

PASTOR'S GREETING - NEWSLETTER JUNE, 2011

Dear friends,

At a recent Presbytery workshop, we were asked, "What does your church do really well?"

I was there with Mary Schneyer, one of our elders. When the time came to share what we had written, we each had answered, in our own way, "community." The time of prayer, fellowship and planning that we all share spills out into service in the community in marvelous ways, and truly is a blessing to the entire valley.

Soon we will celebrate Trinity Sunday. It is often overshadowed by its preceding Sunday, Pentecost. Perhaps because Pentecost is easier to understand (and has cool imagery: rushing wind, tongues of fire, people babbling in different languages). However, Trinity is the way we articulate our God as one of covenant, ministry and community. Trinity allows us to perceive how God is manifest in the world in many ways.

In her book QUEST FOR THE LIVING GOD, Elizabeth Johnson tackles this difficult concept, at one point describing Trinity as a way of seeing which shapes our actions in the world. That is, that the church's identity and mission are to be a living symbol in the world of Divine Love giving life, reaching out and being in relation with the world.

This might sound weighty, but is a wonderful blueprint for our life as church. We worship, we serve and we enjoy one another's company. We do not do this as a closed "club," nor as a group that feels superior because of our affiliation, but as an open, welcoming body, respectful of and caring for all... even those who believe differently from ourselves.

Those who serve in leadership, outreach and hospitality at the Stephentown Federated Church use their gifts to this end, and on Trinity Sunday we honor and thank them. When we consider all the work and play that happens here, that group would include everyone! So let us celebrate our congregation and all of our membership on June 19th, grateful that we have been given to one another.

"The glory of God is the communion of all things fully alive. Wherever the human heart is healed, justice gains a foothold, peace holds sway... wherever liberation, hope and healing break through, wherever an act of simple kindness is done.... there the human and earth community reflect the face of the Trinitarian God.

Borne by the grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit ... the reign of God gains another foothold in history." (Johnson.)

Blessings to all!

Susan

Federated Church Men's Group News

Please join us for breakfast – first Sunday of every month until June. Join us for good food and great fellowship. The last breakfast for Spring 2011 is:

June 5, 2011..... All Church Breakfast – Last meeting until fall. Everyone is invited for our last breakfast meeting of the season.

On May 14th we cleaned up the Presbyterian Cemetery and then came back to the church where we cut up and two trees in front on the Manse. A lot of work well done. The church had the two trees taken down at a cost of \$600. The Men's Group donated \$200 to help with the cost. Any donations towards this expense are welcome.

Fifteen new chairs were purchased and one was donated. Thanks Paul.

We look forward to seeing all our friends and church members at the breakfast meetings. There is always enough to eat and plenty of things to discuss. Call Larry Eckhardt (733-5137) or Ted Bears (728-9326) if you'd like or need some more information. See you all real soon.

SonShiners

The Women donated \$200 towards the kitchen renovation. We look forward to the improvements.

Keep July 30th marked on your calendars for the Garden/Bake Sale & Silent Auction. We will be at Gardner's field from 9am – 3 pm. Barb Terpening is coordinating the event. Signup sheets will be posted on the bulletin board in Pierce Hall for workers and donations. We are asking for donations of finger food (cookies, brownies, cupcakes), garden produce – fresh and canned. We will also be selling water.

The Silent Auction was a hit last year and we are again looking for donated gift baskets, gift certificates from area businesses (restaurants, stores, movies, beauty shops, etc.

Contact Barb at 279-3746 or babst3@verizon.net with questions or information.

Easter Flower Donations

In memory of Myrl and John Makinson from Susan Cooper

In memory of Lois and John Atwater, Michael Torello, Ruth and Edwin Lawless, and Viola and Carl Dege, Theresa and Joe Torello, Flo and Bill Hall, and Elizabeth Chittenden from Janet Atwater

In memory of Jeanne and William Atwater From Connie Atwater

In memory and honor of Kyle Wise, Blanche Coffee, Elsie and Cal Atwater, Sharon Condron, Joan Williams, and Joseph M. Beebe from Georgi Beebe

In memory of Calvin and Virginia Atwater, John and Dorothy Hanlon, Hazel and John Atwater, and Carrie Greene from Elizabeth Hanlon

In memory of parents Clifford and Grace Barker from Pat Coon

In memory of George and Sara Burgoon and Alvin McMillan from Paul and Joan McMillan

In memory of our loving parents John and Gladys Farrell from Malcom and Nancy Beal

In memory of Robert, Dot, and Dotsy Leab and Doug and Sally Feathers from Marge and Mel Feathers

In memory of Jean Eckhardt from George Eckhardt

In honor of our family and friends From Larry, Heather, Matt and Andrew Eckhardt

In memory of husband Edward and parents from Anna Gerald

In memory of Rose and Don Hall and Gertrude Hoag from Donna and John French

In memory of John and Dorothy Morris from the Morris family

Birth Announcements

Joann William gave birth to Anthony Edmund on May 7th!!!!

And he's already coming to church!

Death Announcements

Calvin Atwater passed away earlier this year and was interred on Sat., May 21st

Eva Mayer passes away on May 17th A Memorial Service was held at the church on May 21st

Celebrations!

We congratulate all the families and their children and grandchildren who graduated this year!

We celebrated the coming of summer with a Church Picnic after church, May 22nd. We had tons of *good* food that everyone brought and shared. Thanks to Don & Leigh Lewandoski for donating the hamburger and hot dogs, Ted for bringing the grill, and Joanne & Jay for cooking! We never are at a loss for lots of food.

On a quick note, thanks to Janet and Joanne for the great treats for the coffee hour after church.

Choir

As we come to the end of the choir season, I would like to thank Barb and all the choir members for their support, prayers, and hard work during my many absences this year. June 5th will be our last regular choir Sunday. For the remainder of June, we will have a choir pick up. Our members meet at 9 am each Sunday for this month and will sing some of our and we hope your favorite hymns. Anyone is welcome to come and sing with us. Just be here at 9 to go over the music before the service. The months of July and August will give the choir a much needed rest and will return in September ready to bring you some more gospel music. If you know of anyone that would like to provide special music over the summer on Sunday please me know.

Bev Westfall

To God Be the Glory

This article is a little different than the one I normally write. I have been thinking of all the work that has been done to the physical side of our church in the last year or so and I thought it would be good to make sure all of you had the opportunity to share in this knowledge.

We replaced the Church roof in the fall of '09 for \$17,400.00. Some of that was for temporary repairs for Pierce Hall- about \$300.00. Pierce Hall roof was replaced during the summer of '10 for \$10,500.00. This included the two entryways. The steeple was quoted at \$16,700.00 and was quoted over a year ago so it will probably cost a little more when we do it. There is \$11,115.22 in the Steeple Fund CD at this time. Also there is a jar for your spare change out back that supports the steeple fund.

The oak for the kitchen cabinets is being donated by Warren French. Ted Bears has drawn up the plans and consulted with General Committee, Men's Group and SonShiner's Group. The excitement of the renovations for the kitchen will begin after the Men's Group has used the kitchen for the Church wide breakfast in June. Ted will be working at this as his time allows over the summer.

The donated oil was donated in '09 for the winters of '09-'10 and most of '10-'11. The lions share came from Frieling Smith, about 1600 gals. Between 1 & 2 hundred was donated by Stephen & Deborah Pentak. We really appreciate these donations. The donated oil has allowed us to put moneys toward other projects that needed doing in the church. This year we will have to purchase oil at the going price which we hope will go down.

This spring we decided it was time safety wise to upgrade and replace the electrical wiring for the church only. Mike Killeen's bid was accepted for \$3307.25. We have an upgraded service panel from a fuse panel to a circuit panel. This has now allowed us to have our organ on a separate circuit, and the wires that have been running all over everywhere now have a permanent home.

The Church Directory is now completed and handed out. If you did not receive yours, please see Bev Westfall or Rev Susan for a copy. There are others available at the front of the church as well. We hope this is a resource that will continue to help us communicate with each other more effectively.

Since we have the directory that contain many emails, we would like to consider sending our newsletters to as many people online as possible. Especially with the cost of stamps continually rising. As an added feature, we would be able to include more pictures on line. If you do not want to get your newsletter by email please let Barb (babst3@verizon.net) know and we will be happy to send you one by mail. We will set up an email to let you know when the new newsletter is available. Your email address will be treated with respect and not sent to anyone else. We feel this is another way we can be good stewards of the money that come to us each week.

There have been several requests to form a *prayer chain*. We are in the forming stages of this. We would like to use both email and telephone numbers for those who do not have computers. If you are interested in being a part of this, please let Janet Atwater (jatwater@taconic.net or 733 9042) know you wish to be included.

We also are setting up a church email and telephone chain for better communications. If you are in the directory, you will be on the initial list. If you do not wish to be on the list, please let me Bev Westfall know (morg104@aol.com) and I will take you off the list. We are trying to improve the communication between Sundays. There will be a test run when we get it completely finished.

In looking at what we have done and where we need to go, I feel that God has blessed us abundantly. We also thank each of you for your financial support, your prayer support and your physical support. As we look forward and look at possible projects for the future we appreciate your continued support. God Bless.
Thanks be to God!

submitted
by
Bev Westfall (Secretary to General Committee)

JUNE CALENDAR 2011

June 5 8:00 am Men's Breakfast all church breakfast
 9:00 am Pick up choir
 9:30 am Worship Service- Communion
June 12 9:00 am Pick up choir
 9:30 am Worship Service
June 15 6:00 p.m. choir dinner at Jimmy D's
June 19 8:00am SonShiners Breakfast
 9:00 am Pick up choir
 9:30 am Worship Service
June 26 9:00 am Pick up choir
 9:30 am Contemporary Worship Service

JULY

July 3 9:30 am Worship Service - Communion
July 10 9:30 am Worship Service
July 17 8:00 am SonShiners Breakfast
 9:30 am Worship Service
July 24 9:30 am Worship Service
July 25 7:00 pm General Committee Meeting
July 30 SonShiners community Garden/Bake Sale & Silent Auction at Gardners 9-3
July 31 9:30 am Worship Service

AUGUST

August 7 9:30 am Worship Service - Communion
August 14 9:30 am Worship Service
August 21 9:30 am Worship Service
August 22 7:00 pm General Committee Meeting
August 28 9:30 am Worship Service

Coffee Hour after every Sunday service.

Child care provided each Sunday in the summer.
No choir for July & August.