

First Presbyterian News

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First Pres. Family,

On Friday July 23, 2021 the XXXII Olympic Games opened in Tokyo, Japan. The games were originally scheduled for 2020 but were postponed due to the COVID19 Pandemic. It is always a pleasure to see the best athletes compete. I know many of us will be following team USA in the various competitions. New Olympic stars will emerge and become known for their victories and achievements. It is interesting to consider how those new stars are able to excel. The answer is innovation.

Olympic games have been going on for many years and, given the nature of the events, we might think that there would be the same level of achievement from one Olympiad to the next. But in virtually every sport there is innovation. Training and nutrition programs, skills development, technique analysis, and equipment improvements, are just a few of the ways that athletes seek to innovate for that competitive edge.

You may remember the 1968 Olympics when the world was astounded by a young man named Richard Douglas Fosbury who introduced a new high jump technique that won him a gold medal. His innovation became known as the Fosbury Flop. That innovation made him one of the most influential athletes in the history of track and field. His technique has been adopted by almost all high jumpers today. I had competed in high jump in my High School days and when I witnessed the genius of Fosbury's technique, I wondered: "Why didn't I think of that?"

The Olympic games remind us that in every human endeavor there is always room for innovation. I believe that this principle also applies to Christ's Church. The sixth chapter of Acts reminds us that the Apostles had to innovate to allow the early church to continue to grow. The original Apostles were too busy teaching and preaching to oversee the distribution of food. Some church members were being neglected and left out, so they prayed about it and came up with the first innovation – Deacons!

We face a time when mainline traditional Churches have been declining in membership and influence. Pews are more sparsely populated on Sunday morning and those who attend are predominantly of retirement age or older. The traditional Church is in decline and will have to innovate if it is to survive. Some innovators have already broken with tradition, like the Cowboy Churches, who meet on weeknights for those who cannot or do not desire to attend traditional services. The dress is "come as you are" and the music is often contemporary. There are Cowboy churches here in Virginia, not far from here there is also a Christian fellowship that meets around old-time music and folk dancing.

It is clear that some of our sisters and brothers in Christ are innovating to preserve the witness of their churches to their community. We need to remind ourselves that the only reason for the existence of the church is to follow the Great Commission of Christ to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20). Churches go about fulfilling this commission in various and unique ways. So, if we return to this task as our primary goal and innovate ways to fulfill that commission in our unique place and time God will bless our efforts with success.

(Continued on page 2)



Prayer List - Continued prayers for Donnell Corelle, Keith Gilliam's family continue to need of prayers. Kim Albert has been doing very well lately. Healing can be baby steps for many, but we celebrate with those on that path. Del Pool still is in need of prayers, as he continues to make small improvements, and is now home. Dale Harris had surgery and is now doing well.

Sandra McGregor has brain and lung cancer. Marge Nelson is progressing toward recovery and staying with Stewart and Patty. Ann Carlisle had surgery the end of July. Sandra Wallace - Mac Lacy's girlfriend, had a procedure done in July. Frances Anne Thackston was in the hospital, and released again. Barbara Johnston has been dealing with water damage in her home; Ed Fraser had hip surgery on July 19, he is home recovering. Susie Luedtke has had some health issues, Gene Haugh - has pulmonary issues, Eli Brown, son to Dr's Brown had an eye injury. Pattie Grubbs had tests at Duke to diagnose some health problems. Dan Koutsos going through dialysis.

Communion - Our next observance of the Lord's Supper will be August 8th. Mark your calendars and make sure you come to church to observe this holy sacrament. This date has moved slightly, so mark and/or change your calendar to the updated date.



Flower Calendar - The 2021 flower calendar has many openings. Call or visit the church office door to request your favorite dates for providing flowers in the Sanctuary. Remember birthdays, anniversaries, special dates... all are wonderful reasons to beautify the sanctuary. Flowers can be from your home garden as well. All of God's nature is beautiful, and we can enjoy it all in various settings.

Rally Day - Save the Date - We will plan to have Rally Day on Sunday, September 12. Plans are being discussed and in early stages of preparation. Mark your calendars and plan to attend on this special day.



Memorial Service for Joe Ferguson - There will be a memorial service for Dr. Joe Ferguson on Saturday, August 7 at 10:00 am here at church. All are welcome and invited to attend. Following the service there will be refreshments of lemonade and cookies out at the picnic shelter.



(Continued from page 1 - Interim Pastor's

message)

I have heard several church members express concern about what will become of their beloved church and what can be done to preserve this unique Presbyterian witness in South Boston. God has blessed us with a highly intelligent membership, some of the brightest minds around, so I challenge you to pray for Your church, think out of the box, and ask the Holy Spirit to show you the innovation that might revitalize the First Presbyterian Church of South Boston. I would love to hear the results of your prayers and deliberations and no doubt I will say to myself: "Why didn't I think of that?" ~ Rev. Glenn Coleman, Interim Pastor



August 1 - Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Imitate the Goodness of Jesus"
Scriptures: Psalm 51:1-12; Matthew 12:9-24

August 8 - Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Seeing with Your Eyes Closed"
Scriptures: Psalm 34:1-8; John 6:35, 41-51

August 15 - Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Wisdom and Gratitude"
Scriptures: 1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14;
Ephesians 5:15-20

August 22 - Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Are you ready to win?"
Scriptures: Psalm 84:5-12; Ephesians 6:10-20

August 29 - Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Work Righteousness"
Scriptures: Psalm 5; James 1:17-27

September 5 - Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Sermon Title: "Table Crumbs"
Scriptures: Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23;
Mark:7:24-37



Church Financial Note - With the first half of the year concluded a review of the financial condition of the church shows the following:

The year to date (January through June) budget established by the Session for the first half of the year is \$106,805.51. Offerings received for this same period totaled \$94,454.31 resulting in a budget deficit for the first half of \$12,351.20. For the first six months of last year offerings totaled \$98,426.81, \$3,972.50 more than this year. At first glance this may not appear concerning, but the receipts for 2021 are inflated by the fact that two families paid their entire pledges for the year in January and February. Weekly contributions during the spring and summer have fallen off fairly significantly from 2020.

The Session has taken action to reduce expenses in several areas. Foreign mission support has been eliminated for all but Matthew and Teresa Lee and The Persecution Project. The lawn maintenance contract with Reaves Lawn & Garden has been terminated and cost reduced by purchasing a lawn tractor and hiring Avon to do the work. Also, expenses are less this year because we have no current obligation to Vanderbloemen, our pastor search firm.

The church, however, has an expense this year that it did not have in the first half of 2020, that is the salary and benefits paid to a full time pastor. (Glenn, our interim pastor, was hired effective 7/1/20) This expense will continue, and possibly increase with the hiring of a full time pastor.

The Session will continue to look for ways to reduce costs in a financially responsible manner; however, as the stewardship drive will be coming in the fall, we ask each member to prayerfully consider his or her personal financial commitment to First Presbyterian Church. We have a wonderful ministry ongoing with Glenn's leadership, and exciting times ahead as we continue to search for a new pastor to continue God's work through our church. It is important that we prepare for this with a sound financial commitment.

May the Lord each of you for the work you do for First Presbyterian.

Michael M. Rand

YOUR GIVING MATTERS!

The Rabbit Effect

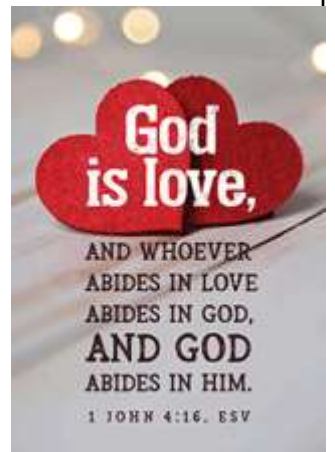


I was teaching a class in church recently and learned of a research project in the 70's. It was to see how diet affects heart health. Rabbits were the test subjects. It's interesting to find out that one group had significantly better health outcomes though fed the same high fatty foods in the same quantities. After much confusion and repeating the experiment, it was determined that the difference was the handler, one kind woman who talked to the rabbits, pet them, and showed them love as she fed them. This study has continued to influence scientists today. Dr. Kelli Harding published a book titled *The Rabbit Effect*. This research shows the effect that love, and touch has on other's health.

I love it when science and religion go hand in hand. In Matthew 22:36-39 we read that Christ was asked, "Master, which is the great commandment?" to which He replied, "Love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart," then added "the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

During the recent pandemic, political commotion and general turmoil, so much hate and distrust has existed for neighbor against neighbor, even family members have argued and turned from each other. The scriptures also talk about that as the days draw closer to the second coming of the Lord, that "all things shall be in commotion; and men's hearts shall fail them". We can conclude from this study, as we treat others with hate, malice, contempt or any type of distrust, their health is jeopardized, and their hearts surely can fail them. The very fact that people tend to be more at odds one with another, is fulfillment of this scripture, surely our hearts are failing if we do not have the God given love for our fellow beings, our brothers and sisters in Christ. However, when we treat others with love, and kindness their health can improve, even if they do not have the healthiest lifestyles.

We are commanded to be loving, kind, inclusive to all those around us. As we do this, we can be saviors of a sort to those we encounter and socialize. As we follow Christ's example and listen to His commands, we also will find the world around us to be a happier, brighter, and much friendlier place. We are all God's children. He loves us all the same. He is not a respecter of one person over another. He wants us all to return home to Him. As followers of Christ, we can and should be the leaders and help the world to come together. ~ *Sherolyn*



The PNC Update - The PNC is continuing discussion with the candidate that we last interviewed in June. We have encountered some communication issues that have hindered our continued dialog. We know that the candidate is talking with three other churches as well, so the competition is on!

Additionally, our account executive at Vanderbloemen is in the process of vetting 3 or 4 promising candidates for the PNC to look at as well. We welcome all this activity and are encouraged that we may be getting closer to identifying the next pastor for our church.

I am sending him to you for the express purpose that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts. Colossians 4:8

Your continued prayers and your encouragement are truly cherished as we continue with this important work. We constantly seek God's will and guidance as we labor to complete the task entrusted to us.

In His saving grace,

Don Cherry, PNC Chairman

AUGUST

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship 6:00 pm NA	2 6:00 pm NA	3 12:00 PM NA	4 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	5 8:00 pm - AA	6 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	7  Memorial SERVICE
8 - Communion 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship 6:00 pm NA	9 6:00 pm NA	10 12:00 PM NA	11 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	12 8:00 pm - AA	13 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	14
15 - 5 Cents a Meal collection 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship	16 	17 12:00 PM NA 6:00pm Deacons 7:00pm Elders	18 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	19 8:00 pm - AA	20 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	21
22 - 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship 6:00 pm NA	23  6:00 pm NA	24 12:00 PM NA	25 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	26 8:00 - AA	27 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	28
29 10:00 - Sunday School 11:00 am—Worship 6:00 pm NA	30 6:00 pm NA	31 12:00 PM NA	September 1 12:00 PM AA 6:00 pm NA 6:00 pm—Choir	September 2 8:00 pm - AA	September 3 12:00 PM AA 7:00 pm NA	September 4

AUGUST



- 2 Meredith Howell
- 4 Donnell Corelle
- 6 Joan Owens
- 7 Ann Crabtree
- 10 Jim Luedtke
- 10 Drew Morgan
- 14 Barbara Johnston
- 15 Lisa Howell
- 17 Wilma Hendley*
- 19 Syla Hendley
- 20 Ronnie Crabtree

- 23 Wayne Roller
- 25 Dan Koutsos
- 29 Sally Slaff
- 29 Marge Nelson
- 30 Debbie Burton*
- 31 Polly Ratcliff*



* In Memory



If we don't have your birthday listed, please call the office and let us know.

From the Elders

Session Notes: **Since our last Newsletter, our Session discussed:**

The Session met on Tuesday, July 20, 2021.

1. Rev. Coleman updated the Session on congregational news.
2. The minutes of the June 15th, Session meeting were read and approved as written by the Session.
3. The Peaks Presbytery Committee on Ministry has approved our Interim Pastor contract renewal.
4. The PNC is attempting to continue dialog with the last candidate that was interviewed. The lack of response to our communications is disappointing.
5. Membership Roll – Chastain Frederick (Freddy) Collins passed away on July 9, 2021.
6. Next communion will be Sunday, August 8, 2021 (moved from August 1 due to Rev. Coleman being away).
7. Work continues on developing the Church Operations & Policy Manual.
8. There was discussion about planning fellowship events and meals.
9. Rally Day will be Sunday, September 12th.
10. First six months financial reports were reviewed. Giving is down, we are over \$12,000 behind year-to-date vs the 2021 budget.
11. Rev. Coleman has requested time off, July 30 – Aug.1, and Sep. 8-15



Upcoming :

Choir - Each Wednesday at 6 pm.

Deacons - Tuesday, August 17 at 6:00 pm

Session - Tuesday, August 17 at 7:00 pm

First Presbyterian Church
800 North Main Street
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