



First Presbyterian Church of Gulf Shores

NEWSLETTER



"Loving God, Growing in Faith, Sharing Christ's Love"

January 2012

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Winter season 2012 is here! We are so happy to see so many of our winter family back in Gulf Shores already, and more are on the way. We are so blessed every year by the energy, dedication, and loving presence of our winter family. We have been planning for this winter since the end of last winter season, and I think you will find many good things to be involved in.

Paul Welch is back with another great set of classes on art. This time his theme is the 64 greatest paintings in the world. Toby Gurley is teaching on the story of God's Chosen People from Abraham to the time of Jesus and a bit beyond. I will be starting a new class on the prophetic book Micah and its relevance for today. The prayer shawl knitting group is back in action, men's coffees resume, pot lucks are happening, there will be a blood drive again, a Mardi Gras Social, as well as our second annual Art Show.

I will be doing a special Saturday Seminar on Reading the Bible in the Modern World which I hope will provide some helpful tips. Lots of our churches in the area have been reading the bible in 90 days, or in a year, which is great – but people are discovering that there are challenges, even obstacles they face as they read the bible. How do we deal with the violence and the pre-scientific views? I will present some perspectives that may help.

One alert is needed: in the past the monthly "men's breakfasts" were just for men, then we opened the door to women to join us. Those were fun, but the men started feeling jealous about the Presbyterian Women's group, and wanted a group of their own, so now we are going back to the original design; the "men's" breakfasts will be "men only." Ladies, come to PW and enjoy the fellowship.

Don't forget Sunday School. Join one of our adult classes this winter too. This is going to be a great winter season. Thank you for being a part of it, and may the Lord bless you in 2012!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Steven

***At its stated meeting of December 27, 2011, the
Session***

- Voted to approve the 2012 budget prepared by the Administration, Finance & Personnel Team.
- Called a congregational meeting for January 22, 2012 following the traditional worship service for the purpose of presenting the budget to the congregation for information.
- Called a session commission to examine the new elders for December 29th at 3:00 pm at the church.
- Voted to elect Larry Rice treasurer for a three year term.
- Voted to elect Barbara Helms clerk of session for a one year term.

Set Ministry Team positions as follows:

Administration, Finance & Personnel, Rachel Savage

Christian Education, Rachel Savage

Congregational Care Chris Roper

Fellowship, Ellen Roberts

Membership & Communications, Russell Gaston

Mission, Jean Adcock

Property, Craig Jackson

Worship, Bob Roberts

- Heard that the Hilts will be asked to serve as winter family liaison again this year.
- Voted to approve Mrs. Marilyn Buechner as an affiliate member of our church.

Elder for the Month of January

The Elder for the month of January is Dale Dusenbery (968-3168). You may contact Dale if the pastor is temporarily unavailable for any reason. This contact will be completely confidential.



Winter Season 2012 at Gulf Shores First Presbyterian Church

Join us for special events, engaging classes, and inspiring programs this winter season!

EVENTS:

Art Show, February 17, 5:00-8:00 pm, and February 18, 10:00 – 6:00 pm.. Featuring high quality local and regional artists, and a variety of media.

Red Cross Blood Drive, January 25 from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Come help save a life – the next one could be yours.

Mardi Gras Social: on Wednesday, Feb. 8. This will be a fun time to gather with friends and enjoy an evening of fellowship and fun.

PROGRAMS:

Friday Morning Men's Coffee, 7:30 am. Beginning January 6.

Monthly Men's breakfast – 8:00, the first Saturday of the month, beginning January 14.

Presbyterian Women – meet at 9:30 a.m. the second Tuesday of the month for great food, a devotional, and always good fellowship.

Prayer Shawl knitting ministry – 9:00, every Monday morning.

Book Club – Meets the second Monday of each month at 9:30 am. for lively discussions and great fellowship. Call for book and location (meets in homes) 968-7720.

Feast Groups, are groups of 3 pairs or some combination of 6 people who take turns hosting a meal for the others in the group. It's a great way to get to know people.

Thursday Prayer Group meets before Bible Study at 9:00 a.m. in the parlor (across from the office). Everyone is welcome to join in prayer for the the needs of our congregation, and beyond.

JOIN US FOR 3 NEW CLASSES:

“The World’s Greatest Paintings” will permanently change what you think about, what you see, and how you experience paintings. Paul Welch, an accomplished artist and the former director of the Art department at Northwestern Michigan College has both an artist’s and a professor’s experience, and combines both with a relaxed, engaging presentation style. The course meets on Tuesdays for 6 weeks, starting Jan 10 through Feb. 14 from 10:00-11:00 and is free.

“The Saga of God’s Chosen People” is an new look at the story of God’s chosen people, the Jews, from their beginnings with Abraham and Sarah until today. Not merely a history, this class will trace the story of God's chosen people as it relates to His plan for restoring creation. Toby Gurley, of Fairhope is the teacher. He is a graduate of “the Academy for Equipping the Saints” course and enjoys a reputation for engaging, effective, and challenging teaching. You will not want to miss it. The course meets on Wednesdays for 8 weeks, from January 11 through Feb. 29 from 10:00-11:00 and is free.

“The Prophet Micah and the Modern World” We will look at the book of the prophet Micah in his setting, explore his powerful words and challenging vision, and consider the ethical and social implications of this biblical text for the complex world of today. Taught by Steven Kurtz, who taught Bible for over a decade in Croatia, this course will set the whole discussion in the context of the ancient near eastern world, enabling us to understand the issues and appreciate the solutions offered. We will meet on Thursdays at 10:00-11:00 for 8 weeks starting January 12 and is free.

SEMINAR (free & open)

“Reading the Bible in the Modern World” Is there a Way Into the bible, given its violence and un-scientific perspectives? Given by Steven Kurtz, Saturday, January 28, 9:30-11:30 am.

From the Treasurer's Office

The books are closed on 2011 except for some minor touches, and the good news is that our financial condition is improved over 2010 by some \$5,000.

Income from all sources totaled \$231,200, only \$217,800 of which was general fund income available for budgeted operating expense. Budgeted expense was held to \$212,700, as we could see early on that general fund income would fall well short of the \$225,300 budget plan. The majority of the difference was due to reduced personnel cost. A detailed summary of financial condition will be available at the congregational meeting scheduled for January 22.

The session has approved an operating budget of \$204,802 for 2012. Your Administration, Finance and Personnel Team is confident that general fund income in 2012 will equal that sum. We thank you for responding to our plea for pledges. The number of pledgers increased measurably versus last year.

Your giving statements for 2011 will soon be ready for you to pick up in the Narthex. They will be mailed to those who cannot attend services.

Happy Birthday!

Ken Ketzler
Pam Howard
Roger Burkman
Mary Anne Hunter
George Davis
Bob White



Please make sure the church office has your birthday month!

Presbyterian Women



The next meeting of the Presbyterian Women will be held on Tuesday, January 10 at 10:00 am. Fellowship will begin at 9:30 with the meeting at 10:00. The lesson for this month is *Greatly Honored Are Those Who Show Mercy!* All women are invited. .

Lunch Bunch



Lunch Bunch will begin meeting this month. Please watch your bulletins for date and place. Thanks.

The Book Club



The Book Club will meet on Monday, January 9 at 9:30 a.m., at the home of Lynn and Sandra McCorry, (Palm Beach Condo, 22984 Perdido Beach Blvd., #B31, third floor, beach side, Orange Beach, 3 miles into Orange Beach, east of State Park, 980-1894 or 901-277-5537). The book for January is *Cutting For Stone* by Abraham Verghese. The reviewer will be Sandra McCorry. All are invited.

A Very Special Thank You

Dear Church Family,

Thank you for the beautiful celebration for my retirement as organist. Joining me for the special worship service to our God and perfect reception were loving friends, extended family, church members, and our former pastor, Reverend Charles Sims and his lovely wife, Sandra.



The painting of our church by our own, Helen Haberstroh, is so perfect for my music room...I will treasure this through the years with wonderful memories of this special time in the life of our church.

I look forward to serving our Lord with you for years to come. Every note I played was to the honor and praise to our Lord.

You are so very special to me. Blessings and love,
Barbara



We will be un-decorating the church this Saturday, January 7 at 9:00 am. We will need all the volunteers we can find to help us with this project. If you feel that you can help, just show up Saturday morning, and we will find something for you do.

Thanks.



The family of Robert H. Carr, Jr., would like to express their heartfelt thanks for all the cards, calls, and donations made in his memory. We will never be able to express how very much this has meant to us all.

Sincerely,
Ruth G. Carr

Men's Breakfast

Men's breakfast will resume Saturday, January 14 at 8:00 am. Please sign up on the sheet in the Fellowship Hall if you plan to attend. Thanks!



Friday Men's Group will meet each Friday at 7:30 am. Join us, men.

Church Family Directory

If you had your picture taken for the new church family directory, you should have received your picture(s), whether purchased or complimentary. If not, please call Jean at 974-3148. For everyone else, we want you in our directory so everyone can put a face with your name! How can you schedule your appointment? Three ways: Stop at the photo table in Fellowship Hall on Sun day, January 1, 8 or 15; call the church office, or click the link on the church website. Photos will be taken on January 20 & 21, but this is the last chance to get in the new directory! Many people who had their photos taken have remarked that they are pleased with the results and there was no pressure to buy anything. We especially want to encourage our seasonal family to be represented in our directory. And, everyone who is in the directory will receive a free copy!



The FEAST Groups are now forming for the new year. If you are interested in joining a FEAST Group; sign up sheets are available on the table in the Fellowship Hall. Please fill one out and place in collection plate or church office. Singles are welcome. .