

# First Light

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Vol. 12 Issue 4 News from the First Presbyterian Church, Marshall May 2010

## A Minute in Ministry

Well, friends by now I hope and expect you have received the letter sent a few days ago regarding the upcoming transition in my ministry and in the life of our congregation. There is, of course, much more to say than what was encapsulated in those few paragraphs. Much more emotion about what we've shared. Many more questions about what's to come. I look forward to having those discussions. In fact, I need to have those conversations to help my transition as much as you may need to share them, as well. It feels to me like one of those difficult unknowns in life ... that we will get through with God's grace. Session members were very gracious tonight – through many tears. Though as they admitted (and is natural) I'm sure there's shock, sadness, anger, and maybe a bit of longing for denial thrown into the mix. In some way I know that feeling, too. The first thing to say is that if you are feeling something similar, it's o.k. and I understand ... at least I'll try the best I can.

Now ... (deep breath) ...

In an attempt to begin conversations about the future, allow me to address some procedural questions and practical concerns that may be common at times like these. Some of us have been Presbyterian for a long time and have probably lived through a transition or two like these. However, others of us are more unfamiliar with Presbyterian ways! First, it is probably helpful to clarify that unlike other denominations who have bishops with the power to move clergy, this transition process will be guided by the authority of the people. Committees will be involved (surprise!) among the congregation and presbytery. Resource persons from presbytery will help to guide our steps through this process.

One of the very next steps is for a representative from the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery to meet with Session and discuss together a timeline and other details. We will form a covenant of closure as we look toward dissolving the pastoral relationship. We will either call a special Session meeting or address these matters at our next one scheduled for May 24. And at some point in the coming month and a half we will need to call a special meeting of the congregation to approve the date and agreed upon terms for our ending together. (Continue on next page)

[www.sanctuaryforall.org](http://www.sanctuaryforall.org)

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## Staff

### Pastor

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### Center for Children

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Mandi Creighton, Asst. Director  
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### Music Director

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### Christian Ed Director

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### Clerk of Session

Phil Mershon  
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Phm709@msn.com

## A Minute in Ministry (Cont.)

In some other churches the transition from one pastor / priest to the next is fairly immediate, however smooth or not. In our Presbyterian Church we have an intentional interim period while the congregation searches for the next installed pastor. After whatever date is agreed upon as my final Sunday among you, there may be a short period of pulpit supply until an interim pastor begins. Session will likely start the process of looking for an interim pastor relatively soon. There is no definite established time frame for this interim period. And one hesitates to presume how the Spirit will move. Some of you who were here before I arrived twelve years ago know that this interim process can take several years. A more typical period is often between one to two years.

Through that interim period ministry will continue, of course, perhaps with some filtering of previous programs or the start of a little something new. The congregation will do a self-study / long-range visioning process. Around the same time, the congregation will select a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) to guide the search for the next installed pastor. Based on results of the congregational study the PNC will write a Church Information Form. Pastoral candidates write a Personal Information Form. And from there a process more akin to typical networking and interviews begins with an exchange of forms, phone conversations, etc.

What's most important to me through all that is to come will always be the relationships we share with God and one another. Though it will feel as though we're entering a "winding down" period, in many ways the life we have shared will never come to an end. At least, that's what I hope for in my heart and mind, I guess. As I expressed in the letter, I am immensely grateful for all the goodness we have shared. And while I have no illusions that our time together has been perfect, I believe our congregation possesses significant strength. There will be real challenges to face, disagreements to resolve, and life together to celebrate. And in God's grace this congregation will continue to provide a vibrant, relevant, loving, joyful, witness creating sanctuary for all.

Grace and peace,

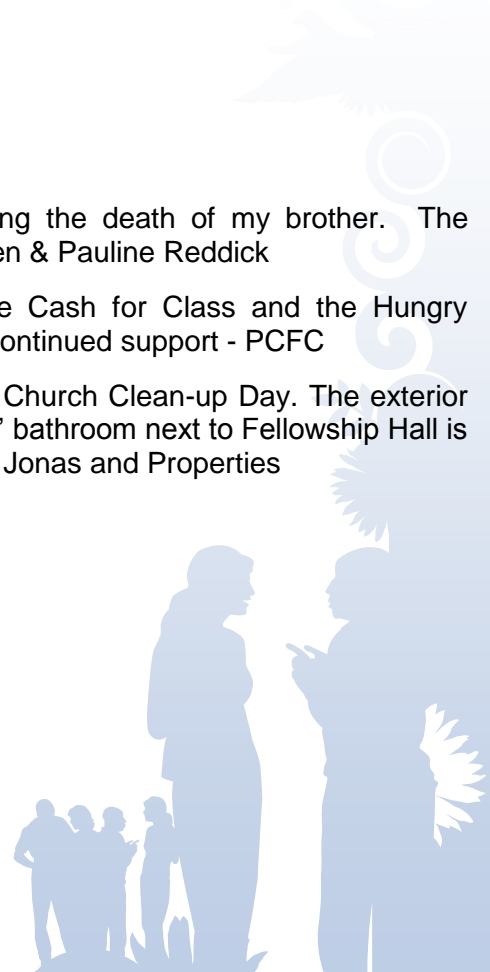
Seth

## We've Noticed

Thank you for all the cards and e-mail following the death of my brother. The thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated - Ken & Pauline Reddick

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Cash for Class and the Hungry Howie's Fundraiser in April. We appreciate your continued support - PCFC

A big thank-you to those who helped during our Church Clean-up Day. The exterior and grounds are looking wonderful, and the Boys' bathroom next to Fellowship Hall is receiving a much needed refurbishing! – Whitney Jonas and Properties



# News from Christian Education

## Vacation Bible School RENEW – The Green VBS!

Grow in faith. Have fun. Change the world! What more could you want? And we're almost there.... **June 14 - 18, 2010**. The coordinating team for VBS is busy gathering supplies for cool crafts and yummy snacks, making our thumbs as green as possible, and generally having a great time. We still need lots more help to make the week fun, educational, and safe for all the children who will join us. Please check this newsletter and coffee hour each Sunday for lists of donations that would be much appreciated. Please contact Suzanne Weeldreyer for information about items already donated. Thank you to those who have already signed up to donate. All children who are joining us need to register. Registration forms are available in the church office or you can register by sending a message to Suzanne at [sweeldreyer@att.net](mailto:sweeldreyer@att.net). Please register your child as soon as possible if you know you'll be joining us. Walk in's will be more than welcome, though! Watch this newsletter, the Sunday bulletin, and the tables at coffee hour for more information about volunteering or donating supplies.

### VBS Supplies Needed

- 4 balls of yarn, at least 30 feet each (any color)
- Drinking straws (not bending ones) – one per child
- 4 to 6 plastic buckets to rinse brushes (old ice cream tubs would work great)
- one roll of papertowel (recycled, if possible)
- 2 cups gravel (like aquarium gravel)
- 2 cups sand (clean)
- 3 clean 2-liter soda bottles
- Rocks, twigs, branches, leaves, etc. for a “organic” sculpture project
- 3 buckets of different sizes
- 5 - 10 large seeds or balls (to throw in the buckets)
- 20 empty 3 liter bottles
- 2 balls to use for bowling (to knock over bottles)
- several cardboard boxes that can be cut up to make stepping stones
- sunflower or pumpkin seeds (put seeds on spoon and fill cups)

### To borrow and return:

- Globe (one that's fairly recent would be best)
- 20 to 30 foot rope

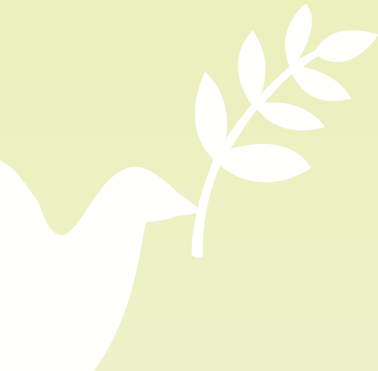
## Got a Good Book? The Church Library Does!

Our library is a wonderful resource for all ages. The collection contains many interesting, insightful, inspirational and fun books for adults and children. For the past few months, we've been working on cleaning our library area and reinforcing the shelves. Things have been moved around and spruced up to make this a comfortable and inviting place to sit and read. We're still at work but please take a minute to wander through and take a look at the shelves to find some good summer reading! Thank you to Beau Godde, Glenn Kowalske, and Joyce Ickes for working hard to get our library in good shape!

## Youth Group Cleans Up!!

The Youth Group held their final project for the school year on Sunday, April 18. Ten of our youth enjoyed a quick lunch at church after worship and then hit the streets to pick up trash around the downtown area, middle school, and along some of the streets around the school. While cleaning, they made their way to the new Sweet Shack for a well earned ice cream treat. They returned to make sure the church grounds were litter-free before heading home. Thanks to them all for making things a little cleaner in our community!





## Volunteers

### Liturgists

**May 2**

Jack Vandy Bogurt

**May 9**

Shirley Clothier

**May 16**

Dianne Backus

**May 23**

Ken MacNevin

**May 30**

Becky Davis

### Greeters

**May 2**

Rich & Polly Healy

**May 9**

Ralph & Ann Niehaus

**May 16**

Steve Hanway

**May 23**

Don & Diane Backus

**May 30**

Rosalind Jolly & Carol Stewart

### Coffee Hour Hosts

**May 2**

Suzanne Weeldreyer

**May 9**

TBD

**May 16**

Ralph & Ann Niehaus

**May 23**

JoEllen & Erin Gilbert

**May 30**

TBD

# News from Christian Education (Cont.)

## Teachers Touch Lives....And Change Them Forever!

Our teachers and their families enjoyed a wonderful breakfast on Sunday, May 2 before the worship service! The breakfast was to recognize and appreciate our teachers for the time and energy they give to the young students of our congregation. We will recognize our Christian Education Team in worship on June 6 so that everyone can have a chance to thank them. Well Done, Teachers!

**Teachers:** Jaime Collins, Lupe Fitch, Vicki Strand, Rose Almaraz, Julie Machalka, Christi Barrett, Kris Johnson, Mike Hagedorn, Carol Stewart

**Youth Group Leader:** Kristin Kowitz

**Adult Education:** Seth Weeldreyer, John Cox

**Substitute teachers:** Jean Cox, JoEllen Gilbert, Deb Cascioli, Missy Lillrose, Douglas Gilbertson

Thank you to Melanie Snodgrass, Jim Daily, Steve Hanway, and Kristin & Andy Dale for helping to organize the meal!

## Sunday School Update

As we bring this school year to a close, a couple of reminders about our Sunday school schedule:

- **May 23** is the last day of classes! This is Pentecost so wear red to celebrate!
- There will be **NO** Sunday school on **May 30** (Memorial Day Weekend) or **June 6** (Church Picnic). Children are welcome in worship and can enjoy a "Mystery Worship Bag" on those two Sundays! (*You'll just have to come and find out what the mystery is all about!*)
- **June 13** will be the first day of **Summer Praise Time!** Summer Praise Time is for all ages (Preschool - Fifth Grade) and is held at the same time as regular Sunday school classes; following the Time For Children. We will meet in the East Room where parents can pick up their child(ren) on the way to coffee hour.

## Sunday School Offering: The Fountain Clinic

A great big THANK YOU and WELL DONE, to our Sunday school classes! They've been so generous with their pennies, quarters and dollar bills that we've raised over \$500 this year to give to the Fountain Clinic. (We've still got another month to collect offering through the last day of classes on May 23.)

## PWA Garage Sale

Our Garage Sale in April was a great success! We made \$659, which will go a long way to help support the efforts of the many non-profit agencies we lend financial aid to each year. Last year, among others, we gave money to Mobile Meals, Charitable Union, Fountain Clinic, Salvation Army and the Humane Society. With the great start we've gotten this year, our hope is that we can continue to provide assistance to these important agencies in our community. We thank everyone in our church who donated the many nice pieces we were able to sell. And, we appreciate the patronage of the folks in our congregation who came in that day to purchase items. Whatever was left over at the end of the day was taken to our local Goodwill, so everything will eventually find a good home! We had so many women and men helping us throughout the weekend that we cannot name them all. But, you know who you are, and we certainly appreciate your time. It's true that "many hands make light work," and this was surely in evidence that weekend. Your PWA sends out a big THANK YOU to everyone who played a role in our success. We could not have done it without you!



# Calendar Highlights

<b>Sunday, May 2</b>	Fifth Sunday of Easter Communion Acts 11:1-18; John 13:31-35 Teacher Appreciation Breakfast
<b>Monday, May 3</b>	PWA Board Meeting, 7pm
<b>Saturday, May 8</b>	Euchre Night, 6:30pm
<b>Sunday, May 9</b>	Sixth Sunday of Easter Acts 16:9-15; John 20:1-19 Graduating Senior Recognition
<b>Monday, May 10</b>	Teams 6:30/7pm
<b>Tuesday, May 11</b>	Mary Martha, 10am
<b>Thursday, May 13</b>	PCFC Board Meeting, 6:15pm
<b>Friday, May 14</b>	AWOL, 6:30pm
<b>Sunday, May 16</b>	Seventh Sunday of Easter Guest Pastor: Curt Korten
<b>Monday, May 17</b>	Deacons, 7pm
<b>Sunday, May 23</b>	Pentecost Sunday Acts 2:1-21; John 21:1-19 Music Sunday
<b>Monday, May 24</b>	Session, 6:30pm
<b>Sunday, May 30</b>	Trinity Sunday Psalm 8; Romans 5:1-5

\*AA meets each night of the week at 8:00pm.\*

May Life at First Presbyterian Church						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Worship 10:15am Communion	3 PWA Board Mtg. 7pm	4 TOPS 8:30am	5 Choirs 6pm	6 Sip & Stitch 10am	7 Painters 1pm	8 Euchre Night 6:30pm
9 Worship 10:15am	10 Teams 6:30/7pm	11 TOPS 8:30am Mary Martha 10am	12 Choirs 6pm	13 Sip & Stitch 10am PCFC Board Mtg 6:15pm	14 Painters 1pm AWOL 6:30pm	15
16 Worship 10:15am	17 Deacons 7pm	18 TOPS 8:30am Esther Circle 7pm	19 Choirs 6pm	20 Sip & Stitch 10am	21 Painters 1pm	22
23 Worship 10:15am	24 Session 6:30pm	25 TOPS 8:30am	26 Choirs 6pm	27 Sip & Stitch 10am	28 Painters 1pm	29
30 Worship 10:15am	31 Memorial Day					

# First Light

## Birthdays

### May 1

Doug Earl  
John Cox

### May 3

April Missias

### May 4

Bill Orwig

### May 5

Chris Wigent

### May 6

Debbie Veale

Nick Vetter

### May 8

Dan McFadden

### May 9

Tyler Morris

### May 10

Allison Johnson

### May 12

Frances Wingerter

William Almaraz

### May 15

Lee Sherman

### May 17

Kari Grigowski

### May 18

Henry McIlwain

Stuart Sutherland

### May 19

Ellen Thornton

Jim Ayers

Liana Sutherland

### May 20

Kris Johnson

### May 23

Bonnie Anderson

### May 24

Carol Stewart

### May 25

Diane Zaharion

Brittany Johnson

### May 26

Becky Davis

Rachel Wojcik

### May 27

David Fitch

Brian Woods

### May 29

Joelle Knoch

Alexis Fitch

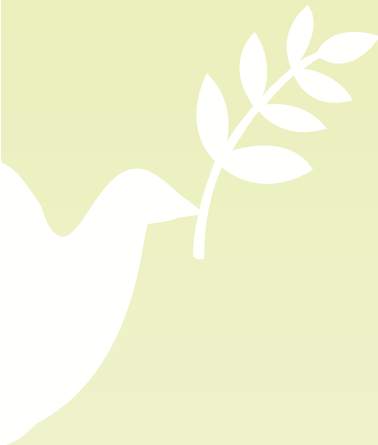
### May 30

Paul Ousley

### May 31

Allison Brownell





## Spiritual Development Opportunities

### Faith at 8:45 – If the Church Were Christian

We have just begun a new series centered on this book by Phillip Gulley. Gulley offers reflection on core characteristics that would define church life in faithfulness to Jesus way in our world.

- May 2 Ch 3 – Reconciliation Would Be Valued over Judgment
- May 9 Ch 4 – Gracious Behavior Would Be More Important Than Right Belief
- May 16 Ch 5 – Inviting Questions Would Be Valued More Than Supplying Answers
- May 23 Ch 6 – Encouraging Personal Exploration Would Be More Important Than Communal Uniformity
- May 30 Ch 7 – Meeting Needs Would Be More Important Than Maintaining Institutions

The book is available at Fireside Books here in Marshall. We meet in the Lounge before Sunday worship each week beginning at 8:45.

DVD – Bible Beginnings Bible Beginnings, our newest offering for adults and young adults, will continue this month. The group is meeting on Sunday afternoons following worship and Tuesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. (The group will meet only on Tuesdays for the first two weeks of this month due to the First Sunday Forum and the Annual Meeting.) Please watch the prayer chain and bulletin for updates on meeting dates and lessons to be covered. You are welcome to join at any time. Questions should be directed to John Cox.

First Sunday Forum – We'll delay meeting this month as our meeting for April was postponed for Easter. We'll plan to meet later this month (May 23 or 30?) as the first Sunday of June will be our picnic. We meet in the Conference Room after worship / fellowship time. If you have ideas for future discussions, please contact Seth!

## Properties Update

We need a few volunteers to help clean out closets and basement. As well, any church handyperson who would like to help build a closet in the SW corner of the Fellowship, please see Whitney Jonas.

## AWOL

May AWOL will be held at the home of Kat and Brad Whaley, 12421 15 ½ Mile Rd. on May 14th at 6:30pm. Please RSVP by May 10th at 269.781.2073 or email at [kat@graysmail.com](mailto:kat@graysmail.com).

## Church Picnic

**Fellowship Committee** is sponsoring our annual YEAR END CHURCH picnic to be held on **June 6<sup>th</sup>** at Ketchum Park following our church service. The picnic will be potluck. Fellowship committee will provide iced tea, lemonade, coffee, paper plates, napkins and cups.

## Euchre Night

Come join the fun!! It will be an evening of Euchre hosted by Shirley and Ed Clothier. The event will be held in Fellowship Hall on Saturday, May 8th beginning at 6:30pm. It will be run as a "tournament"...the rules are easy and will be explained that night. Sign-up sheets will be in coffee hour. Or you can RSVP to [edshirley2@charter.net](mailto:edshirley2@charter.net) or 781-2368. Guests are asked to bring an appetizer or dessert to pass, and a beverage for yourself. Child care will be considered if needed.



# Ushers Schedule

## May 2

Head Usher – Alex Kowitz  
Elevator – Ben Kowitz  
Bulletins – Adam Dale, Ally Johnson  
Acolytes – Nicholas Lillrose, Gabriel Weeldreyer

## May 9

Head Usher – Alex Veale  
Elevator – Mason Fitch  
Bulletins – Madison Gilbertson, Katie Howard  
Acolytes – Morgan Koetje, Ailih Weeldreyer

## May 16

Head Usher – Alex Kowitz  
Elevator – Ben Lillrose  
Bulletins – Allison Brownell, Riley Brownell  
Acolytes – Nicole Almaraz, Jamie Daily

If you cannot serve on your assigned Sunday, please arrange a trade or substitute, then notify Phil Mershon and the church office of your change - Thanks!

# Session Action

**At its April 2010 meeting, your Session took the following actions:**

- Received a report from the most recent meeting of Presbytery
- Approved the appointments of Brad Whaley as co-trustee and Whitney Jonas as successor trustee for the Irrevocable Maintenance Trust
- Approved the use of memorial funds designated for flowers and beautification to purchase new plants for the church grounds
- Received the March financial report for the Presbyterian Center for Children
- Approved the solicitation of sponsors for walkers, and also the sale of luminaries, as fund raisers for Relay for Life
- Approved a request from the congregation for snacks and craft materials for Vacation Bible School
- Received the March financial report from Presbyterian Women of Marshall
- Authorized the wedding of Amanda Cole and Chris Miller
- Decided to continue the process of working toward the establishment of a columbarium in the church
- Received notification from the pastor that he will be preaching a candidacy sermon on May 16 for the position of senior pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo

Respectfully submitted, Phil Mershon, Session Clerk

# PCFC Advisory Board Notes

- Reviewed letter received from former employee
- Reviewed and approved March Financials
- Discussed Center's options for Day After Thanksgiving
- Approved taking out a business income coverage insurance policy
- Approved changing our meeting date to the second Thursday of each month
- Discussed bus trip fundraiser
- Did a Cash for Class and Hungry Howie's fundraiser reminder

# First Light

## Teams

### Administrative Ministry Team

Whitney Jonas  
269.753.9951

#### Finance

Joelle Knoch  
269.789.1339

#### Personnel

Jim VanderWeg  
269.781.3432

#### Properties

Whitney Jonas  
269.753.9951

#### Stewardship

Rich Healey  
269.789.0665

### Community Outreach Ministry Team

Michael McNeil  
269.789.0721

#### Mission

JoEllen Gilbert  
269.789.1500

#### Evangelism

Doug Gilbertson  
269.781.3101

### Spiritual Life Ministry Team

Diane Kowalske  
269.781.8529

#### Worship

Ken MacNevin  
269.781.3329

#### Christian Education

Steve Hanway  
269.789.0827

#### Fellowship

Creighton Sherman  
269.781.2267

Shirley Clouthier  
269.781.2368

### Deacons

Karen Earl  
269.781.3211

### Women's Association

Lisa DeGraw  
269.841.6787



# Youth Group Clean Up Day 2010



(Front, l to r) Alex Kowitz, Ben Kowitz, Gabriel Weeldreyer, Ally Foreman,  
Alex Veale, Ailih Weeldreyer, Morgan Koetje, Nick Vetter  
(Back, l to r) Nicole Almaraz, Nathaniel Weeldreyer

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