



Tower Bell

JANUARY, 2009

Dear Friends,

Welcome to 2009! I want to begin the New Year with a note of thanksgiving. Words cannot express my sincere gratitude for the love, kindness and support I've felt not only during the Christmas season, but ever since arriving here the end of August. It has been an exciting and fruitful journey together.

The passing of another year also causes us to reflect on days gone by like the time when Charlie Brown and Lucy were philosophizing. "Years are like swimming pools, Chuck. We jump in one end, and we splash around until we reach the other end...And how was your year, Chuck?" Charlie, with a rather dismayed look answered, "Somebody let all the water out!"

Isn't that the feeling of many people? We have celebrated the anniversary of Christ's coming. We have renewed the dream of the ages of "peace on earth." What we prepared for so much, anticipated so long and celebrated so joyously is now over. It's as if someone popped our heavenly balloon or let the air out of our tires. Suddenly, we are back down to earth—children no longer act like angels; people attend church more infrequently and the spirit of good will and love seem to be slipping away.

However, the wonder, love and praise of Christ's birth can be more lasting if in the Season of Epiphany we would look to the Wise Men who saw His star and FOLLOWED IT. **The church in 2009 will need star followers.** The Apostle Paul said, "*Forgetting what lies behind, I press onward in the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*"

First Presbyterian Church needs you and me to be points of light in the new year. Together let us press forward with spiritual sensitivity and new determination to use our God-given gifts to continue to shape the future of this church—to teach the children, sing the anthems, lead the youth, to pray for and to visit the sick, to minister to the least of these and to prepare the way for a new pastor/head of staff.

I close with a prayer by W. R. Hunt,
"Dear Lord, please give me a few friends who understand me and remain my friends; a work to do in the church and world that has real value; a mind unafraid to travel even though the trail is not blazed; a deeper understanding; a sense of humor; time for quiet meditation; a feeling of the presence of God; the patience to wait for the coming of these things and the wisdom to recognize them when they come."

Grace and peace to you as you seek to follow God's light and to be points of light!

Peace in Christ,

Bob Agnew

Stephen Ministry

Most people are much more open to giving care than to receiving it. When a person is giving care, he or she is in a position of strength, stability, and authority. When a person is receiving care, he or she is acknowledging weakness, insecurity, and vulnerability.

As a result, there are countless people today who, though they really could benefit from a Christian friend who would listen and care for them, instead tough it out on their own. They remain the strong silent type, or wear a smile across a face that is holding back a flood of tears. Society encourages this (particularly for men). To ask for help is to admit weakness. To show weakness is to admit inferiority.

But suffering alone is not God's intent for us. Jesus promises, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). We can receive this promised rest when we turn to one another for comfort and help.

Our Stephen Ministers know all about receiving care. Many of them have been on the receiving end of care at an earlier point in their lives – something that has motivated them to give care now. They know how difficult it is to ask for help, but they also know the great personal and spiritual growth and healing that follows.

Stephen Ministers know how to respond in a loving, caring, and nonjudgmental manner. They are equipped, ready, and waiting to provide the comfort and care God very much desires you to have.

To learn more about Stephen Ministry and how it can help you or your loved ones, call Nancy Shephard at 272-0909, or Dr. Bob Agnew at 234-4159.

9:30 a.m. Christian Education for all ages

10:45 a.m. Worship Service

11:45 a.m. Fellowship Time

January 4

Dr. Bob Agnew, preaching

January 11

Dr. Bob Agnew, preaching

January 18

Dr. Bob Agnew, preaching

January 25

Rev. Robbie Carnes, preaching

ADULT EDUCATION

CHAPEL CLASS
SUNDAY MORNING
9:30 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.

January 4 – Epiphany Celebration –
All Church Event [Social Hall]

Celebrate Epiphany Sunday with an All-Church Event in the Social Hall featuring King's Cakes, a Three Kings Drama, and other activities.

January 11, 18 & 25 – Happy 500th Birthday,
John Calvin – A Look at Calvin's Theology

Dr. Randall Zachman will return for a three-week series on "The Theology of John Calvin." This course will offer an examination of the major theological themes of Calvin's theology, in honor of the 500th anniversary of his birth. In particular, we will look at Calvin's understanding of the self-manifestations of God in creation and in Jesus Christ, and the self-revelation of Christ first to the Israelites in the Law, and then to Jews and Gentiles in the Gospel. The integration on creation with Christ, and of the Law with the Gospel, lies at the heart of Calvin's theology, and hence forms a fitting theme for our consideration of his theological legacy.

Dr. Randall Zachman is Professor in the Department of Theology at the University of Notre Dame and Director of the MTS Program. He holds the following degrees: B.A., Colgate University; M.Div., Yale Divinity School; Ph.D., University of Chicago Divinity School. Zachman's area of interest is the history of Christian thought from the Reformation period to the present. Zachman is the author of *Image and Word in the Theology of John Calvin* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), *John Calvin as Teacher, Pastor, and Theologian: The Shape of his Writing and Thought* (Baker Academic, 2006), and *The Assurance of Faith: Conscience in the Theology of Martin Luther and John Calvin* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2005). He has co-edited *Conciliation and Confession* (Notre Dame, 2004), and has edited the forthcoming *John Calvin and Roman Catholicism: Critique and Engagement, Then and Now* (Baker Academic). Zachman has published articles in *The Journal of Religion*, *The Scottish Journal of Theology*, *Calvin Theological Journal*, *Concordia Theological Journal*, as well as chapters in other volumes.

For additional information on the Chapel class offerings, contact: Pete Amos (574-247-0628 or AmosFamily51@aol.com) or Linda Fox (574-277-6317 or billorlynn@sbcglobal.net), Co-Chairs, Adult Enrichment Committee or Phyllis Wezeman, Director of Christian Nurture -- 574-234-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org.

GROWING CHRISTIANS CLASS
JANUARY SCHEDULE
SUNDAY MORNING
9:30 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.

Social Hall

January 25, 2009

THE BIBLE JESUS READ

A Video Bible Study based on the book by Philip Yancey
On Sunday, January 25, 2009, facilitator Pete Amos, will begin a new eight-week "Growing Christians Class" series – "The Bible Jesus Read" – based on the popular book by Philip Yancey. The topic for January 25 is "Is the Old Testament Worth the Effort?"

Yancey is an astute author who challenges Christians' assumptions without alienating them. In "The Bible Jesus Read," Yancey encourages readers to consider how Hebrew Scripture -- what Christians call the Old Testament -- is relevant to their own lives. His premise is that although many Christians tacitly consider the New Testament more important than the Old, the New Testament was written after Jesus' earthly ministry, making the Old Testament "the Bible Jesus read." Hebrew Scripture was the greatest influence on the mind and spirit of the founder of Christianity, a fact that, in the author's estimation, obligates Christians to know it well. Yancey acknowledges the difficulty of transcending the cultural gulf between modern civilization and ancient Israel and seeks to bridge the gap by highlighting sections of the Old Testament that he initially found hard to appreciate. The writings of the Prophets were particularly obscure to Yancey because of the non-narrative style and assumption of a warrior culture. However, he gradually discovered the passages' deep relevance to, and resonance with, his own experience. He came to love these Old Testament books when he realized that many of their concerns, such as justice for the poor and faithfulness to God, are timeless.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Outreach Committee continues to strive to add new members to our church community. Our Ambassadors, who wear a name tag with a red ribbon attached, continue to greet visitors and make them feel welcome as they attend our service. Please feel free to help us identify visitors so that no one is missed inadvertently.

Next year our own First Presbyterian Church is celebrating 175 years of service to the community!! This will be an exciting year for all of us as it reminds us of those early ancestors who had the faith and the foresight—and who thought it was vitally important—to found a Presbyterian Church in this new territory! Just think—Indiana had become a state in 1816—only 18 years earlier, and here our Presbyterian Church took roots. This should inspire all of us to continue to make First Presbyterian a flourishing church as we continue to walk in the footsteps of those early South Bend settlers. The Outreach Committee is busy thinking of meaningful activities that our committee can plan to assist Nancy Shephard, who has been named to head up the celebration. We have a wonderful heritage right here and hopefully our Committee will be able to assist in the celebration.

ADULT SMALL GROUPS

DAVE RAMSEY'S FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY – PREVIEWS AND COURSE

“Dave Ramsey’s Financial Peace University” is a biblically based, video driven small group study that teaches families to beat debt, build wealth, and give like never before! Due to requests, we will hold preview sessions in January and start the course again in February. Preview sessions will be held in the Social Hall on Sunday, **January 18** at 12:15 P.M. and Wednesday, **January 28** at 6:30 P.M. The thirteen week course will begin on Wednesday, February 4 and continue through Wednesday, April 29. Each week, the group begins with a meal from 5:45 P.M. to 6:15 P.M. and holds the session from 6:30 P.M. to 8:30 P.M. Pete Amos is the facilitator. For additional information, or registration materials, contact: Pete Amos -- 574-247-0628 or AmosFamily51@aol.com or Phyllis Wezeman 574-234-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org.

ECO-STEWARDS

Eco-Stewards will meet at 6:00 P.M. on the 2nd Tuesday, **January 13**, at The Side Door Café, Martin’s at Erskine Plaza (Ireland Road off Miami) and on the 4th Tuesday, **January 27**, at The Side Door Café, Martin’s on SR 23 and Ironwood. Come talk, dine, and grocery shop in one trip! For additional information, contact: Alisea McLeod, Eco-Stewards Coordinator, at 574-288-4784 or aliseamcleod@hotmail.com or Phyllis Wezeman at 574-234-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org.

EIGHT GREAT DATES

First Presbyterian Church offers an exciting program -- EIGHT GREAT DATES -- to help couples of all ages place a priority on their marriage. The next date is Friday, **January 9**. The format is: 6:00 P.M. – 8:45 P.M. – Child Care provided in the Pre-K Room on the Second floor of the Education Wing; 6:00 P.M. – 8:45 P.M. – Date. Cost is \$5.00 per child. For additional information or a reservation, which is due by Monday, **January 5**, contact Phyllis Wezeman -- 574-234-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org.

ETHNIC EATING

Ethnic Eating, a quarterly culinary cuisine group for adults who enjoy food from around the world, will hold its next gathering on Friday, **January 23, 2009** at 6:30 P.M. at the Viet Nam Restaurant. It is located in Town and Country Shopping Center on McKinley in Mishawaka. For information or reservations, please contact: Kathleen English – 574-232-3846 or katmanduh@hotmail.com or Phyllis Wezeman – 574-234-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org

FAMILY AT HEART – INTERPLAY GROUP

Family at Heart, our parent education group, held the third Tuesday of the month from 8:30 A.M. to 10:00 A.M. in the Tent, is in the format of an INTERPLAY GROUP this season. InterPlay is easy, fun, and life changing. The leader, Indi Dieckgrafe, is Professor of Dance, Saint Mary’s College and a national InterPlay leader. The January date is Tuesday, **January 20**. Child care is available by reservation. For additional information, contact Phyllis Wezeman -- 574-234-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org.

FOOD FOR THE SOUL

Join us for any or all of a four-part series, “Food for the Soul,” as Edie Sutton of Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service returns to First Presbyterian Church’s Social Hall on Tuesdays, **January 13, 27, February 3, and March 3**. From 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M., there will be Coffee and Gathering, Cooking School, and Lunch. And, for those who would like to stay from 1:00 P.M. to 1:30 P.M., there will be a Psalm study.

Edie’s Program will feature “Cooking for Diabetes ... and Healthy Eating Tips for Everyone.. It will include Snacks, Desserts, Main Dishes, and Sides. Five different dishes per class will be demonstrated.

Cost for the four-part series is \$25.00 per person or \$40.00 per couple. For additional information, contact: Phyllis Wezeman, Director of Christian Nurture at 574-234-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Our “Prayer Shawl Ministry” is a group of people who work individually in their homes crocheting or knitting tangible symbols of the presence of God in our lives. While each shawl is being created, prayers are offered silently for the person in need. When the shawl is completed, it is delivered to the recipient. For additional information or to suggest the name of a person for whom a shawl could be made, contact: Gretchen Klanke – 574-273-9484 or gret4music@aol.com or Phyllis Wezeman at 574-234-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org.

TUESDAY EVENING WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Our Tuesday Evening Women’s Bible Study, which meets at the home of Ruth Roll, resumes on **January 13**. It meets every Tuesday evening at 6:30 P.M. Linda Fox is the facilitator. For additional information, contact Linda Fox at 574-277-6317 or billorlynn@sbcglobal.net or Phyllis Wezeman at 574-234-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org.



WOMEN'S GUILD -- JANUARY

The Womens’ Guild is an association of Christian women who gather for Bible Study, Prayer, and Service. It is modeled after the Women’s Guild of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian in Malawi and it is an extension of the Presbyterian Womens’ groups of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The Saturday, **January 17th** meeting will be at the home of Ruth Roll, 3026 Woodmont Drive, South Bend, Indiana, with fellowship from 3:45 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. and Bible Study and Prayer from 4:00 P.M. to 5:30 P.M. For additional information, contact Mlekwa Mwachande – 574-289-5371 or Phyllis Wezeman – 574-234-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

BIG HEARTS BUNCH

The Big Hearts Bunch, our Caring Kids' Club for Third, Fourth, and Fifth Graders, will gather for lunch and a service project on

Sunday, January 11 from 12:00 Noon to 1:30 P.M.

The group will learn about the "Mission of the Quarter" – Ronald McDonald House, make a meal for overnight guests, and prepare chicken casseroles for Hope Rescue Mission as well. For additional information, please contact: Phyllis Wezeman at 574-23-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org.

CHILD CARE FOR JANUARY

INFANT NURSERY & TWOS/THREES CLASS

Sunday Child Care is provided from 9:15 A.M. to 12:15 P.M. -- during the Christian Education Hour and the Worship Service. Please pick up your child/children before attending the Fellowship time.

CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

A Children's Library is located in The Gathering Place on the lower level of the Education Wing. It is open during selected Second Hour sessions for Pre-Kindergarten through Second Grade children. Resources are available for self check-out by Pre-K through 5th Graders at any time.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGES FOR JANUARY

Children's Messages for January will focus on the special days of the Church Year and the Calendar Year including Epiphany, Baptism of Jesus, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

CLUB 345

Club 345 is a once-a-month group for third, fourth, and fifth graders and a way for young people to explore and express their faith. The January outing will be sledding and hot chocolate at Wilhe Dreyer's house. The date and time will be determined by "SNOW." Everyone will be contacted when conditions are "RIGHT." For additional information, please contact: Dru Wrasse, Chair, Children's Ministries Committee --269-695-1026 or wrasseдру@yahoo.com or Phyllis Wezeman, Director of Christian Nurture --574-234-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org.

FAITH STEPS SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY

Faith Steps, our 9:30 A.M. to 10:30 A.M. Workshop Rotation Model Sunday School for Kindergarten through Fifth Grade children, will participate in the Epiphany Celebration in the Social Hall on January 4. On **January 11**, they will review the Creation story in Art (Dru Wrasse, Teacher) and complete the set of "seven-day" masks for display in the room. Noah will be the Bible story for January and February, in **Cinema on the 18th** (David Eggleston, Teacher) and in **Drama on the 25th** (Margo Shearman-Howard, Teacher).

FEATURING FIRST KIDS BULLETIN BOARD

Our "Featuring First Kids Bulletin Board," located on the wall near the Social Hall, displays nametags for our Pre-Kindergarten through Fifth Grade children. Pre-Ks through Fifth Graders should pick up their nametags when they arrive at church, wear them throughout the day, and hang them on their "grade" ribbon before they leave the building.

MICHIANA WORKSHOP ROTATION MODEL NETWORK MEETING

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2009

12:00 NOON – 1:30 P.M.

Sunnyside Presbyterian Church
115 S. Frances Street
South Bend, Indiana

Topic: Age Groups and the Workshop Rotation Model

PRE-KINDERGARTEN SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS FOR JANUARY

The Pre-K Class for children who have turned four but who have not started Kindergarten meets every Sunday from 9:30 A.M. – 10:30 A.M. in Room 214 of the Education Wing. On January 4, however, Pre-K children will participate with their parents in the Epiphany Event in the Social Hall. For additional information about the Pre-K Sunday School class, please contact: Peggy Van Laere, Coordinator – 574-271-5661 or FAMVAN@aol.com or Phyllis Wezeman, Director of Christian Nurture – 574-234-4159 or pwezeman@fpcsouthbend.org.

SECOND HOUR FOR JANUARY

Second Hour is a Faith Formation Program for Kindergarten through Second Grade children. It begins after the Children's Message in the 10:45 A.M. Worship Service, and is held from approximately 11:00 A.M. to 11:45 A.M. The schedule includes:

January 4 – Music,
January 11 – Missions,
January 18 – Children's Library,
and January 25 – Church Year.

WORSHIP FOR CHILDREN

Children of all ages are invited to participate in worship with their parents or caregivers on Sundays and on Special Days throughout the year. Children's messages will be shared during the service. Following the Children's Time in the 10:45 A.M. service, Pre-Kindergarten through Second Grade girls and boys may leave for Second Hour classes in the Education Wing or they may return to sit with their families. For Pre-Schoolers, Worship Bags are available in the hallways. For Kindergarten through Fifth Graders, Children's Bulletins may be found on the literature rack in the "Children's Corner" or distributed with the bulletins.

YOUTH EVENTS AND INFORMATION

FPCSB youth and parents,
There are many different events happening in the life of the church the rest of December. I will get these posted on Facebook and at www.fpcsouthbend.org soon. We wish you a very Merry Christmas as we share God's love with others.
Blessings,
Pastors Lindsey and Robbie

I've heard a rumor that there's "No School" on Friday, December 19

Middle School girls make candy lolly pops at 1pm
We'll deliver them during caroling.
Meet at the Normans
(1425 Meadow Trail, South Bend - 291-2511).

Caroling and Pizza Party

Friday, December 19, 5pm-until?
Meet at the Normans (1425 Meadow Trail, South Bend 291-2511), bring money for pizza and a snack or dessert to share, then we'll go out caroling for senior citizens. Middle school and high school will go in separate groups.
Bring a friend!

Confirmation Classes Resume after Christmas

Sun. January 11, noon "Ten Commandments: How Do I Live?"
Sun. January 25, noon "Worshiping in Public?" **AND Parents come for Youth Committee Meeting**

Jesus Christ Superstar is coming to the Morris Performing Arts Center Wednesday, February 11, 2009, 8 p.m.

Tickets start at \$27.50, no group rate for this performance.

If you're interested in going as a group. Contact Lindsey (pastorLcarnes@gmail.com) with the number of tickets that you would like to order and give me a check as soon as you can.

I'd like to order these by Christmas so that we can get a block of tickets and sit together.

What kind of show is it? It's a rock opera based on the last part of Jesus' life. For more info see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_Christ_Superstar.

Youth Committee Meeting Sunday, January 25—Noon (Youth Rooms)

Parents please attend and help plan out events for the new year including sledding and a mission trip for the summer.

AND SOME NOTES FROM OUR COLLEGE KIDS...



"Thank you so much for the box of goodies and such. It really made my week. I miss and love you all."--Theresa Rosencrantz

"Hello!!! To my wonderful F.P.C. Family: Thank you so much for the care package and the letters! It was a much needed reminder of the family I love and miss at home. Sorry it took me so long to get back to you-- It's been quite busy here at Butler! Thanks again!" --Lydia Dreyer

"Dear First Pres, Thank you for the generous gift basket. It was so thoughtful of you. I loved all the snacks, readings, and puzzles. I am enjoying my time here at UK and I am looking forward to Thanksgiving! Thanks again"--Elizabeth Ehlers

"Dear First Pres, Thank you so much for the nice care package. I enjoyed the puzzles and scriptures and the cookies were great. It was so nice of you all to think of me and I look forward to coming to church over Christmas. Thanks again!"
-- Emily Ehlers

Outreach Lunches



The Midtown/South Lunch group will meet Wednesday, January 14, at 11:30 a.m. Cira's Restaurant, 2007Miami Street in South Bend.

The Northside Lunch Group will meet Tuesday, January 20, at 12:00 p.m. at American Pancake House in Roseland.

Mission Committee

Mission of the Quarter
Ronald McDonald House, located at Memorial Hospital, is the "mission of the Quarter" for January, February and March. Please help us collect the following items which may be left in the Church Office or the Narthex.

Individual snacks (chips, pretzels, etc.)

Individual cereals

Granola bars

Individual puddings and fruits

Trash bags (8 gal & 13 gal)

Gallon & quart size Ziploc bags

Laundry detergent

Stamps

White copy paper (8 1/2 x 11)

First Presbyterian Church
333 West Colfax Avenue
South Bend, Indiana 46601
Return Service Requested

SESSION REPORT

At its meeting of November 20, 2008, besides attending to routine matters, Session elected the following corporation officers:

President: Doug Hemphill
Vice President: Doug Marsh
Asst. Treasurer: Bob Toothaker

Jim Tuesley had earlier been elected Treasurer while the Clerk, John Mihelich, serves ex-officio as Corporation Secretary.

Session discussed the financial situation for both 2008 and 2009 and will address the question at its meeting on December 18.

The Deacon Committee

recognizes the following people for their generous efforts at Hope Ministries (serving and/or preparing casseroles) from August through December:

Don and Joann Sporleder (3)
Les Lamon
Bruce and Cathy BonDurant (2)
Willie and Jean Meiss (2)
Kathy Cates (2)
Donna Rehbein
Ann and Anita Schwarz
Dottie Taylor
Norm Bone
Pam and Sarah Proctor (2)
John and Jan Mihelich (3)
Dave Norman (2)
Larry and Alma McClelland (2)
Eve Pierce (2)
Linda Thorpe Gordon (2)
Pam Marsh
Leandra Allen
Fran English

Edie Parker
Nellie Namwali
Guy and Marty St. John (2)
Sue Galassi
Gwen Lofgren
Harry and Bonnie Shaffer
Sue Marsh
Dave Wojcicki
Dave Dunlap
Judy Eaton
Dixie Thurin

Thanks for a job well done!



Merry Christmas and a Happy Healthy New Year!