



The First Presbyterian

Volume 60 No. 2

October 2005

CHURCH OFFICERS

Elders

Susan Haney
Clerk of Session

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Garrett DeGraff
Catherine Fletcher
Lee Helsby
Ray Henrikson
Jack Holmes
Tara Lindsley
Judith Mark
John Myers
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Alice Schrade
Susan Sneeringer
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Deacons

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Moderator

Kathryn Eastman
Marian Eaton
Heidi Elad
Brian Fuss
Charles (Chas) Kite, Jr.
John Knutson
Kristen Majkut
Yousaf Mathias
Vaughn Nevin
Timothy O'Toole
David Quist
Gail Scott
Rachel Smith
Sarah Sperry
Roseline Takor
Peter E. Thomas
Gloria Wood

STEWARDSHIP LUNCHEON

October 2
Following 10:45
Worship Service
See you there?

Dear Friends:

The fall months are busy months in the life of the church. Sunday Church School classes are formed and getting underway, we begin to think about and schedule Advent and Christmas events and within all of that we focus on stewardship. Church staff and lay leadership are accustomed to this flurry of activity and know how to cope. This year there is a different feeling.

The grim news of the devastation left by Hurricane Katrina haunts us. We try to figure out how we can deal with the news of hundreds of dead Americans in an area of the country where many of us have enjoyed vacations. We may point fingers at government agencies and ask why the response was too slow or inadequate. While those are legitimate questions for citizens to ask, our task now is to figure out how we should respond to the on-going needs of people who have lost everything except for a few possessions that they were able to carry away with them on their road to safety.

I have mentioned our first response through the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance fund. The goal of PDA is to raise \$10 million to minister to the needs of the victims of the hurricane. PDA allocated \$500,000 from funds received in the annual One Great Hour of Sharing offering. That money is on its way and will be distributed appropriately and wisely.

Personal care items have been collected and sent to the shelter in Houston.

We are discussing other ways for us to be involved in helping relieve the anguish of the victims of the storm, but I wanted you to know that immediately after the needs were known, your church, both locally and nationally, was working on your behalf.

I return now to the routine but important subject of stewardship. Because of the stewardship of your financial resources, we are able to be a witness to the wonder of God's love in this community and beyond. As we see the needs of far-away places, we are also very much aware of the needs of our congregation and the community that surrounds us. As people suffer the devastation of Katrina, there are members of our congregation also suffering the devastation of illness, family disorder, and other personal problems. We are able to minister to those needs because we are called by God to be the agents of God's love and secondly we have the resources that make that possible. We look at the world with 20/20 vision and seeing those far away and those close at hand, we commit ourselves to ministry at home and in places that we see only through the lenses of television cameras. Your responsible stewardship makes that possible.

I hope that you will attend the *Stewardship Luncheon on October 2* following the 10:45 a.m. worship service to hear what your church is doing at present and what the needs of the congregation in the future will be.

Let us pray for our fall stewardship emphasis and for the alleviation of the pain of Hurricane Katrina's victims.

Faithfully,

Joseph W. Shook, Interim Pastor

**Pastor Nominating
Committee**

submitted by Sheryl Sheraw

The search for a pastor is a spiritual as well as practical undertaking. As we work, the PNC seeks the guidance of the Holy Spirit through reflection, prayer and the mutual give and take of the committee process. Our goal is discernment. Our charge is not to "hire a pastor" but to be God's agent of Call. Candidates are also participating in the discernment process needed to recognize a Call.

By now we have 78 potential candidates. It is clear to us that some of these are not a "match" for our needs. Others appear to offer strong "matches." It is our work now to explore these candidates in depth. It is a daunting task. Please continue to pray regularly for our work.

The PNC shares here a final narrative written for the Church Information Form which pastors read:

Key theological issues of the church and society that are reflected in the ministry of the congregation/organization:

Our theological perspective is global, international, intercultural, interfaith, interdenominational, Christian, Presbyterian, local, social, spiritual, personal and, most of all, without label. Our socially active tradition dates from Pastor Eliphalet Nott's sermon against dueling after the death of worshipper Alexander Hamilton (a sermon that influenced federal legislation), to Pastor Eugene Carson Blake's ecumenical initiatives, to our forum on GA's study of financial divestment related to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the repair of local interfaith backlash to it.

We have groups that go on retreat to a Benedictine Monastery, and a Franciscan Friar attends weekly men's Bible Study. Our youth participate in summer mission study programs, discovering through work and observation the social and theological issues they will face in their journey of faith and action.

Uniquely located at the edge of a park in a neighborhood of elegant townhouses only blocks from the state capitol, the church is at the seat of power in the center of a city where the powerless walk the streets. Area colleges and universities, a first rate medical center, government agencies, and commerce are the workplace of many of our congregants; issues surrounding birth, death, sexual orientation, violence, terrorism, health, education, poverty, homelessness and hunger impact our lives and work. What theological principle unifies our corporate theology? – "Love the Lord and love your neighbor."

**Announcement of Fall
Education Program**

*By Vaughn Nevin for the Health
Care Advisory Committee*

The Health Care Advisory Committee is presenting three discussions about end of life decisions we all need to consider for ourselves and for our families. The sessions will be held on three consecutive Sundays beginning October 30 and then November 6 and November 13. All sessions will start at 4 p.m. and end no later than 6 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

October 30- Sessions conducted by Rev. Dr. Joseph Shook, Skip Meislahn, J.D., and Actuary Al Easton. The main topic will be the pros and cons of long term care insurance.

November 6- Session conducted by Gail Scott, R.N. Hospice nurse and John Scott, M.D. discussing issues and concerns of decisions regarding medical care in final illness. Rev. Shook and Mr. Meislahn will also be available.

November 13- Session conducted by Cris Blanchard, MSSW, PhD., Alice Schrade, MSW and Cassidy VonStettina, representative of Tebbutt, Frederick and Griswold

Funeral Homes. The topic is dealing with loss and preparing the memorial or funeral service you and your family would want.

Yes these are serious sounding and may take some of you away from Sunday afternoon football. However, it is your chance to talk about these things within the faith community and your hopes for the future.

We hope to see you there. All of the committee members will be there and any can answer your questions about the sessions ahead of time. The committee includes: Susan Easton, Al Easton, Cris Blanchard, Gail Scott, John Scott, Alice Schrade, Marilyn Riddle, Art Hengerer, Charles Kite and Vaughn Nevin.

**Parish
Register**

Long-time member, Josephine Brower entered the Church Triumphant on September 13, 2005. Our prayers are with the family.

The Sacrament of Baptism was administered to Carson Lee Engstrom, infant son of Erin and Leif Engstrom on August 21.

Congratulations to Heidi and Benjamin Iyok-Elad as they celebrate the birth of Pharryll Ayuk Elad on August 18, 2005 and to Merri and Skip Meislahn as they welcome into their family their first grandson, born to their daughter and son-in-law, Brooke and Rob Killian in Denver on August 27.

Our Christian sympathy is extended to Barbara Kirwan on the occasion of the death of her father in Utica.

World Communion Day

Submitted by the Mission Committee

Did you know that on October 2, 2005, Christians in New York, Wisconsin, Haiti, Iraq and every country in God's world will be celebrating World Communion Day? On this day, the division of conservative, liberal and moderate will disappear as every Christian becomes one through Christ's body and blood. In addition to this most special, awe inspiring day, the Presbyterian Church will be collecting funds for our Peacekeeping Mission throughout the world. As wars rage and people die don't feel helpless - like there is nothing you can do - because you can! It is up to Presbyterians around God's world to spread the awesome message of Christ's great love and peace. The monies collected will support Peacekeeping through the General Assembly, Synods, Presbyteries and right here in Albany. Give to this most important offering and start the new church year out right. Your generous gifts will be collected on Sunday October 2, 2005. God Bless You.

Women's Spiritual Group

Submitted by Margaret Zettle

Women of the church are invited to join a Bible study using the guide Women and the Word: Studies in the Gospel of John. The guide encourages us to read the Bible thoughtfully, to consider the background and commentary, and to share insights and experiences. It provides help and structure for both students and leaders in a series of nine sessions covering the Incarnation of Jesus, A Mother's Role, A Woman Accused of Adultery, The Promise of the Spirit's Presence, Witness to Jesus's Death and Resurrection, and more.

The group currently meeting at noon on Wednesdays in the church library would welcome additional

participants. They would also be glad to help women who are interested in meeting at a different time to start more groups. Guides are available in the church office. Talk to Margaret Zettle or Joanne Gascoyne if you're interested.

Fall Rummage Sale

Submitted by Laura Sharp

The time is drawing near for our Fall Rummage Sale on Saturday, October 15. Please feel free to continue to drop off your donations to the church all the way through the eve of the sale. If you haven't yet experienced the immense measure of joy connected with set-up the night before, check-out on sale day, or clean-up around 2:30p.m. - by all means, call Laura and we'll s-q-u-e-e-z-e you in. Thank you!

Haunted Corn Maze With SUNY Cornerstone

Submitted by Laura Sharp

Our teens and young adults have been invited to join SUNY's Cornerstone members (Protestant Campus Ministry) for an evening trip to the Haunted Corn Maze (or is it Maize?) in Schaghticoke. The date is still T/B/A, but if you're interested, call Laura and she'll keep you posted. For families with younger ghoulish kids, there is a non-scary version as well as a snack bar, a hay maze, a slide down the hillside and other activities.

Church Cookbook Available at The Book House

Submitted by Alice Schrade

The Book House at Stuyvesant Plaza has taken about 20 of our absolutely wonderful cookbooks to sell. They are on sale for the same price that we charge, \$10.00. ALL of the proceeds go to the Focus Food Pantry. So far, 3 books have been sold. Please tell all your friends to shop at our wonderful independent local book store and, while there buying the latest novel,

to ask for the First Pres Anniversary Cookbook. The Book House is doing a wonderful thing for us.

Remember Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries and house gifts where our cookbook would be so welcomed.

Usher Greeter Teams for October

October 2

8:30 a.m.

Eric Eisenbraun

10:45 a.m. – Team 7

Marc Scarlett, Amy Scarlett, Carolyn Gavin, Marc Boucher, and Janna Boucher

October 9

8:30 a.m.

John Myers

10:45 a.m. – Team 8

Elly Rice, Bill Storrs, Irving Smith, Heidi Elad, Margaret Zettle and Catherine Fletcher

October 16

8:30 a.m.

Peter Thomas

10:45 a.m. – Team 1

Phillip Riddle, Marilyn Riddle, Brian Fuss, Harriet Seeley and Dave Quist

October 23

8:30 a.m.

Barbara Billet

10:45 a.m. – Team 2

Lee Helsby, Joanne Gascoyne, Richard Gascoyne, Margaret Hannay

October 30

8:30 a.m.

Bruce Brynolfson

10:45 a.m. – Team 3

Bob Stevens, Linda Stevens, Bob Jackson, Lois Cameron and Ted Cameron

**Deacons' Flower Ministry
Rotation Schedule
for October**



October 2- Albany South:
Chas Kite and Joe Mathias

October 9- Delmar Area:
Gail Scott, Peter Thomas, Sarah
Sperry

**October 16- Downtown, North
Albany Area:**
Bruce Brynolfson, David Quist and
Tom O'Toole

**October 23- Guilderland/South
Colonie:**
Kristen Majuk, Brian Fuss

**October 30- Latham Area and
North Area:**
Roseline Takor, Heidi Iyok-Elad

LECTIONARY

October 2: Exod. 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20;
Ps. 19; Phil. 3:4b-14; Matt. 21:33-46

October 9: Exod. 32:1-14; *Ps. 106:1-6, 19-23; Phil. 4:1-9; Matt. 22:1-14*

October 16: Exod. 33:12-23; *Ps. 99; 1
Thess. 1:1-10; Matt. 22:15-22*

October 23: Deut. 34:1-12; *Ps. 90:1-6, 13-17; 1
Thess. 2:1-8; Matt. 22:34-46*

October 30: Josh. 3:7-17; *Ps. 107:1-7, 33-37; 1
Thess. 2:9-13; Matt. 23:1-12*

Please note: Recordings of the
worship service are available, please
contact the church office.

First Presbyterian Church office hours:
Monday thru Friday
9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Phone 518.449.7332;
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THE
FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
of Albany

Founded in 1763

JOSEPH W. SHOOK
Interim Pastor

ROBERT C. LAMAR
Pastor Emeritus

VICTOR A. KLIMASH
Director of Music

NANCY J. FRANK
Organist

LAURA SHARP
Christian Education Assistant

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