



Pastor's Perspective

September 2011

Telling the truth is a dangerous business. We caution our children that they should always be truthful, but we forget to inform them of the perils of doing so. And so, the next time they see Aunt Bertha, they say, "She smells funny!" Unless Aunt Bertha has an extraordinary sense of humor, there will probably be trouble.

Of course, we need to warn our children that there are times when it is imprudent to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. But, I submit, even at those times when it necessary to tell the truth, telling the truth is dangerous.

That's what makes being a prophet so risky. Prophets in the Bible, you will recall, were those men and women who were shown the truth by God and then told to go and tell it to the people. Invariably this truth was unpleasant. God had some bone to pick with his people and he commissioned a prophet to do the dirty work. That is why prophets in the Bible are uniformly reluctant to carry out the task. They try to explain to God that they are too young or too old or too uneducated or, like Moses, that they stutter. They knew that they were sticking their necks out. And too often their hearers had the power to use the axe.

Christians like you and me are called to two essential tasks. The pastoral and prophetic. Some wag has dubbed these the tasks of "comforting the afflicted" and "afflicting the comfortable." Most of us don't mind the pastoral task and a few are even good at it: they know the right words to say when a person needs comforting; their mere presence helps. Hardly anyone wants to be a prophet. Oh, there are some people who relish "telling it like it is," but they don't get invited anywhere.

In the Bible for every prophet telling the people what is wrong, there is a false-prophet telling the people that things are fine. I have somewhere a cartoon of an ancient Israelite telling another, "That's all very well, Mr. Amos, but I'd like to hear more of what's right with Israel!" People want to hear that things are okay the way they are. But sometimes things are not right. And somebody has to say it.

It is particularly hard to tell the truth to someone upon whom we must depend for our livelihood. That is one of the things wrong with the media today. Media organizations are all in competition for ratings. If the truth is unpleasant, ratings will drop. And so there is a great temptation to twist the truth to make it more palatable, or if that is impossible, then at least to tell the truth about those other people, who usually turn out to be the less powerful and those already oppressed.

Perhaps the greatest compliment ever paid to Jesus during his lifetime on earth was spoken by the Pharisees, "'Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and teach the way of God in accordance with truth, and show deference to no one; for you do not regard people with partiality.'" (Matthew 22:16) Jesus spoke the truth because he viewed everyone as equal.

Isn't it the case that the reason you and I often avoid telling the truth is because we are afraid of people, or in awe of people, or enamored of people? Former United States Senator Mark Hatfield used to say that it is extremely difficult for high-ranking politicians to get honest information from people. And several ex-presidents have pointed out that upon leaving the Oval Office they started losing more golf games.

Let us remember that all persons are equal in the sight of God. That, at least, will give truth a chance.

Shalom,

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MARCH SESSION MEETING

- Clerk Craig Faulkner reported on Attendance and One Death.
- Pastor Stan gave an update of his activities. And announced his retirement effective December 31, 2011
- Ann Camp gave an update for the Calling and Membership committee activities. Ann announced plans for a spaghetti supper on September 18, 4:30 to 6:30 with proceeds to purchase bells for Sunday School. Ann also reported that \$443 was collected at the recent bake sale.
- Lynn Curtis gave a report of Fellowship activities planned. Lynn reported on a scheduled ice cream social on September 11 following Worship. She also reported on the planned progressive supper scheduled for September 25. The Annual Turkey Supper will be November 13, 2011.
- Finance Committee update was given by Drew Wilkin. Drew reported plans for the fall stewardship campaign. He stated that a letter would be tried this year in place of other campaigns used in the past.
- Nurture committee report was given by Teresa Ray. Teresa reported The Family Fun Night had 50 people attend. She also announced a fund raiser for the Sunday School program. It is called "We Are Nuts for Kids" which asks people to donate a certain amount in support of the Sunday School Curriculum purchase.
- Outreach committee report was given by Todd Gravert. Todd reported nearly \$2200 was received from the garage sale. Todd requested that 25% of the upcoming Peacemaking Offering be sent to the Kemmerer Village (a home for disadvantage youth). He also requested and was granted permission to hold a bake sale December 5 with first \$300 going to the Fulton/Thomson Food Pantry. Permission was also granted to again sell pizzas.
- Properties Committee report was given by Jim Balk. Jim reported that a donor had come forward to pay for the rental of a lift to replace the light bulbs in the Sanctuary.
- Webmaster Lisa Colgan gave a report including the number "hits" the church was getting on it's web site. Lisa had also e-mailed an eight page report to each Session member..
- Worship Committee update was given by Bill Wilkin.

LECTIONARY FOR SUNDAYS AND FESTIVALS SCRIPTURE

September 4 Exodus 12:1-14 Psalm 149:1-9 Romans 13:8-14 Matthew 18:15-20	September 11 Exodus 14:19-31 Psalm 114:1-8 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21 Romans 14:1-12 Matthew 18:21-35	September 18 Exodus 16:2-15 Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45 Philippians 1:21-30 Matthew 20:1-16	September 25 Exodus 17:1-7 Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16 Philippians 2:1-13 Matthew 21:23-32
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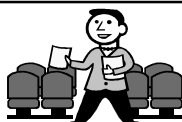
AUGUST WORSHIP LEADERS

Ushers

Bob and Lynn Curtis
Bob and Shirley Buikema

Greeters

September 4 Ron and Connie Koehn
September 11 Jeff, Jackie & Brandi Pessman
September 18 The Tichlers
September 25 Randy and Mary Buikema



**JAN STUART'S PANTRY CORNER
MONTH OF SEPTEMBER**

Toilet Paper
Bar Soap





“A harvest of justice is sown in peace” (James 3:18)

Dear Friend in Christ,

Every time our congregation celebrates the Lord’s Supper there is the opportunity to remember other Christians around the world who are also receiving these gifts of God. But we make a special point of remembering our unity with Christians worldwide on World Communion Sunday, the first Sunday in October. It is a day to be mindful of the love of Christ, who draws us all together despite our many differences.

As Presbyterians, we recognize that Christ taught us to be peacemakers and that being peacemakers is part of being Christ’s followers. So when on World Communion Sunday we receive the bread and cup of heaven, we bring our gifts of self, service, and money to be put to work for Christ’s peace in the world.

The Peacemaking Offering encourages all parts of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to work for peace. Each congregation is invited to find ways to promote peace within the congregation and within the community. For that reason, our church will retain 25 percent of the Offering we receive, and we will decide how best to put this money to work. Another 25 percent will go to our presbytery or synod, and the remaining 50 percent will go to the General Assembly Mission Council for peacemaking involvement throughout the world.

Join us on October 2 as our church celebrates World Communion Sunday and we commit to being instruments of the peace we find in Christ. Please come ready to give generously to the Peacemaking Offering.



SUNDAY SCHOOL IS COMING

We are nuts for kids!

Please help fund our Sunday School program.

We are nuts about kids helps us do that.

Take a nut off the tree and pay the amount shown and
you have just helped us fund our program.

For more information ask Lynn: 563-321-3657

September 11th - Kick off Sunday school with art-shirt craft

September 18th - Lesson

September 25th - Lesson

October 2nd - Lesson

October 9th - Lesson

October 16th - Music class

October 23rd - Sing during service, Lesson

October 30th - Lesson

November 6th - Lesson

November 13th - Music class

November 20th - Sing during service, Lesson

November 27th - Movie

December 4th - Christmas program practice

December 11th - Christmas program practice

December 17th - Saturday program practice (time will be announced)

December 18th - Christmas program, No lesson

December 25th - No lesson

January 1st - No lesson

January 8th - Craft

If you would like to help in any way please call Lynn Richards at: 563-321-3657 Thank you!



August 23, 2100

*Harbor Crest Auxiliary
817 - 17th Street
Fulton, Illinois 61252*

Dear Friend,

The Harbor Crest Auxiliary has been reorganized and has just recently installed new officers for the current and coming year.

We are sending this letter to invite you to come to our next meeting which will be held At Harbor Crest in the activity room on September 13th at 6PM. There will be an opportunity to renew old friendships and establish new ones. Please come and bring any guests who would enjoy volunteering their time and talents to ensure the highest quality of living for the Residents at Harbor Crest.

There will be a bake sale and silent auction held on October 7th in conjunction with Fulton Steamers homecoming parade. Fliers will be posted with additional information but feel free to contact me with any further questions.

*Marie Johnson, Corresponding Secretary
Harbor Crest Auxiliary*

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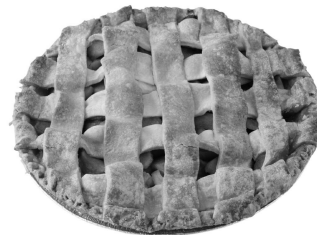
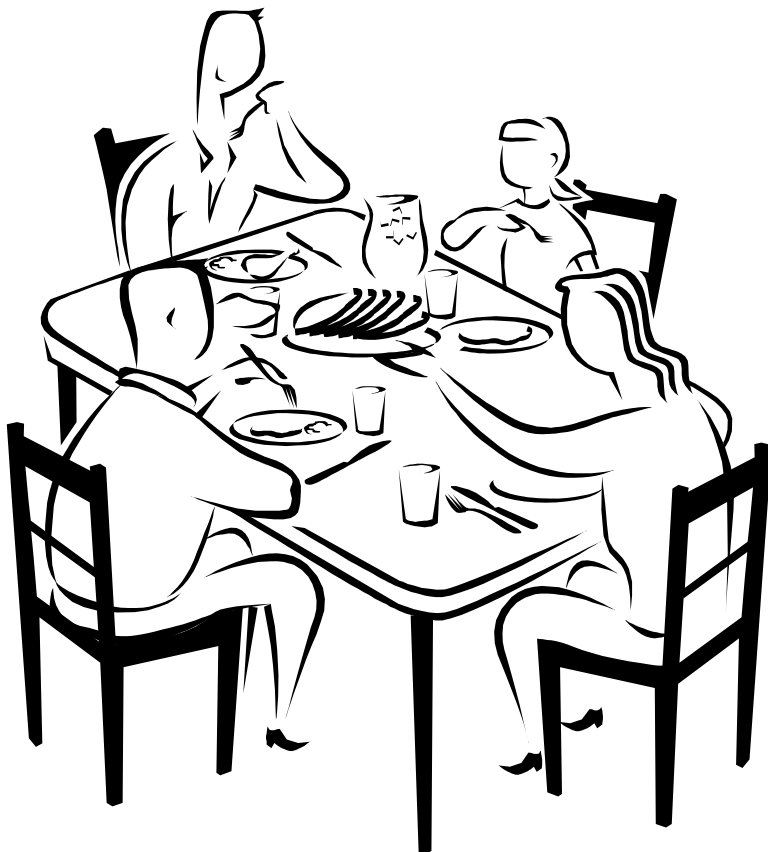
PROGRESSIVE SUPPER

September 25th starting at 5 PM



A fun evening awaits all who will be attending this progressive potluck event. Starting at 5:00 PM at the home of Jim and Anne Balk and then progressing to the homes of Ron and Connie Koehn, Dave and Teresa Ray, and John and Lisa Colgan, we will be enjoying a variety of appetizers, salads, main dishes, and desserts throughout the evening. Whether you choose to bring a dish to pass or just wish to enjoy the evening, everyone is welcome to attend. Rides and carpooling will be available to all.

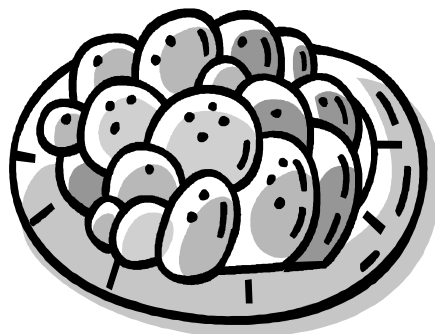
The sign-up sheet for the event is posted on the bulletin board. Or contact anyone from the Fellowship Committee if you would like to attend and would like a ride.





Ice Cream Social

Sunday, September 11th



Come to the Outreach Center after church and enjoy delicious ice cream with numerous toppings to choose from, cookies, and punch provided by the Fellowship Committee.

Also, the Nurture Committee is providing a special cake to celebrate the start of the new Sunday School year.

You are all invited to this fun event!
Bring your "Sweet Tooth"
Bring a friend.

SPAGHETTI SUPPER ANNOUNCED

September 18, 2011 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

Spaghetti with and without meat.

Sauces,

French Bread,

Cole Slaw,

Applesauce,

Dessert and Beverage.

Free-will Offering.

Proceeds to be used to pay for the bells for the Junior Bell Choir. The bells have arrived and the children will soon be learning to play them.

