

Presbyterian Times



First Presbyterian Church
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A Message from Our Pastor Rev. Lou Ellen Hartley



I have seen this cartoon pop up on the internet a few times over the past few years. I love it. Poor Thomas – we read about him every year. Every year, the story following the Easter story is the Thomas story. We always meet the disciples, minus Thomas, hiding in a room. Jesus appears to them, and when Thomas returns, he doubts their story. For 2000 years now, Thomas has had a new name. We forget everything else about him. For example, his name means twin. We don't call him Twin Thomas. He asks Jesus to clarify some of his sayings. We don't call him Clarifying Thomas. Tradition even tells us he was the first Christian missionary to India. We don't call him Travelling Thomas. No. He is stuck with DOUBTING Thomas. One moment defined him. What a terrible fate.

Thomas' story has some modern applications for us, reminders of how tightly a reputation can stick. Churches must always be aware of their reputations within their community. Is a church known as the fighting church, the giving church, the grumbling church, the feeding church, the welcoming church? Changing a negative reputation within a community can sometimes take

generations. Sadly, one bad moment in time can label a church for years to come. One bad experience can wipe away a life time of good service.

This is important for us to remember as we invite and welcome people into our church building for study, worship, and fellowship. Visitors judge congregations in a matter of moments and form their opinions almost instantly. We must make sure we welcome people who are visiting for the first time or even the first few times. Do not be afraid to tell people your name and ask for theirs. Do not be afraid to greet people and give them directions to the sanctuary. Do not be afraid to sit next to someone who is visiting, even if it means getting out of your regular seat. Accompany visitors down to fellowship. Sit with them and make them feel at home. A consistently gracious and hospitable welcome to newcomers and old timers is part of our calling and our discipleship. The bad taste of a poor and cold welcome can linger for far too long.

As we strive to be the church of Christ and reflect his ideals of forgiveness, grace, mercy, and welcome of the stranger, may we welcome everyone as if we were welcoming Christ himself. Let us make room in the pew and at the tables for those who are seeking out a church home and place to worship and grow.

Peace in Christ,

Pastor Lou Ellen

Congregational Meeting

Rev. Lou Ellen Hartley

The Session has called a special congregational meeting on Sunday, April 17 immediately following the worship service for the purpose of electing church officers to fill vacated seats. Please plan to attend. Thanks you.

Care of the Church

A lot of extra activities have been happening at the church. Numerous reports have been received that lights are being left on as well as doors being left unlocked. Please be conscious of the building when you leave to assure doors are locked and appropriate lights have been turned off. Thank you.



Preschool News

Rachel Allison, Director

It's hard to believe we are looking at April on our calendars! We will be very busy this month! Besides Music and Chapel and PE at The Centre we will be having several

exciting presentations. The Aerospace engineers from Missouri S & T will be here on April 15th to teach us about rockets during our space themed week. The Kuhljuergen's Miniature Donkeys are returning, which is always exciting, and they will tell us the story of the cross on the donkeys back. The Rolla Fire Department will be conducting car seat safety checks on April 18th and 19th and Theresa Davidson of the Mark Twain National Forrest will be here during "Bullfrogs and Butterfly's" week to teach us about Butterflies and Pollinators. We will be hosting a Disney Family Trivia Night on April 17th to raise money and awareness for Danny's Dose and we expect to have lots of fun! All in all a very busy month!

Stewardship

Barbara Ford, Treasurer

March winds usher in thoughts of spring and new growth and spring housekeeping. The stewardship committee is working on providing lots of information regarding our upcoming capital campaign. A brochure is in the being created and will be printed in the office. We are planning a carry-in lunch where we can present the information and field any questions the congregation may have. More on the carry-in later. We have talented and dedicated people on our committee making this process seem easy and smooth; and for that we thank God. Keep us in your prayers as we continue our service to God and this church.

The February 29, 2016 financial data is as follows:

General Fund Bank Balance	\$14,812.26
Renovation Fund Bank Balance	\$13,790.42
Reserve Account balance	\$215,403.40
February Income	\$18,675.16
February Expenses	\$24,968.06

February expenses are high because there were three payrolls during that month. This happens twice a year. For those still needing to know, per capita for 2016 is \$31. Thank you to all members who have already contributed toward this expense.

Memorial Garden

Cynthia Hobart

Over the past several years the following engraved Memorial Bricks have been placed in the Memorial Garden in memory of Shirley Andrews, William Andrews, Harriet Babbitt, Laura Bennett, Donald Paul Bennett, Eva M. Best, Phyllis Carson, Ralph Carson, Jeanne Christenson, Eva G. Gollahon, John P. Gollahon, Mary Geurin, John Guerin, June Harper, Don T. Harper, Mary E. Heagler, John Heagler, Juanita Heglin, Russell Heglin, William (Bill) Hudson, Edna Jane legate, Helen L. Porter, Rev. G. Scott Porter, Sally Porter Kaiser, Scott T. Porter, Sharon Kohrmann, Donna Lindsay, Ray Lindsay, Margaret Ann Maddox, Bob L. Marlow, Helen C. May, Lawrence E. May, Patrick S. May, Patti McKay, Chris J. McKay, Dorothy M. Neely, William Neely, Ora C. Ray, Agnes Remington, Charles R. Remington, Jr., Eleanor G. Rickerson, Gertrude Roemer, Elmer Roemer, Bret A. Rogers, James W. Rose, Jeanne L. Senne, S. Tyler Skelton, Jimmie June Timpe, Malcolm J. Timpe, John Dee Van Horn, Kathryn Vogt, Fred K. Vogt, Fred W. Vogt, Frances Wallen, Helen Wiese, and Ernest R. Wiese.

In the Garden there are also bricks (without dates on them) in honor of Gerre McKay, Joe Senne, and Lou Vogt (who passed away after her brick was placed there). In addition, Pauline Marlow Taggart dedicated a brick "in honor of loved ones".

Each Spring orders are taken for Memorial Bricks. The orders are sent to the Acme Brick Company, which engraves the bricks and sends them back to the church 6-8 weeks later. In the Fall the bricks are placed in the Memorial Garden, and later after a worship service the congregation is invited out for a prayer of dedication for the newly placed bricks.

During the next month or two, if you wish, you may place an order for a Memorial Brick in memory of a church member, family member, or friend. The cost of the brick is \$100, part of which pays for maintenance of the Garden. Please contact Betti Jo in the church office or Cynthia Hobart if you wish to purchase a brick.

Presbyterian Women
Cynthia Hobart, Moderator

MANY THANKS TO ALL THE WOMEN OF THE CHURCH WHO HELPED WITH THE LENTEN LUNCHEONS: those who provided publicity, who prepared and/or purchased food, set tables, helped serve soup, salad, coffee, etc., and helped clean up afterwards.

ALSO, WE ESPECIALLY THANK BETTI JO, who prepared flyers and programs with copies of the hymns, and received reservations.

Pat Look, Treasurer, reports we netted \$610 for One Great Hour of Sharing, more than in recent years!

From the Office
Betti Jo Pyatt, Office Manager

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY!**

...wishes go out to Cynthia Hobart, Bruce Russell, Mariesa Crow-Drewniak, Marilyn Schmidt, Britt Whitaker, Rhonda Kimball, Amy Whitaker, Carrie Aswegan and Ming Leu.



....wishes go out to Carol & Frank Jessop, and Bob & Earline Morrison.