



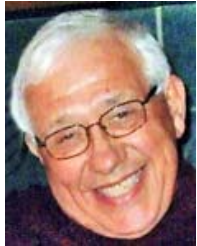
May 31, 2011 [fpconline.org](http://fpconline.org)

### Worship Times

First Presbyterian Church offers four Sunday worship services: Traditional worship in the Sanctuary at 8:30, 9:30 and 11 a.m. and Contemporary worship in Westminster Hall at 11 a.m.

### Childcare

Reserve by contacting Carrie Jowers (210.396.9768 / [carriej@fpcsat.org](mailto:carriej@fpcsat.org)) no later than two days prior to the event. Drop-ins for childcare cannot be accommodated.



## First things first *Pastor's ponderings*

Not long ago after a worship service, agreeing with a statement that I had made, one of the ushers as I was leaving the Sanctuary said, "We need to continue to make the first thing, the first thing." I really resonated with what he said at that moment. The Evil One must have a "hay day" with the way we are so prone to go on wild goose chases and "major in the minor." Conversely, I picture God as shaking His head in frustration — deeply desiring for us to travel down the path which He has laid out for us.

Please note that some of our endeavors are really good and have merit, but not top priority. When we go down those roads, we

sacrifice the "best" and settle for that which is just "good" or "better." Often, we have a good feeling about our accomplishments, but we have missed God's primary purpose for us.

Now you might say, what is God's primary purpose for us? What is the "best" path? What is the "first thing?" Jesus was asked a similar question in Matthew 22:36 when an expert in the law asked Him, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Without doubt, he was trying to trick Jesus into saying something which could be held against Him.

In a stroke of pure genius, Jesus summed up the law with a kind of laser-like clarity when He responded, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." (He was quoting Deuteronomy 6:5.) This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." (He is quoting Leviticus 19:18). All the law and the prophets hang on these two commandments.

The "first thing," then, is to seek to know and love God on a daily, moment-by-moment basis. Just as many of us have heard since we were children, we do

—*Pastor's ponderings continues on page 2*

## A statement about the passing of 10-A

Since 1978, the Presbyterian Church (USA) has been grappling with the subject of the ordination of gay and lesbian persons as elders, deacons and ministers of word and sacrament. In 1996, an amendment was added to our Book of Order that set the standard for ordination being "to live in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness."

While attempts to remove that amendment from the Book of Order have failed in the past, on Tuesday, May 10, it was officially removed by a majority vote of the 173 Presbyteries. A "local option" amendment was put in its place. The standards for the ordination of elders and deacons will be decided upon by local congregations and for ministers by local presbyteries.

For many years, First Presbyterian Church of San Antonio has had members with different opinions about this issue. So, what affect will this action of the PCUSA have for us as a Church?

In essence, nothing changes in our ability to elect the officers and call the ministers we choose. Likewise, we continue to believe that the Bible is God's inspired Word and the ultimate authority for the living of our lives. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Head of the Church and we trust in Him as Savior and Lord. We are not hampered from continuing our mission to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with our world and to care for hurting people all around us. Our ministries of worship and education are not changed by this action.

It is important that we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus and His Great Commission to us as we prayerfully, deliberately move into the future.

# Day of Pentecost

*An excerpt from the "Companion to the Book of Common Worship" (Geneva Press, 2003, 117-119)*

According to the Day of Pentecost story in Acts 2:1-13, God gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to empower witnesses to the resurrection. Sounds from heaven, cosmic language, the rush of a mighty ruach (wind, spirit, breath) invaded the house in which the apostles gathered, and appeared to them as a burning fire. Tongues of fire touched their nerve centers. A power — the unseen power of God — moved among them and gripped them. The Holy Spirit is unseen, like the wind, which is why the Old Testament calls it ruach YHWH, "the wind or breath of God" (cf. John 3:8). The Spirit is the "unseenness of God" working among us.

According to Joel (2:28-29), the ruach is to open everybody to God's future. People young and old will dream and will have visions of hope; they will be able to loose themselves from the way things are now, because God is establishing a whole new economy of creation. The Holy Spirit breaks us out of our preoccupation with ourselves and frees us to serve neighbors, loosens our grasp on possessions and sets us to loving people. New creation is what Joel is talking about. Pentecost is new creation.

The book of Acts tells the story of the outcome of Pentecost's new creation: people witness in word and in deed to the risen Christ. At the outset, the newborn church immediately tumbled out into the streets to witness to God's mighty works in the languages of people all over the world. By the end of the story, a tiny, Spirit-filled community of faith that broke from its present order has spread across the continents with incredible power to bring new things into being. With the gift of the Spirit, all things are possible.

Therefore, on the Day of Pentecost, we celebrate God's gift of Holy Spirit which draws us together as one people, helps us to comprehend what God is doing in the world and empowers us to proclaim, in word and in deed, God's plan of reconciling all people in the name of Christ (Ephesians 1:10).

Without the gift of the Spirit, Christ's church dries up and withers away, and we are left with only our broken selves. With the gift of the Spirit, all things are possible. A spirit-filled community of faith opens eyes to needs in the world and sees its missing as God's new people. The Day of Pentecost is the climax of the Great Fifty Days of Easter, celebrating as it does the gift of the Spirit to the body of Christ — the church.

*Pentecost is Sunday, June 12*

## Pastor's Ponderings

*—Continued from page 1*

this through reading the Bible, prayer, worship, fellowship and service. This is the vertical dimension of life. This is where it must start.

When we even begin to be faithful to knowing and loving God with our whole selves, God always moves us beyond our comfort zones to love our neighbor as ourselves. This is the horizontal dimension.

The vertical and the horizontal dimensions were best displayed in Jesus, who in flesh and blood showed us what it means to make the first thing the first thing. His ultimate act of love for God and others was the vertical and the horizontal coming together on a cross. Allowing Jesus to be our primary example helps us accomplish God's primary purpose for us.

When we take our eyes off of Jesus and focus our attention on other things, we major in the minors. For example, I have made my primary attention establishing programs, erecting buildings, trying to fill the plate and the pew, working for or against change in the PCUSA, and the list goes on and on. While all of these activities maybe worthwhile, they should never be my primary focus.

When I am following the example of Jesus, I am spending time in prayer and study, pouring myself into others in every way possible, sharing the good news of forgiveness and new life, trying to be His healing touch in the lives of hurting people, worshipping God and experiencing genuine fellowship. Frankly, without the Holy Spirit filling and empowering me, I don't do a

very good job of following Jesus. Yet, I have been amazed time and time again that when I seek to put my agenda aside and allow people to see right through me and see Jesus, unimaginable things happen.

I pray that as you prepare to welcome a new senior pastor to be your shepherd, that you would ask God to help you to make "the first thing, the first thing." Paraphrasing Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:9, who is quoting Isaiah 6:4, I believe with all of my heart that "Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, we haven't even begun to dream of what God has prepared for those who love Him."

*James A. Cappe*

# Best of the rest

## MEMBER NEWS

Alamo Heights student **Bill Lane** has received a \$2,500 scholarship from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Prouds parents are Bernard and Lellen Lane. Congratulation, Bill, from your FPC family!

First Presbyterian Church recognizes **Sarah Berton** and **Camilla Kampmann**, members of Girl Scout Troop 1222, who recently received Girl Scout Silver Awards. Sarah is the daughter of Michael and Margaret Berton. Camilla is the daughter of George and Abigail Kampmann.

## CHURCH REGISTER

Deaths

**Johnye Ray Sirotiak**

April 28

**Louis Herbert Stumberg**

May 3

**G. Lindsay Crump**

May 11

**Ruth Campbell**

May 21

Marriage

**David Stuart Sien and Janet Duncan**

**Baggett**

May 7

## STAFF NEWS

**Steve Ryherd** has been named interim contemporary worship leader. He comes to FPC with more than 10 years experience serving as a worship leader.

Steve is married and the father of four children. Please welcome Steve to our church.



Welcome **Ashley Hamner**, our new Children's Ministry intern. She is a rising senior at Trinity University majoring in business and minoring in psychology and Spanish, where she is involved in choir and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. Ashley is most looking forward to developing a great community at FPC and says she "can't wait to work with the kids and see all of the great things God can teach me through them."

## CALLING ALL MEMBERS

A congregational meeting will be held in the Sanctuary on Sunday, June 12, immediately following the 11 a.m. worship services. The purpose of the meeting is to elect two deacons to fill unexpired vacancies. The Officer Nominating Committee has put forth the names of **Georgia Heath** to replace Pat Brannen (Class of 2014) and **Pat Krueger** to replace Kay Johnson (Class of 2013). All members are encouraged to attend.

## VBS REGISTRATION CONTINUES

"Hometown Nazareth - Where Jesus was a Kid," is being held July 17-21 (Sunday - Thursday) from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. for those 4 years (as of 9/1/11) up to fifth grade. To register or to learn more, visit the home page of the church website.

## MISSION: POSSIBLE!

Interested in serving globally or locally? Our Local Missions Committee and Global Missions Committee are looking for three to five new members to join their incoming classes. The time commitment is relatively small (once a month on a Wednesday evening for a little over an hour) but the impact each committee has is huge, as they build relationships with mission partners and seek to promote FPC's mission efforts. If interested in serving in this way, please contact **Alyssa Payne** (210.271.2742 / alyssap@fpcsat.org) in the next couple of weeks, as the committees hope to have their new members in place by the end of June.

## NURSERY ANGELS

First Presbyterian is blessed with an abundance of children in the nursery area! The Nursery Committee is thrilled to serve Christ through a ministry of providing a loving, caring and Christian environment for these young members of our congregation. We need volunteers to volunteer as Sunday Angels for one hour, one day a month from September through May. Serving Christ in this small, yet important way is one of the most rewarding things you can do in the budding spiritual lives children. For more information or to serve as a Sunday Angel, please contact **Sara Parish** (210.394.0865 / sara23sc@hotmail.com) or **Laurie Byno** (210.367.9333 / lauriebyno@ymail.com).

A big thank you to those who served as Nursery Angels this past year: **Charlotte Bauerle, Catherine Bell, Sara Braisted,**



**Andrew Brewer, Meredith Brewer, Mickie Browning, Tammie Cagle, Jill Charlton, Jenny Crider, Randy Crider, Edward DeLeon, Tera Doerr, Amy Foster, Ann Fryburger, Lynda Greene, Hillary Hamilton, Anne Hiller, Mary McDougale Homburg, Danielle Kieschnick, Jody Lutz, Karen McCulloch, Anne McGarraugh, John Michael McGarraugh, Ellen Meadows, Heather Nelson, Sara Parish, Jacque Patton, Micki Philbin, Kathy Price, Tim Price, Linda Ruhmann, Bunkie Shed, Shelbie Shed, Kelley Terry, Julia Troy, Candace Tottenham and Shalimar Wallis.**

## "AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART"

This sermon series (June 19-Aug. 14) deals with the life of David, Israel's greatest king. God used David in an amazing way in the early part of his life. Yet, David, who as a young shepherd boy defeated the mighty enemy giant, Goliath, failed in overcoming his own personal foes. While David was abundantly blessed by God, in some important ways, he did not finish his life well. Make plans to attend.



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# JUNE EVENTS

Full details online - [www.fpconline.com](http://www.fpconline.com) -  
or by calling 210.226.0215

- June 3: KEYS Step & Stretch class / Memorial Day program
- June 5: Blood Drive
- June 5-8: Urban Plunge (middle school retreat)
- June 11-18: Dominican Republic mission trip
- June 12: Pentecost (wear red to church)
- June 12: Congregational meeting
- June 13: Officers meeting
- June 17: "See Your City" adult day trip
- June 17-19: MoRanch Family weekend (retreat)
- June 19: Father's Day
- June 26: Loves & Fishes

