

November
2010

Tolono Pres News



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If you or someone you know would like a visit from a Deacon or the Pastor, please contact Rev. Kerry Bean at either 485-3725 or 485-5263.

First Presbyterian Church (USA)
104 E. Vine Street Tolono, IL 61880 (217) 485-3725

Advent Worship Begin December 1st



Advent begins this year on Sunday 11/28. And once again this Advent, First PC-Tolono will be providing special **Advent worships**. These worship services will all be based on the theme of "expectant waiting for Christ's coming."

The services will take place on Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm, beginning 12/1.

Each service will last

around 30 minutes, and will feature lots of prayers and time for reflection. Simple contemplative music will also be provided.

A short message on the theme may be included, as well.

Kerry envisions these worships as a time for folks to be still and rest in the midst of one of the busiest times of the year.

The sanctuary will be

bathed in candlelight as we prepare for the arrival of Christmas and also beckon Christ to return again in glory.

Please carve out these times on your holiday calendar to refresh your spirit.

If you have any questions about the services, please contact Kerry at 485-5263 (manse) or leave a message at the church office: 485-3725.

Pastor's Page

November, of course, is the month that our nation stops and gives thanks for its many blessings. It is the closest thing we have to an actual national religious holiday, because most of us are giving our thanks to God.

Of course, it is certainly fitting for us to thank those who provide us with so many important services: from mail delivery to hospital care to fire and police protection. And of course, we can also thank also those in agriculture who grow, harvest, and

As Always, Let Us Give Thanks...

distribute our food for us.

And then we can also thankfully remember the people who give us joy by simply being in our lives- our friends and family members, for instance.

And while we're it, we would be right to offer thanks for all those people who pray for us and provide unexpected acts of kindness- often strangers- that enrich of lives so much.

Our world and our lives are so interconnected that we cannot possibly keep

track of all the people who affect us- both for the worse and for the better. It's almost dizzying when you try to grasp the complexity of it all.

And yet, "all good gifts around us are sent from heaven above / so thank the Lord for all his love." That's nice and simple and profoundly true.

Please take the time this Thanksgiving to actually thank God for all your blessings- and for all the people and creatures who enrich your life- and most especially for Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. -Kerry



'The Mysterious Case of the Purloined Paintings from the Parlor' Sells Out!

Proceeds support PTYG Mission Trip 2011

*“Our parlor’s paintings have been purloin-ed. We feel like fainting, we’re so annoy-ed.... Our tears, they overwhelm us. Now we must hang our black velvet Elvis.”
-actual lyrics from “The Mysterious Case of the Purloined Paintings”*

It was amazingly heart-warming to see every seat filled for our Dinner Theater production of “The Mysterious Case of the Purloined Paintings from the Parlor”. All the proceeds- over \$700- will go towards helping meet expenses that the Philo Tolono Youth Group (PYTG) will incur as they prepare for their Mission Trip in 2011.

A delicious dinner was prepared by a group of gallant cooks led by Jeri Brooks and Barb Kelley. PYTG members also lent a hand by serving the meals and bussing the tables. The production was held on 10/24 in the Fellowship Hall of the Christian Education Building.

Much to the delight of the audience, their tables were draped in tablecloths and decorated with centerpiece candles. I handed out programs and “whodunit?” cards.

The production itself was just as silly as advertized. The cast was funny and energetic and delivered such lines as “Holy alarming alliteration, Batman!” with style and panache. Almost half of the cast were members of our WYN youth group- and they rose to the challenge like champs.

Although (obviously) I am the least objective person to be writing this article, I do believe that “a most wonderful time was had by all” (with the possible exception of my 19-year-

old son Jeremiah- who was totally embarrassed to win the special grand prize for correctly guessing the mysterious art thief’s identity).

This was the second Dinner Theater Mystery that we have produced. Will there be a third? Stay tuned to this newsletter to find out. Only the Shadow knows for sure. (Or, me, actually...)

-Kerry

Prayer List

- Jan Shoop , members of Tracy Wilson’s family and any others with ongoing health challenges.
- Safety for travelers during the beginning of the holidays.
- The homeless and those needing shelter as the weather gets colder.
- All those recovering from the tsunamis and other disasters of nature.
- The military and their families facing separation and possible harm.
- First Presbyterian Church of Tolono and our leadership as we seek God’s will for the future.

New Session Members Elected

During our congregational meeting on 10/31, members elected elders to serve on session for 2011-2013. Suzie Fisher and Gary Fisher will continue their present service. Delores Lucas is returning to Session after one year’s break. And

Autumne Fisher will be ordained and installed as a new Elder in early January. Officer Training will also take place in January. No Deacons were elected this year. A new Board of Deacons will be elected in 2012.



Session Meeting Highlights: October 2010

Our session met on October 19th. Here are some of the highlights of their discussions:

Committee reports were first. Buildings and Grounds is still planning a clean-up day. Details to be announced. Christian Education reported that WYN is being well attended and held its annual cookout at Jeff and Suzie Fisher's farm. PYTG is continuing and there are several new members. PTYG will be selling Christmas Greenery as a fundraiser. Mission Committee is again facilitating the

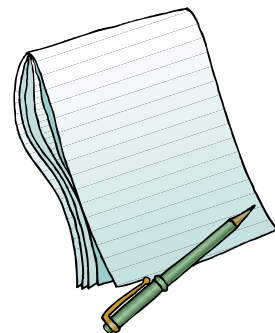
collection of coats and winter wear for the Pine Ridge Reservation residents. Also, the Christmas Joy Offering will be collected in December during worship. Chris Schweighart, Clerk of Session, will be meeting with the Membership Committee to examine our membership records and church register. **(That meeting was held 10/28)** Finally, the Nominating Committee will be recruiting folks to serve on Session for 2011-2013. A congregational meeting was approved for Sunday 10/31 after worship.

Kerry reported that the

Prayer Group for Church Growth and Mission was begun meeting- and praying. It was decided that this year's Christmas Eve service (12/24) will be held at 5:00pm. Advent Services will be held on Wednesdays in December at 6:30pm.

Rehearsals for the Dinner Theater Mystery play were continuing. The play was held 10/24.

Tracy Wilson provided September 2010 financial reports (which are highlighted below.)



Our Deacons:

Linda Smith
Betty Pacquin
Jeff Fisher

Financial Information: Overview of Aug. 2010 report

Here is a snapshot of the church's finances as of September 30, 2010. The report was compiled by Staci Kamradt and Tracy Wilson, the church treasurer.

In September, the month's income was \$16,460, which included Farm Income of \$10,697.

On the expense side of the ledger, total expenses for September were \$8,803. So for the month we received \$7,800 more than we spent. Without farm income, however, costs outran giving by \$2,040. Our budget called

for September giving closer to \$7,128.

Turning our attention to the Year to Date figures:

Income YTD is \$95,837, which is \$16,500 above budget. The farm income came in earlier than budgeted, however.

Expenses YTD: Our 2010 budget calls for expenses of \$85,353 by 9/30. Our actual expenses are approx. \$80,000. In other words, we stand \$5,500 under budget. We still need to pay presbytery more than \$2,000 towards our per capita

apportionment, but that is the only outstanding item. That payment goes out this month.

So if we take a quick look at the math:

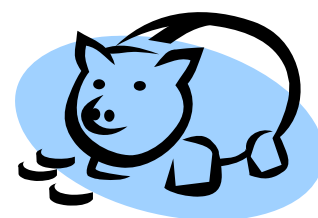
YTD Income: \$95,837

Minus

YTD Expense: \$80,000

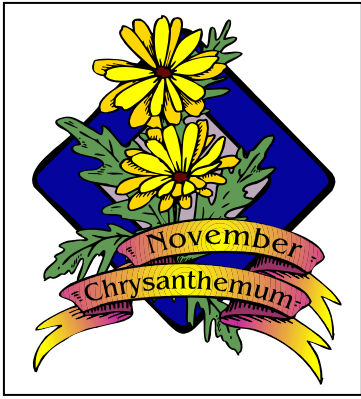
Total YTD: \$15,837

We continue to do well in the midst of challenging financial times. Thanks again to all of you who continue to generously support the mission and ministries of our church!



Session Members

Chris Schweighart, Clerk
Susie Fisher, CE
Gary Fisher, Grounds
Jeannette Hulick, Worship
Jim Wilson, Grounds
Tracy Wilson, Finance
Rev. Kerry Bean, Pastor



Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday 1	Tuesday 2	Wed. 3	Thursday 4	Friday 5	Saturday 6
	Prayer Group Mtg. 7pm at the Manse	Election Day	WYN 5:30pm			
7 9:15 am Adult Sun. School 10:30am Worship Veteran's Service –UMC 2pm	8	9 Quilting	10 WYN 5:30pm	11 Veterans' Day	12	13
14 9:15am Adult Sunday School 10:30am	15 11:30am Friends of Ch. Buffet Lunch / Prayer Group at Manse 7pm	16 Session 7pm	17 WYN finale 5:30pm	18	19	20
21 9:15am Adult Sun. School 10:30am	22	23	24	25 Thanks-giving Day	26	27
28 9:15am Adult Sun. School 10:30am Worship	29 Prayer Group 7pm Manse	30	Dec 1 Advent Worship 6:30pm			

November Lay Leaders

- Tracy Wilson- 11/7
- Cary Woolard- 11/14
- Linda Smith- 11/21
- Jeannette Hulick- 11/28

Nov. Birthdays and Anniversaries

- 11/9 Linda Fisher
- 11/11 John Reifsteck
- 11/14 Bill Stevens
- 11/15 Stephanie Ferguson
- 11/15 Brian Fisher
- 11/17 Jay Rogers
- 11/18 Marvin Little
- 11/19 Morgan Cross
- 11/19 Brad Hulick
- 11/19 Becky Maxwell
- 11/23 Miles Owens
- 11/24 Herman Duggins
- 11/24 Courtney Hatfield
- 11/27 Joel Evans
- 11/23 Greg and Autumnne Fisher
- 11/24 Carl and Delores Lucas

Veterans' Day

First Presbyterian Church –Tolono offers thanks and gratitude to those members of our armed forces who have served our country in times of war and peace. We salute you and your sacrifices.



The Confession of Belhar

Over the past several weeks, we have been including the confession of Belhar in our worship as our Affirmation of Faith. This is because the Presbyterian Church(USA) will be voting this year to possibly include Belhar in our Book of Confessions. In fact the Presbytery of Southeastern Illinois will be voting on this Confession's inclusion at this month's meeting in Effingham (11/18). Belhar comes to us from South Africa and was originally written as a response to the terrible racial tensions caused by the official governmental policy of Apartheid. We Americans with our difficult and divisive history of slavery should be able to relate well to the issues that the Confession addresses. Here it is in its entirety:

1. We believe in the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who gathers, protects and cares for the church through Word and Spirit. This, God has done since the beginning of the world and will do to the end.

2. We believe in one holy, universal Christian church, the communion of saints called from the entire human family.

We believe

- that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another (Eph. 2:11-22);
- that unity is, therefore, both a gift and an obligation for the church of Jesus Christ; that through the working of God's Spirit it is a binding force, yet simultaneously a reality which must be earnestly pursued and sought: one which the people of God must continually be built up to attain (Eph. 4:1-16);
- that this unity must become visible so that the world may believe that separation, enmity and hatred between people and groups is sin which Christ has already conquered, and accordingly that anything which threatens this unity may have no place in the church and must be resisted (John 17:20-23);
- that this unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways: in that we love one another; that we experience, practice and pursue community with one another; that we are obligated to give ourselves willingly and joyfully to be of benefit and blessing to one another; that we share one faith, have one calling, are of one soul and one mind; have one God and Father, are filled with one Spirit, are baptized with one baptism, eat of one bread and drink of one cup, confess one name, are obedient to one Lord, work for one cause, and share one hope; together come to know the height and the breadth and the depth of the love of Christ; together are built up to the stature of Christ, to the new humanity; together know and bear one another's burdens, thereby fulfilling the law of Christ that we need one another and upbuild one another, admonishing and comforting one another; that we suffer with one another for the sake of righteousness; pray together; together serve God in this world; and together fight against all which may threaten or hinder this unity (Phil. 2:1-5; 1 Cor. 12:4-31; John 13:1-17; 1 Cor. 1:10-13; Eph. 4:1-6; Eph. 3:14-20; 1 Cor. 10:16-17; 1 Cor. 11:17-34; Gal. 6:2; 2 Cor. 1:3-4);
- that this unity can be established only in freedom and not under constraint; that the variety of spiritual gifts, opportunities, backgrounds, convictions, as well as the various languages and cultures, are by virtue of the reconciliation in Christ, opportunities for mutual service and enrichment within the one visible people of God (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:1-11; Eph. 4:7-13; Gal. 3:27-28; James 2:1-13);
- that true faith in Jesus Christ is the only condition for membership of this church.

Therefore, we reject any doctrine

- which absolutizes either natural diversity or the sinful separation of people in such a way that this absolutization hinders or breaks the visible and active unity of the church, or even leads to the establishment of a separate church formation;
- which professes that this spiritual unity is truly being maintained in the bond of peace while believers of the same confession are in effect alienated from one another for the sake of diversity and in despair of reconciliation;
- which denies that a refusal earnestly to pursue this visible unity as a priceless gift is sin;
- which explicitly or implicitly maintains that descent or any other human or social factor should be a consideration in determining membership of the church.

3. We believe

- that God has entrusted the church with the message of reconciliation in and through Jesus Christ, that the church is called to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that the church is called blessed because it is a peacemaker, that the church is witness both by word and by deed to the new heaven and the new earth in which righteousness dwells (2 Cor. 5:17-21; Matt. 5:13-16; Matt. 5:9; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev. 21-22).
- that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit has conquered the powers of sin and death, and therefore also of irreconciliation and hatred, bitterness and enmity, that God's lifegiving Word and Spirit will enable the church to live in a new obedience which can open new possibilities of life for society and the world (Eph. 4:17-6:23, Rom. 6; Col. 1:9-14; Col. 2:13-19; Col. 3:1-4:6);
- that the credibility of this message is seriously affected and its beneficial work obstructed when it is proclaimed in a land which professes to be Christian, but in which the enforced separation of people on a racial basis promotes and perpetuates alienation, hatred and enmity;
- that any teaching which attempts to legitimate such forced separation by appeal to the gospel, and is not prepared to venture on

First Presbyterian Church

104 E. Vine Street
Tolono, IL 61880

PHONE:
(217) 485-3725

MANSE PHONE:
(217) 485-5263

E-MAIL:
tolonopres@yahoo.com

Rev. Kerry Bean,
Designated Pastor



We're on the Web!

See us at:
tolonopresbyterian.org

FIRST PC(USA)
104 E. Vine
Tolono, IL 61880

Belhar Confession (continued)

the road of obedience and reconciliation, but rather, out of prejudice, fear, selfishness and unbelief, denies in advance the reconciling power of the gospel, must be considered ideology and false doctrine.

Therefore, we reject any doctrine

- which, in such a situation, sanctions in the name of the gospel or of the will of God the forced separation of people on the grounds of race and color and thereby in advance obstructs and weakens the ministry and experience of reconciliation in Christ.

4. We believe

- that God has revealed himself as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people;
- that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged;
- that God calls the church to follow him in this, for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry;
- that God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind;
- that God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger, helps orphans and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly;
- that for God pure and undefiled religion is to visit the orphans and the widows in their suffering;
- that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right (Deut. 32:4; Luke 2:14; John 14:27; Eph. 2:14; Isa. 1:16-17; James 1:27; James 5:1-6; Luke 1:46-55; Luke 6:20-26; Luke 7:22; Luke 16:19-31; Ps. 146; Luke 4:16-19; Rom. 6:13-18; Amos 5);
- that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream;
- that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged; that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.

Therefore, we reject any ideology

- which would legitimate forms of injustice and any doctrine which is unwilling to resist such an ideology in the name of the gospel.

5. We believe that, in obedience to Jesus Christ, its only head, the church is called to confess and to do all these things, even though the authorities and human laws might forbid them and punishment and suffering be the consequence (Eph. 4:15-16; Acts 5:29-33; 1 Peter 2:18-25; 1 Peter 3:15-18).

