

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN TIMES

October, 2013

First Presbyterian Church
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A Message from Reverend Susan Rosenbaum

Hebrews 10:22-25 The Message (MSG)

²²⁻²⁵ So let's *do it*—full of belief, confident that we're presentable inside and out. Let's keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps his word. Let's see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worshiping together as some do but spurring each other on, especially as we see the big Day approaching.

Currently I am reading a book called Being Church: Reflections on How to Live as the People of God by John F. Alexander. Melana recommended this book to me and I suggested it to a devotion group in which I participate, so we are taking one chapter a week and having an online discussion. I have learned a lot from this book about being church. One statement the author makes in the third chapter is this, "*Church isn't the sort of thing you can go to. You can be the church, you can become the church, you can even do the church, but you can't go to church.*" I totally believe that statement. We can go to a building, but the building is not the church. We are the church. I have been thinking a lot about this statement. As a matter of fact, it has inspired a few sermons. What intrigues me about this statement is the fact that many people seriously believe that the church is a building and if you are a member of the church, you belong in that building to worship and praise God. While this is a part of being the church, it is not solely what Christians do. I have to admit that I love worshiping with a community of believers. There is something about coming together and giving God glory that speaks to my soul. But if that were all there was to being a Christian, the world would not have changed much when Christ became our Savior. So there is more to faith than just worshiping and worshiping does not have to take place in a building.

This building-less concept is also interesting because as our New Worshiping Community Team has been discerning a new community, the one thing which is clear to us is that we are not looking for a building. We are looking for people. We want to connect with people who have a longing for God but don't necessarily long to worship in the same place week after week. We want to connect with people who see the church as something they are or something they will become. It is a concept which allows the priesthood of believers to become a wonderful reality.

What would our churches look like without buildings? What mission could we do if we did not have to worry about upkeep for those buildings? These are questions that can make us think outside the box. What would it mean to your body of believers if you did not have a building but instead met on various homes? How would that impact your life, your mission, and your faith? I would be curious to hear your answers to these last three questions. My hope is that these questions help us better define who we are as people of God and how we can better serve the Lord. As always, I invite you to engage in conversation with me on this subject. My email is pastoralpresbyter@gmail.com and my phone number is (620) 674-1844.

May you be blessed as you bless others.

Pastor Susan Rosenbaum

Out of My Mind ~ for October 2013
ponderings from Pastor John

I have a smattering of things for you this month.

First, my dear Lucia has taken an Interim Head of Staff position for Brandon FPC, beginning November 1st. Brandon is just east of Tampa Bay, FL. This is gratifying news for her and will bring some changes for the two of us, and in my relationships with you all.

The most observable change will be that I will be in my study on Thursdays, beginning in November, as Lucia will no longer be in Springfield. When we have lived a plane ticket apart in the past, we work out with our churches times to visit one another. Typically I will go to her one month, and she will come here the next. Personnel and I are already talking this over, and you all will see how this develops. Please keep us in your regular prayers; we like living together better than living apart, but God give the grace needed to do what God asks, and it will be fine.

Second: we reached and passed a significant Mile Stone in our interim work together. Last Sunday we held a Town Hall meeting: "Letting God ... Getting On." I believe the Holy Spirit was with us in our conversations. I will use this marking point to say something like: "We will now let the past be the past, and we will build together toward the future."



I recognize deeply that this does not do away with your feelings of hurt, loss or anger. But it gives us a reference point to practice letting them go and letting God bring healing as needed. If you feel the need to work with such feelings, I as your pastor, and our Interim Ministry Team [Janice, Melba and Robert] would love to talk with you about anything on your heart!

Next: I'll make a quick response [from the Town Hall meeting] for those of us who feel the interim process is taking too long. I likened it to marriage ending in divorce or death, and a too-quick pairing up again.

Since the 1970's some folks have been attending to pastoral transitions carefully. Generally 40-60% of churches make pastoral changes well enough. But if one [or more] of three conditions pertain, then the percentage of churches having difficulty with transition to a new pastor goes way up [80% or so.] "Difficulty" is defined as: 'short, conflicted pastoral tenure.'

Those three conditions are: 1) long pastorates [7 years seems to be the length of stay after which a transition becomes more difficult.] 2) conflict in the congregation to the level where some folks are 'taking their ball and glove and going home.' 3) Pastoral malfeasance: misconduct, theft, or just poor behavior as a pastor.

Over a couple of decades observers found that if a church did an intentional process, centered around the 6 Tasks, the next pastoral relationship was smoother, longer and more effective ... I'd be glad to talk this over with anyone who is feeling frustrated. I do have some interesting research about the benefits of interim pastoral work.

Fourth: Our next piece of visible work will be 'Harvesting our History' and you will soon see a physical Time Line on the east wall of our Fellowship Hall. We will invite you to place significant personal events on our time line ... more details to come!

Finally: I think our positive energy in worship, fellowship and work together, has grown significantly in the past several months. I believe it would be possible now to invite people to join us, and they would value the same experience we are having.

This would mean we might get more comfortable in telling persons about our faith in Jesus and our love of this church ... whew, scary thought!

Our Session and Membership Committee are interested in supporting all of us who are being led to get better at personal faith-sharing.

Toward this end, I am calling an Evangelism Retreat for Saturday, November 9th ... well, OK, we can call it: "Learning how to share our faith" ... time! Details will come forward in due time. Please be praying about God guiding and growing us in this area.

Love and prayers, ~~Pastor~~ John, Chief Steward

Work for our common good; love openly; and, get to know God better this month!

Hear Ye, Hear Ye, Hear Ye.

Our Fall Stewardship Campaign is Coming!

When the words “stewardship campaign” come up, we often think just about making a financial commitment to the church for the coming year.

However, **rightly understood**, stewardship is far more inclusive than mere money. We are called to be: **“Stewards of the mysteries of God”** as St. Paul puts it in 1 Corinthians 4: 1 Being a Steward~Disciple of Jesus involves all that we have and are! We can be responsible Stewards with *all* our resources: our talents, our time, and our treasures ... **so that we can continue to bring God’s Shalom forward!**

As members and friends of **First Presbyterian Church of Rolla**, the gifts we offer **of our** time, **skills** and financial resources, are holy gifts. They are symbols of love and signs of grace offered out of joy and devotion; symbols of our covenant of love with Jesus Christ; made in response to Christ’s great love, which was offered first to us. Consider Matthew 6:38: “Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

We pray for God’s guidance as **you** seek to determine how **you will give of your** own gifts of time, talent, and treasure to further God’s **work** through **our blessed church**.

On Sunday, October 1st, we will begin our Fall Campaign. On the 13th you will receive our Narrative Budget, a Commitment Card and an Estimate of Giving card. The Narrative Budget will show how **our Session intends to invest** our financial gifts **for** our church for the coming year. The Narrative will also provide examples where your gifts of time and talent can be offered. **The Commitment Card will give each of us an opportunity to make commitments to prayer, new spiritual disciplines and activities for the coming year.**

During this time of transition and transformation, our church is challenged to **move into our future confidently, energetically, generously and trustingly**. We encourage you to **pray for specific discernment about what percentage of your ‘harvest’ God is leading you to give**. Note that just a small percentage increase in our giving will **allow us to meet our regular expenses with active giving!** Please give prayerful consideration of your gifts **and commitments** to God, through our church, for the coming year.

Grace and peace,
The Stewardship & Finance Committees

Presbyterian Women Rummage Sale October 5, 2013

The Presbyterian Women are having a rummage sale on Saturday, October 5, 2013, 8:00 am to 2:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We need your help in making this a success. Please look through your cupboards and storage places and anything you have not used in the past two

years, bring to us. Small appliances, kitchen ware, garden tools, books, CD's, games, toys, Christmas ornaments, knick knacks; anything you think will sell will be appreciated. (NO CLOTHING PLEASE) Be sure things are clean and in good condition. The proceeds will help PW fund our mission projects. You may bring items to the church on Thursday, October 3 from 4-6 pm and anytime Friday, October 4 from 8 am to 4 pm. If you need someone to pick up your items, please call Christine Rueff at 364-7603. **Volunteers are needed to help work on Friday and Saturday. If you are able to help out, it would be greatly appreciated. Sign up board outside office.**

**“Crossing the Road”
Reverend Wilfred Orr**

We often have difficulty in bridging our differences with others.

If you would like to learn from an experienced, wise person in this area, please come and join us for: **“Crossing the Road”** presented by the Rev. Wilfred Orr.

The Rev. Orr served as Pastor of the Newtownbreda Presbyterian Church in Northern Ireland until his retirement in 2012. During his years of service there, Rev. Orr was a leading figure in the Ballynafeigh Clergy Fellowship. The proactive role played by this fellowship was significant in contributing to this district remaining one of the areas in Northern Ireland most balanced between Protestant/Unionist and Catholic/Nationalist populations in spite of the polarizing impact of “The Troubles.”

As a leading figure in the Ballynafeigh Clergy Fellowship, and as a pastor, Rev. Orr worked tirelessly to promote both stronger ties between churches of all traditions in the district and between those from different cultural, social, and political backgrounds. In 2012, he was presented with an Order of the British Empire (OBE) for “Service to Community Relations” in the Queen’s honors list.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) has recognized him as an International Peacemaker and brought him to the United States. He will be with us on Wednesday, October 9th, presenting from 4-6 p.m. in our Fellowship Hall. We have much to learn from his experience in bridging differences.

**150th Celebration
Mary Kwantes**

This is a huge month for the 150th celebration. We are hosting the community at the Olive Street Church on October 19 from 10-12. Please drop by and extend your thanks to any guests we may have and TELL YOUR FRIENDS. Then during Sunday worship the Mass Reunion Choir will lead in singing the beautiful "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling". For all of you singers who enjoy singing hymns but have never joined choir, this is your chance to work with the remarkable Jeff Sandquist. Practice for this event is Oct 16 at 7 pm. No robes will be issued and we will dress for Sunday to make things simple for the many guests who have been invited back to sing. We will

also practice on Sunday at 8:30. It will be inspirational. Invite your friends to this and the lunch to follow at 12. A sign-up list for side dishes will be posted. Finally the wonderful organist, Robert Hachmeister, will lead us in worship October 27 and play for the Heritage Hymn Sing at 2 pm that afternoon. If you know Bob, please join us for lunch out after morning worship.

In November the 150th committee is remembering our members who have died in the last 25 years (more or less). We will post a list. If you have a family member who worshiped with us, but was not a church member, please tell the office and we will include them. For Veterans, Sunday, Nov. 10 we will have a bouquet of red, white and blue carnations to honor all veterans, living or deceased. You may honor a family member by letting Betti Jo know the name, the branch of the armed service, and if deceased, the date they died. We will attach a ribbon with the name and info. You may take the carnation home after the fellowship time at which the bouquet will be used also.

The memorial bricks will be dedicated on November 3, immediately after the worship service.

Thank you to all of you who brought food and helped with the lunch honoring our 50 year members. The food was great and the stories shared truly memorable.

Those interested in getting a head start on the music for the October 20th Choir Reunion can start coming to practice Wednesday, October 2 and 9th at 7:30 and 7:00 pm on the 16th.

October 23 – 26 Photo sittings for family pictures/church directory. (Go to rollapresby.org-Family album tab)

Membership Jonathan Kimball

Our next membership event is a **bonfire at the Whitakers' house on October 5, 5-8 pm**. We scheduled it to start somewhat early so that families with younger kids could participate, as well as the young at heart. Sunset is at 6:45pm, so we'll have some time both before and after dark. We will have hot dogs and smores, so maybe bring a side dish. Bring lawn chairs, guitars, games, whatever you think is needed to make the bonfire a fun time! Feel free to invite your friends and neighbors.

The Whitakers' house is on County Road 3160, east off Highway 72. Look for the power substation as you turn left. Go a little over a mile. House is 12001 on the left up a long driveway. There will be some balloons on the mailbox.

Next up will be the hunters' breakfast on opening day, **November 16**, roughly 8am to noon. The menu will be pancakes and sausage. This is a great way to reach out to the community and invite our neighbors in, just to share in a simple meal. I know I'll be looking forward to it after a morning in the woods! If you would like to help out, please let me know, or talk to Mary Kwantes.

MISSION Committee
Frank Jessop

The Peacemaking Offering will be dedicated on Communion Sunday, October 6. Fifty percent of the offering will go to General Assembly Peacemaking Programs, twenty-five percent will go for Peacemaking ministries in the Presbytery and Synod, and twenty-five percent will stay in the congregation to be used for Peacemaking in the community. The Mission Committee this year voted to give our share of the offering to H.O.P.E. This organization has a home for homeless youth. Their vision "Is to provide a bright future for homeless youth by breaking the cycle of hopeless and poor judgment and provide an opportunity to obtain self-sufficiency".

October 12th is the time that we need the Health Kits at the church so that they can be delivered to the Festival of Sharing October 19th. Place the Health Kits in the box in the foyer. Health Kit items are: 1 hand towel, 1 washcloth, 1 wide-tooth comb, 6 standard size Band-Aids, 1 toothbrush, 1 bar of soap, 1 metal nail clipper. Place all items in a one gallon plastic bag with zipper closure. DO NOT include toothpaste.

The Holiday seasons are just around the corner. The Mission Committee voted again this year to adopt eight needy families for Thanksgiving and Christmas. You will be hearing more in the next newsletters. Our church has been very supportive in this mission. This is a time when church reaches out to those in the community that are in need of help during the Holiday seasons.

MEMORIAL GARDEN NEWS
Mary Kwantes

The Memorial engraved bricks in memory of Shirley Andrews, John W. Cole, Harlan S. Creighton, Edna Jane Legate, William Neely, and Frances M. Wallen, which have been on display, will soon be placed in the Memorial Garden. On Sunday, November 3rd, All Saints Sunday, after the worship service the congregation will be invited out to the Garden, where Rev. Oerter will offer a prayer of dedication for the bricks.

The Come, Come Church
By Mary Kwantes

Here in this lovely Christian Valley
We once built a small brown,
unpretentious church,
and worshipped there,
filling the wooden pews
with people like ourselves,
our kind, our kin.
After a family, family or so
Some trees grew up

Around our Christian valley church
And silenced us into silent retreat.

And we,
We liked the trees,
The peacefulness,
Of their green grandeur,
As if we lived,
Beneath the shadow of our God.
Secure,
And more than that,
We felt ourselves surrounded
By a heritage we should preserve,
And so we let them stand.
And the green of growing trees
Soon filled our valley in the shadow.

Then through that woods
We'd ring our steeple's happy
"Come, come, come" bells
To people living on the hills
above our church.
We'd sing our hymns,
But our choir could not sing
Beyond the walls,
Nor could the ringing
Seep through the wildwood
To sound upon those hills,
Bare hills,
Where no saintly spires rose up
And one put on Sunday best.

Then one day
Some took axes in hand
To cut down trees for some new church
They wanted on the hill.
We commissioned them,
And later more,
Sending them on their way,
But still most of us would sing
In Christian self-complacency
"Come, come to our love church

Whose clean white doors
We've left open for you.
Come from your world
Of sin and poverty.
Gather at our living streams;
We'll even pour you cups
Of cold water.
Come down yourself
And meet us at our church."

Above our lovely Christian wood
are hills.
Christless
They stretch to reach heaven
But can't,
They can't hear bells.
They will never come unless-
Unless we Christians
Cut down all these trees
That muffle our bells
And cover up the sky,
And then climb the hills
With fresh cut crosses
On our backs.
Unless we carry
"Come, come" with us,
Then, only then
Can LOVE, LOVE, LOVE
Be heard aloud

