

## The Cornerstone News

### First Presbyterian Church, Paulding Ohio

Volume 2 Issue 10



**Live such good lives among the pagans that ... they may see your good deeds and glorify God. -- 1 Peter 2:12**

**I can live for two months on a good compliment.**  
-- Mark Twain

Two teams of short-term missionaries visited Thailand with very different strategies. One team saw their mission primarily as blessing people, while the other team saw their mission primarily as evangelizing people. These teams were being researched for a doctoral thesis and the researcher came up with a pretty stunning statistic: those who went with the focus of blessing actually had *50 times as many conversions* as those who went with the focus of evangelizing!

Maybe it shouldn't be so surprising because it seems to be very much in line with what the Apostle Peter wrote in his letter (quoted above) and what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount: **let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.** (Matthew 5:16) In his little book, *Surprise the World*, Michael Frost uses the acronym *BELLS* to spell out "five habits of highly missional people": **Bless, Eat, Listen, Learn, Sent.** He's found in his own church and in lots of other churches that this is a good tool for mobilizing Christians into living missionary lifestyles.

Frost suggests *blessing* at least three non-family members each week—one person from your church, one who doesn't attend any church and one from either category. He divides the blessings into three categories: *words of affirmation, acts of kindness and gifts.* Words of affirmation could be notes, e-mails, texts or simply spoken words. Acts of kind-

ness could be helping someone move, offering to babysit, mowing a lawn, offering a ride, taking someone out for coffee or lunch, or any number of other things. Gifts could be a \$5 *Subway* card, a bag of garden tomatoes, a book, poem or whatever.

Even the smallest acts of blessing do two things: they make someone's day a little brighter and they can create opportunities to talk about Jesus. The most effective blessings are those freely given (echoing the words of Jesus: **Freely you have received, freely give**—Matthew 10:8). That is, blessings that are offered out of love (not mere duty) and simply with the purpose of blessing (not simply because we want to convert people). In Colossians 4:2, the Apostle Paul writes, **Pray that God may open a door for our message**—acts or words of blessing can be used by the Holy Spirit to crack the door open so that someone may hear the message of Jesus.

Maybe three people a week seems like too much right now. The point of blessing isn't to keep score (though setting a specific goal might help some people), it's to develop a habit of encouraging others that lines up with Jesus' description of his followers: **You are the light of the world.** (Matthew 5:14). As Michael Frost put it, *We need to develop a rhythm of gift giving, time spending, and affirmation sharing as an end in itself because it fosters a spirit of generosity, it mirrors the character of God, and it alerts others to his reign.*

The 4<sup>th</sup> century Roman emperor Julian feared that Christians would take over the empire. Why? Because their acts of kindness and their generosity were winning converts right and left. In a letter to his officials he wrote, ... *the [Christians] devoted themselves to philanthropy. And they have gained ascendancy ... through the credit they win for such practices.* May our practices of blessing and kindness and generosity gain ascendancy for our Lord Jesus. Shalom!

*Pastor Dave*

# October 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b>
<b>2</b> Communion	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Chamber of Commerce: Meet the Candidate breakfast at 8:30	<b>5</b> 1st Wednesday Meal 5:30 and Worship 6:15 Choir 7:00	<b>6</b> Prayer in the fellowship hall 6:00 Congregational Life/ Outreach meeting at 7:00	<b>7</b> 5th Quarter Party - Presbys Host	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> VT Meeting 6:00 pm  Choir 7:00	<b>13</b> Prayer in the fellowship hall 6:00	<b>14</b> 5th Quarter Party	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> Fall Family Fun Fest at Searing's barn	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> Session 7:00 pm	<b>19</b> Choir 7:00	<b>20</b> Prayer in the fellowship hall 6:00	<b>21</b> Women's group serving band a meal prior to away game	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Choir 7:00	<b>27</b> Prayer in the fellowship hall 6:00	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>					

## October Birthdays

1<sup>st</sup> - Marlene Buehler  
 1<sup>st</sup> - Chantz Verfaillie  
 4<sup>th</sup> - Terry Buehler  
 5<sup>th</sup> - Beth Griffiths  
 10<sup>th</sup> - Adam Leever  
 11<sup>th</sup> - Haley Via  
 12<sup>th</sup> - Tim Cline

12<sup>th</sup> - Don Crossland

21<sup>st</sup> - Jennifer (Mayer) Thompson  
 23<sup>rd</sup> - Justine Holtsberry  
 24<sup>th</sup> - Bill Hurtig  
 26<sup>th</sup> - Marcia Wiebe  
 29<sup>th</sup> - TJ Wiebe  
 30<sup>th</sup> - Jeremy Fife

## October Anniversary

12<sup>th</sup> - Jason and Andrea (Smalley) Retz  
 30<sup>th</sup> - Harry and Marcia Wiebe

## Session Highlights

At the September 20th regular meeting, elders:

\*noted that, after making the final payment on organ renovation, there is still nearly \$13,000 in the organ fund; and, after paying to send seven kids to camp, there is still about \$1000 in the camp fund. We are blessed! \*

saluted treasurer Carol Razo (again!) for her thorough and prompt assistance on any and every Session request for information and action.

\*learned that the 321 N. Cherry St. property became the church's on Sept. 2. It is insured, and the utilities have been shut off. Demolition of that house and its garage, backfilling that lot, and removal of the cottage garage will be a package deal for under the estimated \$10,000.

\*heard that a work evening is scheduled Mon., Sept. 26 to pull some bushes, remove the basketball standard, and start emptying the cottage garage; the parking lot curb that has hung up a number of vehicles has been re-shaped; and the replacement alley door is ordered.

\*heard that Missions is sending \$500 to Louisiana flood relief and \$200 to the Hands of Hope fall fundraiser.

\*learned the chili booth at the Flat Rock had great participation from our members, gave our church great exposure, and netted about \$300. Thanks for cooking, Jane Nice. \*approved lending the Historical Society 2 risers for their Festival of Trees in November. Rhonda will be responsible for them.

\*supported a youth outing on Wed., Sept. 28th, organized by the Nice's. Thanks, Dave and Jane!

\*were reminded of the Special Congregational Meeting to be held Sun., Sept. 25th. Elder Ed Cline will present the request made by Pastor David Meriwether to retire/resign as minister of our church for congregational approval.

\*heard that the Nominating Committee is working on the slate of elders and deacons for the Class of 2019.

\*supported having a Fall Family Fun Fest at Searing's pond on Sun., Oct. 16, 4 - 7 pm. Bring a big potluck dish, invite some friends, bring your kids' friends, and enjoy, courtesy of the Congregational Life/Outreach committee. Also, our church's turn to host 5th Quarter is Friday, Oct.

Submitted by Barb Searing, Clerk of Session

firstwednesday

October 5, 2016

1st Wednesday meal and worship on the 5th.

Supper at 5:30

Worship at 6:15

Hosted by the Women's Board

(Signup sheet available in the sanctuary if you want to assist or organize a meal for the upcoming season).



Fall Family Fun Fest will be held on Sunday, Oct. 16 at Searings' pond from 4 - 7 pm. A potluck supper will be enjoyed at 5:30. Come when you can, leave when you must, and reach out to friends and extended family to come along! Watch for details.



The Chamber of Commerce is hosting a Meet the Candidates and Issues Breakfast

Tuesday October 4 at 8:30 am

Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall

Come hear the issues discussed, meet the local candidates and talk with people representing some state and national candidates.





Here we are, it is October; and time for our 35th Annual Women's Retreat. Are you excited about hearing Carrie Gaul? Her work with "Revive our Hearts" Ministry, her work as an author and teacher should have us waiting with great anticipation for Saturday October 29th.

After going to "Revive our Hearts" web site, I lifted some quotes, two

from women blessed by their ministry, one from a presenter:

"I love that this ministry doesn't ask me to depend on a person or a book, but on the Lord."

"We learn what storms are, then learn to thrive in Christ in the midst of the storm."

"Sometimes God answers prayer immediately. Sometimes His perfect timing is to wait for years. Don't let yesterday's seemingly unanswered prayers keep you from praying today." Stephen Kendrick

Personally, I think it is exciting to know that the God of Jacob - Jacob whose life was even messier than ours - will meet us here on that day. We need to be prepared for what the God of Jacob wants to do in our lives on the 29th.

The Women's Praise Team from Galilee Missionary Baptist Church in Defiance will be with us for part



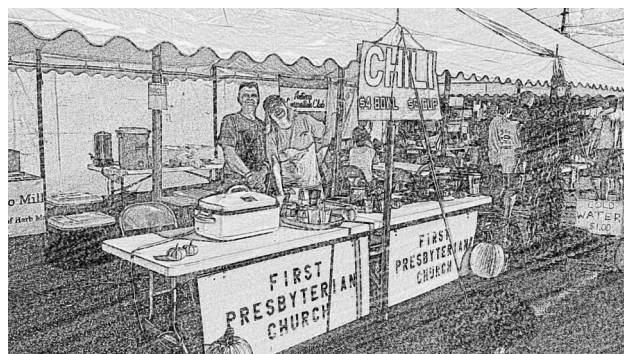
Part 3 of 3  
**Hand in Hand,  
 Heart to Heart:**  
*On the journey together...*

**35 Retreats in 37 years  
 and Hundreds of Women**

of the day. I was told that more than one woman said that they would come to the retreat just to participate in the worship that they lead. We have Susan Kayser on piano, Susan Crossland on the refurbished organ, an excellent catered lunch with friends that we met at previous retreats and seldom see. Add all that together with the fact that the Lord invited us here; what a day we will have. You may call 419-399-2438, or 419-399-4891 to register, or this year for the first time you may register on line at [www.firstpresbyterianpaulding.com](http://www.firstpresbyterianpaulding.com).

We'll see you soon!

Submitted by Sue Paulus



See if you can recognize the people in this photo. Maybe you could win a corn stalk award, too.



Jeff and Sherie Summers are pictured after working in the tent selling chili. They won the cornstalk award, which is an inside joke of some kind.

Ethan Hill is shown with his trophy for participating and placing in the pedal tractor pull. There seemed to be a great deal of fun and teasing happening this year, but congrats to the winners pictured.



Thank You: a huge thank you from your church family to Jane and Dave Nice for cooking boatloads of delicious chili and setting up our Fall Festival Booth.

The Praise Band played Sunday afternoon. Note the peanut gallery watching and listening from the end of the grandstand.





This is information from the newsletter that was received a short time ago:

Did you know that one of the most open groups to the gospel right now is young people? Furthermore, there is an ever-growing population of young Israelis immigrating to Berlin.

We felt burdened to reach these young people as they arrived in Berlin. **This summer, the Lord made it possible to build a new team to open our Berlin branch.** The gospel is already reaching those there who need it most. I am so encouraged with this progress

and opportunity. To me, that was more than enough to celebrate, but God had bigger plans! The ministry is growing and expanding in ways we can hardly imagine.

Due to the increase of ministry over the summer, and the decrease in summer giving, we now face a projected \$300,000 budget shortfall. But as you know, the ministry of reaching Jewish people with the message of Christ must go on! We have incredible ministry opportunities before us that we want to accomplish but we need your help to do so. In fact, **we have a very specific \$50,000 goal we need to reach by September 30** in order to achieve and complete these ministry opportunities.

**Would you give a special gift today to help us reach more unsaved Jewish people with a bold proclamation of the gospel and help us meet our financial goal?** If you would like to help with getting the gospel message out to the Jewish community, you may donate to the church and the treasurer will forward the donation.

## Lighthouse Library News

For your fall and winter reading we have purchased some Christian novels that will lift you spirits and help you remember how much God cares about every aspect of our lives. Especially in the following series by author Lauraine Snelling> These books are featured first on the table beside the novel section. Later we will feature other new and donated books. Featured now:

Red River of the North Series:

1. An Untamed Land
2. A New Day Rising
3. A Land to Call Home
4. The Reaper's Song
5. Tender Mercies
6. Blessing in Disguise

Next-Return to Red River Series

1. A Dream to Follow
2. Believing a Dream
3. More Than a Dream

Prequel - An Untamed Heart

Also Home to Blessing Series

1. A Measure of Mercy
2. No Distance Too Far
3. A Heart for Home

All of the above are written by Lauraine Snelling.

Featured next by author F. David Bunn:

- The Ultimatum
- The Great Divide
- The Book of Hours
- Strait of Harmony
- The Patmos Deception
- Unlimited
- Rare Earth
- Drummer in the Dark
- Winner Take All
- Imposter

Another author that both men and women will enjoy is Robert Whitlow:

- The Witness
- A House Divided
- The Confession

We have one new book by Terri Blackstock:

- If I Could Run

New in the non-fiction area are two books by Jimmy Dodd:

- Pastors Are People Too
- Survive or Thrive

Take advantage of this time of increase in what we offer in our Lighthouse Library. Enjoy a great read!

## Financial Tidbits:

- - Paid Kirkmont Center \$2,360 for 7 kids to attend Camp Rejoice.
  - Made the final payment for the organ repair contract in the amount of \$15,500.
  - Drew \$35,000 from the Nicelley investment to purchase an adjoining property.
  - Received a donations of over \$2,000.00 each for the Garage Replacement Fund, the Bargain Bin Building Fund and the local food pantry.
- Carol Razo, Treasurer

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## CARING & SHARING FOOD PANTRY

Please make these items a priority as you so generously give:

Toilet paper-the supply has been completely depleted

Cans of everything tomato:

Juice, spaghetti sauce, tomatoes of all kinds

As always, hygiene products are in **great** demand. Food items can and do often come from the Midwest Ohio Food Bank, but they do not supply any kind of hygiene item. That is why we have to ask for them every month.



Uniting in prayer for revival!

Don't miss the excitement of over 20 churches joining together to lift up Christ.

Tuesday Octo-

ber 4

7:00 PM

Paulding High School in the Auditoria

**Women's Circle:** Circle will not meet in October, as the meeting date is the same night as IGNITE! Paulding County. We are all encouraged to attend the IGNITE! Prayer for Revival gathering at the High School Auditoria at 7:00 that evening. See you there!

Dear Dave:

I wish I had that moment back again. That moment during the congregational meeting when the moderator asked if there was any discussion prior to voting on your resignation. I was waiting on someone else to speak up, and then suddenly the moment was gone with no one having said anything.

If I had it to do over again, I would speak up. If I could go back to that moment, I would tell you how much I appreciate your unfailing dedication to our church over the past 25 years. These days it's difficult to find someone who's stayed in the same job for 25 years. You have been with us consistently through weddings and funerals; through periods of growth and times of regression. During those same years, I waffled back and forth between being an active contributor and barely attending services at all. All those years, you were at the pulpit every Sunday.

Transitions are always difficult, but God uses all situations for good. Please know that we thank you for your service and are praying for God to guide your future, as well as the future of our congregation.

We love you! Carol Razo

## Becker Visit

On September 11, we had a visit from Jake Becker, head of the City Schools in Philadelphia. This is one of the entities that our church supports financially. After the service several who knew Jake as a boy when his father pastored here had lunch together at Vagabond Village. It was wonderful to see him again and to hear how he and the school are caring for youth in the inner city of Philly.





## 5th Quarter Time is Here!

5th Quarter parties for teens in 7th - 12th grades will again be spearheaded by our church, courtesy of the Congregational Life/Outreach committee. All parties will be held in the Presbyterian parking lot, rain or shine. Should the weather not cooperate, the festivities will move inside. (That, thank the Lord, has only happened once!) The dates for 2016 are:

- ~~Friday, Sept. 2 (First Christians hosting)~~
- ~~Friday, Sept. 9 (Nazarenes hosting)~~
- Friday, Oct. 7 (Presbyterians hosting)
- Friday, Oct. 14 (Branch Christian Fellowship hosting)
- Friday, Oct. 28 (Methodists hosting)

There is a home game on Friday, Sept. 16th. There will be NO 5th Quarter that night, as it is the same weekend as the Flat Rock Creek Fall Festival, and many of the youth and the churches will be involved with that major Paulding event.

We will need church volunteer 'hosts' to assist the other churches on 'their' nights. We will be looking for adult supervision, help to set up and clean up, provisions of prizes, pop, and food for "our" week, Oct. 7 closer to the time. We have great church partners again in First Christian (bringing the fire pits and straw bales for seating) and Branch Christian Fellowship (providing the music videos). Other partners this year are the Nazarene Church and the United Methodist Church. We are so blessed to have the community behind this project for our youth. Find '5th Quarter' on Facebook and 'like' it to keep up with what's new!

5th Quarter Teen (eyeing pizza):  
"Is all this free?"

Presby: "Yes! Help yourself."

Teen: "Be sure to tell the whole church 'Thank you.'"



It takes all of us working together to get the job done: pictured is Brent Fishbaugh who volunteered to put up all the signs for each party. A huge thank you goes out to Brent!

## VISION TEAM UPDATE

You may have noticed the Vision Statement which has been on the front of the bulletins the past few weeks and which will be on the front of subsequent newsletters:

**A congregation of passionate and enthusiastic people who want to become more like Christ and live out their faith in the community.**

Matt Reineck came up with this statement and the VT has adopted it for our congregation. A vision statement means nothing if it is not spelled out and lived out. So, beginning October 9, Pastor Dave will be preaching a three week series on the three parts of the statement: what it means to be a passionate

and enthusiastic Christian; what it means to become more like Christ; what it means to live out faith in Jesus in the community. He's preached about each of these things in the past year, but not consecutively, so this series will be a refresher on what the VT has been talking about and trying to communicate with our congregation.

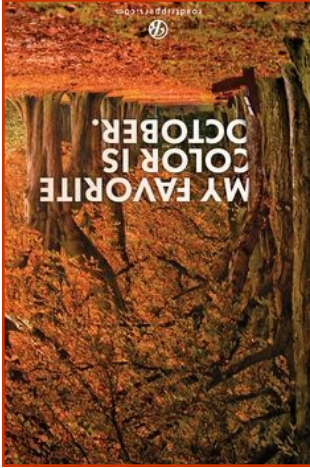
One of the main things we talked about at our last meeting was regarding what we feel has been our biggest challenge: our congregation has become smaller and older and some in our church family are looking to the VT to "come up with a solution" for this situation. To some extent we on the VT have had the same expectation. We seemed to agree, however, that there is no "magic bullet" or quick fix to our situation (a situation to which about 80% of US churches can relate). On the one hand, we've affirmed that we're already doing lots

of good things in our community (individually and collectively). On the other hand, none of these things has resulted in more unchurched people coming to our church.

What we want to do, above all else, is to encourage each other to see ourselves as missionaries in our own community—as those who are gathered inside the church building to worship Jesus and then sent outside the church building to represent Jesus to those God sends our way. This is easier said than done, but it is what Jesus talked about when he said, **You are the light of the world.** (Matthew 5:14)

### Vision Statement

**A congregation of passionate and enthusiastic people who want to become more like Christ and live out their faith in the community.**



*First Presbyterian Church  
Corner of Caroline & Cherry,  
Paulding OH 45879*

Sunday School 9:00  
Praise Music: 10:15  
Worship Service 10:30

## First Presbyterian Church

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[www.firstpresbyterianpaulding.com](http://www.firstpresbyterianpaulding.com) (new website)

[firstpresbyterianpaulding.com](http://firstpresbyterianpaulding.com)

In Essentials, Unity.  
In Non-Essentials, Liberty.  
In All Things, Charity.

