



# CALVIN CHATTER

The Newsletter of the First Presbyterian Church, Winchester, Virginia  
*Serving Christ & Neighbor in the Heart of Winchester since 1800*

Vol. 41, No. 2

February 2010

[www.firstchurch-winchester.org](http://www.firstchurch-winchester.org)

## Old-Fashioned Hymn Sing

*To benefit the Building Fund*

By Pat Ritchie

Following some Shenandoah Valley traditions, we're holding a special Old-Fashioned Hymn Sing and Fellowship "Supper" on Sunday, February 28, at 12N in the Fellowship Hall. A free-will offering will be received to benefit the Building Fund.



The "old-fashioned" part will be a 110-year-old pump organ as the musical instrument of the day to play your favorites, such as "Church in the Wildwood," "Leaning on the Everlasting Arms," "Count Your

Blessings," and more. In addition, we'll have a "Pounding." A pounding is an old tradition of bringing a pound of food, usually for the preacher. In this case, we'll pound for CCAP.

At our Hymn Sing, we'll take turns playing the organ and leading singing.

**What's the menu?** Traditional valley church foods will be served for lunch—sloppy joes, fried chicken, deviled eggs, pickles, macaroni and cheese, green beans, pimento cheese sandwiches, baked beans, and more.

**What are your favorite old hymns?** Suggest your favorite before February 21 to be sure we have music for it at the Hymn Sing. To find out our *most* favorite hymn, we'll "vote" for our

favorite through a donation jar—a dollar per vote, for the Building Fund.

### What are ways you can help with this event?

- Set up the room for lunch after New Stone service.
- Bring food or donate food.
- Suggest your favorite hymns.
- Come on February 28<sup>th</sup> for fellowship and food.
- Wash dishes and clean up afterwards.
- Donate to the Building Fund.

Contact **Dan** and **Pat Ritchie** at 662-1475 or [patritchie@verizon.net](mailto:patritchie@verizon.net) to help with the Hymn Sing and Fellowship Supper.



## Bagging It for the Building Fund

**Pat** and **Dan Ritchie** exceeded their goal of raising \$10,000 for the building fund in January. They raised \$10,222, to be exact. They reached that goal \$6 at a time by preparing bag lunches once a month for sale to the congregation. Many thanks are due Pat and Dan for their significant achievement, as well as kudos for being an inspiration to others to find creative ways to help reduce the building debt. Thanks as well to the many people who helped them reach their goal by donating food, water and time and, of course, by buying all those delicious lunches!

## Focus on Mission: Haiti

By Dave Thalman

### *We pray for Haiti*

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,  
As the eyes of the world turn to Haiti, let us join  
our hearts in prayer:

God of compassion,  
Please watch over the people of Haiti,  
And weave out of these terrible happenings  
wonders of goodness and grace.  
Surround those who have been affected by  
tragedy

With a sense of your present love,  
And hold them in faith.

Though they are lost in grief,  
May they find you and be comforted;  
Guide us as a church

To find ways of providing assistance  
that heals wounds and provides hope.

Help us to remember that when one of your  
children suffer

We all suffer

Through Jesus Christ who was dead, but lives  
and rules this world with you. Amen.

*(Adapted from Book of Common Worship)*



Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) has issued an emergency appeal for Haiti, where a major earthquake that struck the country on Tuesday, January 12 has affected millions of people.

## PDA Response

PDA is rushing an initial \$100,000 from One Great Hour of Sharing and designated funds to help provide immediate emergency relief to the affected people. Funds are being sent through our ecumenical and local partners working in Haiti.

PC(USA) mission co-worker **Carlos Cardenas** is joining an ecumenical team through the Action by Churches Together (ACT) Alliance going to Haiti to help with the response and needs assessments.

## What you can do

**GIVE.** The generous sharing of your financial blessings through the One Great Hour of Sharing offering and special designated giving provide resources needed to assist with immediate and long-term recovery needs.

Individuals may give through your local congregation, on the secure PC(USA) website, or by sending a check to: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700. Please include the special designated giving account DR000064 – Haiti.

**ACT.** Stay informed. Sign up to receive PDA-RIN email notices to alert you of additional needs.

First Presbyterian has sent a supply of hygiene kits to Church World Service. Be attentive to Sunday announcements for more information about needs.

**PRAY.** Please continue in prayer for all who have who lost friends and families, those who lost homes, and those seeking a sense of security after being affected by this tragic earthquake. Remember, too, to pray for relief workers, who are witnesses to the devastation and pain of the people they are there to assist.



## **Focus on Mission: Where Are Our Mission Programs Going in 2010?**

By Dave Thalman

As disciples of Christ, we are called to be servants to each other in this congregation and to our neighbors in our community and the world. Christian people often play leadership roles in many groups that serve others, especially those with special needs or who are on the margins of society. Many people speak of the way that their personal faith journey has been strengthened through service to others.

First Presbyterian Church has a long history of reaching out to our community. Highlights of our history include establishing the Free Medical Clinic and the Weekday School, sponsoring Highland Memorial, Sherando and Sunnyside churches, maintaining Old Stone, creating Jubilee Kitchen, and building a house for Habitat for Humanity. In 2000 when reviewing our vision for the future, we decided it was very important to remain a “downtown church” to be part of the central community that we serve. Since that decision, we have restored 12 E. Cork, Donegal House, and Hill’s Keep. And now we have a great new facility that is busy hosting church and community activities throughout the week. We are also increasing our involvement in mission beyond Winchester. Here is a quick summary of the areas where we will be involved this year. We hope there is an activity here that calls to you to help with our growing ministry as we *“serve Christ and neighbor in the heart of Winchester and beyond.”*

As part of the downtown Winchester community, we will give our time, talents, and treasure in service to others. Here is a quick summary of the organizations where we will provide financial and volunteer support this year.

- Jubilee Kitchen – established and coordinated by our congregation, it serves a hot meal to those in need on 50 Saturdays during the year.

- Four-Cents-a-Meal – normally collected in church on the fourth Sunday of each month, it goes to feeding the hungry in our community.
- Congregational Community Action Project (CCAP) – provides assistance to those unable to meet their daily needs.
- Winchester Area Temporary Thermal Shelter (WATTS) – a new ministry sheltering the homeless and providing two daily hot meals during January and February.
- Boys and Girls Club – provides after-school programs that meet the recreational, cultural, educational, and health needs of our most vulnerable and challenged children.
- Boy and Cub Scouts – First Church is the institutional sponsor for Troop 2 and Pack 2, which meet in our facilities.
- Faith in Action – provides transportation to medical appointments and treatments for those who want to remain independent but can no longer drive themselves.
- Free Medical Clinic – assists with medical needs for those without insurance and who are unable to afford private care.
- Fremont Street Nursery – provides quality, affordable preschool and day care on the north side of Winchester.
- Habitat for Humanity – builds decent, affordable housing.
- Highland Memorial Presbyterian Church – offers pastoral care and a food pantry to the north Winchester community.
- Laurel Center – works to end sexual and domestic violence by providing emergency shelter, hospital companionship, and crisis intervention.
- Literacy Volunteers of America – provides tutors and materials to help teach adults to read and write.
- Volunteer Emergency Families for Children – helps children and youth in crisis. VEFC recruits, trains and supports volunteers who provide short-term shelter care and mentoring to abused, neglected, runaway, homeless and at-risk children and youth throughout Virginia.

*Continued on page 4*

- Winchester Day Nursery – provides affordable, quality day care for special needs children.
- Winchester Child-Parent Center – helps to prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Winchester Union Rescue Mission – expresses Christ's love to men in the community by providing food, shelter, spiritual guidance, and vocational instruction, thus enabling them to reclaim a productive role in the community.
- Westminster-Canterbury – First Church provides pastoral support to this retirement community for Bible study and worship services, including communion.

In addition we will continue to provide the love of Christ through our Prayer, Pastoral Care, Visitation, Parish Nursing, and Stephen Ministry teams for those in our congregation and beyond who need personal support.

Beyond Winchester, we will continue to support these vital activities:

- Shenandoah Presbytery - care of pastors, disaster response, hunger programs, peacemaking, and the Presbytery's 20-year partnership with the Illubabor Bethel Synod in Ethiopia.
- Presbyterian conference centers – financial support to Massanetta Springs and Montreat.
- Ethiopia Partnerships – furthering relationships with our partner congregations in Mettu and Ketta, providing scholarships for worship and music leaders, supporting annual visits, funding for their ministry to widows and orphans in Mettu, and assistance to a medical clinic.
- Guatemala – continuing to build relationships and learning about how we can serve by conducting our second mission trip and participating in the Faith Stories project with the women of the Presbyterian Church of Guatemala.
- Central Asia – continuing to support the general work of Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship and specific support to a mission worker in Central Asia.
- Missionaries – continuing support for three PC(USA) mission co-workers. These include

Drs. **Les and Cindy Morgan** in Bangladesh and **Karla Koll** in Guatemala. We will soon decide on a replacement for **Bruce Whearty** who was forced to return to the U.S. from Ethiopia for medical reasons.

We are interested in connecting concerned volunteers with agencies that can use your support. Service is more than writing a check. Many of us who have volunteered have had the amazing experience from mission service that we always felt that we came away with more than we gave. In many cases we as a congregation have connected with these areas of service because one or several persons who were passionate about a cause stepped up and developed a service opportunity. Please let us know about areas where you would like to become more involved. We are always looking for new ideas. Our pastors and elders on the Ministry Council, **Dave Thalman** and **Susan Kagey**, can connect you with existing service opportunities or talk about new areas that need our attention. We thank you for your dedicated support of the needs of the Winchester community and invite you to experience the joy of giving your time and talents to help others.



## RING THOSE BELLS

The Men's Group of First Presbyterian Church rang the Salvation Army bells for their kettle drive Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. The total collection for their effort was \$378.44. When factoring in the cost of a paid ringer, the net result realized by the Army was \$453.



A THANK YOU is extended to the following First Presbyterian men who volunteered their time to the cause: **Jules Bacha, Ward Edwards, Art Olson, Bob Pierce, Pete Shull, Joe Cook, Bill Brumback, Ed Bell, Doug Butler, Dave Burkes and George Stickley**. Thank you, gentlemen!

## “Learning Forgiveness”: A Lenten Study

*Thursdays from 12N to 1 p.m. in the  
Graham Room*

Lent, a season of penitence and reflection in the Christian liturgical year, begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17. The traditional First Church Lenten luncheon study, led by **Dan McCoig**, begins Thursday, February 18, in the Graham Room and will meet every Thursday from 12N to 1 p.m. through March 25. Each participant is asked to bring his or her own lunch.

Marjorie Thompson, author of *Soulfeast*, wrote the study “Learning Forgiveness.” An outline of the six-week study provides an overview of each session:

**Session One:** The goal of this session is to welcome participants and encourage them to begin reflecting on forgiveness in relation to human community. Parables and folk tales are used to illustrate challenges faced by the need to forgive—and to be forgiven.

**Session Two:** This session addresses awareness, acknowledgment, and confession as the foundation for seeking and receiving forgiveness. Self-examination allows us to look more objectively at our urge to judge others.

**Session Three:** In this session we’ll learn to identify some of our external and internal enemies and begin to move toward loving them. When we begin to see ourselves standing with those who have fallen into the seduction of sin, it casts a whole new light on what it means to pray for our enemies.

**Session Four:** The goals of this session are to identify at least one thing for which we need forgiveness and to seek both God’s forgiveness and that of any person(s) affected by our offense. We’ll consider how to reconcile divine judgment with divine love as we explore the deeper spirit of repentance, one of the key practices of Lent.

**Session Five:** The sense in most New Testament teachings is that forgiving others is imperative—

not optional. What if we can’t forgive? Or we’re simply not ready to forgive? This session uses touching stories of forgiveness to illuminate these challenging themes.

**Session Six:** Many people believe that forgiveness is not possible without repentance and that to offer forgiveness before repentance is a travesty of just, accountable relationships. But what of Jesus’ willingness to forgive on the cross? Can we reverse the conventional relationship between repentance and forgiveness?

Persons who wish to participate are encouraged to register with Dan no later than February 15 so that he can ensure an adequate room is available. The lesson handouts can be downloaded at [www.firstchurch-winchester.org/ministries\\_education.php](http://www.firstchurch-winchester.org/ministries_education.php).



## WATTS Week a Success

First Church served as host to the Winchester Area Temporary Thermal Shelter (WATTS) the week of January 11-17, providing shelter and meals to 9 to 16 guests per night. As one of eight congregations in the Winchester area to host the shelter for one week this winter, First Church provided not only shelter but also 70 volunteers who signed up to help by registering guests, preparing and serving breakfast and dinner, and visiting with guests. **Shannon Brannon** did a phenomenal job of securing and organizing the volunteers. The Valley Nursing Association provided nurses, Westminster-Canterbury provided laundry services, and Habitat for Humanity provided transportation.

Our guests were all men of a wide range of ages, several were veterans, and some were employed. During their stay in the Rumble Room downstairs, they enthusiastically put together 100 hygiene packets for the Haiti relief effort.

In light of the successful week, Session has approved participation as a host church for a second week in March, if needed.

## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

By Paula Wahlman

Many of you may not know what Presbyterian Women are or what we do. Any woman who is a member of the congregation is automatically a member of Presbyterian Women. We presently have four active circles, which meet the second Monday or Tuesday of each month except for July, August and December, for fellowship and Bible study. Lasting friendships are formed among the women in these groups.

A portion of our offerings each month is given to support a particular organization. The following are groups that we are supporting this year:

- ✝ AIDS Response Effort
- ✝ Blue Ridge Hospice
- ✝ Boys and Girls Club
- ✝ CCAP
- ✝ Evans Children's Home
- ✝ Free Medical Clinic
- ✝ Fremont Street Nursery
- ✝ Laurel Center
- ✝ Winchester Day Nursery

In addition to helping these listed groups, Presbyterian Women participate in the Fellowship of the Least Coin and the Fair Trade Coffee project, fill requests from the Western State Hospital for various items for their patients at Christmas, coordinate the CCAP Christmas Tree project and provide financial aid to the Salvation Army at Christmas. We have held bazaars selling lovely hand-embroidered cloths, baskets and other items made by the women in our sister congregation in Mettu, Ethiopia, and returned the proceeds to them.

At the birthday celebration of Presbyterian Women celebrated in May each year, an honorary life membership is awarded to a person who has made a significant impact on the women and the church. Books are chosen to be placed in our library each year in memory of women of the congregation who have passed away during the previous year.

In the fall, Presbyterian Women collect a Thank offering. For the past several years, this offering

has been collected at the congregational Thanksgiving dinner; this past November, CCAP was the recipient of \$6,198 as a result of your generosity.

Circles and activities are open to all women of the congregation. To learn more about Presbyterian Women, contact **Retha Crosen** (662-1427) or **Patty Cather** (667-2851).



### Lent and Holy Week Worship Offerings

#### Ash Wednesday

7:00 p.m. | February 17

Holy Communion and Imposition of Ashes  
Boyd Chapel  
Maren Sonstegard-Spray, preaching

#### Palm Sunday

10:30 a.m. | March 28

Courthouse Lawn on the Old Town Mall  
Blessing of the Palms led by clergy of the congregations in the downtown historic district  
*Sponsored by the Downtown Clergy Fellowship*

#### Maundy Thursday

7:30 p.m. | April 1

Holy Communion  
Sanctuary  
Dan McCoig, preaching

#### Good Friday

12 noon to 3:00 p.m. | April 2

Location and leadership to be announced  
*Sponsored by the Downtown Clergy Fellowship*



## Chapel Time at Weekday School

By Avery Ramspeck

I have the greatest job in the world. I am the chapel coordinator for the Weekday School. As the coordinator, I have the privilege of sharing the Christian faith through Bible stories with children ages 3, 4 and 5 every other week. In chapel, we use Godly Play curriculum, which is the same curriculum used in our preschool Sunday school classes.



*Miss Avery leads the Weekday School chapel.*

Godly Play is a unique curriculum that teaches the language of the Christian faith through a creative and worshipful process. Children are invited to come and play with God. Through the powerful language of scripture, children are encouraged to “wonder” about what happens in a Bible story. The heart of Godly Play is that it does not depend on knowledge, but on personal response and spiritual engagement with God’s word within a supportive and safe community of friends.

A typical Godly Play lesson begins with children entering the room in a quiet, reverent way, ready to worship God. To set the tone, children offer praises to God by lifting their voices in song and responding to the words, “The Lord be with

you”...with, “And also with you.” The children then watch a Bible story unfold on a story mat with wooden figures and other tangible pieces.

Following the story, children respond to “I wonder” questions as they share what they are thinking and feeling. Sometimes, if the story takes place in the desert, we use the “desert box” (a special flat box filled with sand) as the story mat. Each chapel time we have a “feast” (snack) together. Children participate in a responsive liturgy and blessing before opening their napkins to create a “feast table” to enjoy food and fellowship together. (I think this may be their favorite part!) After the feast, children sing a parting hymn before they “Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.”

In most religious education, children are *told* who God is. In Godly Play, children *discover* who God is.



*The children participate in Godly Play to discover who God is.*



**CCAP Sunday**

*3rd Sunday  
of each month*

**February 21**

**SOUPER BOWL  
SUNDAY**

*The youth will be  
collecting canned goods  
for donation to CCAP on  
February 7<sup>th</sup> during all  
services.*

**Four Cents-A-  
Meal Hunger  
Offering**

*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday  
of each month*

**February 28**



**2010 Session  
Council Moderators & Vice Moderators**

**Worship**

Moderator Beverley Simpson  
Vice Moderator Carolyn Rutherford

**Ministry**

Moderator Dave Thalman  
Vice Moderator Susan Kagey

**Evangelism**

Moderator John Fisher  
Vice Moderator Dawn Snow

**Fellowship**

Moderator Chris Oldham  
Vice Moderator Dave Rusch

**Discipleship & Education**

Moderator Dick Creasey  
Vice Moderator Ed Bell

**Administration**

Moderator Dottie Edwards  
Vice Moderator Kathy Ganske

**Facilities**

Moderator Ann Burkholder  
Vice Moderator Jamie Brannon

**Treasurer**

Ron Miller

**Clerk of Session**

Lynn McCauley

**Trustees**

Class of 2010	Betty Burkholder	Class of 2013	Dave Goff
Class of 2011	Randy Bryant	Class of 2014	John Dorsey
Class of 2012	Mike Thompson		



**GUATEMALA MISSION TRIP (February 11-20):  
Prayer Partners Needed**

Participate in the Guatemala mission trip by being a prayer partner for one of the delegation members during the 10-day trip. Travelers are **Sandy Cleaver, Margie Hoffman, Rich Reifsnnyder, Mary Rudolph, Carolyn Thalman, Dave Thalman** and **Jane Vandertoorn**. Please fill out one of the blue prayer cards in the pews or contact Carolyn Thalman ([cjthalman@comcast.net](mailto:cjthalman@comcast.net)) if you have questions.

**Births**

- Dec 15 Laine Elizabeth, daughter of Rebecca (Chezick) and Kevin Nulty, granddaughter of Beverly and Dan Hawkins
- Dec 23 Bodie David, son of Jessica and Adam Swiger, grandson of Linda and Steve Swiger
- Dec 25 Bradley John, son of Tami and Ryan Seabright, grandson of Suzi and Terry Hicks

**Wedding**

- Dec 27 Molly FitzGerald McCoig and William Edwin "Eddie" Bridgeforth, IV

**In Memoriam, with Christian sympathy to the families**

- Jan 5 Ralph Wolfe, father of Sandy Wolfe
- Jan 12 Betty Hancock

**BUILDING FUND/DEBT REDUCTION UPDATE**

<i>Total cost of project</i>	\$7.2 million plus interest
<i>Total received in December on pledges and other contributions</i>	\$156,734 [*]
<i>Amount needed to cover interest only each month</i>	\$12,000
<i>Current total indebtedness</i>	\$2.15 million

[\* \$84,000 of which is the final disbursement from the Holcomb Fund]

**DEADLINE FOR THE March CALVIN CHATTER is February 12.**

Send submissions to [calvin.chatter@verizon.net](mailto:calvin.chatter@verizon.net).

**CALVIN CHATTER**

*Winner of the annual Award for Publication Excellence (APEX) since 1998*

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Founded July 16, 1788; Organized September 7, 1800

Sunday Worship Services 7:30 a.m. (Boyd Chapel), 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

8:30 a.m. New Stone Gathering in Fellowship Hall

Coffee and Cookies 9:30 a.m.; Sunday School 9:45 a.m.

Pastor: The Reverend Dr. Richard W. Reifsnyder

Associate Pastor: The Reverend Dr. Dan M. McCoig, Jr.

Associate Pastor: The Reverend Maren Sonstegard-Spray

Parish Associate: The Reverend Elizabeth Lewis

Children's Ministry Administrator: Stacey Iden

Minister of Music: Roger Callis

Director of Adult Handbell Choirs: Lynn Reifsnyder

Organist: Pat Byers

Music Leader for New Stone Gathering: David Merrill