

# First Presbyterian Church Newsletter

## "THE GRAPEVINE"

### August 2020



Congratulations, to the 2020 recipients of The Maxine Fairchild Memorial Fund Scholarship Award: **Echi Nwadike, Samuel Payne, & Connor Winkler!** Each was awarded \$750 for their continued education. We wish you success in all future endeavors, and hope you continue to follow your faith, and allow God to guide you as you begin the next chapter of life's journey!

#### HAPPY BIRTHDAY:

- 1- Hank Granados
- 17- Savannah Keith
- 19- Michael Dubie
- 21- Janet Corsaro
- 23- Mary Murphy
- 24- Jessica Pineda
- 25- Charlotte Hyun
- 26- David Lee
- 27- June Airington
- 30- Bonny McCreary

#### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY:

- 7- Greg & Bonny McCreary
- 8- Phillip & Elizabeth Dubie
- 18 - Bill & Daisy Hamilton

**Please welcome the newest members of FPCT:**  
**Shelley Abel, Robert Burnell Jr., Lynn Huggins, Manuel Juarez, Mitra Juarez, Dave Pickering, Sarai Asuncion Covarrubias Padilla**

#### TREASURER'S REPORT (July 2020)

##### GENERAL FUND

	<u>MONTHLY</u>	<u>TO DATE</u>	<u>BALANCE</u>
Bal. Fwd:		\$ 36,028.17	
Income	\$13,535.15	68,035.18	
Expenses	12,761.94	<u>83,054.81</u>	
Balance			\$21,008.54

##### Special Fund:

\$26,207.02

##### In/ Out Fund:

\$27,246.32

##### Memorial Fund:

Undesignated:	\$ 5,475.00	
Designated:	<u>12,319.80</u>	
Balance:		\$17,794.80

##### New Site Fund:

Balance:		\$ 850.16
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##### Synod Savings Account

Matching Challenge	\$ 49,356.70	
Youth Reserve	\$ 1,078.85	
Manse Fund	\$ 62.02	
Julia Sturtevant Fund	<u>\$ 26,886.43</u>	
Balance:		\$77,384.00

#### CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**Sun. August 9<sup>th</sup> Via Zoom** for the purpose of completing the Nominating Committee.

##### Computer or device:

<https://zoom.us/j/7372716366?pwd=RUJBRnNMR2tUWWdhOGMzOFZWS9WZz09>

**Phone dial in:** call 669-900 9128, enter meeting code 737-271-6366 when prompted, enter passcode 209-232-5310 when prompted.

## "PD'S PICKINGS"

...and our saga continues! If you've been struggling lately, you're in good company. Maybe you have a shorter temper, or maybe you're more withdrawn, maybe unmotivated, or maybe over-busy trying to fill the day with distractions; maybe overwhelmed by family in close quarters, or maybe lonely; maybe depressed, anxious, or both, or just numb; maybe feeling resigned, or maybe impatient. We're all enduring some degree of house arrest these days, and although the severity of our restrictions has ebbed and flowed, things have not resolved, and we have no clear end in sight. What will happen come school time? Will work ever return to "normal"? When will we be able to gather again for worship in person? When can I hug my grandkids again? And of course, what if I or [insert loved ones here] get it? What if it's a bad case?

Our trusty ship, the Church, including our particular congregation, is in stormy times the likes of which we have not seen in any of our lifetimes. Even those of us with memories of World War II or 1968 haven't seen so many and various forms of disruption and uncertainty all at once. Ships at sea invariably have to go through storms. Even harbored ships face a hurricane every so often. And sometimes the only thing to do in the face of such storms is lash oneself to the mast and ride it out.

This month will mark one year in our journey together. And I think almost none of that has gone the way either members or pastor thought it would—certainly not since March 15th, when we marked our first Sunday unable to gather for worship. But God has called us together for such a time as this.

As I reflect on my candidating sermon and the metaphor of our church being a ship at sea, I am reminded of a story from Acts that I was challenged and encouraged by several summers ago. It is the story of Paul's shipwreck in Acts 27, and it has, yet again, taken on fresh meaning for me as of late. I encourage you to go read it if you are unfamiliar with it.

The thing to remember about this story is this: Paul was not a *willing* passenger on this voyage: he was a prisoner being taken to Rome. Paul also had warned the captain of the impending disaster, but being a prisoner he was of course ignored. Paul even knew what was coming, yet was still helpless in the face of it.

Everything that happened on this voyage happened to Paul. He got no special rescue or shelter from the storm for having been right or because he was a "good Christian". Night after night wind and waves battered the ship. The ship was breaking apart: held together for a time only by passing ropes underneath it. Everyone was constantly wet, cold, shivering, sleepless, for days and days and days. Food was gone. Death seemed imminent, hope lost. Then, through Paul, God promised them not one life would be lost. They survived ... but their ship did not.

Luke, the author of Acts, uses up a lot of precious parchment to tell this story in great detail—something unusual in biblical writing. So the question becomes, "why"? The suggestion is made by some scholars that Luke saw in these events a powerful metaphor for the Church he was writing to:

a Church being persecuted in various ways and, like Paul and his shipmates, fighting to survive in the storms.

If we look at this story not only as history, but as allegory, we observe some things that are both encouraging and sobering: 1) God doesn't stop the storm. God often allows the storms we experience to rage in our lives, sometimes for a long time: as individuals, organizations, or cultures. 2) God may promise to rescue *us*, but not necessarily our "ship". That belief or idea or way of doing things we've been trusting in may or may not survive the storm, even though we do. We must trust in God alone.

Storms are hard. But storms are good at stripping away things that weigh us down or hold us back. They expose what is enduring and what is not, what really matters and what really doesn't. And with the return of clear skies comes new direction and clarity.

Let us therefore turn our face to the wind and ride out this storm, and learn from it, knowing that the God who can still the wind and the waves is also present in them.

In it with you, praying for you,

*Pastor Doug*