



LIGHT FROM THE TOWER

October 2013

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.

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

I need to share two items of important news:

As of August 15 First Presbyterian Church has contracted with Westside Ministries to have them manage our building. Westside will handle cleaning and maintenance as well as seeking tenants and negotiating leases for rental of space. This group of Christians has built a find not for profit organization with a proven track record of success.

First Presbyterian Church has signed a lease with Houghton College. The college will occupy the three rooms on the first floor of Allen Hall as well as one office in the office area off Historical Hall. This was a long time in coming what with bringing on Westside Ministries to manage the building for us and then having a lease negotiated with Houghton. Since you have heard about this possibility for a year and a half this will probably not be a surprise, but we are thankful to God that we have made this next step in attaining our goal of staying in the building and renewing the ministry of our church.

We should thank the group that met and negotiated with Westside Ministries to bring this group of Christians into partnership with First Presbyterian Church. Tim Hess, Mike Henry, Susan Koepfel and Marv Riegle all worked long and hard to make the partnership a reality. Our Trustees and Session also deserve credit for making sure things were done in the best interests of our church. Their faithful service has been wonderful.

Westside Ministries is already in the process of talking with our current tenants in the building to develop long term leases with them so that we can take the next step forward. There is still much to do, but we can be encouraged that Houghton will bring in new opportunities for our ministry and having long term leases with our tenants will help us attain a greater level of financial stability. Additionally, Westside Ministries will be seeking other tenants to occupy space in our building as well as helping us put together various events in the building that will spread the news about First Presbyterian and help us reach out to our neighbors with the good news of Christ's love for us all.

You will see many changes in and around the building lately. The front fence is being painted as I write this with volunteers on the task every Saturday. Allen Hall is undergoing renovations with new paint and floor covering in preparation for Houghton College to begin their programs. More will be coming so look for it.



The board of One Symphony Circle, our own not for profit group working on raising money to restore and maintain the outside of our historic building has begun beautifying our outdoor area as well, and they have many plans for future events. Please watch for upcoming announcements as this group continues its work. Special thanks to all of the members on the board.

Our congregation has many people working on rejuvenating our ministry together as we try to fulfill God's call an turn around things in the church.



Your help and prayers are important to this effort. In coming weeks you will hear more about Stewardship for the coming year, and our leaders are doing some great things as we seek God's will together. I constantly pray that God will continue to open doors to the future for us all. However, we all must take on our responsibility to move things forward. First Presbyterian Church's future is in God's hands, but it is also in yours as well. Your commitment, hard work, and prayers will make the difference between success and failure as we seek renewal and revival for our congregation.

I genuinely hope and pray that October of 2013 will be a time when more of you get on board with the work and the prayer that we need to do together. God has called us all to ministry here. Please answer the call.

In Christ,

Phil Gittings

October is a Special Month for WORSHIP

We baptized four young people and received two new members into our congregation during the month of September. In October we will baptize five more people into the faith and receive another new member. This month will be very special in our worship life, and we hope you join us every week.

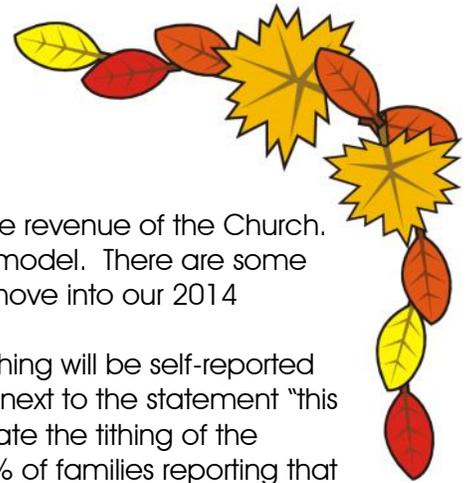
October 6—World Communion Sunday Using many breads from different cultures we will celebrate the world-wide communion of the Church of Jesus Christ. We will sing God's praises with some favorite hymns and listen for God's word as we ponder the friendship and working relationship of Paul and Timothy in the New Testament.

October 13—Baptism and Reception of New Member Many of you have seen the video that Nolan Whipple did for our church a few months ago. Now we will welcome Nolan into membership in our congregation and share in the sacrament of his baptism. Please join us to welcome Nolan as a new member in our congregation.

October 20—Celebration of Covenants In Jeremiah 31 God promises a new covenant will be made with the people. On October 20 we will consider the covenants we have made in our lives, particularly the covenant we make with God when we promise to be Jesus Christ's people.

October 27—Reformation Sunday and Sacrament of Baptism The last Sunday in October is often celebrated as Reformation Sunday because it is the closest Sunday to the day when Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses on the door of the Cathedral Church in Wittenberg and started what we know as the Protestant Reformation. On this Reformation Sunday we will consider the ways God is trying to Re-Form us today, both individually and as a church. We will also celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism for all four children of Gifty Koramoah and George Gyamfi. Be with us as we praise God and baptize Kofi, NanaYaw, Rosie and Junior during the worship service that day.

Stewardship Corner - Myth Buster Edition!



At the last congregational meeting, Taskforce A reported on increasing the revenue of the Church. The taskforce recommended as one of its main points to adopt a tithing model. There are some misconceptions about this model that I would like to address before we move into our 2014 Stewardship Campaign.

We will **never** ask you to prove or report your income to the church. Tithing will be self-reported on an individual basis (i.e. you check the box on the pledge card next to the statement "this pledge represents a tithe"). The information will be used to celebrate the tithing of the congregation as a whole. For example, in 2014 we may have 14% of families reporting that they are tithing. If in 2015 we have 29% of families tithing, we can celebrate that increase as a congregation. Individual tithers will not be identified or made public.

Your pledge is between you and God. As a matter of bureaucracy, your pledge will be reviewed by the bookkeeper, business manager, and the Stewardship Committee. If you have concerns about the privacy of your pledge information, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

The Pastor does not know your pledge unless you tell him yourself.

In 2014 we will not be ordering pledge envelopes, but we do have envelopes from prior years that we will be using up. If you would like to receive pledge envelopes they will be a zero cost item to the church this year.

At stewardship time there is always a lot of focus on the finances of the institution. I want to challenge you to put that out of mind and really focus on the following questions. What joy, comfort, care or spiritual peace has the First Church family brought to your life? What has the church given to your neighbor? What vision do you have for our future as a congregation? And finally, what is God calling you to do? I hope you will join me in praying for a bright and exciting future for First Church.

God bless you and your family,
Lauren Hill, Chair of Stewardship

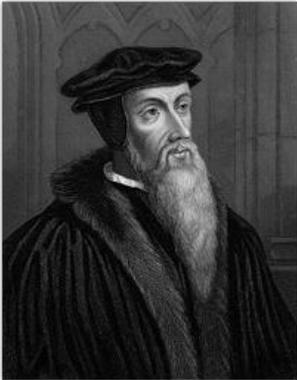
Bookkeeper's Corner

AUGUST 2013 FINANCIAL ITEMS	Actual YTD Aug. 31, 2013	Actual YTD Aug. 31, 2012
Total Income	\$193,712	\$234,161
Total Expenses	\$344,348	\$353,208
Deficit support from the Endowment	\$58,125	\$58,161
HIGHLIGHTS	Actual YTD Aug. 31, 2013	Actual YTD Aug. 31, 2012
Pledge Income	\$87,921	\$101,322
Plate Income	\$12,848	\$14,937

Clerk's Corner — October 2013

At the September meeting of Session, the following business was transacted.

1. Received with thanks the resignation of Carlton Brownell from Session and Trustees.
 2. Approved leaving the position of Elder open and not filling the unexpired term.
 3. Accepted the recommended changes to the Corporation Bylaws, which will be presented at a Congregational Meeting.
 4. Amended Section 12 of the Congregation Bylaws to 12 Elders on the Session to be divided into three equal classes.
 5. Tabled further discussion of the Congregation Bylaws until the next meeting of Session.
 6. Accepted with regrets the letter of resignation from Rebecca Laubenstein as Christian Education Director.
 7. Approved Task Force C hosting a fundraiser in the chapel, narthex and sanctuary of First Church on November 15th, 2013 and serving food, beer and wine.
 8. Agreed to offer surplus items collected in the CE wing to members of the congregation for a free-will offering and then to donate the rest to a charitable organization.
 9. Approved that the transition from full time to part time would have no effect on the payment of health care for the Business Manager.
 10. Approved the lease with Houghton College as revised.
 11. Approved the collection of the PC(USA) Peacemaking Offering on October 6, 2013.
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The Young Adults' "Couchside Calvin" Study Group will meet on October 15th in the evening. Watch the bulletin and Facebook page for more details.

Confirmation Class Begins

This fall we have a group of young men who are participating in our confirmation class, and we hope you will keep them in your thoughts and prayers. Chris Cox, Kofi Osei, and Nanayaw Osei are meeting with Rev. Phil every Sunday in September, October, and early November at 9:30 a.m. to discuss the meaning of faith in Jesus Christ and the importance of membership in the church. They are discussing issues of faith and belief as well as the work Christ calls the church to do. Every week they attend worship and are asked to talk about what they experience as they worship with the congregation.

They will be received into membership on November 10 at the 11:00 a.m. worship service. Please pray for these young men as they discuss their commitment to God and to Christ's church. Make a special effort to get to know them. And welcome them to membership here at First Presbyterian Church when they join.

SONGS FOR THE SAVIOR CHRISTIAN ROCK CONCERT

Friday, October 18th, 2013

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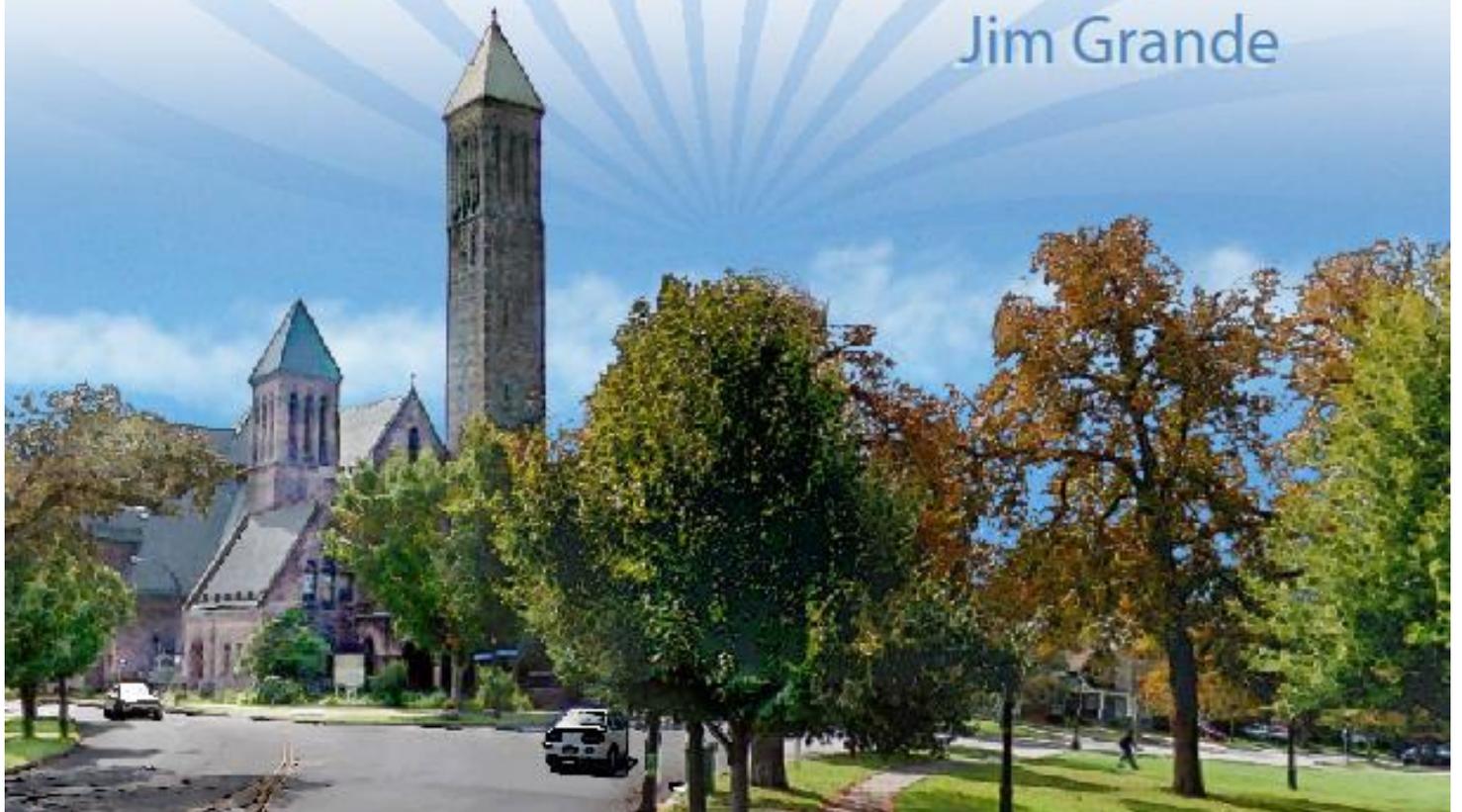
7:00 PM

FEATURING:

First Presbyterian Church
One Symphony Circle
(Across from Kleinhans)
Buffalo NY 14201

884-7250

Elmwood Drive
Soul Esteem
Walking Deadmen
and
Jim Grande



Adult Christian Education Class



Our "Women of the Bible" study class continues into October! Is there something about being a woman that transcends time and cultural differences? A class at 9:30 in the morning in Historical Hall, led by Virginia McIntyre and Maria Oakley will examine both beloved and little known heroines of the Bible. As you learn about them, you may be surprised at what you learn about yourself. Many of the issues these women faced are issues of urgent importance to women today. Although much has changed since the first woman walked the earth, one thing remains the same; being a woman is as challenging as it ever was. Come discover the uniqueness of womanhood- the things that after all these years still unite us as daughters of Eve.

Come see how God enabled ordinary woman to live extraordinary lives. How? By turning their weaknesses into strengths, their sorrows into joys, and their despair into hope. Along the way, you will learn great truths about God Himself.

God's women of yesterday speak boldly to God's women of today! The women of the Bible play an integral, essential, and crucial role in the eternal plan of God. From heaven's point of view, women are always unique, matchless, and irreplaceable. They are never to be found in a subservient ranking within the Kingdom Of God. Moreover, these women demonstrate to us the lofty ideals of faith and faithfulness, virtues and values, brains and beauty, redemption and resourcefulness, servant-hood and sacrifice. What made these women and many others so remarkable? They loved God passionately, looked to Him in life's daily challenges, and yielded to His transforming grace. And you can enjoy God's miraculous work in your life today by following in their footsteps.

Through a detailed study of Miriam, Esther, Lydia, Deborah, Ruth and Mary , mother of God you will learn that God has called today's woman to play a significant role in society, in the home and the church. You will learn from their mistakes and discover the blessings of God heaped upon the woman who faithfully trusts the Lord in all situations. Each timeless biblical story mirrors the challenges and changes today's woman faces. Through understanding these women's lives, this class will help you discover the God behind their stories and yours. This class will last 6 weeks and will have open enrollment which means you need not be present at every class to reap a benefit. There is no text, other than the Bible.

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY: ROMANS

Our Wednesday afternoon Bible study is off to a great start this fall as we finish up our study of the book of Acts. This lively group is always happy to welcome new people and now is a great time to make a new commitment to grow in your faith.

On October 16 they will begin a new study of the Letter of Paul to the Romans. This letter is Paul's most comprehensive discussion of the meaning of our Christian faith and will be a great encouragement to anyone who seriously wants to understand her/his faith better. Our discussions will be lively, and there is no homework. We share many good ideas in this group and hope you will add yours to the list of good things to ponder together.

We meet every Wednesday in the Pastor's Office from 1:00-3:00 p.m. We want to welcome you, so please try to join us.



First Church Calendar

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
		<p>1</p> <p>10:30 AM-12:00 PM — Staff Mtg. 12:30 PM — Food bag distribution 1:00 PM — Ars Nova Rehearsal 5:30 PM — Worship & Music Mtg 7:00 PM — Lands & Bldgs. Mtg.</p>
<p>6</p> <p>WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY PC(USA) Peacemaking Offering 9:30 AM — Adult Christian Ed. 9:30 AM — Confirmation Class 11:00 AM — Worship & Communion, Rev. Dr. Gittings 12:00 PM — Fellowship Time 12:15 PM — Special Session Mtg. 12:15 PM — Financial Fast Series</p>	<p>7</p> <p>BUILDING CLOSED</p>	<p>8</p> <p>10:30 AM-12:00 PM — Staff Mtg. 12:30 PM — Food bag distribution</p>
<p>13</p> <p>Baptism & Receive new member 9:30 AM — Adult Christian Ed. 9:30 AM — Confirmation Class 11:00 AM — Worship, Rev. Dr. Gittings 11:15 AM — Sunday School 12:00 PM — Fellowship Time</p>	<p>14</p> <p>COLUMBUS DAY (Staff Holiday) BUILDING CLOSED</p>	<p>15</p> <p>10:30 AM-12:00 PM — Staff Mtg. 12:30 PM — Food bag distribution 4:30 PM — Literacy Tutoring 6:30 PM — CE Committee Mtg. 7:00 PM — Board of Deacons Mtg</p>
<p>20</p> <p>9:30 AM — Adult Christian Ed. 9:30 AM — Confirmation Class 11:00 AM — Worship, Rev. Dr. Gittings 11:15 AM — Sunday School 12:00 PM — Fellowship Time</p>	<p>21</p> <p>BUILDING CLOSED</p>	<p>22</p> <p>10:30 AM-12:00 PM — Staff Mtg. 12:30 PM — Food bag distribution 4:30 PM — Literacy Tutoring</p>
<p>27</p> <p>4 BAPTISMS 9:30 AM — Adult Christian Ed. 9:30 AM — Confirmation Class 11:00 AM — Worship, Rev. Dr. Gittings 11:15 AM — Sunday School 12:00 PM — Fellowship Time 7:00 PM — Harmonia Chamber Singers Concert</p>	<p>28</p> <p>BUILDING CLOSED</p>	<p>29</p> <p>10:30 AM-12:00 PM — Staff Mtg. 12:30 PM — Food bag distribution 4:30 PM — Literacy Tutoring</p>

October 2013

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study	3	4 1:00 PM — Ars Nova Rehearsal 6:00-9:00 PM — First Fridays Allentown	5 9:00 AM—Ars Nova Rehearsal
9 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study 5:45 PM — Board of Trustees Mtg.	10	11	12
16 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study 4:30 PM — Literacy Tutoring 7:00 PM — Session Mtg.	17	18 7:00 PM — Christian Rock Concert	19
23 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study 4:30 PM — Literacy Tutoring	24	25	26 Wedding
30 1:00-3:00 PM — Bible Study 4:30 PM — Gather for Friends of Night People 4:30 PM — Literacy Tutoring 6:00 PM — P&A Mtg.	31 HALLOWEEN	November 1 7:00-9:00 PM — First Fridays Allentown	November 2

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OFFICERS

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

Phone: (716) 884-7250 Fax: (716) 884-7253

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email@firstchurchbuffalo.org

Twitter: @1stChurchBflo

“Like” us on Facebook:

“First Presbyterian Church of Buffalo, NY”

FIRST CHURCH STAFF

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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
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Christina Banas, *Business Manager*
CBanas@firstchurchbuffalo.org
Voicemail extension: 11

Quinton Meyer, *Volunteer Assoc for Pastoral Visitation*
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Liz Kamke, *Outreach Assistant*
EKSK476@gmail.com

Jason Bravo, *Contemporary Musician*

Tom Hollfelder, *Custodian/Security Guard*

Church Office, extension 10

Weddings, extension 15
weddings@firstchurchbuffalo.org

SESSION AND TRUSTEES BY CLASS AND TERM

Clerk of Session

Janet Hill

Class of 2014

Mark Armesto (T) (1)
John Darby (T) (2)
Lauren Hill (T) (2)
Marv Riegler (2)
Erica Wichtowski (1)

Class of 2015

Jean Hess (2)
Tim Hess (1)
Janet Hill (2)
Don Houck (T) (2)
Susan Koeppel (1)
Virginia McIntyre (1)

Class of 2016

Ian Bradford (T) (2)
Mike Henry (T) (2)
Stephanie Lipnicki (1)
Ryan Nadbrzuch (T) (1)
Maria Oakley (1)

BOARD OF DEACONS BY CLASS AND TERM

Class of 2014

Pat Brown (1)
Russell Carlson (2)
Mary Field (2)
Karen Frieder (2)
Olga Rico-Armesto (1)
Lou Ann Luther Riegler (1)

Class of 2015

Eleanor Kamke (1)
Liz Kamke (1)
Tina Osei (1)
Judith Paradzai (2)
Phil Sims* (2)
Denis Wettlaufer (2)

Class of 2016

Jackie Addo (1)
Cleo Alexander (2)
Mark Juan Armesto (2)
José Gomez* (2)
Gifty Koramoah (1)
Ken Madell (2)

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

* Indicates Co-moderators

**To reach Rev. Dr. Philip S. Gittings,
Interim Pastor,
call 884-7250, ext. 13 (Office)
548-0466 (Cell)**

**To reach Quinton Meyer,
Volunteer Associate for Pastoral
Visitation
909-2259 (Cell)**

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY	Closed
TUESDAY	9 AM to 3 PM
WEDNESDAY	9 AM to 3 PM
THURSDAY	9 AM to 3 PM
FRIDAY	9 AM to 12 PM