08824
732-672-7755

In an ongoing effort to try to keep our directories up-to-date, all changes will be put in our newsletter. If your information changes from what is currently published in the directory—including email addresses, please contact the church office

Sign Up to be a Worship Leader!

Our understanding of worship is an ancient one, firmly grounded in the stories, descriptions, and instructions contained in the Old Testament. The fundamental activities of Jewish worship—the psalms, prayers, and sacrifices—were the duties and responsibilities of all the people. Everyone who entered the temple was incorporated actively into the proclamation of faith.

The early church built upon this concept of public worship. The early church fathers even described their worship services by using the Greek word *liturgy*, which means: “the work of the people.” Their intent was clear: worship is to be the avenue which all believers travel to glorify God.

Help do the work of the people; assist in worship leadership by signing up to be a liturgist! Beginning in September, liturgists will assist on a regular basis with the worship service by leading the congregation through different prayers and reading one of our two Scripture lessons. All prayers and readings will be given to you. To sign up, email wendi.daytonpres@verizon.net—or use the sign-up sheet located in Fellowship Hall.

Have a Prayer Concern or Celebration to Share? Here's How!

We are a congregation that prays together. In order to increase our ability to hear from everyone with a prayer request, the following options are open to you:

—Prior to our gathering our hearts together in prayer as a congregation for the “prayers of the people,” the pastor takes verbal prayer requests from anyone with a celebration or concern to be shared with the church family. That request is then given voice during the prayer time – giving everyone an opportunity to pray on it. The intention is to then take those prayers out with us into the week, and to continue to offer them up to God until we can be together again.

—Some people have voiced a need to have prayer spoken on their behalf, but have been unable to give the prayer request voice in front of everyone - sometimes because they were afraid of getting “too emotional” and other times because speaking in front of people makes them uncomfortable. Prayer request slips can now be found in every church pew. If you have a prayer request to go before the congregation, but do not want to speak it aloud – simply fill the prayer slip out and place it into the offering plate. The ushers will bring it forward to the pastor—who will include the request in the “prayers of the people.”

—Some members of the church family are in need of prayer, but do not care to have the entire congregation know of their specific prayer request. If this is the case, please fill out a prayer slip and place it into the closed prayer box, located in the front of the sanctuary.

—All members can phone a prayer request into the church office, or can email Wendi directly at wendi.daytonpres@verizon.net.

A Special, Musical Opportunity for the Children of the Dayton Church!

We are thrilled to announce that beginning September 11, immediately following worship and Sunday School—all children Pre-School through 7th grade are invited to be part of the Dayton Church Children's Choir! The **DC³** will be under the direction of our own Thomas Buckley. The group will rehearse weekly after church for approximately 20 minutes, with a goal of singing in worship once every five weeks. We believe strongly that being part of the **DC³** will help shape children into strong worshippers. Singing will help them remember, apply and express biblical truth, assist in the development of confidence and self-esteem. This children's choir will be a gift to us all, young and old—in our worship, in our fellowship and in our outreach.

So come make a joyful noise—and be part of the **DC³**!

An Update from our Long Range Planning Committee

The Long Range Planning Committee has determined the objectives of our handicap accessibility project to be twofold:

- To make the ground floor, fellowship hall and sanctuary levels accessible to all people; and
- To build handicap accessible bathrooms.

After much prayer and discussion, we have taken the next step forward in our process. Session voted on August 7, 2011 to enter into contract with 3D Architecture of Kendall Park.

Architect William Doran and his associates will be providing us with construction permit drawings for a new barrier free entry area including a chair lift; new bathrooms to be placed in the entry area and kitchen and a new rear entry to the building. We have shared our vision for this project with Bill—and we look forward with great anticipation to seeing it coalesce with Bill's expertise, ideas and ingenuity. We will continue to provide the congregation with updates!



All members previously ordained as an elder or deacon were invited to come forward for the laying on of hands for the ordination of Beth Vittor to the office of elder on Sunday, August 7, 2011.



Beth Vittor – the newly ordained!

Our Session

Elders:

Class of 2012

Ruth Cerequas—Worship/Nominating Committees, chairs
 Bonnie Knigge—Personnel, Worship Committee
 Barbara Trent—Worship Committee
 June Wood—Fellowship Committee

Class of 2013

Howard Jones—Stewardship Committee, chair
 Ron VanDyke—Personnel Committee, chair
 Keith Watlington—Buildings & Grounds Committee;
 Long Range Planning, chair
 Marlene Wolf—Personnel & Stewardship Committees

Class of 2014

Dick Hart—Fellowship Committee, chair
 Bruce Scurato—Buildings and Grounds Committee, chair;
 Long Range Planning
 Ginny Trent—Christian Education Committee, co-chair
 Beth Vittor—Christian Education Committee, co-chair

Moderator—Rev. Wendi L. Werner
 Clerk—Carolyn Bryant



This Month's Ushers

September 4:

Carolyn Bryant
 Ruth Cerequas
 Ruth VanDyke
 Ron VanDyke

September 11:

Nicole Hughes
 George Knigge
 Linda Mendenko
 Marlene Wolf

September 18:

Debbie Errichello
 Lynne Ewen
 Bruce Scurato
 Emily Scurato

September 25:

June Wood
 Bob Wood
 Patty Patterson
 Nicole Suto

Our Board of Deacons

Susan Brennan	Harriet Terren
Jan Bunch	Ruth VanDyke
Jane Duchak	Jill Thompson, moderator
Cathy Prontnicki	

Dayton Church to Become Chartering Organization of Pack 108, Boy Scouts of America

On Sunday, August 7 the Session met to formally vote on becoming the chartering organization of the Boy Scouts of America Pack 108. Previously chartered by the local Lions organization, the transition will enable this Dayton village based pack to centralize its location for participants under the auspices of our church, sharing a mutual accord to honor and serve our God.

Our church will seek to be granted a charter by the Boy Scouts of America. Working in conjunction with the Boy Scouts, we will seek to provide an outreach program for youth. As a chartered organization, we will be something like a “franchisee” and as such will be the “owner-operator” of the Scouting program.

Beginning in the fall, Pack 108 will begin to meet here in our building on a monthly basis. Their presence among us will not just be a matter of geography. Our church will be actively seeking ways in which to invite the organization into its life. Scouts will be present at our Harvest Fair, will take on buildings and grounds projects on behalf of our church, and will be present in worship in February for “Scout Sunday,” a day celebrated in churches throughout the nation.

According to Pack 108 leader Matt Verney, “The church will also provide meeting space for Pack meetings and, based upon availability and need, for den meetings. Having a place of worship as a chartered organization will also highlight and strengthen the importance of one of the core values of Scouting, reverence to your god. Churches were traditionally the central point for communities to meet, worship, conduct business, and play. Our new chartered organization is centrally located within the community the pack serves, keeping with the American tradition.”

Welcome Pack 108!

Book Club News

The Book Club will meet after worship on Oct. 16 to discuss the book *Sarah's Key* by Tatiana de Rosnay. This is about a French journalist who finds herself related to a young girl who was part of the 1942 roundup of Jewish families that were shipped off to Auschwitz. Please join us for a discussion of this book, and suggestions about what we will read next.



Sing, Sing, Sing...

...be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts...

Ephesians 5:18b-19

Come do as Scripture commands—come lift your voice in song! After the long summer break—our music director Thomas Buckley is ready to call our choirs back into action. Thomas' schedule has changed—as he has transitioned from a Westminster Choir college student into a matriculated private school teacher. As such—our choir schedule will change as well.

Our bell choir and sanctuary choir will now rehearse on Wednesday evenings.

—Bell choir will meet weekly on Wednesdays from 6:30-7:30.

—The sanctuary choir will gather from 7:45-8:45 on the first and third Wednesdays of every month in September and October—moving to weekly rehearsal as needed.

Thomas has been hard at work planning all the music for the year, with larger works being considered for the Advent and Lenten season.

The sanctuary and bell choirs are open to all singers and ringers 8th grade and up.

Email Thomas with any questions at:
thomascraigbuckley@gmail.com

Flowers in the Chancel

Each Sunday, colorful floral arrangements adorn our chancel. Such floral beauty reminds us of the beauty of creation, and lifts up the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. It honors loved ones and gives thanks for special people and events in our lives. With your generosity, worship at the Dayton Church truly reflects our praise for the living word of God as well as remembers or honors a loved one or a special moment in your life.

One way to celebrate your loved ones throughout the year is by contributing chancel flowers. It is a great way to celebrate a special person or event, in memory of a loved one who has passed away, or other special days of remembrances with your family of faith. Suggested days to recognize and celebrate:

Anniversaries

Baptisms

*Thankfulness for a person
or event*

Sweet Sixteen

Birthdays

Graduation from Basic Training

*Mother's, Father's, or
Grandparent's Day*

Confirmations

In memory of a loved one

Graduation

Passing Driver's License Exam

First Day of Kindergarten

Birth/Adoption

Celebrating is easy. Reserve a date(s) for your loved one to be recognized by contacting the church office at daytonpres@verizon.net or sign up in Fellowship Hall. Please keep in mind that while two floral arrangements are welcome—only one is needed each Sunday. Vases are available to use in the church kitchen.

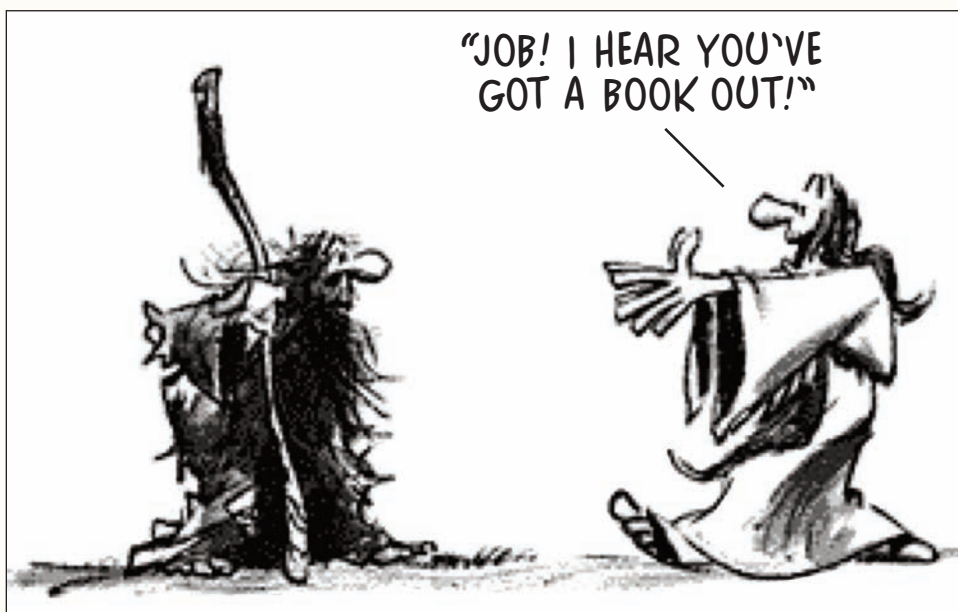
Dayton Prayer Shawl Ministry to Start!

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry will be starting up our meetings soon—September 15 at 7 P.M. to be exact! God has certainly blessed our knitters and crocheters with gifted hands and giving hearts. We have a wonderful inventory of lap robes, shawls and baby blankets to give to men and women in need of comfort and love. We have expanded our wings to include a baby blanket to be given at baptisms too.

Who can forget some of the highlights of our second year—Harold Erikson receiving his blanket on his 90th birthday; Emma and Mom wrapped in her baptismal blanket, Peggy Erikson's shawl by her side, Margaret's growing shawl into a blanket and recently Lillian receiving her shawl to help her grieving.

When we are diligently making these items we pray for the recipients, often unknown at the time. The needles click clack away using typical Prayer Shawl patterns. The shawls are blessed around the circle at our monthly meetings and then lovingly presented when needed. Each of our crafters says that the warmth that she feels is extraordinary—indescribable. Would you like to be a part of our Ministry? Please join with us the third Thursday of each month in Fellowship Hall, have a cup of tea, then pray with us. The joy is catching! Come be a part of us. Don't know how to knit or crochet? We'll teach you. We even have a lot of donated yarn and needles to give you.

The PSM will meet on September 15, October 20, November 17 and December 15 to round out 2011.



Harvest Fair News

Our Harvest Fair will be held on October 1st—just a few short weeks from now! We are looking to out-do last year's stunning success by making a few significant changes. In order to maximize the visibility of the Fair and attract more people, we will be utilizing the front



yards of both the church and manse. Melzo the Clown will be back! She will not only provide us with her fantastic face painting and balloon animal skills but will certainly help wave in the crowds. Since the Fair is earlier this year, we hope to sell mums and pumpkins along with delicious produce grown by members of our congregation.

Here's what we need to ensure the success of this year's event:

- Workers for the day! Help man a game booth, or the bake sale table, or the Tricky Tray or food court! Direct traffic, or provide whatever support is necessary.
- Make a basket for the Tricky Tray by creating one of your own design or designing around a theme given to you by our organizers.
- Solicit donations for our Tricky Tray by approaching your favorite restaurant or store, and be sure to tell them that all donations are being used to make our building handicap accessible.
- Donate your unwanted stuff to our rummage sale. We will accept just about anything, including clothing. Don't miss out on the chance to clean out your closet, attic or garage. Remember, one person's junk is another person's treasure!
- Donate a baked good. What's the best dessert to come out of your oven? Cookies? A special cake? Pie? Cupcakes? Get your baker's hats on, and donate your baked goods to the Fair. Items can be dropped off on Friday, September 30 and early in the morning on October 1.



Our own queen of the Harvest Fair, Kathy Bevenssee will facilitate all helping hands. Sign ups are happening now in Fellowship Hall, or email Kathy at Kbevensee@comcast.net

Sunday School is Set to Begin on September 12!

Hey parents and kids! Are you ready to get “Hand-On?” Here comes our Sunday school program, which will utilize “Hands-on Bible” curriculum—where the Bible is the student workbook! This year’s Sunday school program will once again tap into children’s God-given desire to play...experiment...wiggle...and discover. Our curriculum is R.E.A.L.—Relational—Experiential—Applicable and Learner-Based. Every activity is purposefully designed to involve the child and communicate the biblical point of that day’s lesson. Children won’t just memorize a lesson in their head – they will embrace biblical truth with their heart.

Our Sunday School program for Pre-K through 7th grade students runs concurrently with 10:00am worship. All children are to worship with their families at 10:00. They will be invited to attend Sunday school immediately following the Children’s Message.

Pre-K and Kindergarten: This class will present simple Bible truths in a fresh, interactive setting that capitalizes on children’s need to experience life with all their senses. Each lesson is based on an important Bible story that distills it into a simple, memorable truth that young children can understand and experience.

1st & 2nd Grade: This class has been specially designed for readers and nonreaders alike! In each session, our 1st and 2nd graders will participate in a variety of fun and memorable learning experiences that help them understand one important point. Throughout September, this class will be concentrating on the story of Ruth.

3rd – 5th Grade: Each lesson for this class is based on an important Bible story, and each distills the story into a simple, memorable truth 3rd through 5th graders can apply to their lives. As each activity in class unfolds, children discover and internalize Bible stories and biblical truths, and because they’re doing instead of just listening—they’ll remember what they learn.

6th & 7th Grade: Our young middle school students are in transition between their elementary and teenage years. They are more sophisticated than the middle schoolers of just a few years ago, yet they are still children in many ways. They want purposeful learning, but they want to have fun while doing it too. This class has been developed specifically for them. All lessons are active and fun—but will challenge kids with more sophisticated activities that develop kids’ emerging higher-level thinking skills. They will be encouraged to discover the “why” behind what they are learning—and through it all grow closer to God.

Parents’ prayer at the beginning of a school year

by Tom McGrath

Thank you God, for fresh starts

God bless this brand-new backpack,

filled as it is with survival gear for the year to come.

Bless the pristine paper, the uncreased texts,

the pencils whose erasers have yet to be rubbed raw.

Bless the workbooks and the notebooks,

both the three-ring binder and the spiral variety.

Bless the pencil case and protractor,

the sharpener and the compass.

Bless the thermos and the sandwich bags

and the unbruised apple, gleaming and firm.

Bless all 84 crayons, each with its own contribution to make.

Bless the hands that will use these tools

and the minds that will imagine how.

Bless the hearts that will guide our children

—and the ache in our own hearts as we watch them leave yet one year more.



Mission Connections

In order to keep our church members and friends informed about how your financial pledges and gifts are being directed and used towards Presbyterian Church (USA) missions work, the Stewardship & Missions Committee periodically publishes letters written by missionaries working in various parts of the world. This year, the Presbyterian Church (USA) has mission workers serving in 71 countries. These letters to our denomination will help you get to know them and their ministries. Learn what Presbyterian missionaries do and how you can support them!

A letter from Young Adult Volunteer Katharine Curles in Guatamala

August 2011

The Spirit and the Wind

One thing that surprises me (I don't know why it still catches me off guard) is how much God's Spirit has been moving and been present. I stumbled upon this quote the other night while I was reading, and I really like it.

"God is mysterious. His Spirit is at work within us, and all around us, though His Spirit is invisible. It's like the wind. I've seen the effects of the wind, but I've never seen the wind. There's a mystery to it"



This quote is so accurate in my present life. I don't understand anything that has gone on in my life in the past few months, or, for that matter, a lot of the challenges I've faced throughout this year. But, I know that God's Spirit is in the middle of it. Every time I think that I won't make it, that it's getting too hard, something happens that gives a lift to my feet and my heart, and I am able to keep going again, not just surviving, but really enjoying where I am, who I am, and what God's doing in and through me. This has come in the form of amazing conversations with the Abuelos, encouraging phone calls and skype talks with great people from the States, increased clarity in the obscurity that is the month of August and beyond, a retreat to a Sauna hotel with the other volunteers, reading cool things from one of the six books I'm currently working my way through, or a host of other things that God's Spirit blows in my direction.

One of the occasions where I really noticed this lift was about a week and a half ago when the Abuelo invited me to go pick plums with him. After a crazy walk and social interactions where I didn't understand the language nor the customs, I found myself standing on a hill, overlooking all the fields and houses in Estancia, and feeling a light breeze against my face as I reached up and grabbed plums. With every plum, I thought about some- thing that confused, worried, or frustrated me and I replaced it with something I was grateful for and another lesson I've learned or way I've changed. About two hours later, we had picked 16 pounds of plums and I felt new and rejuvenated. Carrying all our plums to a woman at the house so she could resell them in the Market, I realized how simple life really is, just like their economic system, but how difficult we can sometimes make it. Sometimes you have to just stop, pick some plums, and see the net of blessings.

Another way I have been rejuvenated in this way was this past week. Kyra had to go to Mexico to renew her visa, and, since we had a vacation from school, Tina, Malea, and I eagerly volunteered to go with her and "help her". We went to Puerto Arista and to Boca del Cielo, both on the Pacific coast just northwest of our closest border from Xela. We got to Puerto Arista just in time to be there during a tropical storm. Wow—wind really has some power! So does rain! We were totally soaked all day, and had a pretty chill day minus the times we went swimming. Having a relaxing day to just reflect was so powerful—another way that the Spirit worked to give flight to my thoughts and freedom to think in the ways I needed and repair and prepare my heart for the things to come (aka leaving). The storm left the next day and we played outside and changed locations to Boca del Cielo. What an amazing place. It's an island with a lagoon on one side and unobstructed ocean on the other. Our hotel was cabanas that connected the two. During sunset last night, Tina and I were jumping the waves and she looked at me and said, "if we're with each other on our dying beds, I want you to remind me of this night. This is what life should be" She is so right. It is how life should be—letting God and the Spirit take control of your body and actions with the currents that He has. You can choose to jump, dive, or stand still, but regardless of which one you chose, God will move and you will feel it. And, you should always look around because this world is incredibly beautiful.

Katharine

September 2011

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

28

29

30

31

1

7:00 PM
Fellowship
Committee

8:00 PM
Worship
Committee

2

3

4

10:00 AM
Worship
and Holy
Communion

5

6

7

8:00 PM
Buildings &
Grounds
Committee
at Manse

8

7:30 PM
Personnel
Committee

9

10

11

10:00 AM
Worship
Sunday School
Kick-Off

All Church
Picnic

12

13

6:45 PM
Presbytery
Meeting at
Kingston

14

8:00 PM
Stewardship
Committee
at Manse

15

7:00 PM
Prayer Shawl
Ministry

16

17

18

10:00 AM
Worship
Sunday School
after Children's
Sermon

19

20

7:30 PM
Session
Meeting

21

22

7:30 PM
Deacons
Meeting at
Manse

23

24

25

10:00 AM
Worship
Sunday School
after Children's
Sermon

26

27

28

29

30

1