

THE TABLET

A Newsletter from
First Presbyterian Church
302 E. Windsor Street
Monroe, NC 28112
704-289-2574
www.fpcmonroenc.org

Week of
July 25 - August 1, 2010

From the Interim Pastor's Desk . . .

Dear Friends in Christ,

No doubt, you have heard how many Presbyterians it takes to change a light bulb. The response is, "Change?!!!" When a young salesman said to a farmer in his 80s, "I'll bet you have seen a lot of changes in your lifetime," the farmer replied, "Yep, and I've been agin' everyone of 'em." Could the farmer have been Presbyterian?

No matter how inevitable change is, there is a built-in resistance to it. Such resistance, I have learned, is to be respected for what it represents. Most often, we hear that people fear change. However, I have learned over the years as I have observed churches undergo change, that while fear of the unknown may be present, the underlying emotion is one of lamentation over loss of the familiar.

When a church member, or even an entire congregation, becomes accustomed to certain routine ways of doing worship, or Christian Education, or outreach, or financial giving, or fellowship, those routine ways have a way of becoming sacred. To suggest a different way of doing such activities is to suggest giving up some usual pattern of behavior, and giving up something represents loss, and loss introduces a grief response.

So then, in speaking of change, I think it important to acknowledge the dynamic of grief. As I understand grief, and I have my own personal experiences as well as academics to back this up, it is not just an emotion but, rather, it involves a whole range of emotions that are acted out in a variety of ways, from depression to explosive anger, from a feeling of helplessness to a feeling of hopelessness.

I bring this up at this particular time to review with you the fact that what you as a congregation have been going through for more than a decade has been a lot of change, some of which has been normal, but most of which has been imposed by circumstances over which you have had no control. I need not go into detail about all the changes that have affected the congregational life of First Presbyterian, but I do need to reiterate that such changes have understandably been the

cause of a lot of grief and angst because of the losses that have been incurred.

Frankly, I am amazed at how well you have been recovering from the effects of such losses. Many of you have, as they say, stepped up to the plate. As a congregation, you have proven that you do not have to be numerically larger, as you once were, to provide a viable ministry. I could point to several successful endeavors that have reflected not just life but, more importantly, life in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. In other words, in your "changed" condition from what First Presbyterian was a decade or so ago, those remaining, plus some additional new members, have not only held together but have made wonderful progress on several fronts.

I hope that, in that knowledge, others will take note, step up and be as supportive. For in God's time, First Presbyterian will be experiencing another big change that has to do with pastoral leadership, and I am certain that everyone wishes to usher in a new installed pastor on a high note of enthusiasm and support. But mind you, that particular change will very likely precipitate other changes for which you must be prepared. And prepared you shall be, as long as you understand that because God is forever "doing a new thing" and is ultimately in control, change can represent new beginnings that can be helpful to us in overcoming whatever losses are incurred in the process.

I won't be seeing you this coming Sunday, because I will be vacationing with family at the beach. However, I am sure you will want to be present for Worship because Dr. Donald Mitchell will be preaching. Plan to be present and to stay for a reception for the Mitchells after the Service.

Yours in Christ,
John

UPCOMING SERMON TOPICS

8/1/10	Dr. Donald Mitchell to Preach
8/8/10	"The Hope That Does Not Disappoint Us" Psalm 42; Romans 5:1-5; 15:13
8/15/10	"The 'Why?' of Worship" Psalm 122

DATES TO REMEMBER:

August 28: United Way Day of Caring
August 29: Casual Sunday - 5th Sunday
WV Mission Trip highlights
August 29: Super Sunday Supper honoring our children and youth, by Good Times Group
September 11: Presbyterian Women's Fall Gathering
September 12: Churchwide Rally Day
September 15: Good Times Group
"Poor Man's Lunch" and program

EUREKA! PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED!

This past June the Stewardship Committee and Pastor John advertised in *The Tablet* for a church member to volunteer as the FPC Coordinator of Spiritual Gifts. One of our newer members, Linda Polk, has graciously and unselfishly accepted this challenge for FPC. In her words she states, "I believe that if the Lord truly wants me to fulfill this work, He will make a straight path for me to do it."

Linda has a BA in Biblical Studies/Christian Education from Luther Rice Seminary in Atlanta. She has also taken some graduate studies in Urban Christian Ministries at New Life Theological Seminary in Charlotte. In addition, Linda has been a church secretary at two separate churches. In the not too distant future, she will invite each FPC member—who has not previously done so-- to complete and return two forms to the church office, namely: "Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts", and "Time and Talent Spiritual Gifts Commitment Sheet".

Harriet Metrosky will graciously assist Linda by continuing to compile all of the data resulting from the Spiritual Gifts forms. Harriet has been performing this important work for over a year now and she does an outstanding job. She will record the Spiritual Gifts results into the computer report she has designed for this. This information will then enable the church committee chairs to identify members of the congregation who have particular spiritual gifts, interests, and skills compatible with their committees. The ultimate goal is for church members to be given the opportunity to serve in the church as they feel led, based on their unique spiritual gifts and interests.

So.....a great BIG THANK YOU to both Linda and Harriet!!!

Pastor John Wilkerson and the Stewardship Committee

MISSION TRIP MEETING

There will be a mission trip meeting on Sunday, August 8 immediately following the worship service to discuss the WV Mission Trip highlights during the August 29 service.

ENDOWMENT MEETING

There will be a very important meeting of the Endowment Committee on Thursday, August 26 from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. in the Session Room. Members of the committee are Gloria Baker (chair), Mark Bell, Bobbie Brown, Fred Hargett, Tonya Huggins, Frank Jennings, Joanne Kitchin, Angela Levan, John Milliken, Lynda Keziah, Judy Morrison, Lane Ormand, and Hayne White. Please plan to attend. The congregation is invited and encouraged to give their input to these members and/or to attend this meeting. Thank you!

CONGRATULATIONS TO . . .

Scott and Dyana Morrison on the birth of their son, William Graham Morrison. He was born July 13, 2010. Proud grandmother is Judy Morrison.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you would like to help clean the blue chairs in the fellowship hall please join us on Saturday, August 7 at 10:30 am. Thank you!

CHURCH DIRECTORY

The Olan Mills pictorial directory will be here by the end of August. If you had your picture taken for the directory you will receive a copy.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We are in need of people to help on a rotational schedule to make DVD's for our shut-ins. Jay Ruggiero will have a training session immediately following the service on August 15 for anyone interested. Thank you!

NEWS FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The Financial Secretary will be out of the office from August 12 - August 21. If you have financial questions, please see Jennifer before these dates.

LOAVES & FISHES request donations of applesauce for the month of July. Please place your donations in the baskets provided.

STAFF:

Jennifer Bates - Financial Secretary

jenniferbates@fpcmonroenc.org

Les Everett - Minister of Visitation

No email address

Alissa Isaacs - Christian Education

alissaisaacs@fpcmonroenc.org

Randi Laney - Director of Preschool

randilaney@fpcmonroenc.org

Lee Northcutt - Director of Music

leenorthcutt@fpcmonroenc.org

Dy-Ann Sturgis - Music Associate

dy-annsturgis@fpcmonroenc.org

Dana Underwood - Office Administrator

danaunderwood@fpcmonroenc.org

John Wilkerson - Interim Pastor

johnwilkerson@fpcmonroenc.org

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members of First Presbyterian Church:

Andy Boggs, Lis Braswell (Sonja Norwood's mother), Jeff Brown, Vella Bryant, Bob Hillegas, Jo Hillegas, Jim Hinkel (Brian Center), Tonya Huggins, *Carole Lewis, Nancy Lomax (Woodridge), Libby Morrison, Bob Neill (Home), Brenda Palmer, *Sue Preslar, Marjorie Price (Lake Park), Mary Ann Smith.

Family & Friends:

*David Benton (Jennifer Benson Benton's husband), Dean Davidson (friend of Grace Faris), Julie Ford (friend of Dy-Ann Sturgis), *Tyler Kyle (Neal Albright's grandson), Jane McNeely-Sowell (friend of Patti Jones), Dr. Donald Mitchell, Michelle Moore (friend of Peggy Jennings), Lucy Morton (friend of Dr. Wilkerson), Doris Northcutt (Lee's mother), Jameson Stout (fiancé of Afton Davis), Carol Sutton (friend of Gloria & Sonny Baker), *Blair Westbrook (cousin of Hayne White), Joyce Whitaker (friend of Charles & Carolyn Rawls), Laura Wood (Janie Durland's niece).

In Military:

Glenn Cahoon, Robert Fowler (Les Everett's son-in-law), Chris Greenwood (grandson of Wilson Helms), Todd Hutchison (nephew of Gloria Baker), Baker McKinney (Rebecca Bookholt's nephew). Chris Wilkerson (Dr. Wilkerson's grandson).

**names new to the prayer list*

<u>OFFERING & ATTENDANCE</u>	
<u>July 25, 2010</u>	
Offering	\$7,069.00
Needed per week	\$10,024.00
<i>Attendance- 126</i>	

CHRISTIAN ED PLANNING MEETING

All persons in the church who are interested in working on planning for the coming Christian Education year are invited to attend the Christian Education Committee Meeting on August 5 (Thursday) at 7:00 PM. The meeting will be at the home of Chuck and Penny Lindblom, at 920 Skywatch Lane, in Monroe. We have a new church year coming up in September and we would like to create programs for every one of us. Come put your ideas up front.

LITERACY CHANGES LIVES

"I feel like my mind is opening up..."

This is a quote from one of the 90+ adults in the Literacy Council of Union County's one-on-one tutoring program as he is learning to read for the first time in his life. What an incredible experience for this young man as well as his volunteer tutor! If you can spare about 3 hours a week, you too can experience the rewards of helping an adult to better his life by becoming functionally literate.

Volunteer tutors meet with their students at a day, time, and public location convenient for both. All books, materials, and training are provided free of charge. Using our easy-to-follow method, you will prepare the lessons for your student and track his progress - then revel in the joy of knowing you are helping someone to achieve a brighter future. Your rewards will be as great as those of your student!

Take the first step by attending

**Literacy Council 101
Monday, August 16, 2010
6 - 8 PM
105-A East Jefferson Street
Monroe, 28112**

This informative session will provide valuable insight into the work of the Council, including an overview to tutoring and the commitment required to get started. After completing 101, you will be eligible to continue your training on Friday, August 20th, from 6 - 9 PM and Saturday, August 21st, from 9 AM - 4 PM. All sessions are required, and space is limited. Register today by calling 704-226-1425.

*Check us out on the web:
www.literacyunion.org*

The Literacy Council of Union County is a United Way of Central Carolinas member agency.