

The Celtic Cross

May 2010

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Letter from the Co-Pastors

Danielle Buchanan...

Zachary Burkhart...

Connor Ferreri...

Charlotte Jamieson...

A.J. Lewis...

Joe MacDonald...

Cecilia Roseo...

Caroline Stacks...

We hope these names are familiar to you! They are the names of the members of our confirmation class, the young people who are approaching the most important day of their lives, their Confirmation Day, Sunday, May 23. On that day, they will claim the promises made at their baptism, and freely confess for themselves their faith in Jesus Christ. On that day, they will declare before God, and you, God's people, 'whose side they are on.' And from that day, they will go forth in a new relationship with God, companions of Christ, *disciples*.

These young people do not come to this day glibly or carelessly. They have been preparing for it for a long time — all their lives, really — in Sunday School classes, in worship, in Vacation Bible School, in Mission Mornings, youth groups, through conversations at their mothers' and fathers' knee.

But most recently, they have been preparing for it earnestly in confirmation classes, where they have pondered how God works in the world, and what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ. They have heard about the covenant people who have gone before them; they have visited the ministries of covenant people in the presbytery of Philadelphia; they have shared in the work of the covenant people of this congregation through ministry projects with their shepherds; and they have contributed to the kingdom of God through their stewardship projects. (They will report on these efforts to you during the coffee hour on Confirmation Day— stay tuned!)

Soon, they will go on retreat with their shepherds, and make space for the Holy Spirit to direct and inspire them as they write their own statements of faith. This is not an easy thing to do, to put into words the things that are deepest and highest in us. But they will do it, and on Wednesday, May 19, they will come before the elders of the church and express what it means to them believe in Jesus Christ and be his disciple.

They need your help (don't we all?!). Please pray for them: that the Holy Spirit will move powerfully and visibly in them; that the grace of Christ will wash over them in unforgettable ways; that they will know themselves to be in the grip of God who will never let them go, and they will forever hold on tight. And come celebrate with them in worship on their confirmation day.

See you in church,

Kerry and Carter

Worship Matters

Sunday School at 9:15; Worship at 10:30

May 2	Celebration of the Lord's Supper Tim Detweiler, clarinetist
May 9	Service of the Lord's Day Cherub and Celtic Choirs sing Reception of New Members
May 16	Service of the Lord's Day
May 23	Pentecost Sunday Confirmation Class Presented and Received into Membership
May 30	Service of the Lord's Day

Music Notes

This spring the Chancel Choir has presented many new and varied styles of sacred music. During May we will continue in this vein by singing the newly arranged spiritual, "Lord, I Know I Been Changed" on May 2nd. On Mother's Day, we will sing the lovely, "Simple Praise," by Craig Courtney. May 16th will inspire with the delightful "Just A Closer Walk With Thee," and on Confirmation Sunday, we will sing, "The Plans I Have for You." On May 30th, Memorial Day Sunday, the choir will present the majestic, "This is My Song," based on the hymn tune, "Finlandia."

The Handbell Choir will end their season with the stunning, "A Joyful Noise." The bell choir has continued to grow in ability this year and has made me proud on many occasions. We may have an opening in the bell choir, so if you are interested, please contact me early this summer.

I would like to thank Gary James, Paul Smith, Dan Foust, and Scott Sample for adding to the Easter services with their talents. I would also like to thank Tim Detweiler for accompanying the Handbell Choir and playing the prelude on April 18th. Also, many thanks to those in the Chancel Choir who helped with all the break downs and set ups for our many Lent and Easter services.

One Joyful Choir is back and is scheduled for next November. If you are interested in singing with this all choir made up of singers from the 140 churches in our Philadelphia Presbytery, please see me for a schedule of rehearsals and a sign-up form.

I will be arranging the summer music schedule this month. If you would like to sing during a service or play an instrument in a service, please call or email me soon. Spaces are limited and all ages are welcome. May you always have a song in your heart!

—Diane Land, Music Director

Upcoming Events

All Daughters' Banquet, Sunday May 2 at 5 p.m.

Remember all the wonderful hours you spent playing with your beloved doll? Where is she now? Please bring her to this year's All Daughters' Banquet dressed in her finest. Perhaps you will even want to dress alike! How old is she? What is her country of birth? Any stories to share? Bring your dolls, whether they are antiques or "American Girls" or anything in between.

We will have a guest speaker who grew up with dolls at Mary Merritt's Doll Museum. It will be a great time for the females in the church to get together for fellowship and great food. The Fun and Fellowship Committee will provide dinner (there will be a free will offering). Guests and family members are welcome! But please sing up so that we know how many are coming!

(Remember— "All Daughters" includes all girls and women, not just mothers with daughters because all women are daughters. We have one "All Sons" and one "All Daughters" event in alternate years.)

Strawberry Fest, Sunday, June 13 Following Worship

Strawberries, ice cream and cake—what a great way to begin the summer! Following the 10:30 a.m. worship service on Sunday, June 13, come downstairs to Fellowship Hall for some delicious refreshments. This event, sponsored by the Deacons, will provide a time for fellowship before the beginning of the summer schedule and vacations.

Vacation Bible School, August 11-15—Sign up Now

Children ages 4 yrs to 7th grade are invited to come to "**Living Waters**" VBS. Following from our congregation's newest mission, Clean Water U, Children in VBS will be exploring the gift of clean water and how to bring it to people around the world who don't have the clean water they need. We will explore God's gift of water through song, crafts, games, and stories. A new track has also been added for rising 6th and 7th graders. They will be doing their own special project through the week, converting contaminated water to clean, hearing about the upcoming Honduras trip, and being in contact with kids who have become healthy by gaining access to clean water.

Cost is \$10 per child but no more than \$20 per family. Look for sign up sheets on the Sunday School bulletin board and in the Sunday bulletin.

Mission Mornings, August 2-6

Jr. Seekers, this week is for you! We'll be headed to Kirkwood, Barth Elementary, a Mennonite community, and of course our very own church to do some hands on construction, cleaning, and relationship building! See Liv to sign up.

Summer Gardening Sign-Ups

Please volunteer for two weeks this summer to weed and water as needed to help us maintain our church gardens. Sign up on the church bulletin board.

Christian Education Opportunities

Adult Education Opportunities

- **Forum (Community Room) A Potpourri of Great Topics**

May 2: “What’s In a Funeral?” Speaker: Kerry

Kerry will talk about the Christian funeral, why we do what we do, and some of the choices that we will face when we are working with the church to plan a funeral for a loved one.

May 9: “Things You Don’t Know About Switzerland” Speaker: Paul Lepard

Paul Lepard, who along with Marian, has made many trips to Switzerland will share some of his breathtaking photographs and tell you things you don’t know about Switzerland, the birthplace of Presbyterianism.

May 16: “The Story of Iona” Speaker: Carter

See and hear about the dramatic story of the rebuilding of Iona Abbey and the Christian community which lives there now on the western coast of Scotland.

May 23: “Pottstown Portraits” Speaker: Mike Snyder

Mike Snyder, author of the recently published *Remembering Pottstown: Historic Tales of a Pennsylvania Borough*, will share some interesting stories about our Pottstown past.

- **Faith and Relationships Class (Library)** Teachers: Sharon Trevoy, Debbie Remelius, and Rob Wade. **Topic: “Faith and Film”** Join us as we view and discuss clips from films such as *The Passion, Atonement, and Amazing Grace*.
- **Men’s Sunday Mornings (Pastors’ Conference Room)** Teacher: Bernarr Rhoades
Topic: “ A Perfect Life that Changed Eternity”
- **Sacred Space for Women (Mary Ann Yost room)** Teacher: Amy Shutt.
Topic: “That’s What the Man Said” We continue our study on some of the most important words of Jesus using a devotional commentary by Maxie Dunham.

Weekday Opportunities

- **Thursday Women’s Bible Study:** Meets on May 6 and 20 from 9:30–10:30.
Teachers: Max Creswell and Ron Gower
- **Women’s Bible Study:** 9:15-10:45 a.m. every Thursday. Teacher: Kerry
- **Evening Bible Study:** 7:30—8:30 PM on Tuesday, May 4 and 18. Teacher: Carter
- **Praying the Scriptures Group (Lectio Divina)** 7:30—8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 11 and 25. Teacher: Kerry
- **Moms’ Circle:** Wednesday mornings, May 19, 9:15 to 10:30 a.m.
Teacher: Kerry. Childcare provided.
- **Theology Reading Group** Monday, June 7 at 7 p.m. at Carter and Kerry’s house. We are reading Mere Christianity. Questions? - contact Carter.

Music and Recreation

We are singing two more times this year! Mother's Day, May 9th and Music Appreciation Day, June 13th. Come ready to sing!!!!

There will be **no Music and Rec** on May 19th or 26th.

Confirmation Class Dates to Remember

Wednesday, May 19, 7:30 p.m. Meet with the Session

Sunday, May 23, 10:30 a.m. Worship Confirmation Sunday

Seekers News

Junior Seekers

Saturday, May 8th- French Creek- We'll head down for the afternoon for games, splashing in the water, and some good old fashion relaxing in the sun. In case of rain we will have a movie party at the church. RSVP- Liv

Sunday, May 16th- the "Painting of Hands"- 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. RSVP- Lipsky

Senior Seekers

Friday, May 7th- Reading Phillies! Meet at the church at 6:00 p.m.

Coming in June

Junior/Senior Seeker and Advisor End of Year Picnic Friday, June 13, 6:30—8:00 p.m. at Carter and Kerry's house

We will gather at Carter and Kerry's house for outside fun and then eat!!! We will say good-bye to graduating senior seekers and good-bye and hello to eighth graders rising to ninth grade. **RSVP to the church office. If it rains, we will move it to the church.** More details will be coming in a mailing to your house and in the June *Celtic Cross*.

Workcamp Participants—Mandatory Meeting Sunday, June 13, 8:00—8:45 p.m.

All Seekers going on this year's workcamp and parents of first-time participants need to attend this meeting to learn details about this year's trip and sign the covenant and other paperwork. **This meeting is mandatory.** Contact Liv or a senior high advisor if you think you have a really, really good reason for missing the meeting.

Fellowship

ALL DAUGHTERS' PARTY—Sunday, May 2 at 5 p.m.

See the details on p. 3

PRIMETIMERS—“Joseph,” Tuesday, May 18

PrimeTimers and friends are carpooling and leaving from the church parking lot at 11:15 a.m. to travel to the Sight and Sound Theater in Lancaster County for the 1:00 p.m. show of “Joseph.” See all of the details on the church bulletin board.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY, Tuesday, May 11, 7 p.m.

Come join us in the Library as we knit together so that those going through tough times might feel wrapped in God's love. All are welcome. If you have any questions, contact Jane Barndt.

MEN'S BREAKFAST, May 8, 8 a.m.

Join Carter and the guys for the final Men's Breakfast until September. We meet for breakfast, fellowship, and a devotion at 8 a.m. and are finished by 9 a.m.

Deacons Bench—Thank You!

Thanks For All Those Who Turned Out for the Workday on Sat., Mar. 27

Many thanks for all those who turned out to spruce up our grounds, mulch the beds, and clean up the kitchen for this year's Deacons' Workday: Rick & Sue Moyer, Debbie, Fred & Caroline Remelius, Dave & Doreen Duncan, Barb Albright & Tim Peckham, Rob & Eileen Wade, Kathy Benning, Sharon & Chris Trevoy, Lynn Reichenbach, John Genter, Joel Neiss, Dick Clark, Herb Barndt, Sharon & Kurt Holloway, Sharon & Matt Sgricca, Carter Lester, Bill Wilson, Andy Lane, Marcia Zeigler, Jeanette Feroe, Marilyn Becker, Ginny Bleyer, Ted Vogt, Rob Bostwick, Dominic and Ruth Ann DeRenzo, and Jane Barndt. Special thanks to Cindy Barndt, who coordinated her sixth workday on behalf of the Deacons, and to the parents and cub scouts of Pack 146: Mike & Alex Ziemba, Tammie, Austin, Julia & Nathan Scavello, Michael Sr & Michael Jr Prior, Diane & Ryan Vargo, Jim & Patrick Brennan, Carlos Lopez, Crystal Johnson, Ethan Youse

Thanks from Miller Keystone for Our Blood Drive:

The Deacons recently received a letter from Miller Keystone which began, “On behalf of everyone at Miller-Keystone Blood Center, as well as our 18 community hospitals and the patients that they serve, I would like to thank you for your outstanding efforts in coordinating the March 23rd blood drive sponsored by the First Presbyterian Church.”

We had 27 registered donors, collected 25 units, which Miller Keystone calculates **saved 75 lives!** Thanks to all who contributed on March 23. **Our next blood drive at the church will be July 27.**

Branches of the Vine

OUR BARTH PARTNERSHIP

The 2009-2010 school year has marked the 13th year in partnership with E.B. Barth Elementary School in Pottstown. Our pilot program, "One Child, One Hour, Once a Week," pairs a struggling student in the third, fourth, or fifth grade with an adult mentor.

Mentors meet with their students for one hour one day a week and may complete homework assignments, review basic skills, read, etc. Most importantly, our mentors provide their student with the personal interest, concern and undivided attention of a caring adult. One of our members even helped two students write a letter to President Obama — and they received a reply!

Over the years, our partnership has grown to include fourth and fifth grade book groups, sponsorship of the in-school jobs program, the after-school art and keyboard programs, the Barth Bulldogs (a leadership club for fifth grade boys), and the highly anticipated annual Barth Peacemaker Award, which will be awarded on May 18. You can meet the Bulldogs in the Forum class on June 13, and hear about what you have helped them do and learn this year through your support.

Blessings and opportunities abound at this little elementary school, tucked in a neighborhood in Stowe. And new volunteers are always welcome. Please contact Karen Keiser if you are interested in being a partner in our partnership.

Church Family News

Please keep in your prayers the following members who have been ill or hospitalized lately: **Ted Vogt**, Elaine Siever, Flossie Schumacher, Dick Ludwick, Nancy Bicksler, Jan Rose, and Tierra Dobry.

We celebrate the birth of **Coulson Kenneth Lee**, child of God and son of Holly and Ken Lee and brother of Teagan.

We offer our condolences to **the family of Eloise Workman who died recently.**

Thank you for a job well done to outgoing elders, **Jim Short, Barbara Fletcher, Susan Moyer, and Ginny Bleyer**, and to outgoing Deacons, **Rosie Roseo, Cndy Barndt, Jeffrey MacDonald, Barbara Atkinson, Ruth Ann DeRenzo, and Lynn Reichenbach**, as well as youth deacons, **Victoria Remelius and Christopher Trevoy.**

Thank you to **JoAnn Bathurst**, and the members of the Fun and Fellowship Committee for organizing this year's "**Star Studded Night**," and congratulations to our favorite couple #16, Kerry and Henri.

Session Digest

At its April meeting, the Session:

- Shared joys and concerns.
- Joyfully heard the statements of faith of new elder Chad Stacks and new deacons, Nola Oladipo, Bob Geyer, Sandy Allebach, Dave Weller, Becca Fulmer, and Will Shutt, and heard what they learned during officer training. The Session unanimously approved their “examination.” Newly elected elders and deacons will be installed in worship on Sunday, April 25.
- Ratified the appointment of Barbara Longstreth on the Martha Porter Mission Tithing Taskforce who was inadvertently left off the list at last month’s meeting. The Taskforce will have its first meeting on May 17.
- Approved Kerry being away for study leave May 11 to 15 in Montreat, North Carolina.
- Approved Carter taking study leave at McCormick Seminary in Chicago, Illinois on May 24-28.
- Approved celebration of the Lord’s Supper on the Confirmation Retreat on May 1.
- Approved Liv Stewart Robertson preaching in worship on June 20. Kerry and Carter will also be present.
- Approved a partial list of committee chairs for the new year: Administrative: Scott Sample, Christian Education: Donna Hutchison, Hospitality: Tom Zeigler, Mission: Barbara Longstreth, Nominating: Rob Wade, and Personnel: Andy Lane (Donna Hutchison, Session liaison).
- Heard from Liv that volunteers have been recruited to join her in leading the Children and Worship program for the children leaving worship after the Children’s Sermon.
- Reviewed the financial reports and allocated the monthly amount owed to Mission.
- Reviewed the investment policy statement that will guide the church’s investment advisor, Glenmeade as recommended by the Endowment Committee and approved the statement.
- Reviewed and approved the recommended changes to the Endowment Policy made in light of the adoption of the Glenmeade Investment Policy Statement.
- Approved receipt of the Pentecost offering.
- Approved a confirmand having a bake sale as part of her “kingdom stewardship project” for confirmation.
- Heard that sidewalk and curbing outside of the main entrance will be repaired and replaced, and that repairs are to be made to the flat roof.
- Expressed gratitude for those elders rotating off Session: Sue Moyer, Barb Fletcher, Jim Short, and Ginny Bleyer..
- Received written or oral reports from the Deacons and the Endowment, Worship, Administrative, Fellowship, Christian Education, Personnel, Hospitality, and Mission committees.
- Prayer requests by the Committee chairs: Hospitality: For our new member class; Administrative: Guidance for upcoming property projects; Fellowship: For continued enthusiasm; Mission: For the timing to be worked out for the investigative trip to Honduras for the “Living Waters for the World” project; Christian Education: Thanksgiving for our teachers, for a good close to the Sunday School year, and for volunteers for summer VBS; Worship: For Pentecost and the end of year worship. Prayers are also asked for Kate Lester who meets with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the Presbytery as she continues to move towards ordination.

Financial Reports

General Fund (through March 31)

Budgeted income for the year:	473,060
Budgeted income through Mar. 31:	118,265
Actual income through Mar. 31:	105,719
Income this time last year:	112,593
Budgeted expenses for the year:	473,060
Budgeted expenses through Mar. 31:	117,548
Actual expenses through Mar. 31:	107,792
Expenses this time last year:	116,244
Deficit to date:	(6,970)
Deficit this time last year:	(12,818)

Update from the Administrative Committee Concerning Property Repairs

Perhaps you have noticed some repair work needed or going on around the church:

- We had a leak near the electric box in the sanctuary one Saturday in March. (Thanks to Jim Burkhart for responding to it!). The Committee has talked to a contractor about replacing the mortar joints in the steeple, replacing a broken gutter, and caulking and sealing the stone in the steeple to prevent future leaks.
 - The flat roof also needs patching and repairing which should be undertaken shortly.
 - The Evans Street door is to be sanded and painted. We will also have our painter take care of painting where there has been damage to the paint because of leaks.
 - The front curbs and sidewalk outside the main damage of the church have been damaged by salt in the winters and from settling of a portion of the sidewalk. These sidewalks and curbs are to be repaired at an approximate cost of \$2000.
 - The drains in the lower parking lot were damaged this year from the snowplows and will be repaired.
 - Suppressors were added to the electrical system to help deter lightning from damaging the organ and electrical system in the church.
 - At the recommendation of the Energy Use Taskforce, an energy audit is being conducted by a contractor who specializes in such matters.
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Something to Consider About Visiting Nursing Services

When you or a loved one are discharged from a hospital, there is often a need for visiting nurse services. While most hospitals have their own visiting nursing services and may steer patients towards their own agency, all patients are entitled to choose whatever visiting nurse agency they want to choose. There are a number of worthy for-profit and non-profit agencies. If you ever have any questions about one such agency, the non-profit Visiting Nurse Association of Pottstown, please do not hesitate to contact Carter or church members, Jean Hollenbach, and Jim Short, all of whom serve on its board.

Lectionary Readings

Here are readings for each week. These readings coincide with the daily meditations in the *Disciplines 2010* devotional book distributed by the Christian Education Committee in December and January. If you would like a copy, contact the church office. Kerry and Carter usually preach from one of the texts listed for each week.

For the week of May 2-9:

Acts 11: 1-18, Psalm 148, Rev. 21: 1-6, John 13: 31-35

For the week of May 9-16

Acts 16: 9-15, Psalm 67, Rev. 21 10, John 24: 23-29

For the week of May 16-23

Acts 26: 16-34, Psalm 97, Rev. 22: 12-14, John 17: 20-26

For the week of May 23-30

Acts 2: 1-21, Psalm 104: 24-34, Romans 8: 14-17, John 14: 8-17

For the week of May 30-June 6

Proverbs 8: 1-4, 22-31, Psalm 8, Romans 5: 1-5, John 16: 12-15

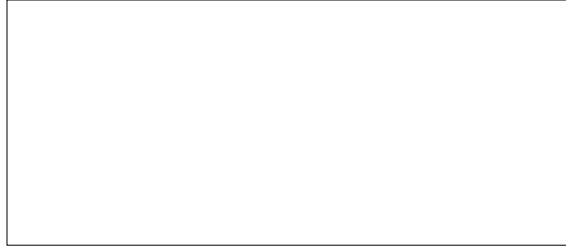
Reading the Bible: A Daily Discipline

Here are some suggestions that have helped other Christians find a daily rhythm for prayer and reading the Scriptures:

1. Find a regular place and time for your devotions. Whether in the morning, evening, at lunch, or at some other time, finding a regular time helps. Our lives can get so busy and it is always easy to let other activities crowd out our daily devotions, so having a regular time to plan the rest of our day around can make a difference.
2. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you before you begin to read.
3. Take your time. Read the passage through slowly and more than once. Reflect in silence on the passage.
4. What does this passage tell you about Jesus or God? What do you learn about human nature? About how we are to live—as a church and as individuals?
5. As you read the passage, is there a phrase or image that catches your attention? Spend a few moments repeating that phrase or reflecting on that image. How does it speak to your life? What is God saying to you through this phrase or image?
6. Many people find keeping a journal helpful. In it you can write a verse or phrase that you want to remember, or write out some of your thoughts and questions concerning the passage. Is there a phrase or image that you want to memorize or take with you through the day?
7. If you have questions, save them for the end. Perhaps a commentary in the church library can help—or you can talk to the pastors.
8. Join a Bible study—it is great to have other Christians to grapple together with the Scriptures!

May 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>Every Sunday: 9:15 a.m. Sunday School for all ages 10:30 a.m. Worship</p>						<p>1 Confirmation Retreat @ Camp Innabah</p>
<p>2 Communion 9:15 a.m. Inquirers' Class All Daughters' Banquet 5:00 p.m.</p>	<p>3 Cubs 7 PM</p>	<p>4 Bible Study 7:30</p>	<p>5 M/R 4:30 Prayer 7:15 Commit-tees 7:30</p>	<p>6 Sisters Bible 9:15 Ladies Bible 9:30 Comm Meal 5 Bells 6:30 Girl Scouts 7:00 Choir 7:30</p>	<p>7 6:00 p.m. Senior Seekers to Reading Phillies Game</p>	<p>8 Men's Breakfast 8 a.m. Jr. Seekers to French Creek</p>
<p>9 Mother's Day 9:45 a.m. Session Mtg. Inquirers' Class joins</p>	<p>10 Cubs 7 p.m.</p>	<p>11 Girl Scouts Dinner 5 p.m. Lectio Prayer Group 7:30</p>	<p>12 M/R 4:30 Deacons 7:30</p>	<p>13 Sisters Bible 9:15 Comm. Meal 5:00 Bells 6:30 Girl Scouts 7:00 Choir 7:30</p>	<p>14 Jr. Seekers Lock-in till Saturday morning</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16 6:30 p.m. Jr. Seekers</p>	<p>17 Cubs 7 PM Martha Porter Trust Tithe Meeting 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>18 Primer Timers to see "Joseph" 1 p.m. Bible Study 7:30</p>	<p>19 Moms' 9:15 M/R 4:30 Session 7:30 Confirmands meet with Session</p>	<p>20 Sisters Bible 9:15 Ladies Bible 9:30 (last one) Meal 5:00 Bells 6:30 Girl Scouts 7:00 Choir 7:30</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23 Pentecost Confirmation Day</p>	<p>24 Cubs 7 p.m.</p>	<p>25 Presbytery Meeting @ Lutheran Seminary—10 a.m.</p>	<p>26 M/R 4:30 Comp. Friends 7:30 p.m.</p>	<p>27 Bible Study 9:15 Comm. Meal 5:00 Choir 7:30</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>



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