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		<i>Press</i>	

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**Building faith-filled relationships with God, one another, and the world.**

## On the Journey

A recent study by the Pew Forum on Religion in Public Life revealed that over 40 percent of adults switched their religious affiliation from the Christian tradition in which they were raised to a new Christian tradition altogether. Our experience in the faith community of First Church conforms to this finding. Indeed, the number of new Presbyterians may be even higher than the reported finding.

We are a congregation of people from diverse Christian backgrounds. Some of our community were raised in Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, or Nazarene churches. Others came from Mormon families, Baptist congregations, Mennonite or Brethren roots and even from the Episcopal Church in America and the United Church of Christ.

From time to time our congregation has been asked to think aloud about the qualities of our faith community that have attracted them to First Presbyterian Church. Many responses are given, but at the top of most lists is the view that the scriptures are handled with care and that there is an openmindedness about tradition and doctrine. Those joining often say something like “I knew it was the right place for me; I am encouraged to think for myself and supported in my spiritual growth.”

Left unsaid, perhaps because it is unrecognized, is the source of these virtues. Every Christian congregation shares much in common. But each congregation has a shaping influence

that typically stretches back hundreds of years or more.

We share with other Christians the essentials of the Christian faith expressed in the earliest creeds of the church. However, we live out the faith in a way that is particularly shaped by the gift of John Calvin.

Calvin’s reformation in Geneva is the foundation for our particular understanding of how to live the Christian faith. His emphases on the sovereignty of God, on the prevalence of grace, and on the loving election of God for each of us to Christian service and the shared calling to ministry of pastors, elders, and deacons continue to shape us. His insistence that the best public order is one that reflects care for the least among us is a lively influence on our outreach, teaching, and preaching.

The current year marks the 500th anniversary of Calvin’s birth. The Presbyterian Church (USA) and other such bodies around in the world are celebrating Calvin’s birth in a wide variety of ways. Some congregations are asking every person— from the very young on up— to gather 500 coins and give them to a local mission. You might consider doing so yourself for Project CATCH. Others are committing to writing 500 cards of support and encouragement throughout the year. We come close to that goal every year through the ministry of



Nita Sherill, Maxine Randall, Rhoby Swartley, Jan Scripps, and others who have written such encouraging notes as part of our pastoral care ministry. Others have committed to reading 500 minutes of scripture throughout the year. You might consider devoting that time (about 10 minutes a week, or a bit more if you are just starting up). Others might commit to 500 pages of scripture each year until you make it all the way through the scripture. One person in another church committed to taking 500 pictures of the life of their congregation and then selecting among them for a set of Christmas cards at the end of the year. What do you think? Interested?

A few people have decided to actually read Calvin. Perhaps you want to try that with a group of folks. If so, please let me know, because it would be a pleasure for me to read Calvin again. The truth of the

matter is that not a year passes in my pastoral ministry that I don't at several points turn again to Calvin for wisdom and guidance. Calvin has a reputation for a kind of mirthless severity. There was much that was stern and severe about Calvin. And clearly he is not the final authority on things. He was a committed scholar and yet, regarding the life of the mind, he wrote: "There is no worse screen to block out the Spirit than confidence in our own intelligence."

Leaning forward into the joy of Easter, it may be beneficial to give the last word, in this column, to Calvin in a passage on joy: "There is not one blade of grass, there is no color in this world that is not intended to make us rejoice."

*Blessings and peace,*

*Mark*

## Grace Note

Two things have become quite apparent to me these last few months. One, the love and affection my Saviour has for me if I but meditate and listen for his love. Two, the tremendous support and learning that has come from Ben and Nita Sherrill's writing class. It seems overwhelming at first, but it is so very important to our loved ones, especially children, to leave a written legacy. To them I say thank you.

*Diane Sower*

## March Friendship Dinner

We served about 110 at the Friendship Dinner on Thursday, March 5. Thanks to all who participated!

*Bill Brudenell*

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## First Presbyterian Church Voted Most Warm and Welcoming Church!

Wouldn't it be great to be able to actually print that headline and mean it? But are we really that warm and welcoming? Many of us would answer yes we are, and we might be right... to a degree. We are *almost* always warm and welcoming to those we know. And many of us make an effort to be warm and welcoming to those we don't know. But do we do enough? The answer to that is a resounding no.

Folks will come for the first time to worship with us for a variety of reasons: because a friend invited them, because we are downtown and they drive by every day, because they are looking for a Presbyterian church, because they attended a forum lecture and heard Mark speak. They continue to come back and become involved in the life of our faith community in large part based on how welcome they felt. Church surveys indicate that most first-time visitors to a church decide their comfort level within the first eleven minutes of being in a new church. And the majority of those decide whether or not they will come back by the time they walk out the doors.

In conversations that I have weekly with people who are new to our faith community, I get a variety of responses to the question, "How was your first experience in worship with us?" Responses range from "wonderful and welcoming" to "it's not the warmest church I have ever been to," and there are a whole lot in between. When I ask

"What makes a warm and welcoming church?" I hear "when others introduce themselves," "when someone says they are glad I am there," "being invited to join them in the coffee time," "when someone can answer my questions about where is the rest room, where is the nursery." You can see it doesn't take much to give folks a sense of being welcomed.



No matter how good we think we are or how good we actually are at being a welcoming church, we can always do better. I encourage you to think back about the first time you came to worship at First Church. Was it a positive experience? Did someone in the congregation go out of the way to introduce himself or herself to you and say "I'm glad you're here"?

Beginning in April I will have an "Answers to frequently asked questions" card for the greeters— and available for all of us so we can help new folks find their way around our building. I am asking each of you to think about what grade or rating you would give yourself— not the faith community as a whole, but just yourself— when it comes to being a welcoming presence on Sunday morning. For some of us, it's easy to approach someone we don't know and begin a conversation. For others of us, this is way out of our comfort zone. As we come into Holy Week and the Easter season, there will be an increasing number of visitors in worship each Sunday. I am asking you to move out of your comfort zone:

If your first experience at First

Church was positive, do you want to extend that same gift to someone else?

If your first experience at First Church was not so warm and welcoming, do you want to spare someone else that experience and make his or hers a positive one?

Make it a point each Sunday to meet someone you don't know.

Before worship and during the greeting, locate someone you don't know. Walk across or down the aisle and welcome someone new. Visit with folks other than those you know and visit with every Sunday.

If you stay for coffee hour, invite a new person to come with you and introduce him or her to others.

If you don't usually stay for coffee hour, decide to stay and participate during this Lenten season.

You might make some new friends or get reacquainted with some old friends. One thing is sure: If we all make a little extra effort, First Church will move way up on the scale of warm and welcoming churches and we will be further along the path of living out our purpose statement, which declares that we are a faith community ***committed to building faith-filled relationships with God, one another, and the world!***

Working at it together, we can make the headline **First Presbyterian Church Voted Most Warm and Welcoming Church!** a reality.

*Blessings and happy greeting,*

*JoAnn*

## From the Editor

The deadline for the May 2009 issue of *First Press* is Wednesday, April 8— two days earlier than usual. I'm going to help Oregon celebrate its 150th birthday and need to have the newsletter "put to bed" before I set off on the 15th. It is, as always, very helpful to have material in hand on the deadline. So: if you will have a problem getting material to me by the 8th, ***please contact me well in advance of the deadline.*** Of course, early submissions are ALWAYS very welcome indeed; don't hesitate to send articles whenever you think of something that ought to be in *First Press*, and it'll go into files right away.

Material can be sent electronically, as separate files in Word or WordPerfect or as e-mails, to [austin\\_bott@rmci.net](mailto:austin_bott@rmci.net). ***If your story includes a picture or other graphic, please send it as a separate file as well as within the story itself; that gives the layout people more flexibility.*** Stories can also be put as "hard copy" in the First Press folder attached to the desk in the outer church office.

If you have any questions, concerns, or ideas, please don't hesitate to e-mail me at the above address, call me at 327-0053, or write me at 6508 Hummel Drive, Boise 83709.

Thank you!

*Judy Austin*

## Joanna

Don't Just Go to Church,  
Be the Church— Because  
We are the Church!

Being a Christian is more than just sitting in the pew on Sunday morning listening to scripture, a sermon, some music and prayers. Being Christian is about living a well-rounded full life. It is getting out there in the world, both inside and outside the walls of 950 West State Street. Oh, don't get me

wrong; I am not necessarily talking about standing on the street corner holding up a sign or knocking on the stranger's door. What I am talking about is being engaged as a Christian in the world— seeking to share God's love and message in a ton of different ways. I am talking about taking what you believe and putting it into action!



There are many ways to live out your faith. Your age and size don't matter; it's where your heart and soul reside that matters. Go out and serve your neighbor, take a meal to someone, teach a life lesson, sing for the Lord, join a Bible study, drive a friend, lead a study, be a surrogate grandparent or grandchild, be a prayer partner, go on mission trip, lend a hand or shoulder, coordinate an outreach event, invite a friend to worship, event, meeting, pick up that trash instead of walking by it! What are events, people, life experiences that come to mind when you consider how to live your faith? Don't be afraid to BE the church!

Being the church— living one's faith— comes in all different shapes and sizes. If each one took a little bit, it would go a long way. Just as the 5 loaves and 2 fish feed thousands, imagine what 400 people could do— just a little bit each. Ask me about my pennies going a long way!

Check out some of the ways WE are the church already!

*Joanna*



## The Presbyterian Hymnal and its Indexes

Two months ago I promised that I would answer several monumental questions as well as give enlightenment, elucidation, and a clear understanding about the Indexes at the back of the Presbyterian Hymnal so you will no longer be bewitched, bothered, and bewildered about any of this. Sit back, my friends, and enjoy your double white chocolate mocha grande frappuccino latte; the enlightenment is about to begin!

### **Question #1 – How much has John Calvin contributed to our hymnal?**

Answer – Turn to p. 677 (“Index of Authors, Translators, and Sources”) where you will see that John Calvin (1509-1564) has one reference: Hymn #457, *I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art*. The words are attributed to John Calvin. The other three sources that are listed refer to the melody source. Elizabeth Lee Smith is shown as the translator.

### **Questions #2 – Did Calvin compose any melodies in our hymnal?**

Answer – On p. 682 of the “Index of Composers, Arrangers, and Sources” there is nothing shown for Calvin. Beethoven, however, has three listings and Bach twenty.

### **Question #3 – What is the word in capitals (TOULON) under the title of Calvin’s hymn?**

Answer – Every hymn has a TUNE (melody) name. You will find Calvin’s TUNE in the “Index of Tune Names” on p. 709 of the hymnal. There is another hymn shown for this same TUNE, #375,

*Lord of All Good*. Albert F. Bayly used Calvin’s TOUNLON but wrote a new set of words in 1962. Do you recognize either of the hymns? If not, there’s a good reason: in the two years I have been at First Church we have not sung either of these. I don’t think I have ever played them in any church! Why not??? Suffice to say that the words far surpass the music. As for familiar hymns: what is the Tune name for *Silent Night, Holy Night*? STILLE NACHT. The TUNE name for *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*? EIN’ FESTE BURG.



**Question #4 – All that stuff is fine and dandy, but those numbers next to the TUNE name must be some secretive cosmic Presbyterian stuff with Dan Brown implications, right?**

Answer – Absolutely. However, you will never see Dan Brown’s name in relation to any of this in the hymnal.

**Question #5 – Spare me the humor. You’re kidding, right?**

Answer – Yes, I jest. The numbers relate to the number of syllables in each sentence. Calvin’s TOUNLON (#457) has four sentences per verse with each sentence containing ten syllables, hence 10.10.10.10. Would you like to sing Calvin’s words but not the TUNE? Simple; go to p. 704 of the “Metrical Index of Tunes.” There you will see nine other hymns with the same meter of 10.10.10.10. But there is a catch: It is not possible (unless you are a reptile) to sing the words of one hymn to the melody of a different hymn because two separate pages are involved.

Solution? Find a melody that is well known such as MORECAMBE,

Hymn #326 (*Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart*), and sing Calvin's words to it. We have done that many times with psalms, i.e., a well-known melody with new words.

**Question 6 – What? Another of your fake, non-questions? No, this is real. What if you are leading a Bible study, getting married, getting baptized—you get the idea— something is happening in your life and you need some music for it?**

Answer – Turn to the “Topical Index”

on p. 692. You will find hymn suggestions there for just about everything except your pet going to heaven (sorry about that). Also, you can find related hymns for certain scriptures. Turn back to p. 688 to the “Index of Scriptural Allusions.” For your Bible study class, do you need a hymn for Matthew 6:10? Not to worry; Hymn #425 (*Lord of Light, Your Name Outshining*) has something for you. Neat, eh!

Now you know the secrets. Go caffeinated forward and angst no more.

## News from Troop 33

In April, the Troop will meet on the 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th. The April campout is the Willow Creek Camporee on Big Willow Creek north of Emmett. This event is a tough competition that the Scouts look forward to each year. The Camporee is on the 17th, 18th, and 19th.

In May, the Troop will meet on the 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th. The May campout will be at Succor Creek State Park on the 9th and 10th.

The Troop meets in Lindsay Hall basement on most Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. For more information call Brian Anderson, 389-4742, or Bill Harenberg, 344-2369. Check out the Troop's web site at [www.boisetroop33.org](http://www.boisetroop33.org).

## Cub Scout Pack 33 Update

In February, Pack 33 was given a gift by a young man named Ben Kemper. Ben is a professional story-teller. He is 17 and a junior at Boise High School with a resume' as long as my arm. Ben kept the boys riv-

eted with a story about a troll that he once encountered on his way home from school (true story!). To hear Ben tell a story, see his website at [www.benkemperstoryteller.com](http://www.benkemperstoryteller.com). You too will be in for a treat!

*Cydney Shubin*  
Cubmaster

## In the Faith Forest

The children ages 3-10 have been busy learning about building relationships with God, each other, and the world each week. In February and March they learned some Healing Stories and about Palm Sunday. As we look ahead to April and May: they will be studying the Great Commandment and Philip and the Ethiopian. Feel free to ask one of the children what they are learning.

We are always looking for people to support the Faith Forest program. We especially need help in leading or assisting with lessons on Sundays from 10:00 to 11:00. Please contact Joanna Dunn or Nikki Cooley if you could help support this program.

## From the Library

As Holy Week starts early this month, we invite the adults to select from our books by such authors as Peter Marshall, Max Lucado, and Paul Maier. In addition:

*Were You There? Finding Ourselves at the Foot of the Cross*, by Erik Corbell. The author “explores how each person or group responded differently to Jesus’ predicament” and shows how we can “find a reflection of ourselves in these characters.”

Marcus J. Borg and John Dominic Crossan have collaborated to write *The Last Week: What the Gospels Really Teach about Jesus’s Final Days in Jerusalem*. Using the Gospel of Mark,. They follow the day-by-day account of the week leading to Easter and find “profound insights into the political and spiritual dynamics of Jesus’s True Passion— his message of the Kingdom of God.”

Let your children select from our many books for Easter and Spring on display or from all the other books on the shelves.

Long on the best-seller list has been the book *The Shack*, by William P. Young. In case you haven’t yet read it, it is now available in the library. This is an unusual presentation of forgiveness.

Thanks to you who were in attendance Sunday, March 8, for helping to make the Book Fair a success. Everyone gave generously and cleared out many books. Thanks to all who donated books to help make this possible.

*Kathleen McClenahan  
for the library team*

## Christian Formation Events

***Trash or Treasure? – Rummage Sale Saturday, May 16*** This year the 6th-12th graders will be having a rummage sale! We will be collecting gently used and new items. Please support us by bringing in your donations, especially as you do your spring cleaning. You can bring them to the church starting April 1. For larger items, please bring them the week of May 10, or we can arrange for them to be picked up.

***Technology and the Church***. Adult Christian Formation Class, Sundays, April 19 and 26.

From communication, to information, to resources, to tools, to being the church!

***Easter Egg Hunt*** for Children 5th grade and under, Saturday, April 11, at 3 p.m. Donations accepted! Invite your friends to join in the search. Please RSVP to joannad@first-presbyterian.org or 345-3441, ext. 119.

***Biking Event***. FLY (Faith Living Youth— grades 6-8), April 26; times and details to be determined.

***PAC (Parents and Children) fellowship***. Potluck dinner and fellowship at the home of Jim Wolf and Dinu Mistry, April 5, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

***Sawtooth Opening Work Weekend!*** Mark your calendars for Memorial Day weekend, May 23-25. There’s a new Greeling Hall! We clean, we cook, we test things out, we even cut trees down! There is enough to do for everyone, no matter your age and size. If you have questions, ask John Hicks or John Harrenburg— or Nikki and Troy Cooley, who have gone for several years. It helps to have an idea of the number of people so the camp folks can plan, and maybe some of us can plan activities for kids— including WORK and PLAY!



**CATCH!**

THANK YOU for your generous gifts to the Catch program! Financial gifts allow us to pay monthly rent for our family, and the gifts of new and used household items help any family in the program. Such gifts of love are a source of encouragement and hope to the recipients!

In February Ruth Galey had the pleasant task of delivering new handmade quilts to our CATCH family. Ruth took several quilts to the apartment; then Tracy and her sons, Christian and Nicholas, chose the three they would like to keep. They were delighted.

The warm, colorful quilts were designed and made by women in our congregation. The group is called “Quilting from the Heart” and it meets every Thursday in Lindsay Hall between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. You are invited to join in the fun whether you are a beginner or an expert with a needle!

**Here’s a Story, About a Group of People...**

If you’re familiar with the all-popular “Brady Bunch” show from the early 70s, then you’ll have no trouble making your way through this article as you hum the tune. If you’re not familiar with the theme song to the “Brady Bunch,” I apologize. Maybe a friend who knows the song can hum it for you!

*Here’s a story, about a group of people, who attended different services at the church.  
 They were one team, worshipping all together, yes, they were just one group.  
 Then the Blue Heart who’s a Red Heart said to all of them, it’s our month to provide the fellowship.  
 So she e-mailed and she wrote them all a letter, yes, it was all so hip.  
 Then they signed up for the greeting, coffee, and cookies, and made all the tasks and duties seem so serene.  
 Yes, they were one group working all together, yes, they were Team 13.  
 Then on Wednesdays they prepared yummy suppers, and invited all their friends to come and sit.  
 Yes, they set up, served the food and did the dishes, yes it was quite a hit!  
 Then one day their month of service was all over, and it seemed their month of service really flew.  
 Yes the Service and Fellowship is only successful, if your team can count on YOU!*

Thank you once again, Team #13! February’s fellowship went smoothly and joyfully, due to each person’s willingness to be a part of the TEAM: Judy Austin & Don Bott; Terri Muse; Andy, Pete, and Mike Larson; Ron & Yvette Ingalls; John & Karin Hart; Ed & Betsy Galtney; Lula Sortwell; Ken Spriggs; Margie, Alex, & Todd Lundquist; Jean Butts; Libby Butts; and Ron Eardley. You guys are the Best!

*Shelly Slater  
 Red Heart for Service & Fellowship, Team 13 Blue Heart Leader*

Editor’s note: on behalf of the team, thanks to Shelly for her wonderful work as our leader!

## Planning for the Future— and for Your Loved Ones

*A reminder, both of concerns we should all have and of an opportunity to address them:*

As we move forward into a new year, it is usual that we look back at the year just past. We reflect on how the events of the world, of our community, within our work and our families, affected our lives. Some find it helpful to put pen to paper and write— without editing yourself. Let your thoughts of the blessings of the past year flow out through your pen. As we look to the future we find reasons for hope. Perhaps for you it is because we have a new President and we hope for change in our economy and the world situation. Perhaps you have had a marriage in your family or the birth of a new baby. Whatever your blessings and your hopes, it can be very enlightening when you let your thoughts flow through the pen or pencil and then read what you have written.

As I reflected on this past year, I realized the anniversaries of the death of two significant people in my life still impact me greatly. In the same week that I had done my journaling, someone spoke to me about the End of Life Planning Booklets that were developed several years ago, about the same time that my mother died. My mother was a blessing to me throughout her life and, as was her way, she had prepared to take care of my brother and me even at her death. Having lived through the deaths of two husbands, she understood the multitude of decisions to be made under the most stressful emotional circumstances. Because she wanted a sad and emotional time to be as easy as possible for us, she planned her funeral years before she died. What a gift that was to us! It was all there in writing, funeral and burial plans, where documents were kept; and she had added my brother to all of her accounts. Most of the decisions and plans had been made, and we needed only to carry out her last wishes.

I have sat with many folks after the death

of a loved one. In some cases we reviewed together the last wishes that had been written down and planned a service accordingly. In other cases I have talked through decisions with family members doing the best they could to make decisions. They could only hope their decisions would be according to what their loved one would want, because they had never really discussed it.

The end-of-life planning book is a document that can convey our choice of music and scripture, our preference for funeral arrangements, pertinent information about our life to be included in an obituary, and financial and legal information. We included all that it seemed to us from our collective experience would make things as easy as possible for our loved ones who have the responsibility of handling things at our death.

Death is a truth of life. While most of us hope it will come later rather than sooner, we know it will come eventually. As Christians we believe this is only the end of life as we know it, and— trusting in the promise of God and the hope of the resurrection— we believe that there is life beyond what we know.

Whether you are 30 something or 80 something or somewhere in between, as you look to the coming year and make promises to yourself about what will be different this year from last, consider the gift of planning that your loved ones will receive at the occasion of your death. While some of us might find this a difficult thing to do, or even confusing, I can tell you from personal experience that it is truly a loving thing to do.

At the suggestion of a couple of folks, we will have a class on April 26 following the 11:00 service to look over the booklets and begin the process of filling them in. If you would like to know more about the booklet of last wishes or if you would like to participate in the class, please call me: 345.3441 ext 118. We will make it an enjoyable and informative time as we plan together.

Blessings and hope for the coming year,

*JoAnn*

## Session Retreat

The Session held its annual retreat in March. The two-day schedule gives Session members time to discuss issues in depth, to spend more time than usual talking with one another, and to develop goals for the coming year. Goals adopted for 2009-2010 are:

- > to establish procedures for reviewing programs and actions of all committees, bodies, and organizations in the church;
- > to come into conformity with Section G-14.0240 of the *Book of Order* of the PC (USA);
- > to allow time at every Session meeting to review ongoing personal outreach efforts;
- > to find a replacement for the current Clerk of Session by October of 2009 to allow for an overlap training period;
- > to improve communications with the congregation by (1) redesign of *First Press* by the end of 2009; (2) distributing "hot sheets" with important Session news on the Sunday following a Session meeting; (3) hosting an additional Town Hall meeting in 2009; and (4) completing redesign of the First Church website by September of 2009.

In addition, as the "hot sheets" distributed on March 15 indicated, the Session took a big step forward in the Lindsay Building project by authorizing a revised "scope of work" for the project and by deciding to conduct a capital campaign next fall to support the Lindsay Building renovation. Although all estimates are not yet available, the Session authorized a fundraising goal of up to \$1 million.

### **Lindsay Building project**

The Lindsay Building renovation is a revised, scaled-down version of earlier plans presented to the congregation, with the most significant change the deletion of the outdoor courtyard. The fundraising goal of

up to \$1 million is a 50 percent reduction of the earlier plan.

In April, Paul Shubin and Ron Ingalls will bring to the Session a recommendation for the composition of a Lindsay Building Renovation Committee to monitor the project. Key elements of the project include remodeling Lindsay Hall (the banquet hall), refurbishing the kitchen, enhancing the 9th Street entrance to Lindsay (including renovation of the bathrooms), repairing the north and south stairwells to make them safer, and adding an entrance to Lindsay from the garden area. The new entrance is intended to alleviate the bottleneck that develops when people are entering Lindsay, leaving Lindsay, and taking dirty dishes up to the dishwashing counter.

Compared to the original plan, the revised plan eliminates remodeling of the sixth floor Christian Education area and of the Lindsay basement and eliminates the outdoor sunken courtyard. Thus, the work done on the Lindsay project will not be as disruptive to those who use the sixth floor and basement areas.

Of great concern to Session members was the feasibility of proceeding with the project under the present economic circumstances. The revised project focuses on safety, practicality, and usefulness to the congregation. More information about the fundraising proposal will be made available as additional estimates are submitted.

Meantime, the Session's Facilities Commission has established its own goals for the year: installing a new security system for the building, improving lighting in the sanctuary, reducing energy usage by 5 percent, and establishing a disaster preparedness awareness and planning program. Joe Galey will head up the disaster preparedness efforts and will return to the Session in April with suggestions for membership from the congregation.

### **Clerk of Session**

Lindy High, who has served as Clerk of Session for several years, announced that she will leave the position as of this coming December. Bonnie Lind and John Hicks will lead the search for a new Clerk. Anyone interested in the position is invited to call Lindy at 336-2647. Responsibilities of the position include maintaining minutes of Session and Congregational meetings, preparing reports on Session decisions for the congregation, signing documents for membership, preparing the annual statistical report required by the PC(USA), and monitoring Congregational bylaws and Session rules to ensure that any amendments are done correctly.

### **Examinations of new church officers**

Section G-14.0240 of the *Book of Order* requires the Session to “confer” with newly elected elders and deacons “as to their willingness to undertake the office.” Although orientation sessions are arranged for the new officers, the Session has not offered any type of examination, which, according to the *Book of Order*, is to include examination of personal faith; knowledge of the doctrine, government, and discipline contained in the Constitution of the church; and the duties of the office. If a new officer is not approved, the Session is to report its decision to the nominating committee, which is to find another candidate.

Several Session members expressed concern about the *Book of Order* schedule, which provides first for election of officers by the congregation, and then for the examination. During the coming year, the Session will decide how best to comply with the requirement.

### **Ongoing outreach efforts**

For the past couple of years, the Session has focused much attention on First Church membership and on ways to increase both attendance and membership. One way is through the Inviting Church Ministry, which has sponsored a variety of activities, from public policy forums to the Christmas-season performance of “Messiah,” to expose more people to First Church’s programs.

Another effort falls directly to Session members, who are asked at almost every meeting to think of people who have not been seen lately at church and to reach out to those persons to find out why they have not been in attendance.

The *Book of Order* requires the Session each year to review the church’s membership rolls and to move from the active list to the inactive list anyone who has “failed intentionally to participate in the work and worship of the church for a period of one year.” Last year the Session contacted those who had been absent from church for a year to ask whether they wished to be retained as active members. In December, the Session approved a shift from active to inactive for those who either did not respond to the inquiry or indicated they wanted to be listed on the inactive rolls.

At its retreat, the Session agreed to follow up with those who had been placed on the inactive list. Session members will contact those members to find out why they decided to become inactive and will report back to the full Session.

### **Committee, organization review**

The *Book of Order* includes this requirement:

**The congregation of a particular church and the committees, bodies,**

**and organizations of that church shall report annually all proceedings and actions to the session, which shall review and summarize them and incorporate the summary in its minutes.**

At First Church, all subunits of the church submit annual reports in writing, and those are compiled in the annual report of the church. However, compliance with the *Book of Order* requires the Session to take earlier action to monitor and report on the activities of those subunits. To that end, during the coming year the Session's Personnel Committee will be responsible for establishing procedures "for reviewing programs and actions of all committees, bodies, and organizations in the church."

#### **Improving communications**

Over the past several years, First Church's Session has tried in a variety of ways to improve how it communicates its decisions and actions to the congregation. Those have included adding "Session Notes" to each issue of *First Press*, asking Elders of the Month to make announcements during church services, adding e-mail to remind members of the congregation of various events and activities, sending letters, and updating First Church's website (a project nearing completion). However, comments made at the recent Town Hall meeting indicated there are still areas of improvement.

To that end, the Session will hold a special meeting on March 23 to consider the best ways to respond to issues raised during the Town Hall meeting. In addition, the Session adopted a goal of finding new ways to improve communications with the congregation. Finally, the Session agreed to hold another Town Hall meeting— a time for open exchange of comments and questions— during the coming year.

#### **Stewardship campaign**

The Session reviewed preliminary plans for the 2009 Stewardship Campaign. George Coburn, convenor of the Operations Commission, outlined a preliminary schedule that includes a mailing, informational sessions, announcements made during worship, and a "Pledge Sunday" luncheon after a single service on May 31. The details will be decided during a special Session meeting on March 23.

Members of the staff attending the retreat— Mark Davis, JoAnn Thiry, Joanna Dunn, and Michael Civiello— added their perspectives and insights to the long conversations held during the two-day meeting.

*Lindy High  
Clerk of Session*

#### **Support & Endowment**

The Support & Endowment Management Committee will meet Thursday, April 23 at 7:30 a.m. at the Owyhee Plaza Grill. Meetings are open. For further information, contact Marilyn Fordham at [mmfordham@aol.com](mailto:mmfordham@aol.com).

#### **Stewardship Campaign**

This spring you will be asked to consider your annual pledge to support the life and ministry of First Church. The Church operates on a fiscal year of July 1 to June 30, so your personal decision to support the church financially is critical at this time. Without your pledge, the Session can not make informed decisions about how best to fund church operations. We ask you to pray about your decision to pledge to support the work of our church and to attend one of the several information sessions that will be held on Sunday mornings during late April and early May. Mark your calendar for **Sunday, May 31, for the Pledge Sunday Luncheon following the 11:00 combined worship service.**

## Session Notes

During its meeting of February 23, 2009, the Session:

> **Approved the One Great Hour of Sharing offering** and authorized a free-will offering to be taken in conjunction with the College of Idaho choir concert on March 29.

> **Approved submission of the Annual Statistical Report** for the calendar year ending December 31, 2008. The annual report is submitted to the Presbytery of Boise and to the PC(USA) and includes information about church membership, finances, Christian education, and use of PC(USA) materials and resources. According to the latest report, First Church now has a membership of 389, of which the largest age group—125— is over the age of 65.

> **Heard a report from Steve Severn, First Church Treasurer, on year-to-date finances.** As of the end of January, revenues at FPC were about \$9,000 below projected levels. At the same time, expenditures were more than \$28,000 below budgeted levels, thanks to the work of the church staff in holding expenses down. The Session's Operations Commission will look at ways of communicating more with the congregation about First Church's financial status throughout the year.

> **Approved the baptism** of Savannah Fisch, daughter of Michael Fisch and Kelly Wedeven, on March 22, 2009, and **authorized the issuance of a certificate of transfer** to First Presbyterian Church of Bellingham, Washington, for Doug and Pat Sterret.

> **Reviewed recent work of the Facilities Commission**, which currently has a substantial surplus in its budget for the year. However, convenor Tony Gonzalez noted that last year the commission had to cover \$34,000 in unanticipated expenses, including an unexpectedly high billing for snow removal. This year, he said, costs were reduced because Mike Sanders and Spence Stout have done much of the snow removal work. Still pending this year are installation of a new security system and the addition of new lighting in the sanctuary, but the commission will wait until closer to the end of the budget year to make a final decision on the lighting project.

> **Updated itself on the pastor's performance evaluation.** As of the February meeting, Bonnie Lind, convenor of the Personnel Committee, had received about 100 responses to the questionnaire distributed on a performance evaluation for Mark Davis. She said she will be analyzing the responses and giving a full report at the Session's retreat this year.

> **Received a report from Joanna Dunn** on the status of First Church's children's, youth, and adult Christian formation programs. Children's programs include child care, the weekly "Celebration Chapel" for children between the age of four and third grade, and "Faith Forest," which now has a core group of leaders. Youth Ministry programs include Sunday and Wednesday programs, the Thursday lunch outreach program that draws between 60 and 80 youths to First Church, mission trips and fundraising activities, and monthly programs. Among the programs for adults

are classes, development of a YMCA seniors program, and a family ministry.

**Reviewed plans for the new members' class** being offered as "Boise First and You." JoAnn Thiry said 10 persons have joined the five-week course, which includes sessions on being Christian in the Presbyterian tradition, being a Presbyterian at First Church, and the meaning of church membership. She urged Session members to attend the class whenever possible to introduce themselves to the prospective members.

*Lindy High  
Clerk of Session*

**Elders of the Month** for April are Mike Thomas, 938-2694, and Bonnie Lind, 484-7551.

## News from Camp Sawtooth

### Memorial Weekend Work!

The *beginning* list of projects for those who come to Camp Sawtooth Friday evening, May 22, through Monday, May 25, includes:

- > RV Park: Install five frost-free hydrants
- > Greeling Hall: Install storage cabinets
- > Popma Chapel: Re-attach benches & cross; install new doors
- > Cabins: General cleaning
- > Pine Tree & Maple: Repair windows
- > Roads: Need to be graded and raked (bring your wheelbarrows, shovels, rakes, and leather gloves)
- > Move rocks to line paths
- > Manager's Cabin: Remove chimney; install metal on roof
- > Make your reservations early: directorscampsawtooth@yahoo.com. Bring your RV or stay in a cabin; meals are provided Saturday-Monday.

Opening "Work" Weekend involves more than just "work." To begin the 2009 Camping Season, you are welcome to join in a Prayer

Walk at any time throughout the weekend.

Beginning Saturday morning after breakfast as each one chooses a task, we will pray to start the day, and posted at each facility will be prayer requests and scriptures. Walk and pray as a group, alone, two by two; or pray as you work. We want to cover the Camp from the Camp Fire Station north of the Chapel to the cabins at the south end. It will be like a treasure hunt through prayer. Colossians 2:3 says "In Christ Jesus are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

There will be a time of dedication of the Greeling Hall and the Popma Room remodel, and Prayer Partners will be organized for the 2009 Summer Program Staff and Deans with a sign-up sheet available.

If you would like to receive prayer requests via e-mail, and/or be a prayer partner, please e-mail the Directors.

### Staff needs

Camp Sawtooth is still looking for staff to fill the following positions:

- > *Program Staff* – three positions, male staff
- > *Assistant Cook* – one position
- > *Volunteers* – Program Staff-In-Training (PSIT), teens; Cabin Parents or Camp Host

### Remodeling Projects Completed in 2008

#### *Popma Chapel*

- > Trenching/conduit, Hawley Lodge to Popma Chapel
- > Updated electrical wiring from Hawley Lodge to Chapel
- > Sandblasted & clearcoated walls/ceiling/pews; stained floor.

#### *RV Park*

- > Trenching/waterlines/conduit, Hawley Lodge to RV Park
- > Electrical wiring and RV hook-ups

#### *Greeling Hall Bathroom Remodel*

- > Trenching/conduit/waterlines from Hawley Lodge to Greeling Hall
- > Electrical from main power transformer to Greeling Hall



## 1st Presbyterian The Church Family

### April Birthdays

April 1	Terri Muse	April 14	Margie Fischer
April 3	Sidney Asker		Allison George
	Mark Matsko	April 16	Louise Nagel
	Nick Stoppello		Todd Miller
April 5	Eloise Anderson	April 17	Bette O'Loughlin
	Lula Sortwell	April 19	Jennifer George
	Janet Eyth	April 20	David DeLawyer
April 6	Cordia Davies	April 23	Bill Harenberg
April 6	Day Thomas		Nancy Kirk
April 7	Tom King	April 25	Ben Sherrill
	Chris Melgaard		Colton Slater
April 8	Diane Sower	April 26	Bernice Wise
April 9	Kapono Dunn	April 28	John Pickrell
April 10	Ann Kluckhohn		Carrie Zanders
	Jane Whitman		Robin Matsko
	Don Collins, Sr.	April 30	Marie Reser
April 11	Elinor Brown		Kelly Winans
	Sam Lewis		Kaitlin Marsh
			Ben DeLawyer

### ATTENDANCE AND GIVING

*Attendance includes all Sunday services and those on special days in the Church calendar (for example, Ash Wednesday and Christmas Eve) and services led by First Church at nursing homes.*

*Giving reflects donations to the ongoing work of the church, both pledges and undesignated giving. It does not include special offerings, designated donations (such as contributions for the Sunday-morning flowers), or rent of First Church facilities.*

February 15, 2009

#### **Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Attendance - 209

Giving - \$3,806

February 22, 2009

#### **Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time**

Attendance - 179

Giving - \$4,187.25

March 1, 2009

#### **First Sunday in Lent**

Attendance - 226

Giving - \$8,300.00

March 8, 2009

#### **Second Sunday in Lent**

Attendance - 161

Giving - \$7,400.00

## WORSHIP NOTES

*The scriptures listed below are those from the Revised Common Lectionary, used by mainline Protestant denominations across the world. They are often but not always the scriptures read during Sunday worship at First Church. If you are interested in art that is relevant to the particular days in the liturgical calendar, check the Vanderbilt Divinity Library's lectionary website (<http://divinity.library.library.vanderbilt.edu/lectionary>) for examples. This is the website, produced by the library of Vanderbilt Divinity School at Vanderbilt University, from which we draw the lists of lessons.*

April 5, 2009

**Liturgy of the Palms  
Sixth Sunday in Lent**

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29  
Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16  
Liturgy of the Passion  
Isaiah 50:4-9a  
Psalm 31:9-16  
Philippians 2:5-11  
Mark 14:1-15:47 or Mark 15:1-39, (40-47)

April 6, 2009

**Monday of Holy Week**

Isaiah 42:1-9  
Psalm 36:5-11  
Hebrews 9:11-15  
John 12:1-11

April 7, 2009

**Tuesday of Holy Week**

Isaiah 49:1-7  
Psalm 71:1-14  
I Corinthians 1:18-31  
John 12:20-36

April 8, 2009

**Wednesday of Holy Week**

Isaiah 50:4-9a  
Psalm 70  
Hebrews 12:1-3  
John 13:21-32

April 9, 2009

**Maundy Thursday  
(Holy Thursday)**

Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14  
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19  
I Corinthians 11:23-26  
John 13:1-17,31b-35

April 10, 2009

**Good Friday**

Isaiah 52:13-53:12  
Psalm 22  
Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9  
John 18:1-19:42

April 11, 2009

**Holy Saturday**

Job 14:1-14 or Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24  
Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16  
I Peter 4:1-8  
Matthew 27:57-66 or John 19:38-42

April 12, 2009

**Resurrection of the Lord**

**Easter Day**

Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 25:6-9  
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24  
I Corinthians 15:1-11 or Acts 10:34-43  
John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8  
Easter Evening  
Isaiah 25:6-9  
Psalm 114  
I Corinthians 5:6b-8  
Luke 24:13-49

April 19, 2009

**Second Sunday of Easter**

Acts 4:32-35  
Psalm 133  
I John 1:1-2:2  
John 20:19-31

April 26, 2009

**Third Sunday of Easter**

Acts 3:12-19  
Psalm 4  
I John 3:1-7  
Luke 24:36b-48

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