

First Presbyterian Church of Alvin

Press Bytes



To the Saints at First Pres:

Greetings: There seems to be a lot of anger and frustration going around the country these days. Everyone seems to have a chip on their shoulder just waiting for anyone to knock it off. It seems to be silly stuff for the most part. As a pastor, I've worked a lot dealing with anger and conflict as I suspect all clergy have. In any "public" organization you will have these situations come up from time to time. I don't think you always resolve anger but rather manage it or come to some resolution. These are some things I have learned over the many years of working with folks:

1. Decide whose problem it is. So many times we find ourselves getting blamed or chewed out over something that is not our fault or even involving us at all. This transference happens for several reasons: One, we can't take it out on the one who causes the problem for lots of reasons. Could be a person or organization or institution like the government. Two, we can't take the risk of alienation from that problem causing entity. We choose a "safe" person or persons who won't reject us or retaliate. Ministers face this a lot as does anyone who works with the general public. Many folks do shoot the messenger. I would never want to be at the desk of airline attendants when flights are canceled for instance! Suggestion: If we take a deep breath and decide who has the problem, we can help that person deal with it, even if it does involve us.

2. If we have nothing to do with problem we can listen to other person but not feel responsible even though the person is blaming us for whatever it is that is bugging them. If we might be the "problem" we can still listen and try and resolve the conflict. Thomas Friedman a psychiatrist wrote a great book entitled, Family Systems. He tells us that when things seem out of control or get out of control, we are to be the "NON-ANXIOUS PRESENCE!" That is, we rise above the chaos and move to calm the situation, even if it may directly involve us. We are the "take control" person, the stable element in the chaos. We bring calmness to the situation. This is not always easy. We too have emotions and a sense of right and wrong. In arguments with others, especially kids, we need that calmness. When young children at school would have fits and lose control, the teacher was instructed to take the child and firmly hold them close to them. The security and adult presence would work miracles. Someone was in control. That's like what Friedman was suggesting. In Chaplaincy training in Atlanta, my supervisor said we can tell the person out of control that "I will receive your anger but not be responsible for it." We can say this to ourselves

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October Issue

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C.O. Magee (on Cover)

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On Sunday, October 7 (World Communion Sunday), there will be a potluck lunch right after church to welcome our newest member:

Patricia Costanza



Please join us for a wonderful time of food and fellowship!

“Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?”

Luke 6:41



Love. Grow. Serve.

“My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.”

John 15:12

The new Christian Education year has begun! This is always an exciting time of the year! We honor our third graders with a bible, commission Sunday School teachers, and bless backpacks. Everyone is always excited to begin new lessons and learning more about Jesus. Mission & Outreach and the Church’s Ministries restart each January but get refueled at this time of the church year. With summer ending and fall beginning we are also fast approaching the Advent Season. As you begin studying your new lessons also take a few moments to see how you can better serve your church in our Outreach and Ministry opportunities. Below is a list of opportunities to serve our church and community. If you see something you would like to volunteer or serve please contact a Session member or C.O.

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Gathering Place | Clothing Outlet | Sunday School |
| Potluck setups | Headstart Christmas | Nursery Volunteer |
| Christmas Families | Children’s Christmas Party | |
| Children’s Worship Bags | Choir Christmas Cantata | |
| Refreshments after worship | Decorating for Advent | |
| Preparing Advent Devotion packets | Mission Christmas Sale | |
| Watering Poinsettias during Advent | Baking Cookies for Advent Season | |
| Hanging of the Greens | Ringling Salvation Army Bell | |



About World Communion Sunday

“All who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment against themselves.”

(1 Cor. 11:29)

The first Sunday in October is designated as World Communion Sunday, which celebrates our oneness in Christ with all our brothers and sisters around the world. Paul tells us that we are to **“discern the body”** when we partake of Holy Communion, mindful that we note our relationship to all our brothers and sisters in Christ in the celebration. One is not to go hungry while another is drunk! (1 Cor. 11:21). This is scandalous behavior opposed to the Way of Christ. Thus it is appropriate that World Communion Sunday is also a time when we receive the annual Peace and Global Witness Offering as a way of continuing the ancient Christian practice of sharing what we have with brothers and sisters in need.

World Communion Sunday (originally called World Wide Communion Sunday) is a gift of the Presbyterian Church to the larger ecumenical church. The first celebration occurred at Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, PA, in 1933 where Dr. Hugh Thompson Kerr served as pastor.

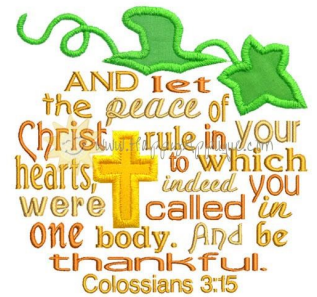
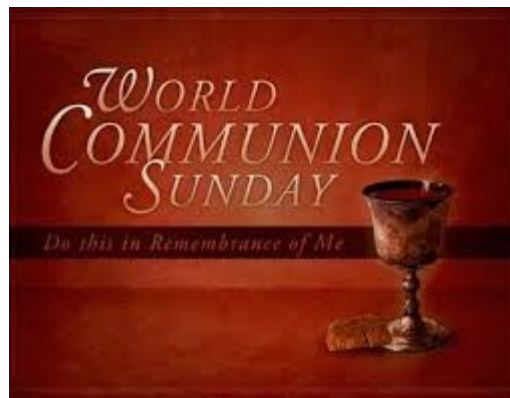
John A. Dalles, a PCUSA pastor who has researched the history of World Communion Sunday notes this in his blog entry, reprinted from the October 7, 2002, issue of Presbyterian Outlook:

Davitt S. Bell (the late Clerk of Session and church historian at Shadyside) recalled that Dr. Kerr first conceived the notion of World Communion Sunday during his year as moderator of the General Assembly (1930). Dr. Kerr’s younger son, the Rev. Dr. Donald Craig Kerr, who is pastor emeritus of the Roland Park Presbyterian Church in Baltimore, was sixteen in 1933. He has related that World Communion Sunday grew out of the Division of Stewardship at Shadyside. It was their attempt to bring churches together in a service of Christian unity—in which everyone might receive both inspiration and information, and above all, to know how important the Church of Jesus Christ is, and how each congregation is interconnected one with another. When I asked Donald Kerr how the idea of World Communion Sunday spread from that first service to the world wide practice of today, this is what he replied,

“The concept spread very slowly at the start. People did not give it a whole lot of thought. It was during the Second World War that the spirit caught hold, because we were trying to hold the world together. World Wide Communion symbolized the effort to hold things together, in a spiritual sense. It emphasized that we are one in the Spirit and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Celebration of World Wide Communion Sunday was adopted as a denominational practice in the Presbyterian Church (US) in 1936. Churches in other denominations were invited to celebrate with us from the beginning, but it wasn’t until 1940 when the Department of Evangelism of the Federal Council of Churches (a predecessor body of the National Council of Churches) promoted extending the celebration to a number of churches around the world that the practice became widespread. Today, World Communion Sunday is celebrated around the world, demonstrating that the church founded on Jesus Christ peacefully shares God-given goods in a world increasingly destabilized by globalization and global market economies based on greed.

This year, World Communion Sunday is October 6. Hope to see you there!



“There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.”

Mark 7:15





Ongoing Prayers Kathryn Wilkerson, Belinda Busscher, Barbara Passmore, Dixie Clark, Betty Montgomery, Lewis & Edith Rockwell, Bill Pannell, Louisa Vera, Cathy Gross, Joe Rossano, Nancy Williams, John Shaw, Pat Carpenter, Janette Arterburn, Cheryl Martin, Margie Martin, Roy Case, Genie Hayes, Margaret Gibson, Ashley Burns, Avery Jones, Alan Gray, Jill Wheatley & Family, Lucille Beasley, Delia Carrillo, Julia Ferraro, Lisa McCalla, Susan Armstrong, Frances Bowers, Joy Dell DeWitt, Francis Issacs, Amy Shlensky, Tina Kennedy, and Taylor Bailey .

Immediate Concerns : The Wheatley Family, The Costanzo Family.
Please call the church office with updates.

Elder of the Month — Helen Escobedo
Refreshments — Education

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

September 2019

The Stated meeting of the Session was held on Monday, September 16, 2019 in the church library. However, due to the lack of a quorum, no decisions could be made and voted on. The Session heard a presentation by Eric Andreas from Edward Jones who gave a presentation concerning our present financial investment strategies. He made some points about how we could increase our investment revenue without doing anything risky. He also spoke about the services he could provide because he is based locally. His presentation was very comprehensive, but no decision could be made due to a quorum not being present. The meeting was adjourned with prayer. A Special Called meeting of the Session was scheduled for after church on Sunday, September 22, 2019 to discuss and vote on the agenda. The Session reconvened on Sunday, September 22, 2019 in the Library. This meeting was opened with prayer by C.O. with the presence of a quorum. A recap of Eric Andreas’s presentation was provided and after a discussion, the Session voted to change our investment management to Edward Jones, with Eric Andreas as the financial manager of this. He began the process after speaking with the Trustees to inform them about his services. It was agreed by the Session that this move will be advantageous for our church. If anyone has questions about this, please speak with C.O. or Cindy Waggoner, Treasurer. Other highlights were a discussion about our fallen steeple cross, the approval of the minutes from August, a request to use the Fellowship hall for classes by Bel Sanchez, who was formerly with Communities In Schools, but is now a volunteer helping people in the community with learning new skills. The first will be sewing, which will help some unemployed to have a skill to earn money with alterations and sewing. In a separate vote, the use of the Fellowship Hall/classrooms was approved for ESL and Citizenship classes, beginning in October. A budget workshop was scheduled for October 19th.

Message from the Pastor Cont.

too without verbalizing it. In a hurricane there is always the “eye”. It is usually calm with sunshine. That “NON-ANXIOUS PRESENCE” can be the “eye” in a storm of emotions. Sometimes in the church folks get upset and express that negative feeling. It might be because there is a controversial issue at stake or maybe the minister or someone else did or said something this person really dis-agreed with or maybe they were hurt. Perhaps, something is going on in that persons life that is causing pain, anxiety hurt or frustration and it’s expressed over something not really the problem. Whatever the problem, it comes out at church and directed often at a person or people. Being that non-anxious presence will hopefully enable the issue to be dealt with without a lot of damage. My vision of two individuals going at each other is like two TV’s facing each other at full volume, nothing is accomplished. We don’t want to be drawn into another’s anger by getting angry too. This takes a lot of strength to be that non chaotic presence, but it really seems to work. Anchors stabilize great ships. We can be that anchor that stabilizes negative experiences. God desires all God’s children to be at peace. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called God’s children. Dona Nobis Pacem!

Peace,

C. O. Magee



Trick or Treat Trail

For the past few years, the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Alvin has sponsored the Trick or Treat Trail event as an alternative to the traditional going from house to house on Halloween to trick or treat. In keeping with First Presbyterian Church’s focus on mission, we will once again be sponsoring a booth along the trail where goblins, ghosts, and other Halloween creatures can get their candy in a safe environment. The Trick or

Treat Trail will be held on October 31st from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at the National Oak Park by the railroad station in downtown Alvin. In order to accomplish this, the church needs your help. This can be done in several ways.

First, we need CANDY, CANDY, CANDY! *Please remember as you shop for candy that allergies to peanuts are much more common than they were when you and I were young, so try to stay clear of candy containing peanuts. Please bring your candy to church beginning now through Sunday October 27th. We will have totes set up in the Narthex for you.*

Second, we need people to help set up our canopy, lights, and tables. These people need to be at the National Oak Park at 5:30 pm.

Third, we also need people to work the 2 hour event.

Fourth, we need people to take down our canopy, lights, and tables when the event is over.

As you can see, there is a lot to do to make the Trick or Treat Trail a wonderful and safe experience for the children of Alvin. To get an idea of who can work the event, there will be a signup sheet in the Narthex of the sanctuary beginning the first Sunday of October for those who can help with the last three items needed.



- 1 Joan McNabb
- 3 Jeanine Richey
- 3 Mark Busscher
- 5 Paul Rayburn
- 8 Megan Melchor
- 8 Robert Escobedo
- 9 Cory Day
- 14 Mike Case
- 14 Buddy Ruskey
- 16 Karen Hering
- 20 Nan Self
- 24 Ayla Busscher
- 24 Pam Bates
- 24 Pat Carpenter
- 26 Alex Pannell
- 28 Barbara Whitfield

We will be having a



BRING YOUR PUMPKIN AND IMAGINATION.
When: Saturday, October 26th, 4pm-8pm
Where: Fellowship Hall
Snacks will be served.
Prizes will be awarded.

HEADS UP

As in the past, you will be able to purchase poinsettias to remember and honor your loved ones. Once again, we're asking for a love donation to help defray the cost of poinsettias and other decorations. The proceeds from the poinsettia sales will go to the Youth Fund to help our young people with their activities for the coming year. Order forms will be in next month's newsletter. Thank you!



Sunday, November 3, 2019 is Remembrance Sunday

During the morning worship service we will have a time of remembrance for those church members, and those close to our church members, who have passed away this past year.



Organist's Musings

By: Chris Lo

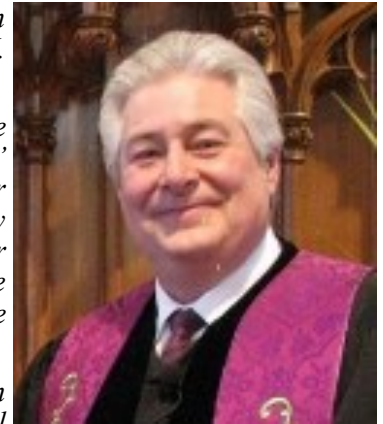
This is the second article on the history of the use of music in the Presbyterian Church. It is a continuation of some scholarly writing by the Reverend Dr. James W. Thornton, the Senior Pastor of the Carmel Presbyterian Church in Glenside PA.

In addition, it was a standard practice, though not demanded by the "Regulative Principle," that the method of singing in Presbyterian worship, was "lining out," where a "Precentor" read or sang one line and the congregation repeated it after him. This was largely due to illiteracy and a lack of psalters, which were printed by hand. The Directory of Public Worship read: "it is convenient that the minister, or some other fit person appointed by him and the other ruling officers, do read the psalm, line by line, before the singing thereof." So, congregations didn't sing whole verses of the Psalms straight through.

Another issue was the singing of a Pastor or a Choir apart from the congregation. In worship, as well as in other areas of church life, Calvin stressed "the priesthood of all believers," (1 Peter 2:5) according to which everyone, as a member of the body of Christ, should participate. Calvin did not advocate choir singing in worship services on the grounds that it suggests the active participation of the entire congregation was not required. He believed that Reformed and Presbyterian worship should involve the whole congregation in every element of the liturgy. Therefore, our heritage included a corporate worship with no hymns, no organ, no choir and no continuous singing! Presbyterian congregations sang the Psalms without instrumentation one line at a time.

Calvin also had thoughts about the music to which the Psalms were sung. Since the combination of music and text is a powerful one, great care should be taken to determine that both the content of the song and the nature of the accompanying music be beneficial to the soul. Calvin believed strongly that the music was "secondary" to the text. Music serves as a means whereby the words touch the human soul more effectively. He believed that there is a fine line between a proper and improper worship of God in song. Singing affects the mind and the heart, and so alters one's knowledge, as well as one's feelings.

Therefore, the type of music which accompanies the text should be appropriate to the contemplation of God and the praise of God's mercy. When the music is proper, it causes one's spirit to rise and aspire to greater piety; when it is improper, music can cause the feelings to surpass the thoughts. For Calvin, when we are moved more by the singing than by what is sung, we have sinned. Therefore, the Psalms were sung to a simple meter, rather than a rhythm of complex structure. The Genevan Psalter was and continues to be, a shining example of these beliefs and practices.



A Peek at Gathering Place

The September 11th FPC Gathering Place was treated to a rousing, toe-tapping performance by the South Street Bluegrass Band. Audrey Hatley, a vocalist, who happens to be one of our volunteers, was accompanied by Lorna Witt. Lorna is a vocalist and also plays the bass. The guitar was played by John Evans and Don Meade played the mandolin. Many lively renditions of Bluegrass tunes and spirited hymns were enjoyed by our guests and volunteers.

