

# THE BURNING BUSH

*From the Pastor's desk...*

*"One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray.'" Luke 11:1*

Have you heard the story of the three ministers who got together to discuss prayer techniques? Mind you, in the next room was a phone repairman working on the lines. The first pastor said, "When I pray, I find it helps to hold my hands together like this." The second pastor suggested that real prayer ought to be done on one's knees. The third pastor corrected him and said, "The most biblical authentic posture for talking to God is to lie stretched out on one's face." At that moment the phone repairman, who had been listening in, poked his head around the corner and said, "I'd have to say the best prayer I ever prayed was when I was dangling upside down by my heels from a power pole about forty feet in the air."

I see it this way, the big names in the bible most always found themselves in high-anxiety situations. Elijah cried out, "I have had enough, Lord. I'm the only one left who still cares about you. I've done everything you asked, and what do I get for my trouble? Right now they are looking for my head." Jeremiah moaned, "Since my people are crushed, I am crushed. Is there no balm in Gilead? The people of the Old Testament, God's people, could pray from their guts, raise their voices, shake their fists, shed real tears, and shout for joy all within a few seconds.

For me it is greatly freeing to know that we can pray from weakness instead of strength. When you make the call, the operator already knows the name and address. He knows all about us every time we turn our anxious hearts to the Lord. Why? Because our prayers matter to God.

Trying to close on a house in Indiana has been a real test of my prayer endurance. There have been countless snags along the way pushing things further away instead of closer. At the same time trying to close on the home where I now live, but cannot until things are settled in Indiana. As hard as I try to not let things get to me, still I have sleepless nights, impatience, anxiety, and worry. I know He knows! And behold, a lovely insight showed up on my desk that met me exactly where I am today. It said, "Do not be anxious about anything" Cast all your anxiety on him." I am reminded that having left these concerns with God, I must not pick them up and take them with me again. Here I am, the one who tries to teach this very thing to others, when I am guilty of a weakened faith myself.

We cannot negotiate our responses to difficult situations. We cannot say that the current situation justifies throwing a hissy fit, or embracing a nervous breakdown, or accusing God of abandoning us. We cannot choose what happens to us, but we are empowered to respond wisely. Faced with any given situation we can give up or rejoice.

What Paul says is "Rejoice in the Lord always." It is a call to access, by prayer, a deep personal gladness that whatever we are facing right now cannot separate us from God. Our hope is being connected to and in a relationship with an awesome God who cares for us. The key word from Paul is "always."

You see, worry is a conversation I have with myself: "What am I going to do?" Prayer is conversation that I have with God: "God, please help me do what you would have me to do." Prayer isn't about fulfilling a wish list. Prayer is about joining our hearts with the heart of God. God asks us to do what Jesus did. He asks us to die. Unless we release our grip on our dreams, our desires, our affections, and our ambitions—the entire way we organize our lives apart from God's desire for us—the will of the Father cannot be fulfilled. We must give permission to the Lord to crush parts of us that we have tried hardest to keep under wraps. In other words, prayer is less about my request of God, and more and more about God's requests of me.

There's only one way to find out if God can be trusted—in all things. Knees for prayer bring us face to face with the one who promises that in life and in death, we have no greater security than his very presence.

*Pastor Linda*

# SESSION SNIPPETS

BY PAT WELKER

## **Notes from Aug 11<sup>th</sup> and Sept 8<sup>th</sup> Session Meetings:**

The August meeting was attended by Felipe Martinez, Interim Stated Clerk of Presbytery, Marty Tarter, our rep from COM, and the recently elected PNC. Felipe talked about what the Presbytery can do for our Church and wanted to know where the Church shined within itself and within the community. It was good to get to know Felipe a little bit, as he is going to be pretty important to us in our search for a Minister.

## **MINISTRY TEAMS**

CHRISTIAN ED: Bonnie & Carrie – Sunday School will start with the Kick-off Breakfast on Sept 13<sup>th</sup> with approximately 50 signed up to attend. All preparations are complete. There will be one 3<sup>rd</sup> grader this year who will receive a promotional Bible.

FELLOWSHIP/MISSION: Jodi & Jay with Pat Welker, Marianne Taylor, Sue Lane, Wanda Ohaver, Beth Martin and Lindsey Danley – The 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter Mission Meal is on Sept. 20<sup>th</sup> and will be a Soup Cook-off. The winner of the cook-off will be the one picking which Mission will receive the donations. Menu will be soup, hot dogs and desserts.

NOMINATING: Kathy & Carrie; Kevin Phillips & Marianne Taylor as at-large; Deacon- Linda Riley; Trustee- Jane Rutledge – The Team will be meeting soon to work on filling office positions for the Class of 2016.

STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE/MEMORIAL & PERSONNEL: Kathy & Sam – Manse work is done, as is the necessary painting on the main floor.

As the Session had to provide a salary range for an incoming minister to the PNC, Kathy gathered all the financial information needed to make the process much easier.

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

EVANGELISM: Kim & Jodi with Lori Danley, Michelle Lane, Paula Monari, Deb O'Donnell and Gisela Schuman – The Child Safety Seat Check & Bicycle Safety Class is scheduled for Saturday Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>. Informational fliers will be given to school for distribution to Elementary students to take home for their parents/grandparents. Next event for the Evangelism Team is the Spoon River Drive Fritter Sales. There will be a sign up sheet passed during worship for supplies, as well as workers for the two Saturdays of the Spoon River Drive.

TECHNOLOGY: Carrie & Kim, Michelle, Tadd Swanson & Brady Johnson – The WiFi Range Extender is ordered and will be installed. Results will be studied to determine the next step in making the Church internet more efficient. [Church Website](#)- Work continues on the website. Take a look and see how great it is. It has much information on it and if you would like to see something else on there, let Kim, Carrie or Michelle know.

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP REVIEW: Pat & Kathy – Looking over the Active Member List for possible corrections that can be investigated.

## DEACONS REPORT

The Deacons met on July 19<sup>th</sup> during Fellowship, with Michelle calling the meeting to order with prayer. Michelle, Linda, Kay, Beth and Steffanie were present.

Secretary's report read & approved  
Treasury balance \$87.54  
Served 50 Communion on July 5<sup>th</sup>  
Deacons sent 21 cards during June.

In new business: 1) the Deacon's discussed sponsoring a family at Thanksgiving and/or Christmas. Some of the Deacons will discuss with Marianne Taylor, as she is with the Farmington Food Pantry, Kathy Welch of the Coat Closet and Chris Evans as she is a teacher, hoping they could help pick a family in need. 2) Pastor Linda advised that the Church has a birthday in October and she may need some Deacon assistance on October 25<sup>th</sup> for Reformation Sunday. 3) Michelle submitted postage receipts to Beth for reimbursement. 4) Next Communion is Aug. 2<sup>nd</sup>, Kay will bake the loaf of bread and Linda Riley will bring the cubed bread. For the Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> Communion, Michelle will bake the loaf of bread and Steffanie will supply cubed bread.

## PASTOR'S REPORT

It has been a very busy two months, some highlights:

- For August - Was impressed with VBS and the commitment and hard work of so many to put this together. Many kids lives were touched in the community. They were loved and taught about God's love.
- I attended a gathering of retired pastors along with Executive Presbyter, Felipe Martinez. Pastors never retire they just meet to compare their infirmities. I also met with a group of Interim Pastors at the request of Felipe. We had an opportunity to brainstorm and support one another.
- I served Farmington Country Manor with a short message and Communion service. Sara played the piano for us. 20 were served Communion.
- Deacons continue to grow in their duties to the congregation and community.
- Council of Churches met on July 12<sup>th</sup> to firm up plans for the Ice Cream Social at which time the Scholarships are awarded. The Summer Fest Breakfast was a great success and the Scholarship Account has been replenished for students next year. We had one Senior, Alexis Haynes, who was awarded a scholarship. She is a great young lady.
- This month I traveled 133 miles in my work.
  
- For September - I was pleased to be part of the scholarship awards held at the Baptist church. Alexis Haynes was a recipient and I got to know her a little better when we discussed her aspirations and plans for her future, including college. She is planning to pursue Forensic Psychology.
- I met with the PNC to provide leadership for their task of preparing the MIF. The MIF is in the hands of the COM scribe who will review it prior to having it put online. I have no doubt the COM will approve the work for the go-ahead.
- The Builders Class asked me to join them to help them understand Leviticus, which is what they are currently studying. I tried to help them I tried to offer insights into the meaning of what they were trying to grasp. The why's, the where's and reasoning's behind those laws during the people's journey in the wilderness.
- I continue to serve Farmington Country Manor with a sermonette and Communion once a month.
- This month there were 4 counseling sessions, 1 visit, 18 Communion served at [Farmington Country Manor](#), several phone visits and correspondences.

## COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The Council of Churches hosted the annual Ice Cream Social at which time Scholarships are awarded to our seniors. This year the Baptist Church hosted the event and there was plenty of ice cream and pie. There was a great selection of pie to choose from. There were between 35-45 people attending and all seemed to enjoy themselves. The Scholarship recipients were: our own Alexis Haynes and Lucas Stephens and Calli Fletcher of the Methodist Church. The three seniors told us where they planned to attend and the studies they were going to pursue. Nice young people and headed for great things.

## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The Presbyterian Women met at noon on Friday Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> for a potluck meal. There were 9 ladies in attendance for the meal and as usual, there was a wonderful selection of food. This group enjoys being together and visiting. After the meal, we had another lady join us. Marianne led us in a Bible Study from our book, *Becoming a Woman of Purpose*. This was the final lesson in this book. Our next study is *The Sumatra of the Seven Churches*, which is a new style Bible Study, designed to be studies around a table sipping coffee, which should be right up our alley. Following the Bible Study, we had our business meeting. Denise read us our Least Coin Devotion. Our Treasury is sound at this time and we continue to do mission work. Our next meeting will be Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup> at 1PM. Pat will lead the Bible Study, Wanda will give Least Coin Devotion and Pauline will serve us a dessert/coffee. The meeting starts at 1PM in the CE Building so mark your calendar and plan to join us.

## SPOON RIVER DRIVE FRITTER SALES

Our next Church event is Spoon River Drive Fritter Sales. There will be sign up sheets going around to provide needed supplies, as well as time schedules to help. This is really a fun day and you can get to know others that you may not know so well. If this is something you feel you can help with, please consider signing up. This event gives exposure for the Church. Maybe we can influence someone during these two days.



Church Calendar  
can be found at

[www.firstpresfarmington.com/calendar](http://www.firstpresfarmington.com/calendar)

Contact [firstpresfarmington@gmail.com](mailto:firstpresfarmington@gmail.com) to add an event)

### Timeline to Find Minister

June	15	Missions Statement to Marty Tartar to debug
June	23	Mission & Financial Statements to COM for approval
July	1	Call Congregational Mtg to elect PNC – must announce mtg for 2 Sundays
August	1	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.

The Soup Mission Dinner was a lot of fun. We had six very good soups and they were all winners, but Beth Martin's Fajita Soup was the hands down favorite. Congratulations Beth. Beth and daughter, Melody, decided to give the proceeds to "[Warrior Canine Connection](#)" This is a non-profit organization, that brings the healing power of dogs to our nation's heroes. Not all wounds are physical and these dogs make a difference in the lives of those veterans who suffer from PTSD as well as those with physical disabilities. This is an amazing group and I am proud that our church is helping to make a difference in the lives of our wounded veterans. The Fellowship Committee would like to thank everyone for the support and participation. Through the generosity of all of you, we will be sending \$268 to support this program!

**CONGRATULATIONS  
BETH!**



# OCTOBER 2015

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4 Food Pantry & Communion Sunday 	5 PNC meeting 6:15PM	6	7 Choir Practice 7-8:00PM	8	9 Presbyterian Women 12PM	10 
11 	12 PNC meeting 6:15PM	13 Session meeting 7:00PM	14 Choir Practice 7-8:00PM	15	16	17
18	19 PNC meeting 6:15PM	20	21 Nov Burning Bush deadline NOON  Choir Practice 7-8:00PM	22	23	24
25 Reformation Sunday WEAR PLAID! October Birthday Celebration	26 PNC meeting 6:15PM	27	28 Choir Practice 7-8:00PM	29	30	31  Happy Halloween



## Happy Birthday!

**Dale Peterson Oct 1st**  
**Andi Guidi Oct 23rd**  
**John Black Oct 30**  
**Dale Peterson Oct 31**

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

Blessings on:



**COME WORSHIP WITH US SUNDAYS!**

Sunday School classes for all ages 9:30AM

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)**

