



FIRST FACTS



A monthly publication of First Presbyterian Church · Cape Girardeau, Missouri · April 2015

To the Easter People of First Presbyterian Church of Cape,

One of our faithful church members asked me, “Who are the Easter People?” She jokingly said, “Are those the people who only show up at church on Easter?” The title ‘Easter People’ are people who believe in the Resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. So we are an ‘Easter People’ filled with the hope of God for all of humanity.

‘Easter People’ see the possibilities in life and not the obstacles. The resurrection of Jesus Christ gives us the hope of what can be in life and the life to come. The obstacles of life become the springboard of God’s aspirations for all of us. *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1*

‘Easter People’ live with a purpose. We exist because of God’s design not our own. God’s love and God’s ability to create give us meaning that is defined by the Creator and not by the world in which we live. *Not my will but Thy Will be done! Luke 22:42*

‘Easter People’ love with a love that is beyond our limitations. God’s Love is perfection. It is the ultimate change agent. If things are to change for the better, it will be by God’s Love; nothing more, nothing less. *Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. I John 4:7*

‘Easter People’ exist because we are God’s People. The Psalmist reminds that “*I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.*” *Psalms 139:14-15*

We are an ‘Easter People’ exhibiting and testifying to the Love and presence of God. The shouts of acclamation and Alleluias on Easter morning are affirmations and encouragement to the important work/ministry God desires to do through us. In my current Discipleship Class, which I teach on Sunday mornings, we are studying the great work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*. His book is an in-depth look at the Sermon on Mount found in Matthew 5-7. Dr. Bonhoeffer correctly points out the tension of never hiding our faith (*Let your light shine before others. Matthew 5:16*) and being humble and quite about our faith (*Beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them. Matthew 6:1*) The good works that we might do, is not about us! It is always about God through us.

The ‘Easter People’ in and around First Presbyterian are active in displaying the love and power in our community and world. If you are interested in finding out more of what that can mean for your life, drop by and let’s talk.

Your brother and servant in Christ,
Pastor Kim

Adult and Youth Sunday School

NURSERY: Our nursery is open from 9 a.m. on Sunday morning through our worship service, for children birth through kindergarten. Children will be escorted upstairs from the nursery to the worship service for the “Kids” and then will return to the nursery. In the nursery they may participate in a brief Sunday School lesson and activity. Children are welcome to join their parents for the worship service at any time. **Parents come to the nursery after worship to pick up their children.**

CHILDREN AND YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL: The “Early Grades Sunday School” Class, for children kindergarten through second grade, will study lessons based on stories from The Old Testament. The “Upper Grades Sunday School Class”, for children third grade and above, will continue their study of Jesus and His Ministry. Both classes will meet in their classrooms upstairs following the “Kids’ Message” in worship. The teachers of these classes will bring the children to the Narthex after the worship service is concluded.

ADULT CLASS: Pastor Kim teaches an adult study at 9 a.m. on Sunday in the Church library. This one hour class will focus on the important theological elements of an adult faith experience. One of the topics covered this year was the study of Belhar Confession, the newest of the Confessions adopted by our national denomination and approved by this year’s General Assembly in Detroit. Current topic is Dietrich Bonhoeffer The Cost of Discipleship.

**Sunday School-9 a.m.
Sunday Service of Worship- 10:30a.m.**

Treasurer’s Report As of February 28, 2014

General Fund

Year to Date Income	\$35,729
Year to Date Expenses	43,026
Expenses Greater than Income	7,297

Investments

Permanent Endowment	\$250,000
Restricted Investments	55,194
General Fund Savings	63,518
Presbyterian Investment	136,071

For a more complete financial picture, you can attend the Finance Committee Meeting, Session Meeting, or contact our Treasurer, Jean Cairns @ 573-803-0085



FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP

Flowers for worship may be shared to celebrate your anniversary, someone’s birthday, or in memory of a loved one or friend. They can also just say “Thanks, God!” Please call the church office (335-2579) to sign up for flowers.

March 1, Flowers in the sanctuary were in honor of Gina Thomas’s birthday.

March 22, Flowers in the Sanctuary were given by Jean Cairns in honor of her dad’s birthday.



Presbytery of Giddings-Lovejoy

invites you to you to share in the worship of God and the installation by the Presbytery of the Rev. Nancy Gillard as pastor of First Presbyterian Church on April 11, 2015, 2:00 pm 6 E. Ste Maries St. Perryville, MO 63775



EASTER EGG HUNT AND ACTIVITIES

Please join the Christian Education committee on Easter morning for some special Easter activities. We will have an Easter Egg Hunt for the children at 9:15 a.m. Children and families should meet in our Fellowship Hall at 9:15 to gather and then go outdoors together to the courthouse lawn to hunt for Easter eggs. (The egg hunt will be held inside if it rains.) After the egg hunt we will return to the Fellowship Hall for Easter treats and activities. **EVERYONE IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY IS WELCOME TO JOIN US FOR THE FUN AND FOOD!**



EASTER MORNING COFFEE HOUR

The Christian Education Committee invites everyone to come to the Fellowship Hall, instead of the Parlor, for coffee and treats on Easter morning after our Easter Egg Hunt. You are welcome to come early to watch the children hunt for their eggs on the courthouse lawn at 9:15 a.m.

Soda cans for \$\$\$\$ - FPC Mission

Committee asks you to donate your empty aluminum cans (soda and beer) to support the St Louis Ronald McDonalds Houses. Bring them in a plastic bag anytime –Sundays or during the week to the church office. You can drop off in the Green Recycle containers in the Northex or give to Shirley or Jean in the office. We will recycle them and donate the money to the R McD Houses in St Louis.

R McD Houses are located near major medical centers to provide free housing for families with hospitalized children. There are three in St Louis (near Barnes, St Louis U and Missouri Baptist) and one at St Jude's in Memphis. We have collected soda pull tabs for years to support R McD houses, but are now are encouraging you to bring the entire can—more aluminum → more money! Ask your friends and neighbors to save them for FPC and R McD. We will come pick them up if you collect so many they are unwieldy! Please help support our mission to help our neighbors during difficult times in their lives.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Sunday, April 19th at 7:00 p.m.

BLEND will be performing here at First Presbyterian Church. Blend is the a cappella quartet that brings back all of those fun loving memories of the 50's and 60's with a twist of fun. BLEND is the a cappella group that mixes the great music of yesteryear with today's comedy. BLEND is a show you don't want to miss!

Please contact Melissa Harris at 579-4977 if you have any questions

From the Session

At the stated March 18, 2015 meeting of the Session, the Elders did the following:

1. The Minutes of the Stated Meeting of the Session held on February 25, 2015 were approved.
2. Passed a motion to have two Ruling Elders to serve on the Nominating Committee.
3. Passed a motion to let a group of student bikers use part of the church facilities, on April 27 & 28, as a place to sleep.
4. Passed a motion to accept all committee reports.
5. Next meeting is April 15, 2015

We have 15 new women that have joined the circle groups.

The Daytime Circle will meet on Tuesday, April 14, 2015 at the home of Joan Slaughter, 403 Penrod Place, at 11:00 A.M. Please call Joan at 803 - 2998 to let her know you can come as she is preparing lunch for all and will need an accurate lunch count. The discussion will be on Lesson Three beginning on page 23 of our study book, PSALMS. If you would like to join us, we would love to have you. Carpooling to Joan's is recommended. Remember, too, that each month we collect personal care items for the challenged teenagers at Central High School and you may bring your contribution at that time.

The Afternoon Circle will meet at Sue Watkins home at 3120 Independence #20 on April 2, at 1:00 pm. Kathy Brown will be leading the group.

The Evening Circle Meeting will be April 23. Location to be announced, watch your Bulletins for information.

Rummage Sale April 11, 2015

The Mission Committee is planning a Rummage Sale on Saturday, April 11, 2015 to benefit the Hope House in Jackson and the Amen Center in Delta. It will be held in the Activities Building and we are asking for everyone to check their homes for items they no longer need or use to donate to this project. Prior to the sale, we will arrange for a pickup if you are unable to transport items.

BOOK CLUB

The Book Club will meet on Thursday, April 9, 2015 at the home of Joan Slaughter, 403 Penrod Place. at 7:00 P.M. The discussion will be on the book, "Bittersweet" by Colleen McCullaugh. Please call Joan at 803 - 2998 to let her know you can attend. Carpooling is recommended. The May selection is "The Goldfinch" by Donna Tartt and the hostess for that evening will be Jean Cairns.

Per Capita

Each year the church pays a per capita fee for the expenses of Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. The apportionment is based on church membership and is due in the spring. Our per capita fee this year is \$30.29. If you would like to pay your own per capita, it would definitely help our church budget. If you're feeling especially generous, perhaps you will want to pay for an additional member. Thank you in advance.

Worship Attendance

March 1	61
March 8	119
March 15	92
March 22	149
March 29	

April Meal-a-Month

- 1 lb. package of pasta
- Can of spaghetti sauce
- Can of carrots or peas
- Can of fruit

Memorials

Memorials have been received in memory of:

Barbara Klassen, from Georganne & Bill Syler,

Ed Kaiser Jr., from Joan Slaughter, Sharon Metcalfe, Ruth Needle, Madge Ridings, Sarah Barks, Bill Port, Jeanne & John Hirsch, Kitty Rueseler, Winifred Hirsch-Ward, Alice & Paul Kabo, John Shelton, Daryl Henry

Rudie Slaughter, from Alice & Paul Kabo, Daryl Henry

Betty Sitter, from Charles & Laura McGinty, Daryl Henry

Carl Renfrow, Jim & Bev Hirsch

To All the Followers of Jesus Christ in and around First Presbyterian Church of Cape,

You might have heard on the national news about the recent passage of an amendment to our denomination's Constitution changing the language about marriage. The full and unabridged version of the constitutional changes follow in the enclosed 3 pages.

It is my pastoral desire to disseminate the correct information about this important issue. Many voices from within and outside the broader Church have stated things that were not correct. I also wish to celebrate that our denomination has stepped forward after much discussion, prayer, and discernment to affirm the place of all people, regardless of their sexuality, to be embraced with the Love of God.

Serendipitously, our monthly Session meeting occurred on the same day as this announcement was sent out from our national denominational headquarters in Louisville, KY. I was pleased that our Ruling Elders put aside our regular agenda for a significant period of time to graciously discuss this issue and how this issue has personally touched so many families in our congregation.

A person's sexuality is a gift from God. We honor and glorify God by how we practice our faith *and* sexuality. Our Reformed theology has grown by the guidance of the Holy Spirit to realize that heterosexual, homosexual and transgendered people are all part of God's creation and share in the multitude of heavenly gifts. All people are welcomed to explore the gift of marriage and our denomination has granted permission for clergy and congregations to offer their services to those couples wishing to have a Christian wedding. Where true love exists, God is always glorified. Read once again the words from I John 4:7-8, *"Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love."*

Currently, our civil laws in the State of Missouri do not permit this issuance of marriage licenses to same-sex couples. This is under review at the State and Federal level and most likely will be changed in the next few months. Until our laws are changed, same-sex couples will need to travel to nearby states which do acknowledge and permit such marriages. Currently and with the permission of Session, any wedding which takes place in another State, may celebrate their marriage with a reception at our Church.

I am honored to serve this congregation that is open to all people who are on a journey of faith. The visible hospitality, to member and visitor alike, regardless of sexuality, is an attribute that is often mentioned by laity and other clergy. Your love of God is experienced by all who walk through our doors and who are touched by our ministries. I look forward to exploring with our Session how we can demonstrate more effectively our openness to the LGBT community.

I anticipate several grace-filled discussions in the weeks and months ahead. And I know that God will be honored and glorified by the way we proceed.

In His Graciousness,

Pastor Kim

Moderator and Vice Moderator issue letter on marriage amendment

Dear members and friends of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Presbyteries have been engaged in conversation, discernment, and prayer concerning the recommendations from the 221st General Assembly (2014) in the nine months since Detroit, Michigan. Today, Amendment 14F (On Amending W-4.9000 Marriage) received the required majority from the presbyteries.

The approved amendment to the *Book of Order* lifts up the sanctity of marriage and the commitment of loving couples within the church. It also allows teaching elders to exercise their pastoral discretion in officiating weddings and in doing so "... the teaching elder may seek the counsel of the session, which has authority to permit or deny the use of church property for a marriage service."

Though we know that this amendment received the necessary majority for approval, we encourage the congregations, presbyteries, and synods of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to continue to be in conversation about marriage and family. We hope that such "up/down" voting does not mark the end, but the continuation of our desire to live in community; a partnership that requires prayer, the study of Scripture, listening to and with one another, and a dedication to partnership in the midst of our diversity of opinion.

We trust that God whose Word brought Creation into being is also the same Word that speaks to us today. With confidence, we believe that God calls the Church into living as a transformative community that embraces the call to be God's beloved community in the world.



Ruling Elder Heath K. Rada
Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014)



The Reverend Larissa Kwong Abazia
Vice Moderator, 221st General Assembly (2014)

Advisory Opinion

Approved Amendment of W-4.9000

What is the status of the proposed amendment to the Constitution on marriage?

It appears that a majority of presbyteries have voted to approve amending the *Book of Order* section on marriage, W-4.9000 in the Directory for Worship, by replacing it in its entirety with new wording. This new wording will become part of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) beginning June 21, 2015.

Will the approved amendment allow teaching elders to perform marriage services for same-gender couples?

Yes, as long as the couple “meet the requirements of the civil jurisdiction in which they intend to marry.”

Will the approved amendment require teaching elders to conduct marriage services for same-gender couples?

No. A teaching elder cannot be compelled to perform a marriage service for a same-gender couple. “Nothing herein shall compel a teaching elder to perform nor compel a session to authorize the use of church property for a marriage service that the teaching elder or the session believes is contrary to the teaching elder’s or the session’s discernment of the Holy Spirit and their understanding of the Word of God.”

Will the approved amendment allow sessions to approve holding marriage services for same-gender couples on church property?

Yes. Sessions may permit the use of church property for the marriage service of a same-gender couple.

Will the approved amendment require sessions to allow marriage services for same-gender couples to be held on church property?

No. Sessions may deny the use of church property for the marriage service of a same-gender couple.

Will a session be able to categorically prohibit a marriage service for a same gender couple from being held on church property?

Yes. Under our Constitution, sessions have the authority to make categorical determinations regarding the use of the church’s facilities.

Will a session be able to prohibit the pastor from conducting a marriage service for a same-gender couple or compel the pastor to perform such a marriage service?

No. Apart from denying a request for a marriage service to be held within church facilities, the session cannot prohibit the pastor from conducting the marriage service of a same-gender couple, nor compel the pastor to conduct any such service.

Will a teaching elder be able to conduct a marriage service within church facilities without session approval?

No. Only session has the authority to permit or deny the use of church property for a marriage service. The pastor cannot compel the session to approve a marriage service nor can the pastor conduct any such service within the church facilities without session approval.

How does the approval of the amendment of W-4.9000 affect the authoritative interpretation of W-4.9000 approved by the 221st General Assembly (2014)?

The authoritative interpretation of the current W-4.9000 stays in effect until June 21, 2015, when the old wording of W-4.9000 is replaced with the approved amendment. At that time the authoritative interpretation will no longer be in effect since the portion of the *Book of Order* that it is interpreting will no longer be in the Constitution.

What will be the new wording of W-4.9000 in the *Book of Order*?

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. The sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the church and the wider community.

In civil law, marriage is a contract that recognizes the rights and obligations of the married couple in society. In the Reformed tradition, marriage is also a covenant in which God has an active part, and which the community of faith publicly witnesses and acknowledges. If they meet the requirements of the civil jurisdiction in which they intend to marry, a couple may request that a service of Christian marriage be conducted by a teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who is authorized, though not required, to act as an agent of the civil jurisdiction in recording the marriage contract. A couple requesting a service of Christian marriage shall receive instruction from the teaching elder, who may agree to the couple's request only if, in the judgment of the teaching elder, the couple demonstrate sufficient understanding of the nature of the marriage covenant and commitment to living their lives together according to its values. In making this decision, the teaching elder may seek the counsel of the session, which has authority to permit or deny the use of church property for a marriage service.

The marriage service shall be conducted in a manner appropriate to this covenant and to the forms of Reformed worship, under the direction of the teaching elder and the supervision of the session (W-1.4004-4006). In a service of marriage, the couple marry each other by exchanging mutual promises. The teaching elder witnesses the couple's promises and pronounces God's blessing upon their union. The community of faith pledges to support the couple in upholding their promises; prayers may be offered for the couple, for the communities that support them, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness.

A service of worship recognizing a civil marriage and confirming it in the community of faith may be appropriate when requested by the couple. The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the statements made shall reflect the fact that the couple is already married to one another according to the laws of the civil jurisdiction.

Nothing herein shall compel a teaching elder to perform nor compel a session to authorize the use of church property for a marriage service that the teaching elder or the session believes is contrary to the teaching elder's or the session's discernment of the Holy Spirit and their understanding of the Word of God.

APRIL PRAYER CALENDAR

The Session hopes you will use this 'Prayer Calendar' as we daily pray for each other and some of the mission concerns of our church.

- 1ST Kirk Miller (birthday)
- 2ND Sarah Holt (birthday)
- 3RD Presbytery of Carlisle
- 4TH Presbytery of Donegal
- 5TH Willie Phillips (birthday)
Kathy Brown (birthday)
- 6TH The Presbytery of Huntingdon
- 7TH Joan Gohn (birthday)
Will Bahn (birthday)
Hannah Taylor (birthday)
- 8TH Presbytery of Lackawanna
- 9TH Bill Stover (birthday)
Joanna Shaver (birthday)
- 10TH The Synod of Alaska-Northwest
- 11TH John Broeckling (birthday)
- 12TH Presbytery of Northumberland
- 13TH The Presbytery of Philadelphia
- 14TH Pittsburgh Presbytery
- 15TH The Presbytery of Redstone
- 16TH Kathy Woodfin (birthday)
- 17TH Upper Ohio Valley Presbytery
- 18TH Leland Shivelbine (birthday)
- 19TH Paul Rice (birthday)
- 20TH Sam & Sharon McCune (anniversary)
- 21ST Karen Fieser (birthday)
Lee & Missy Smith (anniversary)
- 22ND The Presbytery of West Virginia
- 23RD Ann Ritter (birthday)
- 24TH Presbytery of Central Washington
- 25TH Presbytery of Northwest Coast
- 26TH Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
- 27TH Bob & Cherie Herbst (anniversary)
- 28TH Ralph Sitter (birthday)
Dale & Sue Watkins (anniversary)
- 29TH Emily Harris (birthday)
- 30TH Presbytery of Yukon

From the Mission Yearbook of Prayer and Study

God of all creation, teach us to protect and preserve; teach us to love our neighbors as ourselves; teach us humility before all you have created. Teach us to treat our food and the land from which it comes with reverence. In the name of Jesus, who is the true bread of life.

April 2015

Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																											
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EASTER LILIES:

Easter Lilies will be placed in the sanctuary on Easter Sunday, April 5th. They may be purchased for (\$7.00 each) in memory or honor of a friend or loved one. The deadline for ordering is Tuesday, April 1st.

Please complete this form and return it to the church along with your check or cash.

I/We wish to purchase an Easter Lily.

In honor of _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

In memory of _____

From _____

Enclosed \$ _____ For _____ Lillies

First Facts

First Presbyterian Church

P.O. Box 477

Cape Girardeau, MO 63702

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Rev. Dr. Kim L. Nelson, Pastor

Sunday Church School - 9 a.m.

Sunday Service of Worship - 10:30 a.m.

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