



LIGHT FROM THE TOWER

July 2012

The mission of historic First Church is to bring diverse people of metropolitan Buffalo together to follow Jesus Christ through worshiping God, fostering spiritual growth and serving the community.

Summer Worship is Great This Year!

For the Summer of 2012 we will be thinking about places in the stories of Scripture. As our children study these places and stories we will be contemplating the same stories and places in our worship services. Through various arrangements of our worship space, and through many different worship experiences, we will listen for God's lessons to us and share these lessons at the same time with the children in Sunday school.

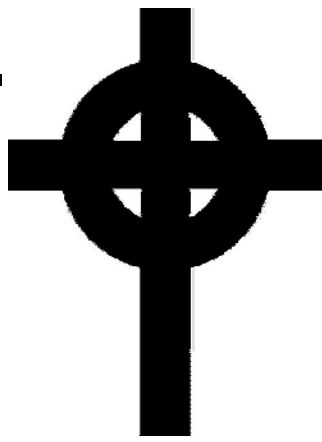
Here's the Line up for July and August:

July 8	Laws from the Top of Mount Sinai	Exodus 19:16-20:21
July 15	A Path Through the Jordan River	Joshua 3:7-4:7
July 22	Tears By the Rivers of Babylon	Psalms 137:1-4
July 29	The Gathering at God's Holy Mountain	Isaiah 56:1-8
August 12	The Baptism in the Jordan	Mark 1:9-11
August 19	The Sermon on the Mountainside	Matthew 5:1-7:29
August 26	Breakfast on the Beach	John 21:1-14

There you have it!

Please join us this summer and
let's worship the Lord joyfully together!





**AN EPISTLE FROM PHIL
TO ALL THE SAINTS AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BUFFALO**

As I write this we are on the verge of July. That is, the first day of July is just a few days away and that means we are already into the summer events and activities. Time flies when you're having fun.

And we are having fun this summer!! First of all, we are now worshipping at 10:00 a.m. in the chapel for the summer. The chapel provides us with an intimate setting for our worship services. We are closer together because we have to be. Also, since the chairs can be arranged and re-arranged it gives us flexibility to allow for some different expressions of our gratitude to God as we share worship together. We've already begun our summer worship experience. I hope you'll make a special effort to join us.

There's another reason to make that "special effort." This summer our sermons and worship experiences are designed to follow along with the same themes as our Sunday school lessons for the children. So the youngsters will hear a children's sermon, then go to class where they will be told about the same Bible stories as the parents and other adults. That way everyone can talk with the children about what they learned and share what you learned from the sermon and worship service. Isn't that a great way to fulfill the vows you make at ever baptism to nurture and teach the children in the ways of God? It's a wonderful way to reinforce the children's lessons, and maybe to remember the lessons better yourself.

There are other important things in this issue of our newsletter, and I encourage you to read about all this things going on. But I want to highlight one more thing here. Our Young Adults Group is a continuing source of joy and pleasure for me as I watch them plan and enjoy activities together. A number of them are planning a short mission trip in the near future, and it's not just for young adults. It's for all of us who can possible go for a weekend to help people in need with some good, hard work. Look for more about that in this newsletter and in future communications as the mission trip is firmed up.

With all the things going on between our struggles to be faithful to God and our many possibilities for the future, I remain thankful for the opportunity to serve this unique congregation, and I pray for you all.

Grace, and Peace,

Phil



Summer Adult Education

THE BURNED-OVER DISTRICT

**YOU LIVE IN IT
YOUR CHURCH HISTORY IS A PART OF IT
NOW COME AND LEARN ABOUT IT**

This summer our Adult Sunday School Class is participating in a unique study of the religious and social history of our area. Western New York during the early 1800's, at the time this church was founded and for several decades afterward, was the scene of numerous revivals and movements of religious zealotry and enthusiasm. Fires of faith and spirituality were lit and burned all over this part of the state of New York. There were so many of these movements that our area became known as "The Burned-Over District" and a wonderful book was written to give the history of the time.

The book by Whitney R. Cross was called The Burned-Over District and during July the Adult Sunday School Class is discussing the history recounted in that book. While some class members are reading the book, we want to invite everyone to come whether you read the book or not, and we hope you will. We are meeting early on Sunday mornings, at 8:30 a.m. in the pastor's office for the discussion. We have just begun so you still have time to join us whenever you can. Coffee is available for all who want it.

Please join us for the discussion of The Burned-Over District!!!

Clerk's Corner

The following actions were taken by Session at its meeting on June 20, 2012.

- Elected Janet Hill Clerk of Session
- Authorized the Personnel and Administration Committee to meet with the Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings to negotiate a contract for a third year.
- Approved the baptism of Molly Fraser, daughter of Lisa and James David Fraser and granddaughter of JoAnn Doerr, on Sunday, July 29, 2012.
- Approved the donation of \$100.00 to VIVE in celebration of John Long's 75th birthday and the 50th anniversary of his ordination.
- Approved the request from Kevin Cunningham to hold a small fundraiser to benefit the Geri Lyon Food Pantry on a Saturday evening during the summer and to serve wine and beer at the event.
- Received the "Option to Stay" Task Force Report.
- Granted the request from Gateway-Longview to serve as an emergency evacuation site when the First Church building is open.
- Approved the request of Susan Koeppel to host a bridal shower honoring Christina Trachtenberg at First Church in August and to serve wine at the shower.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Hill, Clerk of Session

Parent's Corner

By Rebecca Laubenstein, Christian Education Director

Parent's Corner is designed to offer ideas of how you can incorporate God's love and his promises into your day-to-day living. How important and reassuring for your children to know that God loves them *always* and is an integral part of their every-day life, not just on Sundays at church!

Pre-school Age:

Focus: JESUS IS MY GOOD FRIEND Bible Verse: "A friend loves at all times." *Proverbs 17:17*

Bible Story: *Luke 7:36-50*

A woman with very few friends humbles herself at the feet of Jesus. She expresses her love for Him by washing His feet with her tears and perfume. While others reject her gift of love, Jesus praises her for it.

At Home:

BATH TIME: As you wash your child's little feet, talk about how the woman washed Jesus' feet. It was her way of showing Jesus how much she loved Him. After you dry your child off, rub him down with some lotion that smells "oh so good." Talk about how the woman showed Jesus even more love when she poured the perfume all over His feet.

Elementary Age:

Focus: HOPE

Believing that something good can come out of something bad.

Bible Verse:

"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33

Bible Story: **Ascension** *Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 1:3, 8-11*

Bottom Line: Whatever happens, remember Jesus is always with you.

At Home:

Ask your child: Have you ever had a time when things didn't *seem* to be going well, but later it all worked out?

Share with your child: When you feel sad, what gives you hope

Sing a Joyful Song!

This summer, Sunday School age children are invited to stay for 10-15 minutes after Sunday School (during Coffee Hour) to practice singing songs. We hope to be able to sing during worship this summer! We need as many voices as we can get so we hope you'll seriously consider having your children be part of this wonderful way to lift their voices to the Lord! Thank you and we look forward to making joyful noise together!



Garden Walk

Volunteers Needed

Saturday & Sunday, July 28-29

First Church is again participating in the Buffalo Garden Walk. This eagerly anticipated annual event will be held Saturday and Sunday, July 28 and 29 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Membership Committee is asking for your help to be on hand to promote First Church as thousands of participants tour the Garden Walk.

If you are available to be on hand as a volunteer for any period of time this last weekend in July, please call the Church Office to schedule, or fill out the form below and either place it in the offering plate or mail to One Symphony Circle, Buffalo 14201.

Thank you in advance for giving your time and talent to this popular event!

Yes! I am available to help with the Garden Walk!

Name: _____ Phone: _____

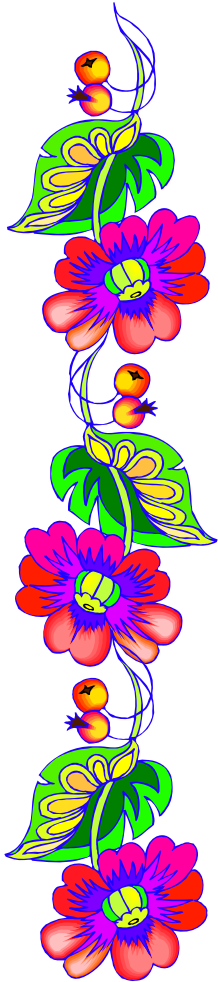
Availability

___ Saturday, July 28 ___ Sunday, July 29

Time: _____

Please return the bottom portion of this page to the church office.

Thank you!

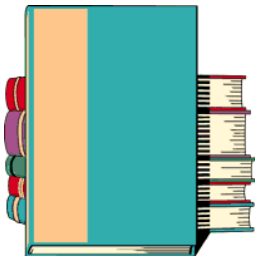


Women's Book Club

The Women's Book Club will meet on
Thursday, August 30 at 6:00 PM
at the home of Ilsa Cooper.

Join us for an evening of good eats and
friendship. It will be a planning meeting to
discuss the 2012-13 book list

Potluck meal— please bring a dish to share.
Please also bring a list of books you think would
work for our group!



ATTENTION COLLEGE STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

College studies can be trying,
especially right around midterm
exam time! We want our college
bound students to know that you
are in our thoughts and prayers. If
you or a family member will be
attending college in the fall, the CE
committee wants your address,
whether you'll be home or away.
Call or email Rebecca Laubenstein
with your info and keep your eyes
peeled for a special package in
your mailbox, come October!

Young Adult Gathering

Shakespeare in Delaware Park:
Wed., July 11th at 6:45ish PM
Richard III

Look for Stephanie & Becky near
the front of stage. Bring something
to eat and drink. Be there at
6:45pm. (Starts at 7:30)

Wed. Aug 15th
A Midsummer Night's Dream
Same plan.

Time and Talent Opportunity

Summer help is needed with the
distribution of food bags through the Lyon
Food Pantry on Tuesdays from
approximately 12:00-1:00 p.m. If you can
help, please call the church office at 884-
7250, ext. 10 or speak to Susan Koepfel.

Thank you!



MISSION TRIP NEWS!

We are excited to have selected a location for our outreach and mission trip this summer! We will be partnering with the First Presbyterian Church of Endicott, NY to assist in a restoration and recovery project for homes affected by the flooding from Tropical Storm Lee in 2011.

Who: Anyone is welcome! Maximum of 20, minimum of 5.

What: We will be doing physical work, and assisting in repair to homes damaged by the flood. Installation of drywall, insulation, installation of windows, painting, etc.

When: Late August or September 2012. (Leave late Friday, work Saturday, worship Sunday and return)

Where: Endicott, NY

How: Transportation -- We will provide transportation in the form of a van to shuttle us all, or several drivers who volunteer their car or vehicles.

Lodging – We will be staying at the Monroe house. A house fully equipped to meet our lodging needs. There will be 14 bunk beds and cots to house up to 20 people. Showers, an equipped kitchen, wi-fi, television/DVD, washer and dryer.

How Much: TBD Depending on number of participants. We should be able to keep the cost between \$50 and \$100 per person. More towards \$50.

We will be finalizing dates in the coming weeks, and will provide an update in the Sunday bulletin. If you are interested in participating, please see Ryan Nadbrzuch or contact him by phone or email 716-531-1390 (Mobile) / rjnad@aol.com

More Details on the mission:

In September 2011, the Southern Tier of New York was hit by Tropical Storm Lee when over 12 inches of rain in a 24-hour period caused some of the most catastrophic flooding this area has ever seen. With thousands displaced, and millions in damages, the First Presbyterian Church of Endicott (FPC Endicott) identified a need for immediate relief for flood-affected families in the area. When the roads, schools and work reopened, FPC Endicott became a command center where crews were sent out daily for 11 days straight before scaling back to 6 days a week. By mid-October, they had moved to 5 days, and a bit less in November as volunteers and the need for the first phase of work decreased. By mid-December, volunteer groups had worked in about 165 houses, along with a number of churches and businesses, and provided over 8500 volunteer hours! They pumped out, cleaned out, mucked out, tore out, power washed and sanitized basements and first floors. The goal in the initial response was to minister to flood-affected families by getting their homes to a place where they could start drying out. As of 12/05/11, 14,844

residents registered for FEMA assistance with only 2129 having flood insurance. The counties of Broome and Tioga were significantly affected with the Village of Owego receiving damage to 1400 of 1600 residences. There is much work to be done. The First Presbyterian Church of Endicott helped form a group called 'Faith Partners in Recovery,' which is a group of faith-based organizations united by the same goal: to help families who don't have adequate resources to get back into their homes and be restored physically and spiritually.



Mission Trip



Bookkeeper's Corner

MAY 2012 FINANCIAL ITEMS	Actual YTD May 31, 2012	Actual YTD May 31, 2011
Total Income	\$177,745	\$198,904
Total Expenses	\$216,609	\$266,579
Deficit support from the Endowment	\$7,661	\$13,145
HIGHLIGHTS	Actual YTD May 31, 2012	Actual YTD May 31, 2011
Pledge Income	\$80,586	\$132,896
Plate Income	\$11,141	\$5,245
Building Use Income	\$18,660	\$9,106
Investment Income	\$32,150	\$24,646

Notes:

- 2012 year-to-date plate income has exceeded the budgeted estimate of \$10,000. Plate income is derived from donations made by visitors and members who did not complete a pledge card.
- Investment income consists of the interest earned on the investments of First Church's Endowment and Central Presbyterian's investment accounts, in accordance with the Consolidation Agreement of 2008.

FIRST FINANCES 101: THE THIRD CENTURY FUND

Question: What is the Third Century Fund?

Answer:

- Established in 1995, the Third Century Fund is an endowment founded to provide for First Church in its third century of ministry, which we just entered in February.
- The fund was established with \$100,000, and grew over time with the help of bequests.
- The balance as of 5/31/12 is \$1,076,685.
- The provisions of the fund allow the interest income to be used now that February 2, 2012 has passed.
- The principal may not be used without a 2/3 vote of the Session.

News in the Family

Congratulations to our Parish Associate, Rev. John R. Long, D.D. who celebrates his 75th birthday and 50th ordination anniversary this month!



We received news that former church cook Margo Bondanella passed away recently. Our prayers of sympathy are extended to her family.



Stop by the Rain Garden on St. John's Place (former Tot Lot) to see the vegetables and flowers growing, planted by and cared for by First Churchers!



Special thanks to the Women's Association who made a donation to One Symphony Circle, Inc. for preservation of the building in honor of their Hat Tea last month!

Save the Date!
Christina Trachtenberg & Chuck Banas will be married at First Church on Saturday, Sept. 15th at 1:00 PM, and everyone is invited! After the ceremony, there will be a 2 hour reception in the chapel. Your presence is requested.

Our dear Bill Rieth has moved to the Rochester area. Keep in touch with the info below:

100 Hahnenann Trail, Apt. 241
Pittsford, NY 14534
(585) 383-8949
williamrieth@yahoo.com



Sig Art

Illustrated by Sig Potembski

For pastoral care concerns,
call Quinton Meyer,
Associate for Pastoral Visitation
909-2259 (Cell)
To reach Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings,
Interim Pastor,
call 884-7250, ext. 13 (Office)
548-0466 (Cell)

July 2012

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
4 INDEPENDENCE DAY (Staff Holiday) BUILDING CLOSED	5 4:00 – 6:00 PM — Meyer's Farm CSA Pickup	6	7 BUILDING CLOSED
11 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study 6:45 PM — Young Adult Gathering at Shakespeare in the Park	12 4:00 – 6:00 PM — Meyer's Farm CSA Pickup	13	14 BUILDING CLOSED
18 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study 7:00 PM — Session Mtg.	19 4:00 – 6:00 PM — Meyer's Farm CSA Pickup	20	21 BUILDING CLOSED
25 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study	26 4:00 – 6:00 PM — Meyer's Farm CSA Pickup	27	28 10:00 AM — Garden Walk
August 1 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study	August 2 4:00 – 6:00 PM — Meyer's Farm CSA Pickup	August 3	August 4 BUILDING CLOSED

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

One Symphony Circle, Buffalo, NY 14201-1213
(Across from Kleinhans)

Phone: (716) 884-7250 Fax: (716) 884-7253
www.firstchurchbuffalo.org
email@firstchurchbuffalo.org

Twitter: @1stChurchBflo
"Like" us on Facebook!

FIRST CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings, *Interim Pastor*
RevPhil@firstchurchbuffalo.org
Voicemail extension: 13

The Reverend John Long, D.D.
Parish Associate for Community Outreach
JohnRLong17@verizon.net

The Reverend Jack Smiley, *Pastor Emeritus*

Dr. David Bond, *Organist/Choirmaster, Bookkeeper*
DBond@firstchurchbuffalo.org
Voicemail extension: 17

Quinton Meyer, *Associate for Pastoral Visitation*
Meyer405@aol.com

Rebecca Laubenstein, *Director of Christian Education*
RLaubenstein@firstchurchbuffalo.org
Voicemail extension: 16

Christina Trachtenberg, *Business Manager*
CTrachtenberg@firstchurchbuffalo.org
Voicemail extension: 11

Tim Neaverth, *Building Supervisor*
TNeaverth@firstchurchbuffalo.org
Voicemail extension: 22

Liz Kamke, *Outreach Assistant*
EKSK476@gmail.com

Tom Hollfelder, *Custodian/Security Guard*

Church Office, extension 10

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OFFICERS

SESSION AND TRUSTEES BY CLASS AND TERM

Clerk of Session
Janet Hill

Class of 2013
Ian Bradford (T) (1)
Norm Gibbon (T) (2)
Mike Henry (1)
Quinton Meyer (2)
Henry Porter (T) (2)
Summer Przybylak (T) (2)

Class of 2014
Mark Armesto (T) (1)
Carlton Brownell (T) (2)
John Darby (T) (2)
Lauren Hill (2)
Marv Riegle (2)
Erica Wichtowski (1)

Class of 2015
Jean Hess (2)
Tim Hess (1)
Janet Hill (2)
Don Houck (T) (2)
Susan Koepfel (1)
Virginia McIntyre (1)

(T) indicates that the Elder has also
been elected to serve as a Trustee.

BOARD OF DEACONS BY CLASS AND TERM

Class of 2013
Cleo Alexander (1)
Mark Juan Armesto (1)
José Gomez (1)
Alexander Lipnicki (1)
Stephanie Lipnicki (1)
Ken Madell (1)
Suzanne Snyder (2)

Class of 2014
Pat Brown (1)
Russell Carlson (2)
Mary Field (2)
Karen Frieder (2)
Maria Murphy (2)
Olga Rico-Armesto (1)
Lou Ann Luther Riegle (1)

Class of 2015
Eleanor Kamke (1)
Liz Kamke (1)
Ryan Nadbrzuch (1)
Tina Osei (1)
Judith Paradzai (2)
Phil Sims (2)
Denis Wettlaufer (2)



Queen City Quality
Printing & Copying
Woman Owned Business

- High Speed B&W Copying
- Digital Color Output
- Project Binding & Laminating
- Large Format B&W, and Color
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- Offset Printing
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- CD & Video Tape Duplication
- Fax & UPS services & more...

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3100 Main St.
Buffalo, NY 14214
Fax: (716) 838-3425

(716) 832-8100
email: production@QueenCityImaging.com
www.QueenCityImaging.com