

# NewsBrief

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

## October, 2003

### From the Pastor's Pen-Cell

Is it true? Will First Presbyterian Church receive a \$62,000 grant? Well, we'll get to that before this article closes, but we've a full month to review first.

October 2003 is a big month at First Presbyterian Church. Dr. Charles Kimball will be with us over the last weekend of the month. He will help us think about the subject "When Religion Becomes Evil." Perhaps you have seen Dr. Kimball quoted in *Time* and *Newsweek* or *The New York Times* over the past several weeks. When he is here we will celebrate the Reformation. Remember to don your tartan for the Scots and Knox part of our heritage on the 28<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Richard Streeter will be introduced to our congregation on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Dick is our Consecration Sunday speaker in November. He pioneered the Paoli Presbyterian Church to set a benevolence budget of over \$650,000. During the second weekend of the month the Optimists will hold their first meeting of the year and in the First Week of the month the Penny Pincher Sale will amaze us. That week we will Celebrate World Communion and have a special opportunity to learn about Peacemaking Presbyterians. First Presbyterian Church is rolling.

I feel like the chief who once said, "Which way did they go? How many of them were there? What did they do? I am their leader, I must catch up with them." I am still back polishing off September. Remember September? It was then that our remainder of our mission team to Mozambique arrived home safely after having constructed and dedicated a church in Pembe. That was the month that got LOGOS moving again, Sunday School, Junior High and Senior High Fellowships moved into high gear and confirmation commissioning got under way. It was a month that launched couples into marriage.

June used to be the big month for weddings, but now the order for the month with the most weddings seems to be September followed by October, then May and fourthly June. I even got the opportunity to drive one bride and groom in Doug Drake's 1946 Dodge. Now there is a leap of faith . . . Doug permitting me to steer one of his wonderful restored antiques. I told folks on Monroe Avenue that if they didn't like the way I drove, they should stay off the sidewalk.

As we ease into October, our Stewardship Commission will be encouraging us to faithfulness and will be providing a new challenge. Over the summer a number of members have been exploring how to provide the resources to maintain our historic building. A Capital Fund Drive has been seen as the tool to accomplish this. Now this approach is being moved off the drawing board as we ask ourselves, "Should we hold a special fund drive to supplant what we could do as a part of our regular stewardship?" At the moment our answer has been a hesitant, "No."

The facts as we best understand them are these. We need to be spending between \$50,000 - \$75,000 per year on the maintenance of our property. We have been spending between \$8,000 - \$10,000 per year and doing a pretty good job. Eventually the deferred maintenance has to be done. We do have a \$62,000 matching grant to help us with the bell tower and some of the brickwork on our building. We don't have the \$62,000 sitting in a fund to match the grant. We do have a line of credit from which we can draw funds to match the grant. We did borrow over \$60,000 from ourselves to do work on the steeple when a \$20,000 steeple repair became \$120,000. We haven't yet repaid this loan to ourselves. We do need to replace our stove, lift drains, and restore our stained glass windows (at an eventual cost of about \$100,000). We want to do a better job in mission. Rather than hold a capital campaign for all of this, we believe that it would be more prudent for us to challenge ourselves to increase our regular stewardship than to hold a special fund drive. Whereas a fund drive would have us seeking between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 of additional support over three years, we believe that challenging ourselves to increase our total budget about \$100,000 per year will accomplish what is needed more effectively and efficiently. Just thinking about all of this makes October a big month, doesn't it?

(Mark 10:27) Jesus looked at them and said, "For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God all things are possible."

(Luke 1:37) For nothing will be impossible with God." Bruce

**Prayerfully Pondering Embracing All the Seasons of Life...**

Have you noticed the leaves are beginning to change and the air has grown cooler as the kids wait at the bus stop or we collect our morning paper? No matter how much we accomplished or experienced this summer, time inexorably marches on and the seasons change. Baseball season is about to reach its climax and give way to football season. Fall plays are in rehearsal, and many homecoming games and dances were recently celebrated. Lake houses and mountain retreats are being shut up and we are returning to a fall schedule of activities. To quote a television poet, "Like sands through an hourglass, these are the days of our lives." Yes, time turns.

Nothing more poignantly reminded me of that than Grammy's death on August 25<sup>th</sup>. My family and I knew that someday she would leave us, but until the very moment that she ceased breathing, I did not know how badly it would hurt. C.S. Lewis writes in his raw memoir of his wife's death, "No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear." Fear of being alone, fear of doing without the love of the departed, fear of living our own lives – all these fears are real and painful.

Just a few days after Grammy's death, I held a day-old preemie baby weighing a bit more than five pounds. Her rosebud lips puckered slightly and her eyes were shut tightly against the light in the room. I was struck by the remarkable resemblance her small and fragile face bore Grammy's as she too slept so soundly. God marvelously created both these beings, as each of us was knit together in our mother's wombs, and gave them a life worth living to its fullest and most free expression of love.

Sometimes, we just do not seem to understand God's intention for our lives. How come we face such frustration, stupidity, anger and pain in both our immediate situations, the failing economy around us, or in our global examples of war-torn strife? Where is the loving God in the face of so much misery? This same God is at work in birthing us and moving us through all the stages of our lives – even our deaths. For those of us who are cleaning out our gardens this time of year, remember that the old foliage must die for the bulbs to be quickened again in the spring.

Being human, we do a masterful job of rationalizing our fears of death. We create elaborate schemes by which to beat it. Plastic surgery is just the more recent manifestation. Think about Halloween. On the eve before All Saints Day, we try to scare away the spirits of death.

Along with a small package of M&M candies, I was once given this meditation:  
 Red is for the blood you shed,  
 Brown is for the sins, which fled,  
 Orange is for the edge of night,  
 Yellow is for the sun so bright,  
 Blue is for your hours of sorrow  
 Green is for our new tomorrow.

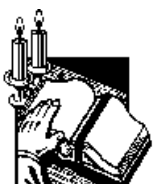
Just as God created all the colors of the rainbow (and scientists who created all the food dyes for M&Ms), God also Promises us that all the seasons of our lives are precious in god's sight. God gave us Christ to demonstrate how deep that love is. Just as your cards, calls, and kindnesses have helped me bear the loss of Grammy, God 's companionship in Christ makes it easier for us to bear all the days of our lives. May you find hope daily in God's promises, the turning of the seasons, and the camaraderie you share with others devoted to sharing God's Good News. *Carrie*



Reading the bible reminds us how God honors all the seasons of our life. Most of our readings in the Old Testament during October are in Jeremiah. The prophet artfully intermingles god's justice and hope. Prophetic writings can be difficult to follow because they are not chronologically correct narratives. In the New Testament, we read primarily from the fourth gospel, John. Instead of focusing primarily on the narratives of the life of Jesus, John probes the meaning of the life of Jesus and gives us the wonderful "I am" statements. May you delight in your opening of the mystery this month.

<b>OCTOBER</b>	
1. Isa. 61, 62/Heb. 12	17. Jer. 27, 28/John 11
2. Isa. 63, 64/Heb. 13	18. Jer. 29-31/Ps. 119:1-24
3. Isa. 65, 66/John 1	19. Jer. 32, 33/John 12
4. Jer. 1, 2/Ps. 112, 113	20. Jer. 34, 35/John 13
5. Jer. 3, 4/John 2	21. Jer. 36, 37/Ps. 119:25-48
6. Jer. 5, 6/John 3	22. Jer. 38, 39/John 14
7. Jer. 7, 8/Ps. 114, 115	23. Jer. 40, 41/John 15
8. Jer. 9, 10/John 4	24. Jer. 42, 43/John 16
9. Jer. 11, 12/John 5	25. Jer. 44-46/Ps. 119:49-72
10. Jer. 13, 14/John 6	26. Jer. 47, 48/John 17
11. Jer. 15, 16/Ps. 116	27. Jer. 49, 50/John 18
12. Jer. 17, 18/John 7	28. Jer. 51, 52/Ps. 119:73-96
13. Jer. 19, 20/John 8	29. Lam. 1, 2/John 19
14. Jer. 21, 22/Ps. 117, 118	30. Lam. 3-5/John 20
15. Jer. 23, 24/John 9	31. Ezek. 1/John 21
16. Jer. 25, 26/John 10	

**Attention All You Lifelong Learners! (yes, that means you!)**  
 First, we have resumed Wednesday



Bible Study at 9:30 AM and again at 7:00 PM with the lectionary cycle of readings being the focus of our study. Participating in the study will help make the worship service be more meaningful as we will jointly look at the passages from which the service will be based. Bruce Boak, Sandy Pacyga and Carrie Mitchell will share the attached rotating schedule. Join us for one or many in Room 201. And bring a friend.

Second, we will be offering a Forum most Sundays of the fall during which recipients of our Outreach funds will describe the ministries in which they are engaged. Come and learn how our dollars make a difference and how we can become even more involved. Planned dates are October 5, 12, 19; and November 16 and 23. Watch the Sunday bulletin for specifics.

Finally, we are enthused to bring a Spiritual Renewal Weekend to the congregation. The Session has decided to foster our spiritual growth through a Spiritual Renewal Weekend to be held January 22-25, 2004. This wonderful series of worship, educational, and fellowship opportunities will celebrate Christ and encourage us to make deeper commitments to God. Wherever we are in our spiritual journey, God will meet us. There is already a strong prayer team praying for this effort. If you feel called to help bring this Spiritual Renewal Weekend to fruition, please contact Dave Jenks, Jack Holzwarth, Carrie Mitchell or Sandy Pacyga. We anticipate the Renewal Weekend lighting a spiritual fire to warm us for seasons to come!

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**Wednesday Bible Study Teacher Schedule:**

9/24	Carrie Mitchell	2/11	Carrie Mitchell
10/1	Bruce Boak	2/25	Bruce Boak
10/8	Sandy Pacyga	3/3	Sandy Pacyga
10/15	Carrie Mitchell	3/10	Carrie Mitchell
10/22	Bruce Boak	3/17	Bruce Boak
10/29	Sandy Pacyga	3/24	Sandy Pacyga
11/5	Carrie Mitchell	3/31	Carrie Mitchell
11/12	Bruce Boak	4/7	Bruce Boak
11/19	Sandy Pacyga	4/14	Sandy Pacyga
12/3	Carrie Mitchell	4/21	Carrie Mitchell
1/7/04	Bruce Boak	4/28	Bruce Boak
1/14	Sandy Pacyga	5/5	Sandy Pacyga
1/21	Carrie Mitchell	5/12	Carrie Mitchell
1/28	Bruce Boak	5/19	Bruce Boak
2/4	Sandy Pacyga	5/26	Sandy Pacyga

**CONFIRMATION – COME CLAIM THE CREED!**

The Confirmation Class of 2003/2004 began last month with a joint parent/confirmand/mentor orientation night on Sunday, September 7, between 6:30 and 8:00 PM in Fellowship Hall. The mentors and confirmands will return to Fellowship Hall, Sunday, October 5 between 6:30 and 8:00 PM. We look forward to a marvelous journey as we discover what it means to follow Christ together.

**LOGOS**  
Sylvia Fix

This year at LOGOS we are “Opening Our Hearts”. Come join us.

Full LOGOS Program begins September 24. The time to register is now!

September 24 – Reunion  
 October 1 – Surprise Night  
 October 8 – Gifted – Time for showing off talent  
 October 15 – Colorful – Bundle of leaves  
 October 22 – Love – Bring a Church Chum or Buddy to LOGOS  
 October 29 – Giving – Reverse “Trick or Treat” with dress up.

Attention all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders!

Join us on Sunday, September 21<sup>st</sup> from 6:15-7:30 in Fellowship Hall for our first JYF of the new school year. Don't miss out on an incredible time of wacky games, crazy competitions, pizza and an all around great time. Friends are always welcome!  
 Please bring \$2 for the pizza.  
 Plus... It's build your own ice-cream sundae night!

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**JOYFUL NOISE TO PLAY AT FESTIVAL**  
from Sharon Peet

Joyful Noise Bells well be participating in a handbell festival on Sunday, October 26 at 3:00 PM at the Presbyterian Church in Shortsville, NY. Come support your youth bell choirs  
 Attention all Senior Highers!

Don't miss out on our first MTC of the new school year. Join us from 7:45-9:00pm on Sunday, September 21st in the Youth Forum room for a fantastic time of fun, food, friends and fellowship.

Plus... It's free CD night. That's right! Every high school student that comes to our first MTC will receive a free CD. Friends are always welcome.

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### Parent Board Meeting

The next Parent Board Meeting will be held in Dan Kulp's office at 12:30pm on Tuesday afternoon, September 30<sup>th</sup>. You do not need to be a parent to belong to this crucial group of adults that provide valuable planning and input for the Director of Youth Ministries.

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Dear Friends,

I'm back! I'm also very excited about starting up the new school year with all of your kids. The two months on the road allowed me to meet and converse with youth leaders from all over the country and from several different denominations. If I learned one thing, it was this: If you really love kids, you will do anything to bring them to Christ.

I hope you will join with me in this effort. Like many of the youth directors and pastors that I performed for, you may not have a lot of resources, help or even profound biblical insight, but if you love Jesus Christ and love children, they will be impacted.

This new school year will bring us our usual load of crazy youth meetings, parties, competitions, overnights, trips, concerts and much, much more. Make no mistake, however, all of these events are a big excuse to share the Gospel with young people.

Which opportunities will be available to you? Dinnertime with the whole family? A family vacation? A sporting event? Discussing a show that you watch together on TV? Other more uncomfortable opportunities could be what you say no to. The movies you won't allow them to see. The friends that you will not let them hang out with. The clothes you tell them they cannot wear. The language that is not allowed in your home. You may get more mileage out of these touchy topics if you make it clear that these are things you will not allow because you love Jesus Christ and certain behaviors hurt the God that loves them so much.

Another opportunity to be a witness to our teens also includes our own behavior. One thing that confuses some of our teenagers is seeing their parents behave one way at Church and then another at home. Or, treating their own spouse with a lack of love and respect. Nothing burns a kid more than hypocritical adults. Be sure to let them experience Christ by witnessing you being sold out for God and walking the walk; not just talking the talk. An unselfish parent can have an eternal impact on their child.

Real, passionate, and unselfish love for teenagers can only come from passionate love for Jesus Christ. I look forward to your participation in this effort with me. God bless you and your family.

In Christ,

Ephesians 6:4

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...*from Sandy's desk*

A sudden crisis...an unexpected tragedy, a test of fortitude, the bewilderment of those who must make immediate decisions, Look for information, make appropriate and meaningful arrangements; these phrases represent the kinds of situations we would all like to avoid. Most of us would prefer that our loved ones would not have to face these struggles on our behalf.

So very often when the unexpected, debilitating illness or loss of a loved one or family member happens, pastors and church staff find that there is no plan in place and no real information on which to base decisions.

Your attorney would advise you to have a legal document, a will. Your physician has probably encouraged you to fill out and have on record a "Health Care Proxy" and if it is your desire, a "Do Not Resuscitate" order. In this issue of our NEWSBRIEF, you will find a 2-page form that we encourage you to fill out and return to the church office. It will be kept on file, available only to pastoral staff.

I encourage you to read over the **Pastor's Information Form**, discuss it with your loved ones and friends. Fill it out and bring it to the office or mail it in. Keep a copy for your household records and rejoice in one job well done. This is a gift of peace of mind for you and your family that only you can provide. It will give you some confidence that you have not left decisions to others. And when you and yours work on these forms in family units you will find that it can be a reassuring and rich activity for you all. God Bless.

**A NEW MEMBER CLASS** is forming that is designed to welcome families and individuals in Christian fellowship, provide information about the Christian Faith, and to discover the uniqueness of our journey with Christ. These sessions are for people who are seeking church membership and for those who are just seeking. It is a time to explore and see if

this might be a good place for you to call your spiritual home. November 9, 4:30 PM, Room #200.

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**You are invited for afternoon tea – please help the ARC House by donating your time and your talents!**

The ARC house, owned by the church, will be getting a face-lift on the weekend of October 17, 18 and 19 and we need your help. Andrew Harrison is coordinating a fall clean-up which will include planting flower beds, raking leaves and painting both porches on the house. The work will be done by members of the church as well as the Boy Scouts and we need volunteers!!

Gardeners – if you are dividing hostas or other shade loving perennials, if you're moving bulbs or would just like to donate some, please call Andrew at 248-9386.

Workers (painters & gardeners) – if you can donate some time, there are work shifts on Friday evening, all day Saturday and on Sunday after church, please call 248-9386 to schedule a few hours.

Tea servers & hostesses – if you would like to help serve afternoon tea to the workers and visitors on Sunday from 2:30 to 4:30, please call 248-9386.

Most important of all – please come and meet your neighbors living in the ARC house.

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**OPTIMISTS** – Because the Penny Pincher Sales involves the first Friday in October, our first fall meeting will be held the second Friday, October 10 at 6:15 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Our program will be presented by Matt Wahl – a member of our church and owner with his wife, of Forsythe Jewelers. His talk will be on gems.

**OPTIMISTS** are an enthusiastic mixture of singles and couples, 50 years and older, who get together usually the first Friday of each month (October through December, and March through June) for a potluck supper, good fellowship, and an interesting program. We bring a dish to pass, our own table setting, and take turns with the kitchen chores. A fee of \$2.50 per person is charged for coffee, speakers, catered affairs, etc. We welcome all newcomers and visitors!!

If you are not already a member, but would like to attend or want further information, please call Sue Suter at 381-5297.

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**Stephen Ministry Corner**  
from Gregg Eldredge

Stephen Ministry is a 2 year obligation. It is a program with an intense 50 hour training program. It requires bi-weekly 2 1/2 hour meetings. It stresses confidentiality. It is caring for people of your own sex.

Sounds simple enough? Let me assure you that it is one of the most rewarding programs that we offer in this church. I took this course over 10 years ago because I wanted to learn to be a more astute listener in my profession as a Pediatrician. Did it work. WOW!!!

We all think we are good listeners, but a 50 hour course to learn how to be a better listener, why is that necessary?.

We all have had the ups and downs, not only our personal life, but with the lives of our parents, children, spouses, and close friends. We have dealt with each of the problems as they arose, sometimes successfully, and occasionally not well. But that is what life is all about.

How do we deal with our problems? With spousal support, parental advice, clergy consultation, and occasionally with psychological counseling.

How can Stephen Ministry help with life's problems, especially long term. It means meeting weekly, listening to the person's problems, and voicing not answers, but questions to make the care receiver aware of the alternatives. For many, this is the first time someone has sat and listened to them without criticism. Yet all that is said between the Stephen Minister and the care-receiver is confidential.

There is no greater satisfaction in life, than truly helping someone deal with their conflicts and catastrophes.

**DID YOU REALIZE THAT OUR CHURCH HAS ITS OWN WEBSITE?**

Check out [WWW.Pittsfordpres.org](http://WWW.Pittsfordpres.org). On this website, you can find up to date information on Church events, copies of the NewsBrief, photos from recent activities like our Strawberry Social as well as useful information on our staff and programs. Larry Cooper, a member of our congregation, has volunteered his time and talents to construct and maintain this website. If you are browsing on the web, take the time to check it out and thank Larry for his contributions!

**Worship/Music Committee (WMC) News**

from Allan Reeve

**The Worship/Music Committee (WMC)** is one of the committees of the Session and has two main functions.

The WMC is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that our worship and other services are as meaningful as possible, and that they are in compliance with the Book of Order and Session's instructions. The WMC also monitors the music programs of the Church, and with the Senior Pastor supervises the music director and music staff. As a part of these responsibilities the WMC administers the budget and any related restricted funds dedicated to worship and music.

The WMC makes recommendations to Session concerning the creation and scheduling of worship services, monitors and evaluates all aspects of worship services and recommends changes and corrections when appropriate.

As a point of information, according to the Book of Order the Pastors (and not Session), have the sole authority over the bible passages to be read, the content of the sermon and the hymns to be sung in each worship service. in order to have a cohesive service,.

It is the WMC which schedules Presiding Elders and Communion Servers each month.

The WMC is also responsible for the hiring of the Music Director and therefore, with Session approval, created a search committee which is currently deep in the process of finding a replacement for Cary Ratcliff.

The WMC is comprised of members of Session and members of the congregation, and meets monthly. The WMC is currently comprised of Allan Reeve (Chair), Bob Shone, Marty Tiemann, Ken Anderson, Margaret Mecredy and Florence Cufari. The Senior Pastor and Music Director are members ex officio.

Lastly, to be effective the WMC does its utmost to consider and implement suggestions of the membership. Therefore if you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of our worship services or the music program, please feel free to contact any of the members of the WMC.

#### **WEB CLUB NEWS**

Wednesday Evening Book Club

Join us at 7:30 PM

September 10 – **“Life with Pi”** by Yann Martel.

Home of Rosemary Sidor, 16 Charter Oaks

October 8 – **“Benjamin Franklin”** by Walter Isaacson.

Home of Mary Lou Koch, 65 Reitz Parkway

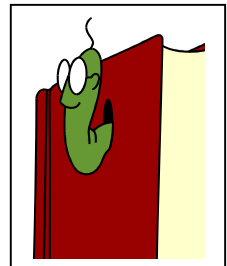
November 11 – **“Cold Mountain”**

Home of Anne Whitney, 5 Sunrise Hill

December 10 – **“Balzac and the Little Chinese Seamstress”** by Dai Sijie

January 14 – **“The DaVinci Code”** by Dan Brown

February 11 – **“My Invented Country”** by Elizabeth Allende



**THE NEXT NEWSBRIEF DEADLINE**, because the office will be closed on October 13 for Columbus Day, will be October 19.