



*First Presbyterian Church
418 West Coolidge
Borger, TX 79007
~May 2009~*

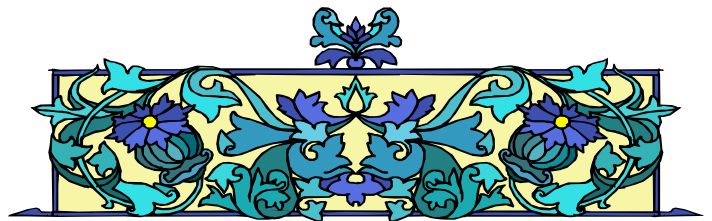


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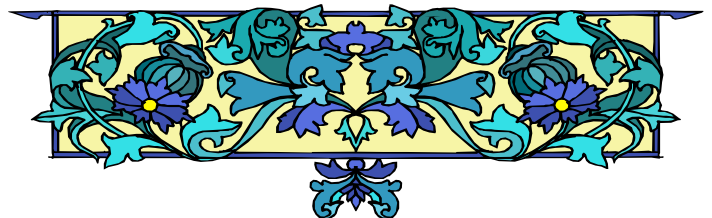
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We are actively working on our new church photo directory. We look forward to sharing the finished product with everyone very soon. This project has been quite a task and we want thank everyone for their help and patience. We would like to include photos of congregation events in the directory. If you have any ideas or would like to submit a photo for consideration please contact the church office.



FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE
First Presbyterian Church Newsletter

May

Borger, Texas

2009

Pastor's Pen May 2009

In our Presbyterian tradition we talk a lot about connectionalism, covenant, commitment (and of course Calvinism). Those C words are important in understanding who we are. We are a people of one God, one faith, and one community. Being connected to each other is the certain way that we live out God's covenant with us. We care for each other, we pray for each other, and we share with each other.

The relationship between The Reverend Glendell Smith (our frequent pulpit supply) and his brother Everett Smith is a wonderful example of what it means to be connected, in covenant and committed to another. They have even made the big-time news: Time Magazine, Fox News, Abilene Reporter News, KRLD (Dallas), and many more media outlets with their story of being connected in a somewhat unusual way.

April 27, 1964 on his 21ST birthday, Glendell received a simple birthday card from his brother Everett. The next February Everett received the card for his birthday. Everett wondered, "Where have I seen this card before?" And the answer dawned on him. "That silly booger sent back the same card I sent him last year."

When Everett first bought the card he was working in El Paso as a barber before putting in 27 years with the El Paso Electric Co. He said it cost 15 cents and stamps were a nickel. Glendell was a student at McMurry University in Abilene when all the 'silliness' and 'thriftiness' started. In 1968, Glendell, then 25, wrote to Everett, "I wonder who will lose this first. If we can keep up with it, it will save us a lot of money by retirement age." Today Glendell lives in Amarillo and serves BSA as a fulltime chaplain and Everett, now retired, lives in Abilene.

Each time the now-laminated card is sent, the brothers add messages to it. The small messages combine to make a sort of abridged family history. When the writing space on the card was used up, the brothers began attaching hand-written notes to the card. Over the years, the *envelope has grown in thickness, with several small note pages attached to the original.*

I think this story is one of true commitment, covenant and being connected. It has surely given these two brothers a few laughs and much heart-felt love. I can't begin to imagine the excitement and even the anxiety of waiting for the arrival each year. They did have one major scare in 1998. Glendell mailed the card to Everett in El Paso but it hadn't arrived in over a week since being posted. After 10 days, the card was returned to Glendell who had forgotten to include Everett's apartment number. The brothers then met face to face shortly afterward in Plainview and Glendell handed the card to Everett. "I almost cried when I saw the card," Everett said. "I thought it was gone forever." April 27, 2009, the card having been mailed for the 90th time, arrived at Glendell's mailbox. It will be returned to Everett in Abilene in time for his February 2nd birthday in 2010.

I would like to invite you to write down your own stories of the C's (connectionalism, covenant, and commitment) in your life. Maybe you would like for us to include it in our newsletter.

Grace and peace in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,



Georgia

Dear Friends,

I am so excited to tell you that God has once again blessed me. When I was serving First Presbyterian in Snyder, I participated in a Lectionary Study Group. It was an ecumenical group of pastors that met weekly at First Christian Church in Sweetwater to discuss the upcoming Lectionary texts. There were 3-4 Presbyterians, 1-2 Disciple of Christ, 1 Episcopalian, and 2-3 Methodists. I even remember when we had a new participant – a young man who was serving a small church in the area and attending seminary in Abilene. He had been directed to us by one of his seminary professors as a group in which to learn and experience wisdom (hummmm.) He made us promise to not tell anyone that he was there because his denomination and church would not approve (what a shame!) Our conversation was a sermon-starter many times for me and for others I am sure, as well as a time for companionship and support.

Well, it now happens that one of my great Presbyterian preacher buddies and LSG partners is in Amarillo. The Reverend Jim Wallace is serving St. Luke's Presbyterian Church and we are once again beginning our Lectionary Study Group. While I know I won't be there every week, I will be there as often as my schedule permits. This will be a grand opportunity and a blessing to be back in conversation with other pastors and the Word. *Welcome Jim and thank you for initiating our gathering!*

It may now be that some of you are asking "What is the Lectionary and why does it make any difference to me?" Every week we are given Scripture readings for Sunday and special days on the Church Calendar from the Revised Common Lectionary. (There are also the Roman Catholic, the Episcopal, and the Lutheran Lectionaries. All four have similarities but also differences.) In the RCL the readings almost always include The Old Testament, Psalms, The Gospel and The Epistle. (It is interesting to note that during the season of Eastertide there is no Old Testament reading). The Lectionary Committee (who knows who they are – I don't) compiles this journey through Scripture on a 3-year cycle: Year A, Year B, and Year C. This year, 2009, we are in Year B.

Planning our liturgy and worship is one of the responsibilities that I thoroughly enjoy. And it is the Lectionary that guides me as I think "thematically" about our efforts to praise and glorify God. You may have noticed that our worship is thematic – generally using the theme that flows through our Lectionary readings in a variety of ways including our hymns (that's why you occasionally get a hymn that is unfamiliar or not a favorite). The Psalms work wonderfully well for the Call to Worship. Themes from the OT can frequently be heard in our Prayer of Confession. And it is likely that I will preach from the Gospel or the Epistle reading. (And no, I don't include all four readings in our Order of Worship – unless you want to stay an extra 15 minutes every Sunday morning).

I have been asked many times "How do you decide what you are going to preach?" Well, I believe that we are blessed to have the Lectionary to follow. It never fails that when I have a theme in mind or even a specific topic I think we need to talk about, all I have to do is pick up the Lectionary for that particular Sunday, read the texts, and Viola! There it is!!! God works in strange and wonderful ways.

So, I invite you to join me in reading our Lectionary texts each week. You will discover that you come prepared for worship, you will hear familiar sounding words and ideas and it will open your mind and heart to God's Word. Each month we will have this listing in our newsletter.

A painting of a hand reaching out towards a church building. The hand is in the foreground, reaching towards the right. In the background, a church building with a steeple is visible against a light sky. The overall style is soft and painterly.

Care of Members and Friends

Please keep these members and friends in our prayers...

Scott Glenn

Bobbie & James Farrell
Aleyene Watkins & Family

Pete Marsh

Leah Buckland & Family
Rhodean Hopkins



Notes from the Music Department



Spring is here with a bang! The weather has been just wonderful for the most part. Trees and flowers are blooming. Everything is coming up roses! Before we know it, school will be out and summer time will be upon us.

Choir practice for May will be on the following nights: May 6 at 6:30 pm; May 13 at 6:30pm; May 20 at 6:30 pm. May 27 will be the last practice until September. We are also having a dinner at 6:00 that evening so choir practice will either be at 5:45 pm or after the dinner. Stay tuned for further instructions!

Closing Response for the month of May will be found on page 587 in the hymnal. This is a familiar Amen and one that we all enjoy. So sing loud!!

I would like to take some time to thank all the choir and congregation for your prayers and concerns during the last several weeks past and ahead. My family will be going through some rather trying times as my husband goes through radiation treatments for early stages of prostate cancer. We feel very fortunate that the cancer was detected early enough and that the prognosis is very good. And we are most grateful to you, our church family, for all your prayers and concerns. Your healing power has been felt by my family and I love you all for your love and support. I felt all your prayers as I dealt with my heart problem and feel healed because of your prayers and support. I am a firm believer that God does indeed answer prayer and I am here to prove it!!

We hold Aleyene Watkins, Scott Glenn, Mary Botkin, and Jim & Bobbie Farrell in our prayers and thoughts. We pray for continued healing and peace as they move through life's journey. We also hold all past and present choir members in our hearts. We miss you all.

May the Good Lord watch between you and me while we are absent one from the other!

Pat Petty and Choir

Church Cookout

We will be having a cookout Wednesday, May 27th at 6:00pm in the church yard.

We will be enjoying Jerry Pool's special burgers, so don't miss out.

Please join us for food and fellowship.

We will be providing more details soon.

