



First Press Magazine

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From Pastor Laurie

You sang in a stable; you cried from a hill; then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still. And down in the city, you called once again when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind.

Congratulations! On June 9 we made it all the way to Pentecost, the day of “Wind and Fire” when the church was born. Better hold on with both hands as you read this summer issue, or it might just blow right out of your hands.

The Holy Spirit has been working around here at gale force firing us up to feed the hungry, advocate for the reunification of immigrant families, become better stewards of the earth, and for the 14th year, yield gold from otherwise discarded items. The Holy Spirit has blown seven new members our way, and confirmed four of our young people. Keep reading and you will be inspired by the fascinating ways that Spirit has moved in the lives of our two members profiled in this issue. Divine Love is in the air and on the move. Praise be to God.



Did You Know?

Our part of the Pentecost Offering will go to Summer NOW, a program to provide nutrition to kids during the summer break who would otherwise qualify for free/reduced school lunches.

First



Press

The Magazine of First Presbyterian Church — Marshfield

Summer 2019



Beginnings

Meet Our Newest Members!



Marty, Jennifer & Jocie Anderson are very excited to join FPC's dynamic faith community. **Jocie**, graduated from Marshfield High School, **Olivia** is a Sophomore, and **James** is in 7th grade.



Dave Hirsch has lived in Marshfield around 40 years. He is married to Janice Frauenheim and has two sons, James and Kenneth, and four grandkids. David enjoys attending the ROMEO men's breakfast group.



Danielle Redding has been attending FPC for years, singing in the Choir and serving on the Worship Committee. She feels like this church has become home for her.



Rod & Sue Ferguson moved to Marshfield from the Twin Cities in 2007. They have two adult children, Scott and his family who live in MN and Sarah who lives here and attends FPC with her son Nathan.

Honorary Green Team Member



Miriam Nygren, age 101, of Red Wing, MN was recently made an honorary member of First Presbyterian's Green Team for her success in reviving recycling at the assisted living center where she has lived since February. Her belief in recycling began April 22, 1970 when her daughter, Marjorie, came home from school excited about the declaration of Earth Day inspired by Wisconsin's Senator, Gaylord Nelson. Their commitment has never wavered. (Miriam is the aunt of Curt Hanson, a member of FPC).

Did You Know?

The REUNIR page on the church website now features a click button to accept orders for the REUNIR bracelet. The bracelets are still free of charge. The cost of postage can now be paid with a click through PayPal. Tell your out of town friends who want to support the cause of reuniting families seeking asylum at the border.



Introducing the Confirmation Class of 2019

Please join us in congratulating **Davis Rens, Charlotte Johnson, Henry Hoerneman, and Ryan Paulman** in completing their confirmation studies. They faithfully attended class all year and conscientiously wrote their statements of faith. This milestone marks the beginning of a lifelong exploration of faith.



Did You Know?



Pastor Laurie and Outreach Committee chair, Dan Crump, attended Madison Action Day in our state capitol on March 28th. The day began with inspiring speeches from many faith leaders and ended with everyone marching to the State Capitol Building to speak to our legislators concerning issues of faith.

Faith Stories Greg Reiersen



Greg grew up and was confirmed at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Iola, WI. Although he never sang in the choir there, he grew up loving the music, especially the songs they sang in the monthly youth group. He still remembers the first time he performed a solo for the Christmas music program, a memory that has fed his love of every Christmas Eve music service since.

Greg's mother was an unquestioning believer in the importance of the church and belief in its traditional teachings. He took those teachings at face value until a college history professor introduced him to the idea that the four Gospels were very likely not first-hand accounts written shortly after Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, but third- or fourth-hand accounts written many years after the fact. The question, "What can you take as fact in the gospel stories?," quietly shapes Greg's faith even now.

While Greg has a certain distrust of belief in

the unprovable, the singing in church has never felt hypocritical to him. In his 40 year career as a high school music teacher and choir director, he has found the time and energy to direct church choirs for 30 of those years. The most spiritual moments of his life have occurred most often while directing choirs, and more often in rehearsal than in performance. He defines those moments as an emotional connection with something undeniably outside himself. Vocal music necessitates a vulnerability that is rare in other forms of ensemble music making.

As FPC's choir director, Greg is committed to providing a "seamless" worship experience. He recognizes that people now come to church to "get" something rather than to fulfill a civic duty. Even so, Greg aims for an experience that goes beyond mere satisfaction. Worship is most meaningful when kindness, patience, and tolerance are modeled. In a world with so much meanness and defense of meanness, church is a sanctuary for another way of being.

Green Team - Faith in Action

Shop Smart; Shop Sustainably!

FPC Green Team has decided to expand the sustainable offerings we pass along to the congregation in the cabinet at church. We are striving to educate members of the church and the community about the damage that single use plastics do to our environment and to encourage voluntary reduction of single use plastics like straws, tableware, and shopping bags. We have a few specific solutions to help individuals operate in a more environmentally sustainable manner.

In addition to Wrap 'n Mats, Chico Bags, and Water Bottle Slings, the following products are now available for purchase:

- Bamboo toothbrushes
- Four stainless steel straws with a cleaning brush and handy carrying case
- Three sizes of mesh produce bags
- Two different types of reusable silicone storage bags (to replace zip bags)



All of these items are yours for \$5 or less. A small price to pay for Creation Care; would you agree?

In the future we will bring in sustainable car kits and beeswax wraps. Both of these earth-friendly items we hope to create in sustainable fashion ourselves. We welcome any other suggestions you may have for items that we might offer in the future to reduce single-use plastics. Thanks for taking a small step to care for our planet.



Close-up

Joy Thomas

Joy grew up in a little town in Jamaica., Annotto Bay, St. Mary. She attended Sunday School since before she knew herself. Church was part of her family, and everyone went. Her mom, Sisily, was always talking about her faith, praying, and singing hymns like “Amazing Grace.” Sisily knew the Spirit of God would communicate through her dreams. She would wake up in the morning knowing what she needed to do that day. The Spirit of God is in everyone, Joy’s mother told her, but it can be suppressed.

Joy had a vision of her own when she was very young. One day, just after a man named Joe was chased through her yard, she suddenly found herself surrounded by clouds, unable to see anything. Looking up, she saw a beautiful staircase. There were animals and flowers everywhere, and lots of children climbing into and out of the lap of a very large adult. Then the cloud closed and it was carried up by two doves on either side of her. Since the vision was tied

in her memory to something others could also remember, Joy’s mom told her it was very important.

“I know there is God. You don’t search for God,” Joy says. Fear of the unknown, or fear of people who are different, can make people act cruelly, but that does not make them bad. Sometimes maintaining the fear is easier than seeing people for who they are. “Money doesn’t make the person. If you have a nice car, enjoy it, but faith in God is what makes you a better person. Faith is being able to see. Lack of faith is blindness.”

Everyone enters and exits this life the same. God is not judgmental, but we have to be honest and humble, not living two separate lives, one in church and one out. Joy is committed to worship because of the gifts God has given, strength and the blessing to do what she can do. She thinks deeply, prefers light to the darkness, and tries to see beauty even when it is hard to see. “The world is a garden filled with different flowers, each one beautiful in its own way.”

Urban Immersion 2019 and United We Can



Story by Carmen Lawler

Twenty-six people from three separate churches were registered and paid up to go to **Urban Immersion** on the first weekend of March, more than twice the number of our largest group in the past. What looked like a bit of snow in Monday’s forecast became a major blizzard by Thursday evening, and we found ourselves scrambling for a “Plan B.” We opted for attending Empty Bowls and, the most obvious choice, bowling.



Ready to sort donated clothing at the clothes closet

While standing in line for our soup, Peyton Daul and Sammy Halle noticed an announcement by Leadership Marshfield for **United We Can**, a canned goods sculpture contest. “Why not build one and enter this contest?,” they asked. It would be fun, and it would help the food pantry right here in Marshfield. Although the weather hampered our well-laid plans, we still got to enjoy soup together, learn a bit about hunger in Marshfield, have fun bowling, and start the ball rolling on a canned goods sculpture.

A month later, on Palm Sunday weekend, we decided to try again because the Urban Immersion Center had spots available then. Sixteen people were able to go this



These mighty guys sorted and boxed up 2000 lb of donated canned goods!

time, still the largest group we have taken so far. A trip like this presents so many opportunities for those lucky enough to go. We get to know each other in ways we otherwise might not get to. We have



Getting serious about poverty

fun eating and working together. Saturday is a full day, and depending on where you’ve been assigned, you can have some pretty sore and tired muscles at the end of it. We also learn about poverty and explore stereotypes of people who must live in poverty. The center’s programming encourages us to think.

It is amazing to watch our youth assimilate their experiences. Last year’s participants came home wanting to do something locally like what they did in Minneapolis. We



Showing us how they fold clothes at home!

arranged a work day at the PDC’s Orenda Center, a domestic violence shelter here in Marshfield. Last

summer, 7 of our youth washed windows and pulled weeds on a warm July afternoon.

This year we came home to the United We Can sculpture contest. The kids collected cans and boxes of cereal during the month of May and built



Tony puts himself into his work

the sculpture you saw on the cover of this magazine. All the food was donated to the Soup or Socks food pantry. As for me, I come home from UISR more committed to providing opportunities for the youth and others at FPC to help those in need, and I’m especially on the lookout for projects that are best



Sammy saw the project through from start to finish

done together.

By the way, we still have ten paid spots to use this summer before we lose the nonrefundable deposit. Watch the church calendar for your chance to take advantage of this meaningful experience. You have to be at least a 6th grader to attend, but there is no upper age limit. Come and see what the experience inspires in you.



Carlos adds the finishing touch

A HOT DOG of a Sale

Report by Barb Gillespie



The 14th annual FPC Rummage Sale is a wrap. Those who put in long hours every day definitely felt every one of those 14 years, but the heart-warming gratitude of our shoppers makes it all worthwhile, year after year. Forty-eight eager bargain hunters were waiting at the door before our 6 am opening on Friday. We heard many positive comments about our organization, our fantastic prices, and the wonderful stuff we find year after year to share with the community. A shopper came by bike and we helped tie his purchases onto the bike to get home safely. One fellow said he knows of no other Christian church that would post a *Blessed Ramadan* sign in their front yard and just wanted to thank the people of our church who decided to reach out in such a kind way. We told him that’s what *We Choose Welcome* is all about.

There were many ways to help — sorting, organizing, pricing, helping lay the tarps, setting up tables, providing treats and lunch items, researching the value of

items on the internet, and posting items for sale on eBay. Next year, we’re planning to check for factory recalls to prevent selling items known to be faulty or dangerous.

We took in close to \$3,500 this year, and money from eBay sales is still coming in. The money will fund a new classroom divider, Outreach giving, Green Team projects, and various other Christian Education and church needs. GoodWill received several trailer loads afterwards, as did the Orphan Grain Train. Leftover books went to the library, and several office chairs and filing cabinets donated by Figi’s Corporate Office went to Habitat for Humanity.

There are jobs for all ages and ability levels, so we hope you’ll consider heeding our call when 2020 rolls around. All volunteers who work 2+ hours get first pick of the treasures! Mark your calendars for May 29 and 30, next year.



Remarks on the 50th anniversary of the FPC organ

Presented on “Music Sunday” May 5, 2019

by Mark T. Nelson

This year, we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of our magnificent pipe organ. This instrument was originally installed in our former church building at Third & Chestnut and dedicated on March 23, 1969. Designed and built by the Moeller Organ Company of Hagerstown, MD; it has 778 pipes in 12 ranks. The organ cost \$24,000 in 1969, but by 2003, when we moved it to this building, the cost of a similar instrument was estimated at \$150,000.

The pipe organ is often called the King of Instruments due to its size, complexity and versatility. It consists of the pipes, the wind chest under the pipes and a keyboard console from which the organist plays. The pipes need air to make their sounds, so you need a blower. When this instrument was moved here, we purchased a super-quiet, German-made blower that fits right below the pipes. Each key on the keyboard needs to trigger a little air valve under the pipe it plays. With all those pipes, that’s a lot of air valves!

Finally, you need to connect all three keyboards to the valves. It’s wired up with a relay system to connect every valve to the two manual keyboards plus the foot-pedal keyboard. When we moved the organ here, we went to a more reliable solid state connection, as the older electrical relays were starting to fail. Some of you may remember when the pipes would suddenly start playing on their own in the middle of the service! Roy Luber would frantically try to stop it by pushing in stops, closing the swell chamber and, finally, just turning the organ completely off. This is definitely an improvement!

There are three reasons we stayed with the pipe organ, even when some churches are going to synthesized organ, electric pianos or guitars for worship music.

1. You need a strong, sustained tone that can carry the melody to everyone in the congregation. It’s like singing in the shower. You like how it feels when you’ve got all that sound surrounding you — and you sing a lot better!
2. A single organ has so much to offer because of its variety of sounds. It has ranks of pipes that range from flute-like sound ... to a soothing oboe ... to a triumphant trumpet on Easter. It has the flexibility to match the style and mood of almost any piece of music, all in one instrument.
3. Finally, First Presbyterian has a strong musical tradition. Being one of the best pipe organs in Central Wisconsin, it lets us meet the expectations within our church membership and among musicians around the area who assist our musical worship.

So, today, we express gratitude for this instrument which for 50 years has inspired our worship with glorious music.



Did You Know?

On a cold, windy day in March, the Immigration Action joined with Silas, Eric, and Steve (not in photo) from the Pres House on the UW-Madison Campus to distribute the free REUNIR bracelets to students and their visiting parents. Close to one hundred bracelets were distributed that day.

