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# FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE

## First Presbyterian Church Newsletter

July                      Borger, Texas                      2010

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Pastor's Pen

July 2010

When was the last time you invited someone to come to our church??? Been a while??? I am sure it has been a while as we Presbyterians are not well-known as evangelists. It's not a particularly comfortable environment for us. We are a quieter, more contemplative group, and besides, we believe that God will bring those to us (and to God) without intervention – don't we? I do too; but, at the same time, I know that it is my responsibility (and yours) to proclaim my (y) faith in response to God's love for me (you) and out of that proclamation I pray others will begin to understand God's calling them. HOWEVER . . .

At our triennial visit of the Committee on Ministry, Palo Duro Presbytery, Elders Julie Johnson (First Presbyterian Church, Canyon) and the Reverend Jim Wallace (St. Luke's Presbyterian Church, Amarillo) asked the session how we responded to the word *evangelism*. You can imagine that some of us became quite anxious. During the discussion one of the questions posed was that of "how open does our church appear to someone on the outside." How inviting do we appear to someone who does not belong to this church? I know it is hard to imagine that anyone might not feel welcome, after all we are but I think that may be true. Jim Wallace brought up the idea that we might need some signage. He said he didn't have an idea which door to come in except that there were cars parked at the office entrance (which was not marked as such). I do have a suggestion - how about NEON, FLASHING, COLORFUL, MUSICAL, - **just kidding!** I think that we all understand that we are a traditional, mainline, reformed church and we aren't interested in being a 'contemporary' (rock 'n roll) worship environment. We are a quiet, respectful, loving, intelligent congregation and we want our worship to reflect all of God's attributes. (Oh my, who wouldn't want to be a part of us???) At the same time, as John Calvin said, "*Ecclesia reformanda!*" Reformed, always reforming. Even to this day, these ancient words are a rallying cry around the world and also for us right here in Borger, Texas. It is a motto that reminds us of who we are and who we want to be and it just may be the key to our future existence. So, in a very reformed sense, I do have a few questions I will think about (prayerfully) and respond to:

- (1) *Is evangelism important to you?*
- (2) *Does our church appear locked up all the time?*
- (3) *What is there that we might do to appear more welcoming and open to strangers?*
- (4) *How would anyone know that our worship service starts at 10:30 (instead of the more usual 11:00)?*
- (5) *Do we want to have new people in our church – especially if they don't look, sound, or think like us?*
- (6) *What would we do with new members if we did get them?*
- (7) *What ideas do you have about evangelism?*
- (8) *Are you satisfied with our church as it is?*
- (9) *What are you willing to give of yourself to make your church a bit different?*
- (10) *Is any of this important to you?*

It is likely that your session will be discussing these questions (and others) as we think and respond to them. I have a suggestion that we put up some signs and I hope that we will have some input from you. In the meantime, I will share this information with you from our denomination. I think it is important information to ponder as we begin to open our "open doors."