

First Presbyterian Church

EPISTLE

Our vision: Seeking God first, who first loved us.

*Our Mission: Knowing & loving God; obeying & worshipping him together;
sharing Jesus & his love with everyone.*

May 2009

Vol. 17 No. 5

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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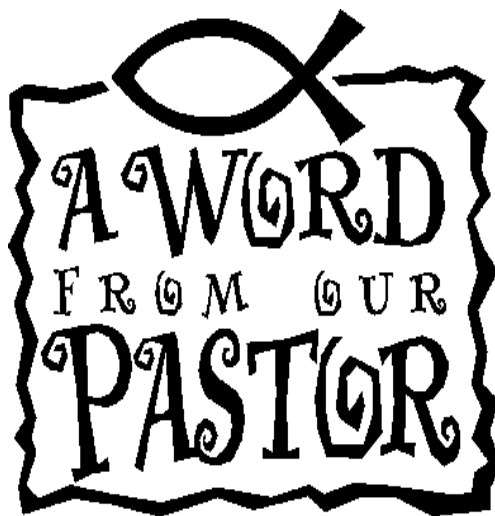
CHURCH STAFF: Rev. Ginger Hertenstein

Steve Bayless,
Choir Director
Sandy Gaskins,
Administrative Assistant/
Bookkeeper
Tom Wylie,
Accompanist/Youth Minister

*"The Epistle" is a monthly
publication of
First Presbyterian Church,
Duncanville, Texas.*

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The disciples stood on a hill with the Lord and watched as He ascended into heaven. They gazed and gazed after Him, just as the children continued to look up to the ceiling of the sanctuary on Sunday as youth minister Tom Wylie let go of a helium-filled balloon to demonstrate the story. Finally two men in shining clothes jostled them back to reality. "Rest assured He'll come back in the same way He went," they said. "In the meantime you've got things to do." And the work of the church began.

Let's note how that work began. Acts 1:14 tells us, "*All these (disciples) were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.*" So the season between the resurrection and the start of the church, which is the day of Pentecost, was spent devoting themselves to prayer.

A woman named Martha Grace Reese has written a series of books about "unbinding" the Gospel. Essentially the books address the decline in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and what to do about it. Her belief is that we need to spend a season in prayer, allowing God to guide us into the expression of the Gospel through our God-given gifts. I love these books and think it's a great idea, entirely relevant for our congregation.

Let's take this month of May and join with the men and women who gathered in that upper room to pray. As we do so, we'll ponder Jesus' teachings in the parables of Luke, listening for His word to us, as we pray. I know He has something really special to say and that He will guide us. Let's listen together, assured of the blessing to come.

See you Sunday!
Ginger

FROM THE WORSHIP TEAM

From the Worship
Team

The Church Year: Pentecost

Dennis Bratcher



Pentecost was originally an Old Testament festival, since the time of Josephus calculated as beginning on the fiftieth day after the beginning of **Passover**. In the Christian calendar, it falls on the seventh Sunday after **Easter**. It was called the **Feast of Weeks** (*Shavuot*), and in the Old Testament was originally an agricultural festival celebrating and giving thanks for the "first fruits" of the early spring harvest (Lev 23, Exod 23, 34).

By the early New Testament period, it had gradually lost its association with agriculture and became associated with the celebration of God's creation of His people and their religious history. By the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, the festival focused exclusively on God's gracious gift of *Torah* (the "Law") on Mount Sinai. It continues to be celebrated in this manner in modern Judaism.

While there are other references to **Pentecost** in the New Testament (e.g. 1 Cor 16:8), it is most significant in Acts 2 and the familiar scene of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on those in the "upper room." The New Testament writers associate the events of Acts 2 with Pentecost, and relate it to the prophecies of Joel 2 and promises of Jesus (Acts 1:8). In both, the emphasis is on an empowerment through the Holy Spirit to enable the people of God to witness to Jesus the Christ.

There is much debate in some circles about exactly what happened at Pentecost, whether it is a repeatable event or only for the early church, or whether it should or should not become a paradigm for personal religious experience. Those who advocate it as a paradigm are sometimes termed Pentecostals, although that term usually refers more specifically to church traditions who advocate speaking in "tongues" or a special Spirit-inspired prayer or praise language.

In any case, what seems clear is that Pentecost represents God's gracious, enabling presence actively at work among His people, calling and enabling them to live out in dynamic ways the witness of being His people. Perhaps at this point there is direct contact with the Pentecost of Judaism, for in Judaism the Torah, God's instruction to His people, is the means by which they become His witness to the world.

The word "pentecost" means "fiftieth day." In most Christian traditions, Pentecost Sunday occurs 50 days following **Easter** Sunday (counting Easter Sunday since it is the first day of the week). Those 50 days span seven Sundays after Easter, so Pentecost is the seventh Sunday after Easter (7 weeks times 7 days = 49 days, plus Pentecost Sunday). Since Easter is a "movable feast," meaning that it occurs on different days in different years (it is tied to the lunar cycle while the calendar is solar based), Pentecost is also moveable. It can occur as early as May 10 and as late as June 13. for 2009 it is May 31.) Some Christian traditions, Eastern Orthodox for example, use a different religious calendar and so have different dates for much of the Christian Year.

FROM THE WORSHIP TEAM

The sanctuary color for Pentecost Sunday is **red**, the color of the church. Technically, red is used only for the Sunday of Pentecost, although some churches use red for the Sundays between Easter and Pentecost Sunday. The red symbolizes both the fire of Pentecost as well as the apostles and early followers of Jesus who were gathered in the Upper Room for the empowerment from God to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world.

or Christians, Pentecost Sunday is a day to celebrate hope, a hope evoked by the knowledge that God through His Holy Spirit is at work among His people. It is a celebration of newness, of recreation, of renewal of purpose, mission, and calling as God's people. It is a celebration of God's ongoing work in the world. Yet, it is also a recognition that His work is done through His people as He pours out His presence upon them.

Let us take this opportunity to be called to renew ourselves through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, by becoming an active part of 1st Presbyterian Church Duncanville. If you haven't already done so, please sign up to be a part of one of the church "teams", by providing your time and/or talent where needed to help renew this church in the community.

-Dennis Bratcher, Copyright ©, Christian Resource Institute
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Important dates in May:

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | May Friendship Day |
| 2 | 4 th Sunday of Easter; Older Adult Week Begins |
| 7 | National Day of Prayer |
| 10 | 5 th Sunday of Easter; Mother's Day |
| 17 | 6 th Sunday of Easter; |
| 21 | Ascension of the Lord |
| 24 | 7 th Sunday of Easter; Presbyterian Heritage Sunday |
| 31 | Day of Pentecost |



Many thanks to **Dub Guthrie** for providing the Cross for our Holy Week services.

SESSION NOTES

Action taken at the April 16, 2009, session meeting:

- Approved financial report for the month of March 2009 and year-to-date.
- Approved minutes of March 19, 2009, session meeting.
- Approved minutes of April 5, 2009, congregational meeting.
- Approved motion from property to have a sign-up sheet at the Job Fair for anyone wishing to contribute to upcoming property projects such as:
 1. Fellowship Hall front exterior door replacement
 2. Carpet replacement in office and CE wing
 3. Fellowship Hall accordion doors
- Approved all committee reports



LETTER FROM ANN STITES

Dear Friends,

In February, I was blessed with the opportunity to share a weekend retreat with your pastor, session, and Acts 16:5 team. It was an amazing spirit-filled time during which we sang, prayed, and discussed God's intent for your congregation. Your leaders engaged in planning creative ways of being the face of Christ not only in Duncanville, but in the larger world.

I was encouraged by the dedication and commitment of your leaders and excited by their willingness to make this congregation a vital witness to the love, power, and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. As I thought about our experiences, the following passage came to mind: **"Behold, I am doing a new thing!** Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland." - Isaiah 43:19. God is doing a new thing in your congregation and it will be magnificent.

John Calvin said that God works on God's own, God works through us, and God works despite us. I truly believe that God is most pleased when we choose to surrender ourselves to God and be His instruments in this world. As your congregation begins a journey of doing new things, I pray that you open your hearts, listen closely to what God is asking of you, and joyfully respond.

Grace and peace,

Ann Stites

SUNDAY SCHOOL WORKSHOPS

Every Sunday, younger and older elementary age children come to a "workshop" during Sunday School hour. The workshop activities may be mostly art, or drama, or cooking, or games....but they they are centered on a Bible story or theme for a period of weeks.

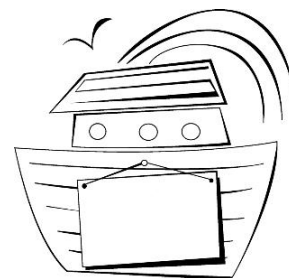
These have been our workshop themes so far this year:

January 4-25	Daniel, led by Katherine Liddle
February 1-15	Parables of Lost Sheep, Coin, and Lost Son (led by Gail Haynes)
February 22 - March 1	Some "I Am's" of Jesus (led by Diane Pegues)
March 22 - April 12	The Last Supper and Gethsemane (led by Nancy Bergman)
April 19 - May 17	Psalm 23 and Jesus the Good Shepherd (led by Lois Harmon)
May 24-31	Marna Bayless will lead some workshops centered on Esther.

** Workshops for older elementary students are led by Sandy Wylie.

Next time you walk by the church office, look on the wall to see some papers the children have done during a workshop this year!

The Children's Planning Team has been designing and recruiting staff for these workshops for the past several years, and is made up of Marna Bayless, Lois Harmon, Betty Jespersen, and Katherine Liddle. We thank everyone who has led workshops this year and in past years! Let any of us know if you would like to take a turn!



*Letter
from Ann
Stites*

**Sunday
School
Workshops**

CONGO LIFE

By the time you all read this, some of the items have passed, but if you would, let them serve as a small reminder of the work that goes on around the church. Each event takes the time and effort of a bunch of great people who volunteer for a task and see it through to the finish.

Congo Life is picking up the pace rapidly in the weeks ahead. The first comment I would like make is not a Congo Life accomplishment, but I would be remiss in not complimenting the Choir and Ginger for an inspiring Maundy Thursday service. It was beautiful and no doubt one of the best attended in recent years. Next came the Prayer Vigil and of course Easter Sunrise Service and the Pancake Breakfast. Again, our compliments go out to Tom Wylie and the Youth for conducting the service. I surmise the breakfast was a success as there were very little leftovers and I don't recall seeing anyone running home immediately following the service without "chowing down" first. I cannot begin to recognize all who pitched in. As some of you are aware, the Congo Life Team has joined forces with the Deacons to create the DeaConGo Team which will assist both Teams in their efforts in providing common services to the Congregation. You may have noticed this if you attended the recent Job Fair.



Congo Life



Mark your Calendars: May 3rd from 12-2 PM – Picnic in the Park. (Armstrong) This is a gathering of the Duncanville's Churches just to meet and greet and do some socializing. This will immediately follow our morning worship service and we Presbyterians need to make a good showing. We encourage you to come to worship dressed for the picnic. Bring food and lawn chairs. There are some grills available if you wish to go that route. Soft drinks will be available.

May 17th – Graduate Sunday. Our Annual celebration in recognition of the recent graduates affiliated with our congregation. A reception will follow the morning worship in fellowship hall.

June 7th - (**Tentative Date**) "Hello – Goodbye". There will be a reception immediately following the morning worship. The purpose of which is to give all of us an opportunity to informally greet the newest members of our congregation and wish those who have recently moved away our very best and let them know that they will remain in our thoughts and prayers.

June 2009 - Are you ready for some BASEBALL? The annual outing will be in June this year and the date is being finalized as I write. It will be published shortly. And of course, Lemonade on the Lawn will begin. Everyone seems to enjoy a little refreshment and socializing after the services on Sundays, so that is about to start up again.

Whew! A little lengthy, but that's about it for this month's Newsletter.

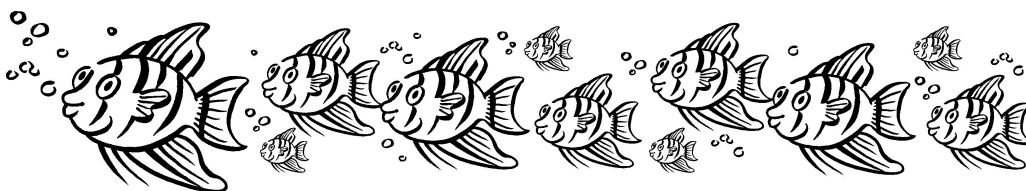
Yours in Christ, DeaConGo Team.

PW NEWS**PW
News**

Our Spring Plant and Bake Sale was a big success, thanks to all who brought items to sell and those who so generously purchased our items! The proceeds of the sale will go toward helping to fund our PW projects here at the church and outside our church. Again, thank you all for your participation and generosity!!

**SWIM, SALAD AND SUNDAE SUPPER****Thursday, June 4th**

Please mark your calendars for this delicious and fun event. Jocelyn Bolles has graciously invited us to her home again this year. As always, bring a salad to share and come at 6 pm if you wish to swim. This is a good time to make the salad that your husband or kids won't eat and enjoy it in good company! We will be eating at 7 pm and will have delicious ice cream sundaes with whipped cream and toppings for dessert. So please come out for an evening of good food and fellowship.

***Bible Study and Fellowship with PW***

Our PW Circles meet monthly (except for the summer months of June, July and August), and the dates and places are below. If you do not currently attend a Circle, please consider doing so. The Circles meet in different homes each month and enjoy Bible Study, prayer, good discussions, desserts and fellowship. There is a daytime and an evening Circle.

The study for this year will be the PW Horizon's Bible Study taken from the Gospel of Luke:

Jubilee!***Luke's Gospel for the Poor***

by Dale Lindsay Morgan

Sarah Circle: Meets Thursday, May 7 at 7:30 pm at the home of Helen Barton, 6820 Shalloway Drive, Grand Prairie, 817-477-2164; Katherine Liddle is co-hostess.

Agape Circle: Meets Friday May 15 at 10 am at the home of Win Cook, 6222 Marquita Ave, Dallas. Members please meet in the church parking lot at 10:30 am to carpool! After our circle meeting (around 11:45 am) we will go to AliBaba Mediterranean Buffet, 1901 Abrams Rd., (not far from Win's) for lunch together!

HOGY PAGE

Youth All-Stars

Each month, we feature one of the youth from FPCD's Youth Group.

This month's Youth All-Star is: **Lucy Russell**

Full Name: *Lucy Elizabeth Russell*
 Birthdate: *May 13, 1995*
 Grade: *8th*
 School: *Byrd Middle School*
 Extracurricular: *Choir*
 Favorite Food: *Cheesecake!*
 Favorite Drink: *Water*
 Favorite Color: *Purple & Pink*
 Hobbies: *Dance*
 Favorite Song: *Boom, Boom, Pow by The Black-Eyed Peas*
 Favorite Movie: *The Princess Bride*
 I'm a fan of: *Music*



HOGY Page

Something most people don't know about me is: *I am afraid of heights.*

Confirmation Class

Tom Wylie will teach Confirmation Class this month. Confirmation Class is open to all young people, 5th grade and older, who are interested in learning about the sacraments, what Christians believe, and what it means to be a Presbyterian. We will meet in the Social Hall at 5pm on May 3rd, 10th and 17th, and conclude with a retreat on May 29-31. Contact Tom Wylie for more information.

MAY EVENTS

<u>When</u>	<u>What</u>	<u>Where</u>
May 3 rd	Water Olympics	FPCD
May 10 th	Mother's Day Madness	TBA
May 17 th	Laser Tag Night	Alley Cats, Arlington
May 24 th	NO YOUTH—MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND	
May 29-31 st	Confirmation Retreat	TBA

GET CONNECTED!

Youth:

If you are currently in the 7th through 12th grade, the First Presbyterian Youth Group is for you! We meet on Sunday nights at the church from 6:00-8:00pm for Bible study, wild & crazy games, field trips, and of course, food! Contact Tom Wylie for more information at 817.734.1786 or wyliefam1@earthlink.net

Adults:

If you are interested in becoming a youth sponsor, it's a great excuse to act like a teenager again. Come and join us; you'll never be the same! Contact Tom Wylie at 817.734.1786, or wyliefam1@earthlink.net

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Adult Sunday Shcool

He, who has ears to hear, let him listen:

Most of us share who we are and our experiences by telling our stories to each other. By carefully listening to each other's stories and searching for ways in which our stories connect with other people's stories, we develop meaningful relationships and a sense of community. Jesus was an expert at persuading and teaching people by telling stories. By listening closely to his stories and learning to tell them to each other, we experience ways in which our individual and collective stories intersect with Jesus' stories. At these intersections, we experience Jesus' presence and we discover revelations about God. The adult Sunday school class will be learning the parables of Jesus for the Sundays in May and the first half of June. Please come join us in our story journey.



Good News Club

GOOD NEWS CLUB

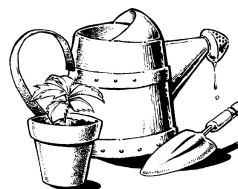
Sharon Ingram and Pat Sparr resumed Good News Club at the Cielo Ranch Apartments in February. We kicked off with a Valentines Day Party and then a six-week study of Elijah interrupted by a St. Patrick's Day Party. Fifty kids have attended in the short time we've been meeting and already three kids have received their NIV Adventure Bibles by attending six times. Through these weeks, the kids have learned up to 11 Bible verses, have learned about God's prophet, Elijah, and that there was a real St. Patrick who was actually from England. Most importantly, these kids hear God's message of love each Saturday and have the opportunity to ask Jesus Christ to be their Savior. If you're interested in helping us out by providing snacks or an extra pair of hands to calm wiggly kids, then please let us know. We meet every Saturday from 10-11 am through June 6 at 3839 Gannon Lane just south of Redbird Mall.

Thank you,
Sharon and Pat



BIRTHDAYS!

If you think we might not have a record of your birthday and you would like us to include it in the "birthday" section of the newsletter, please contact the office (972) 298-3043. Thank you.



MAY

Steve Bayless—5/7
Eugene Cleary—5/9
Sarah Teel—5/9
Lucy Russell—5/13
Marna Bayless—5/22
Catherine Eagle—5/28
Alexander Gaskins—5/31

Birthdays

Attendance

ATTENDANCE

Bookkeeper's Report

April 2008

6-April-73
13-April-83
20-April-80
27-April-80

April 2009

5-April-82
9-April-101
12-April-111
19-April-91
26-April-93

Bookkeeper's Report

March 2009

Receipts
\$13,040

Expenditures
\$16,583

WORSHIP VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

May 2009

10:30 A.M. SERVICE

May	3	Greeters: Ushers: Liturgist: Children's Church: Nursery Volunteer: Tech Team: Tellers:	Donna To, Wendy Jensen Irving Kezar, Jack Pegues Janet Stahl Sandy Wylie Anna Murphy Sean Russell, Jody Fox Lori Glover, Jocelyn Bolles
May	10	Greeters: Ushers: Liturgist: Children's Church: Nursery Volunteer: Tech Team: Tellers:	Gail Haynes, Burle Murphy Bob Moore Helen Barton Sharon Ingram Katherine Liddle Sean Russell, Jody Fox Paul Barton, Tom Harmon
May	17	Greeters: Ushers: Liturgist: Children's Church: Nursery Volunteer: Tech Team: Tellers:	Mickey & Betty Jespersen Albert Teel Joan Brown Kathleen Hartless Jocelyn Bolles Sean Russell, Jody Fox Teresa Reed, Joan Brown
May	24	Greeters: Ushers: Liturgist: Children's Church: Nursery Volunteer: Tech Team: Tellers:	Jocelyn Bolles, Dorothy Cleary Dub Guthrie, Jack Pegues Tom Harmon Savannah Baker-Teel Helen Barton Sean Russell, Jody Fox Mickey Jespersen, Leo Skinner
May	31	Greeters: Ushers: Liturgist: Children's Church: Nursery Volunteer: Tech Team: Tellers:	Tom Harmon, Doris Metzger Eugene Jimmerson, Jack Pegues Scott Hartless Margaret Lewis Lois Harmon Sean Russell, Jody Fox Lori Glover, Jocelyn Bolles

FPCD PRAYER CALENDAR

May 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	FRIDAY	Saturday
3 David & Katherine Liddle Caleb, Jonathan Lenora Dalton	4 Joan Brown Tom & Sandy Wylie Thomas, Katie & Abby	5 Jack & Diane Pegues Carlos & Caryn Benitez Andres & Rachelle	6 Larry & Margaret Lewis Pat Sparr Bryan & Winfred Cook	7 Sean & Lucy Russell Lucy, Sydney, Logan, Weston, & Tristan	8 Paul & Claudia Griffith Dean & Ginger Hertenstein Doris Metzger	9 Norris & Carol McKinney Ryan & Marjorie Ochs Colvin
10 Dorothy Cleary T.J. & Eugene Dudley Austin Allen & Wanda Shipman	11 Nadine Doura Ariel & Leah Dick & Nancy Bergman	12 George & Billie Cowand David & Sandy Gaskins Alexander	13 Eugene & Armelia Jimmerson Leo & Marlene Skinner	14 Dub & Gwen Guthrie Melissa, Carol, & Neal	15 Bill Farish Robert & Catherine Eagle Kent & Lori Glover Taylor & Charlie	16 Kevin & Tonya Jespersen Mickey & Betty Jespersen
17 Scott & Kathleen Hartless J.R. Dave & Jocelyn Bolles	18 Bobby & Teresa Reed Jim & Andrene Hull	19 Tom & Lois Harmon Eunice Pike Jackie Walke	20 Gary & Nita Malone Darrell & Sharon Ingram Jay & Jessica	21 Roy & Wendy Jensen Don & Edie Burquest	22 Eddie & Brenda Everett Jocelyn, Natalie, & Grant	23 Jim & Janet Stahl Donna To David & Kathy Barr Genny & Caitlin
24 Evelyn Pike George & Mary Huttar Teresa Rodrigues	25 Bob & Nancy Harrison Eddie & Darlene Cowand	26 Burle Murphy Susan Murphy Anna Murphy Nicholas & Heather	27 Irving & Peggy Kezar Steve & Marna Bayless	28 Dennis & Susan Walters Dale, Evelyn, & Andrew	29 Albert & Sara Teel Savannah Bob & Liz Moore	30 Stan & June West Sara & Matthew Adelmo & Edelmira Ruiz
31 Gail Haynes Eric & Amy Slater Cody						



***Fireproof Your Marriage* Small Groups**

We have had a great time our first few weeks sharing with each other about God's plan for marriage and understanding our different needs as spouses. Each Sunday at either 9:15am or 6:00pm, we watch a short clip from the movie, *Fireproof*, and then have discussion using questions from the Participants Guide and verses from the Bible. It's not too late to join our small groups at either time Sunday.

Love Dare Books for Sale

Hurry While Supplies Last!!

We have a small number of Love Dare books remaining. The Love Dare book is a Biblically based 40 day challenge to help strengthen marriages. It is a great bargain at only \$10 each and would make a wonderful gift for yourself, your married children or as a wedding gift. Please contact Sandy at the church office or Sharon Ingram if you want one, two or three!



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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www.fpd.org

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Christian Education — 9:15 a.m.
Worship Service — 10:30 a.m.
Youth Group — 6:00-8:00 p.m.