

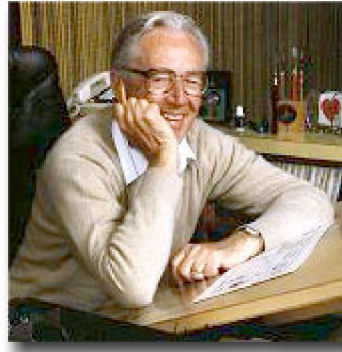
NewsBrief

♥For the members and friends of the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford ♥

May, 2004

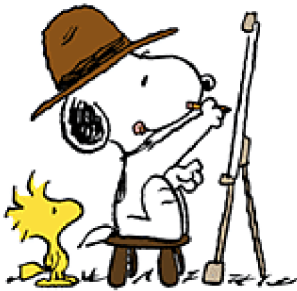
From the Pastor's Pen-Cell

"We're as wet as the fish!" So says Woodstock as he Schulz Peanuts Collection April Mug. Pictures on the side show Snoopy and Woodstock fishing off a small pier in the is one of a collection of 12 mugs that are in my possession month of the year. I haven't as yet gotten out the May is a reminder that April's showers will bring May's flowers. month of April I also obtained a stuffed Snoopy with a suit. He is the Easter Beagle and now joins the puppet office.



appears on my of the mug pouring rain. It – one for each Mug, but April's During the bunny eared collection in the

Snoopy has actually helped me understand the world. He says:



A watched supper dish never fills.
Not knowing how to purr is a great handicap.
A kiss on the nose does much to turn away anger.
Never retrieve a dirty tennis ball before breakfast.
It's impossible to eat dog food when your stomach is all set for Shrimp Louie.
There is no sense in doing a lot of barking if you don't really have anything to say. (This is a very helpful thought for we preacher types who tend to act like sheepdogs who bark at the sheep about once per week.)

I'm rather glad that the *Democrat and Chronicle* continues to rerun the strip, Peanuts. It was a sad day when Charles M. Schulz, the cartoon's creator entered the church triumphant when he died in his sleep on February 12, 2000. His final Sunday strip appeared on February 13, the following day. His health had been poor and he had actually retired in 1999. If you do a little research on some websites you can discover that there is now a Museum completely devoted to the work of Charles Schulz. They will tell you about the syndication of his comic strip, *Peanuts*, in 1950. The syndicate paid Schulz \$90 for his first month of cartoons. The Museum's biography details hundreds of awards that Charles received.

In the 1960s, there were books explaining the cartoon as a religious parable, such as the best selling *The Gospel According to Peanuts* and *Parables of Peanuts* written by Robert L. Short, a Presbyterian clergyman. Short wrote that Schulz, an active church member, "did not want to offend" readers with expressions of his faith. Nonetheless, there are thousands of faith concepts that have come through his drawings. I've gotten my hands on Short's books and a number of others and am contemplating a series of sermons that reflect on the scriptural allusions of Charlie Brown, Snoopy and the gang this fall.

There will be lots to do during the month of May. Grass mowing begins again in earnest. Winter grime is washed away from windows and the planting of flowers becomes a part of our spring ritual. We celebrate our Mothers early in the month and the birthday of the church at the end on Pentecost (May 30). You will want to remember to wear RED that day, the official color of Pentecost. We confirm the 8th grade confirmation class and remember those who have served our country during worship that day. But we suppose that some things could become lost . . . like the celebration of Ascension (a major holiday in much of the world).

It's hard not to forget some of the important things. There is so much to crowd it out . . . all good, mind you, but crowding nonetheless. May God give us the wisdom to distinguish the important things from the loud ones. In the meantime, don't forget to enjoy daffodil meadow in Powder Mill Park, the infilling of water in the Erie Canal, and magnificent displays of nature that God is eager to share. And if you are walking along and your mind needs some additional meandering, then you might think a little about Charles M. Schulz's philosophy:

I love mankind . . . it's people I can't stand.

Linus van Pelt in Charles M. Schulz, *Go Fly A Kite, Charlie Brown* ("Peanuts," 1960)

Sometimes I lie awake at night, and I ask, "Where have I gone wrong?" Then a voice says to me, "This is going to take more than one night."

Charlie Brown in Charles M. Schulz, "Peanuts"

My life has no purpose, no direction, no aim, no meaning, and yet I'm happy. I can't figure it out. What am I doing right?

Charlie Brown

Try not to have a good time. This is supposed to be educational.

Lucy

No problem is so big or so complicated that it can't be run away from!

Linus van Pelt in Charles M. Schulz, *You Can Do It, Charlie Brown* ("Peanuts," 1963)

The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money, or the most awards. They are the ones who care. And don't worry about the world coming to an end today. It is already tomorrow in Australia.

Charles M. Schulz – himself

Bruce



**Prayerfully
Pondering**

Belief...

What do you

believe?

On Pentecost Sunday, May 30th, twenty-two confirmands will stand before the congregation and affirm what they believe. On Sunday, May 16th the Session will dialogue with them about their confirmation experience after having read the faith statements they prepared. These faith statements are their creative expression of what each confirmand believes concerning God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the church, sin and forgiveness, the sacraments, and the confirmands' mission in the world. One Session member jokingly said last year that our young people know more about what they believe than most adults do.

The confirmands will have completed a rigorous two-year experience. They will have engaged their faith through an overview of the Bible and what Presbyterians believe in Sunday School, shadowed an Elder or Deacon in the Sunday morning worship responsibilities, completed five hours of mission work, attended a church board meeting, memorized the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, served at our annual Christmas Ham Supper, learned teambuilding skills at an overnight retreat, met monthly as a class with each individual's mentors, and worshiped in several different faith communities to compare and contrast that experience with our own. All this preparation and struggling is helpful in each confirmand's formulating a faith statement.

The Presbyterian Church USA has a long history of faith statements. Eleven of these have been collected in our Book of Confessions. These confessions, coupled with our Book of Order, make up our constitution. The first two of these eleven confessions are the Nicene and Apostles' Creed and begin with the words, "We/I believe...". The word creed is based upon the Latin word *credo* meaning belief.

Why do we need eleven different confessions? According to the Book of Confession's preface, the eleven "contain a cross-section of ecumenical and Reformed confessions with wide geographical and historical representation."¹ The Nicene and Apostles'

¹ *The Book of Confessions*. Presbyterian Church (USA). (Louisville, 2003) xxi. The eleven are: Nicene Creed, Apostles' Creed, Scots Confession, Heidelberg Catechism, Second Helvetic Confession, Westminster Statement of Faith, Shorter Westminster Catechism, Longer Westminster Catechism, Barmen Declaration, Confession of 1967 and the Brief Statement of Faith.

Creeds are from the ancient church. The Scots Confession of 1560 was written mostly by John Knox, student of John Calvin and father of English-speaking Reformed Christianity. The German Heidelberg Catechism (1563) and the Swiss Second Helvetic Confession (1566) are accepted worldwide among Reformed Christians. The British Westminster Confession and Catechisms (1647) continue to be the primary standard for the Presbyterian branch of the Reformed tradition. The Barmen Declaration (1933) was written primarily as an ecumenical response to Nazi oppression. The Confession of 1967 addresses critical issues of faithfulness in our time and place. A Brief Statement of Faith (1983), written on the occasion of the reunification of the northern and southern branches of the Presbyterian Church, emphasizes our common bond in Jesus Christ and promotes inclusiveness in "witness[ing] among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior."²

Not surprisingly, these varied documents contain contradictions. My favorite examples are chapter 25 of the Scots Confession and chapter 20 of the Second Helvetic Confession reflecting the sixteenth century view that women should not be able to preach or administer the sacraments. Contemporary confessions do not express this view, and our Book of Order precludes it.

Before new members are admitted by a vote of the Session, each class has an opportunity to review the last of these modern confessions, the Brief Statement of Faith. While not exhaustive, it is a marvelous overview of our faith in the triune God. In fact, by placing the emphasis upon Christ's life and ministry, it helps reframe that which we are confessing. Christians confess not *what*, but *in whom* we believe.

I invite you to welcome the newest members (both our confirmands and New Members recognized on May 2nd) of our congregation, celebrate Pentecost with the church universal, and avail yourself of all possible venues to help yourself determine what (or in whom) you believe.

Blessings, Carrie



² Ibid. 10.4.

Week of May 2 – Acts 9:36-43; Ps. 23; Rev. 7:9-17
John 10:22-30

Week of May 9 – Acts 11:1-18; Ps. 148;
Rev. 21:1-6; John 13:31-35

Week of May 16 – Acts 16:9-15; Ps. 67; Rev. 21:10,
21:22-22:5; John 14:23-39 or
John 5:1-9

Week of May 23 – Acts 16:16-34; Ps. 97
Rev. 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21;
John 17:20-26

Week of May 30 – Acts 2:1-21 or Gen. 11:1-9;
Ps. 104:24-34, 35b; Ro. 8:14-17 or
Acts 2:1-21; John 14:8-17 (25-27)

These are the lectionary texts for the month of May. These are just one of the venues by which you can help yourself determine in whom you believe. We welcome you to study in advance of their being incorporated into the Sunday worship services. Join us for Bible Study on Wednesdays at 9:30 AM and again at 7:00 PM to discuss the upcoming Sunday's texts.



Notes from James

Thank you to all involved in the music for the Lenten and Easter Season! All of our ensembles contributed to a marvelous musical celebration. I appreciate all of the individual efforts that were contributed to this challenge! Though the summer is fast approaching, we still have a full calendar of activities in our music ministry.

On Sunday, May 9, at 4:00, in our sanctuary, the Bloomsburg Chamber Singers will present a concert featuring a variety of choral and solo literature. The Bloomsburg University Chamber Singers, established in 1964, is a select group of 16 students and accompanist who perform extensively at the university and in the NE Pennsylvania area. Any student on campus may audition to join this select group, and a variety of academic majors are represented in the choir. The group's repertoire includes sacred and secular, and classical and popular music ranging from Renaissance period to present Contemporary/Vocal Jazz idioms. The Chamber Singers have performed in tours of Japan, Canada, England and Scotland, as well as performing concerts in Philadelphia, New York City, and three tour programs in Williamsburg, Virginia. This year marks the 40th anniversary year for the group. Dr. Wendy Miller, a faculty member from the Bloomsburg University Department of Music, directs the group. The concert is free to the public and all are invited to

attend. After a Mother's Day lunch, perhaps, you would want to treat your family to a concert full of musical variety.

On Sunday, June 13, in the 10:00 worship hour, the Chancel Choir will present a missa brevis of Haydn, "The Little Organ Mass". This is a short (twenty minute) choral work featuring an organ and soprano soloist. We are renting a portative organ that will be played by our organist, Sanghwa Lee, and the soprano soloist will be Roxanne Skuse from our Chancel Choir. Additionally, the work includes parts for string instruments. We hope this will make a worshipful contribution to one of our last worship services before we begin the summer schedule.

Finally, if you have not submitted your Musical Inventory Form, please do so. I would like to have all of these forms gathered by May 1, so that we can plan for the summer services as well as the coming year. You may give your forms to me, place them in my box in the office, or simply put them on the piano in the choir room. So far, we have quite a variety of instruments and I'm looking forward to coming up with some creative ways to utilize our member musicians.

Hope to see you at the Chamber Singers concert on May 9 at 4:00 pm.

First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford

21 Church Street
presents

A Choral Concert
by

The Bloomsburg University Chamber Singers

The Bloomsburg University Chamber Singers, established in 1964, is a select group of 16 students who perform extensively at the university and in the NE Pennsylvania area. The group's repertoire includes sacred and secular, and classical and popular music ranging from Renaissance period to present Contemporary/Vocal Jazz idioms. The Chamber Singers have performed in tours of Japan, Canada, England and Scotland, as well as performing concerts in Philadelphia, New York City, and three tour programs in Williamsburg, Virginia. This year marks the 40th anniversary year for the group. Dr. Wendy Miller, Associate Professor of Music, Bloomsburg University directs the group.

Sunday, May 9, at 4:00 P.M.
In the Sanctuary

The concert is free and open to the public.

JOYFUL NOISE BELLS TO PLAY AT SHORTSVILLE FESTIVAL

from Sharon Peet

Joyful Noise Bells will be participating in the 2nd Annual Bell festival in Shortsville, New York on Sunday, April 25 at 3:00 p.m. The festival will be held at the First Presbyterian Church of Shortsville, 59 West Main Street, Shortsville, NY.

We will be playing two pieces, "Thy Word" and "When Morning Guilds the Skies" and joining in a mass ensemble with the other bell choirs in playing "Amazing Grace" and "Medley of all Seasons", arranged by Jack Bullock. Mr. Bullock was a well-respected Band Director at Canandaigua Academy during the 1960's.

Come support your bell choir on April 25.

OPTIMISTS' next meeting will be held on Friday, May 7 at 6:15 PM in the Fellowship hall. Our program will be "A Guide to Car Hiking the Appalachian Trail" – a talk and slides presented by Jim and Dancy Duffuf.

We welcome all visitors and newcomers -- singles and couples 50 and over in age, who enjoy potluck suppers, interesting programs and good fellowship. For more information, please call Sue Suter at 381-5297.

Stewardship Corner from the Stewardship Commission

"The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love." Galatians 5:6.

Rick Warren in his book *The Purpose Driven Life*, talks about time being the best expression of love. Our time and attention is what our family and friends most desire from us. Our time and attention is also needed for Christ's church. Have you thought about the stewardship of your time? To quote Dr. Warren: "The best use of life is love. The best expression of love is time. The best time to love is now." Are you using your time wisely to show your love?

Did you know that AIDS claims a life every 8 seconds? Oscar-nominee documentary filmmaker Robert Bilheimer compassionately asks what history will remember as our part in this disease. Join us for this important event and discussion Tuesday, May 4 between 7:30 and 9:00 PM in the Youth Forum room. Questions? Please contact Carrie Mitchell (586-5688 x32) or Lee Fox (385-5996).



STEPHEN MINISTRIES AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Over the next few weeks we will be telling you a little about the Stephen Ministry Program. There are Stephen

Ministers at First Presbyterian Church who are trained listeners. A phone call to Rev. Boak or Rev. Mitchell will put you in touch with one of these special helpers when you face the burdens of stress pressure, loneliness, recovery, grief, emptiness, and the pile-up of every day living. (585) 586-5688

This week we tell you about the Core Values of Stephen Ministry:

- Solid Biblical, Christ-centered theology
 - Sound practical psychology
 - Equipping God's people
 - Relational Ministry
 - Transdenominational
 - Excellence
 - Stability and dependability
-

WEB CLUB NEWS

Wednesday Evening Book Club
Discussion begins at 7:30 PM

May 19 – "Year of Wonders" by Geraldine Brooks. The book describes the 17th-century plague that is carried from London to a small Derbyshire village by an itinerant tailor. As villagers begin, one by one, to die, the rest face a choice: do they flee their village in hope of outrunning the plague or do they stay?

Home of Karin McNamara, 67 Stuyvesant Road

June 16 – "Pompeii" by Robert Harris. In this fine historical by British novelist Harris (Archangel; Enigma; Fatherland), an upstanding Roman engineer rushes to repair an aqueduct in the shadow of Mount Vesuvius, which, in A.D. 79, is getting ready to blow its top.

Home of Dianne Brown, 40 Copper Woods.

AMIGOS, come join us for a Deacon Fellowship Fiesta! A Cinco de Mayo Festival for all ages is planned for May 15 in Fellowship Hall starting at 6:30 PM. Crafts, games, piñatas, food, music and dancing instruction await all who attend. Learn traditional Mexican dances such as La Zapatuya, La Raspa and La Cucaracha from a Salsa instructor. Cost is \$2 per person, \$5 max per family. Sign-ups and information will be in Fellowship Hall after the 10:00 AM services on April 26 and May 2. Olé!

& ...Christian Education Committee News

As of the March C. E. Meeting, we are pleased to announce a full complement of Christian Education Committee members. We are excited to introduce to you: Ron Pollock, George Alger (Session Representative), Laura Frank (co-chairperson), Renee Shaffer (co-chairperson), Greg Connors (Session Representative), Bill Gavett (Session elder), Louise Thompson (curriculum development, pageant coordinator), Madge Herge (committee secretary and nursery coordinator), Claudia Williams and a rotating LOGOS representative. In addition, Trudy Dublin has agreed to represent C.E. at PCNS Board meetings with Sylvia Fix as a back up alternative. This committee meets on the first Tuesday of each month in the Sr. High Forum Room and has staff participation from Theresa Zatyko, (Parent Cooperative Nursery School Coordinator), Dan Kulp and Debbie Krouskop. (Youth ministries), and Sandy Pacyga (Lay-Minister for Christian Ed.).

At the present time, this committee has as its priority, the promotion of "life-long" learning and has as its program components, Adult Education, Youth Programming, Confirmation Preparation, Year round Sunday Church School, LOGOS, and Nursery.

The committee will be working toward a clearer focus in the next few months and among other things intends to set up task forces to get various annual tasks done. The people who will be needed to do these one time, short-term annual tasks will not have to meet with the monthly committee and may be welcomed as one-time helpers to get programs to happen. Please consider our real need for people to give us a hand even if they do not wish to be a part of the monthly C.E. committee meetings. Often, our needs are small tasks that can be done at home. Each member of the C. E. committee will be responsible for these annual tasks and will organize the ad hoc task groups necessary to get these jobs done. We are excited about the clarification of these tasks and the potential simplicity of 'many hands making light work' of the ministry of education within First Pres. Please don't wait to be asked—jump right in.

PCNS has agreed to new dismissal routes for children, which will maintain the children's safety and get them out of the building without going past the Sanctuary. They are still seeking some 2004-05 registrations and encourage any of our young families and/or new members to consider PCNS for their pre-school choice.

Youth Ministry reported about 40 participants at the last Coffee House and a good time had by all. They now have a new system in place for identifying teens on sight and off sight in order to keep safety as a first priority. A volunteer group of adults is helping

Debbie and Dan with detail work for programming, but Dan still feels the need for an Advisory Board. The youth have participated in an off sight concert and Debbie has begun a small discussion group which she will meet with regularly on Wednesdays in her office.

LOGOS 2003-04 ended on a very positive note as reported by Matt Wahl. The closing dinner was packed to the ceilings. Everyone enjoyed a Power Point presentation of photos taken throughout the year, the kitchen crew who did such a fabulous job was honored and we want to extend a 'hu-mon-gous' and heartfelt THANK YOU to all the volunteers that make LOGOS possible. There will be a LOGOS Training offered in May in Canandaigua and several of our LOGOS people will be attending to equip ourselves so that we can continue to keep our 12 year tradition strong.

(respectfully submitted by Sandy Pacyga)

SUMMER CHURCH SCHOOL

Going out of town this summer?

Yey!!!

I pray for rest and relaxation and time away from the stress of our busy lives for us all.

And that is why **WE NEED YOU !!!** We need four adults, (different ones Each Sunday) to show our children just how important they are in our parish life **AND**, just how important it is to you to honor God once each week and to witness that faith to the youngest disciples of our congregation.

This summer children's ministry needs **two adults in the nursery** for infants and toddlers to 4yrs. old. Beginning at 9:45 AM, we provide loving care in a safe environment so that parents can worship clear of mind while our wee ones can experience the love of Christian community.

And, we need **two adults**, one to help **Kindergarten thru 2nd Graders** and one to help **3rd thru 5th graders** to learn more about Jesus Christ in the lives of the adults around them, and have fun.

Choose just one or two Sunday mornings, when you can help for just one hour. Mark your calendars and call Sandy who will prepare your class and provide what you will need. (586-5688 ext. 30) **Summer Sundays 2004:** 6/27; 7/4; 7/11; 7/18; 7/25; 8/1; 8/8; 8/15; 8/22; 8/29 and 9/5!!!

Watch for sign-up in Fellowship Hall !!!

