

THE BURNING BUSH

From the Pastor's desk...

My office is in a unique setting. I am privy to the black squirrels and their antics, as well as the music of the birds singing in the tall trees that provide us with shade. But most of all I have noticed the sounds of happy children playing in the park across the street. Oh, to have that kind of energy again! They play for hours and seem never to grow tired or without laughter. How is it that we, as adults have lost the zest that children have? No cares, no worries, just fun.

Jesus reminds us that we are to be as little children if we are to enter the kingdom of heaven. He also said not to worry about tomorrow. We get so wrapped up in the day to day drain on our attentions, our abilities, our demands, ourselves, that we lose track of the importance of having that happy, child-like heart. Sometimes we are dealing with pain or sorrow and it is impossible to laugh. However, Jesus wants us to give all our "stuff" to him. Take it him in prayer and leave it with him and don't take it back. He will not only shoulder our burdens, but has the power to heal our hearts, minds and bodies. Just knowing that Jesus does that for me on a daily basis, is enough to make me want to laugh and leap like David when he danced the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem. We are to be happy Christians, not full of gloom and doom, but optimistic in Christ. With him all things are possible if we but just ask.

We have entered the "dog days" of summer. That was the time of year when our favorite swimming spot became covered with algae when the water got too warm. There's a story about "dog days" or "canicular days" of summer. It was said that it was the time of year when dogs went mad from the heat. But I found out that the name actually has an astronomical source. It is the period in which the Dog Star, Sirius, the most brilliant star in the constellation Canis Major, rises in conjunction with the sun. The ancient belief was that the combined heat of Sirius and the sun, while these two heavenly bodies are in conjunction, brought about the sultry weather. Nowadays, we are more interested in El Nino and El Nina. All I know is I feel like I'm getting moldy from so much rain. I should be losing weight from the loss of so much sweat, but that of course is not the case.

The children don't seem to mind the heat or the rain at all. They charge ahead through the puddles with giggles, and play hard, get dirty and sweaty and don't seem to notice at all. They have not learned to complain about things like that yet. When did we get the notion that whenever we are uncomfortable it makes us feel better to complain about it? Guess it's just human nature that we have evolved this behavior, when in fact, it would be so much more fun to splash around in the puddles and get dirty! Oh, and don't forget to laugh. Laughter is good for the body and soul!

I am certain the God who created us in His own image, laughs. I'm certain he meant for us to laugh until we cry. He knew life would pile up, and a sense of humor would help us to shovel our way out of our serious circumstances. I've not only been blessed to have had a mother with a terrific sense of humor, but also seem to be attracted to others who do. Why is that? Because I like to laugh. I like to laugh a lot. Guess I got it naturally. People who possess a "Loony-Tude" have helped me when I took myself too seriously and helped me put laughter back in its temporal position, lest I think my earthly stint is all there is to this journey. Perhaps you have some Loony-Tude friends. If you do not, I strongly suggest you seek them out. They will help you recall that inward child and cause you to see life less dramatic! Have fun.

Pastor Linda

SESSION SNIPPETS

BY PAT WELKER

Notes from June 3, 10 & 28 Session Meeting

Session finished the Mission Statement and Financial sheet for the Commission on Ministry of Presbytery. The Statement was approved and the next step is for the Nominating Committee to find members willing to serve on the PNC (Pastor Nominating Committee). The PNC is the group that will find our next minister. Very important work. There was a wedding in the Church, Karen Goggin and Bill Wilson. Then Bill was baptized and in the near future Karen and Bill will be joining the Church. What can get more exciting than that? Clark Evans of the Trustees investigated the electrical wiring in the church office. It was very outdated and got some estimates for work to replace the breaker box as well as the wiring. The Session approved awarding the job to Wages Electric of Canton, IL and work will soon begin. This is really a fire hazard and Pastor Linda and Leigh Ann will rest easier once this work is done.

Notes from the July 7 Session Meeting

Work has begun in earnest on the Manse bathroom. There is a plumber, carpenter and plasterer working to update the bathroom as well as remove the moisture problem. The plaster is going to be cleaned and redone where necessary and the vanity relocated against the wall. Then the room will be painted. The Session has also approved painting the living room, dining room, kitchen and hallway. There is still a pet odor in the house so the dining room/kitchen laminate floor will be removed and then a decision made as to what new flooring to install, depending on the condition of the underlayment.

MINISTRY TEAMS

CHRISTIAN ED: Bonnie & Carrie – Nothing at this time.

FELLOWSHIP/MISSION: Jodi & Jay with Pat Welker, Marianne Taylor, Sue Lane, Wanda Ohaver, Beth Martin and Lindsey Danley – Fellowship hosts are signing up.

NOMINATING: Kathy & Carrie; Kevin Phillips & Marianne Taylor as at-large; Deacon- Linda Riley; Trustee- Jane Rutledge – The PNC slate of nominees has been selected. They will be voted on at a Congregational Meeting on July 26

STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE/MEMORIAL & PERSONNEL: Kathy & Sam – Manse work is progressing. Painting is next on list of things to do as well as completion of the bathroom remodel.

WORSHIP: Jay, Sam & Kathy – Reformation Sunday coming in October. Get your plaid on (more info on this later).

EVANGELISM: Kim & Jodi with Lori Danley, Christi Garlish, Michelle Lane, Paula Monari, Deb O'Donnell and Gisela Schuman – Kim has had further discussion with the State Police and they are going to provide the Child Safety Seat Check from 10am-noon on September 12. She is also going to have the Team look into the Bicycle Safety Class working with the local Police Department in conjunction with the Safety Seat Check.

TECHNOLOGY: Carrie & Kim, Michelle, Tadd Swanson & Brady Johnson – Some of the many things the Team is working on - Router/Wireless Network-Tadd & Brady will work to make the Church internet more efficient working toward making a church side and a guest side for members.

- Church Website- Photos are being added to the website as well as church information. Hopefully there will be a Session page, Ministry Team page, Sunday School page, Google calendar page, etc. Take a look at the site and see what has been done.
- Burning Bush- Tadd is going to post the current BB on the website so all can read it.
- You Tube Videos- There are 45 church owned videos on You Tube. Tadd will work to resolve some of the problems with You Tube church videos.
- Facebook- Michelle has been added as an administrator. People are starting to email info and photos for the website, which is good.
- Backup of Church Laptop- Backing up files on the church computer is important and will require more space than is usually offered for free. Additional space can be purchased at a minimal cost so Tadd is going to pursue this further.

Kim continues to work on the Church Website. She also wanted to add information about the Ministry Teams.

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP REVIEW: Pat & Kathy – Nothing at this time.

DEACONS REPORT

Linda Riley called the May 17th meeting to order with prayer, in Michelle's absence. Deacons Linda Riley, Cozy Hoover & Steffanie Ulm were present. The secretary's report was read and approved. The balance in our treasury is \$87.54. We served 50 communion May 3. The Deacons sent 28 cards and made 3 visits in April. In new business, Pastor Linda advised there was a credit @ Staples. Steffanie will let Michelle know in case there are envelopes, etc. needed by the Deacons. Next Communion is June 7th and Cozy will make the bread. Deacons will meet during fellowship on June 21; meeting adjourned.

PASTOR'S REPORT

It's been a very busy month, having worked 101 hours. Some highlights-

- Met with Alexis Haynes to learn about her future ambitions as well as her accomplishments, gifts and participation in the church over the course of her high school years. She is applying for a Council of Churches Scholarship and needed a letter of recommendation.
- Bill & Karen Wilson were married here during May, Bill was baptized June 28th and they are both joining the Church on July 19.
- Met to plan the Farmington Summer Fest Council of Churches Breakfast and helped. It was a very successful fundraiser for the Scholarship Fund of Council of Churches.
- Attended the June 9 Presbytery meeting with Keith Quin at Five Points in Washington. I have submitted my report to Session and must note that Keith enjoyed the meeting.

Thanks to the Session for meeting faithfully to complete the Mission Study Statement. It has been approved by the COM as well as the Financial Statement. Now the PNC will be selected to continue the process of finding a Minister. Next step is writing the CIF (Church Information Form) which needs COM approval and entry in the computer system. Then the PNC will begin receiving MIF's (Minister Information Forms) to be reviewed and considered to find the next Minister. This should be a fun and progressive process and not a dirge. Everyone's help is needed to accomplish this in a timely manner. Celebrate each step.

I have been in close communication with our Interim Executive Presbytery/Stated Clerk, Felipe Martinez. He is interested in what is best for us and will help find our best possible match in a minister. He will be at the August 11 Session meeting to visit with us.

I have had several counseling sessions, made home visits, served Communion, brought Church/Communion to Farmington Country Manor, hospital vigils and many phone and written communications. 40 were served Communion at Farmington Country Manor, homes, etc.

COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The Council of Churches provided a sausage/pancake breakfast from 7-11am on June 27 during the first annual Farmington Summer Festival. This turned into a big project for a small committee but everything went well and much was learned. The Methodist Church provided an experienced person in each station, cooking sausage, cooking pancakes and mixing pancake batter. This was a big help. Baptist and Presbyterian provided additional people to work with the experts to learn the ropes. There was a nice group of people who served drinks, cleaned tables, served seconds, etc in the dining area. Thanks to a consistent crowd, we were busy the whole four hours. In fact, we had to run for additional milk and orange juice, as well as additional pancake mix. We eventually ran out of syrup so that was a good time to quit. The breakfast was served for a donation and I am happy to report that the donation jars contained \$2,390. There was some sausage left over, which was wrapped in 1 lb packages, as well as a few packages of ribs and chops that were sold on Sunday at the three churches. The donations and meat sales totaled \$2,841, which will be used for future scholarships. This was dearly needed, as the scholarship account was going to be depleted this year because we have five graduates from the three churches this year. A job well done and thanks to all from Presbyterian who helped in any way, either by working that day, donating money or both. It takes all of us to do this big project. Hope to see you all next year, if we are given the opportunity to do this again.

JULY 4TH COOKOUT

The 4th of July Cookout was also a great success. Though we could have used a little more help, those who worked were kept busy. There was a line from 11am to 12:45pm wanting burgers or hot dogs. There were 112 hot dog and 190 burgers sold in that short time. The grill masters kept busy cooking the meat while the sandwiches were wrapped and sold. Money was collected and desserts chosen. We had people in the CE Building cutting and wrapping the desserts for sale by donation. After all the smoke cleared, we had \$1,015.66 to put in the church treasury. Another job well done!

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP

If you were unable to help with the Council of Churches Breakfast or July 4th Cookout, consider helping in one of the upcoming events. We will soon be planning the Spoon River Drive Fritters and the Soup Supper & Bazaar in the fall. It is fun to be with others working toward the same goal. It's a great way to get to know each other!



The Council of Churches awarded three scholarships at the annual ice cream social. Congrats to Calli Fletcher, Lucas Stephens and our own Lexi Haynes! Calli will be attending the University of Illinois to study engineering, Lucas will be attending ICC to study computer networking and has plans to transfer to Western Illinois University later. Lexi will be attending Western Illinois University in the fall, where she will be studying Forensic Psychology. Please keep these students in your prayers as they go on to new adventures!

Left to right: Calli Fletcher, Rev. Dr. Paul Lee and Lucas Stephens of Farmington United Methodist Church, Rev. Dr. Linda Philabaun and Lexi Haynes of First Presbyterian Church of Farmington.

Church Calendar
can be found at
www.firstpresfarmington.com
Contact firstpresfarmington@gmail.com to add an event)



Timeline to Find Minister

		Missions Statement to Marty Tartar to debug
		Mission & Financial Statements to COM for approval
		Call Congregational Mtg to elect PNC – must announce mtg for 2 Sundays
		Have PNC elected; PNC & Session complete MIF, MIF approved by COM (meet 4th Tues of month), Presbytery stated Clerk works with MIF & Financials (Meet Felipe Martinez)
September	1	PNC starts receiving PIFs to review. Also any self-referrals (5-10 qty) Will select PIFs for further review
October	1	Should be ready to interview/meet candidates. Narrow down candidates to final choices.
November	1	Fill position.

AUGUST 2015

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						1
2 Food Pantry Communion Sunday	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 Evangelism Team meeting 12-1PM	10 Tech Team meeting 7:00PM	11 Session meeting 7:00PM PNC meeting 8:00PM	12	13	14 	15
16 Birthday Celebration at Fellowship time	17 PNC meeting 6:00PM	18	19 JrHigh/Sr High Picture Day at Farmington 265 Burning Bush deadline NOON	20 Elementary Picture Day at Farmington 265	21	22
23	24 PNC meeting 6:00PM	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 PNC meeting 6:00PM	 <i>August 8</i> <i>Pat & Ralph Welker</i> <i>August 12</i> <i>Darrel & Crystal Gomes</i>				



August 4 Kay Fairburn; **5** Kathleen Kowal
 Pat Threw, **7** Stormy Luna, Sue Lane,
 Ralph Welker, Sherry Higgs; **13** Dianna
 Threw; **18** Deb O'Donnell, Beth Martin;
23 Bonnie Suydam

Thanks to all my church friends for the acts of kindness and concern shown to me since my recent fall. I have enjoyed and appreciated the visits, cards, phone calls, flowers and food. A special thank you to Pastor Linda for her prayers and healing visit. Hopefully, I will be able to return to church soon. I am so blessed to a part of such a caring congregation.



Blanche

The Burning Bush – August 2015
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
83 North Cone Street
Farmington IL 61531-1248

Blessings on:



COME WORSHIP WITH US SUNDAYS!

Adult Sunday School class 9:30AM

**Children's Sunday School
classes to resume in the fall.**

Fellowship Time 10:30AM

Worship Service 11:00AM

Join us for a great message and God's word!
Enjoy wonderful music and fellowship
between Sunday School and
Worship Service

**"In the Beginning was
the Word, and the
Word was with God,
and the Word was
God." (John 1:1)**

