

Hilltop Highlights

A Monthly Publication of First Presbyterian Church

*Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The Lord did not appear to you?'" Then the Lord said to him, "What is that in your hand?" "A staff," he replied." The Lord said, "Throw it on the ground."
(Exodus 4:1-3)*

Dr. Ralph F. Wilson tells Moses' story this way. *"Moses, sweltering in the heat of the Sinai desert, is engaged in a pity party. "I can't do what you want, Lord, because of this excuse and that excuse. People won't accept me. I can't talk good. Let somebody else do it."*

But arguing with God is never a good idea. You don't win. Even if you say "No" (and God may let you), you lose. When you say "no" or "I can't," you miss out on the great adventure God has for you when you're in the center of His will for your life. But what is that will?

In the barren wastes of the Sinai, God asks Moses a simple question: "What's in your hand?" Moses is a shepherd. That's all he's done for 40 years, and he's ready to retire at age 80. "What's in your hand, Moses?"

Moses looks at his hand. "A staff," he tells God — as if God didn't know. Duh!

The Lord says, "Throw it on the ground." Moses does so, and it becomes a snake. God tells him to pick it up by the tail and it turns back into a staff. Hmmm. Over the next 40 years of Moses' life, God uses that simple wooden stick to deliver the Israelites from Pharaoh, to open the Red Sea, to win a battle with the Amalekites, to bring water from a rock.

Who would have thought?

As Moses learns to use in faith what God has put in his hand, his life is changed — as well as the course of world history."

While Capitol One may be asking "what's in your wallet, my question to you is this: What's in your hand? How might God want to use you? See what He has placed in your hand. God puts just the right thing in each of our hands. Maybe it's a skill or talent. Maybe it's a sympathetic ear. Maybe it's the gift of cooking or serving. Maybe it's the gift of prayer.



When we are willing to give back to God in faith what He has given to us, no matter how small and insignificant it may seem at the time, then big things can happen. This month we will be looking at the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000. When Jesus sees the crowd he says to his disciples: "You feed them." They are stunned by the suggestion of

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We Keep in Our Prayers

- ◆ Prayers for Gary Marks for a new kidney to become available soon.
- ◆ Marilyn Parker who is in rehab at Hillcrest. Marilyn welcomes visitors.
- ◆ Prayers for Carl Seaman and his family as he battles pancreatic cancer.

Bakersplus.com

Baker's is offering the community rewards program again in **2017**. You **will not** need to re-enroll. The church received **\$251.69** from the second quarter of 2017. If you have not enrolled please do, this helps us pay for various items that are not budgeted such as the new TV in the classroom downstairs and new light weight tables for the Craft Room.

Financial Information

	<u>June</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income	\$18,852.61	\$193,680.70
Expenses	<u>\$32,822.56</u>	<u>\$206,513.30</u>
Difference	<\$13,969.95>	<\$12,832.60>



Happenings



The Arrows to Aerospace parade will be marching down Mission Avenue on

Saturday, August 19th.

This is a great opportunity to show people the spirit and mission of First Presbyterian Church.

The Fellowship Committee is looking for volunteers to help decorate the float on Friday evening the 18th at 5:30pm, after decorating, the helpers all go to LaMesa for Dinner. If you plan on helping decorate the float and go to LaMesa please call Rick Holbert so he can make reservations for the correct number of people at 402-291-7637.

We also need CHILDREN, YOUTH and ADULTS, to participate in the parade. We need people to ride on our float and people to walk alongside. Please meet at the church at 8:00am on Saturday morning wearing your church shirt if you have one.

Let's show our community what a strong, exciting church we are!

If you can participate please place your name on the sign up sheet in the library.



Happenings



Choir Begins-I'm having to do something in the choir room this week that makes me very sad. Each choir member has a slot to put their music and folders in and is marked with their name. I'm having to remove Lexie Ryks name, Bethany Dart's name, Betty Cash's name, and Rebecca Horton's name. Please note that these are all members of the soprano section.

We can shift some people around, but we need MORE Singers! I know there are more singers out there. If you've been taking a break from choir, please rethink this and join us when we start rehearsals in August. The choir picnic will be on August 16 (place to be determined) and rehearsals will start on Wednesday, August 30. We are a fun group and we make some pretty good music, so come and check us out! Making a Joyful Noise, Alice



Come Ring With Us!

Westminster Bells will begin rehearsals Tuesday, August 22nd at 7:00pm, and we need some helping hands. Please consider sharing your musical gifts and come join the bell choir! Middle school

students through adults are welcome, no prior experience is necessary. If you can read music, we'll teach you the rest! Contact Liane Kirmis for more information at 402-296-5751.

Help us make a joyful noise to the Lord!



Join us for Ladies' Lunch. We are meeting on the **Fourth Thursday** of each month at noon.

August 24th we'll meet at Famous Dave's in

Bellevue. Make your reservation by calling the church office at 402-291-1104 or e-mailing admin@bellevuefpc.org.



Smile! We are hiring Lifetouch Company, a professional photography and church directory company that did our last pictorial directory to come and take pictures for our new pictorial directory. The directory will also be available in a digital version.

There will be time slots available for everyone interested at the end of September, more information will be available in the September newsletter. Each family that participates will receive a free 8 X 10 photo and a completed pictorial directory. The photographer will be taking additional pictures of your choosing (clothing changes, props and pets are okay with your personal pictures) and they will be asking for you to purchase them. They will be great for Christmas cards or just updated family portraits. All families age 60+, military, and first responders will receive 20% off all portraits as well. There will be price sheets next to the sign up sheets on the table in the narthex.



Kick-off Sunday September 10th

9:00am– Sunday School classes for all ages

We'll start the day with a short intergenerational gathering in the Parlor/Library which will include donuts, coffee and juice. It's a chance for all of our Sunday School participants children, youth and adults to come together and celebrate the upcoming year of classes. Following our gathering, each class will go to their rooms for their regular lesson.

10:30am– Worship

All of our Christian Education volunteers will be commissioned during the worship service.

**Starting September 10th-Worship will begin at 10:30 am.
Sunday School for children and adults will begin at 9:00 am.**



For many years, Presbyterian Women (PW), the women's organization of the Presbyterian Church (USA), played an active role in First Presbyterian Church in Bellevue. Several years after the local PW group disbanded, a Bible Study group continues after 40+ years. We meet the 2nd Thursday each month, September thru May, at 7:00pm. We will begin a new study on September 14, 2017.

This year we will use the Presbyterian Women Horizons Bible Study '*Cloud of Witnesses: The Community of Christ in Hebrews*' by Melissa Bane Sevier. We will explore nine major themes, relate those themes to other parts of our faith tradition, and tie them together with the overarching motif of community. Our prayer is that the study of community in Hebrews will help us strengthen our own communities.

We welcome new participants to join us. Contact Joyce Ritchey at 402.291.8998 or Anne Webster at 402.733.8250 to get a study book and details.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF SARPY COUNTY

Sarpy Habitat has started its 43rd house at 207 E. 15th St, Bellevue and will start its 44th later this year. As of this writing #43 "hole" has been dug. As with all organizations, they must keep up to date with their contractors. As a result, they are looking to expand their use of Sarpy companies; specifically plumbing, electrical, mechanical, roofing, concrete, and drywall finishing. Members of this congregation may have acquaintances in these trades. If they are interested in joining the list of sources for new construction, please ask them to contact Jon Costello, Executive Director, at 402-292-6560.



Pastor, continued

trying to feed such a great crowd. So Jesus reframes the question for them. "Okay disciples, take stock of what you have on hand. Find out what food we do have." Andrew checks the cupboards and says, "There's a boy here with five loaves and two fishes. Jesus takes the bread and the fish, and with thanks, gives them to God, and proceeds to feed all 5,000 people. Without those two fish and five loaves, as insignificant that they might have seemed in the face of the need, no one would have eaten that day!

That's how God's work gets done. By people taking stock of what they have and then offering to God what they find there in their hands. We all have a few loaves and a few fish up our sleeves. We all have something in our hands that God can use in a big way. Even if it doesn't seem so big or useful to us at the time. It just takes a willing spirit.

What difference can you make? Take a look at what's in your hands. See what skills and abilities that you do have "on hand". Then, when God asks you, "What's that in your hand?" You'll be able to tell Him what you do have on hand to do the job — and then you can let Him use your gift or skill or resource or opportunity to do some amazing things.

On August 27th, we will be hearing from some of our mission partners about how what may seem to us as not very much to offer has enabled them to do some amazing things for God's people.

So, what's in *your* hand? Yours in Christ, Pastor Mike



We all want to thank Mandi Crick for her 6 years of teaching the joy of giving God praise and glory through music. She has encouraged all of the kids to try solo's and instruments and to step out of their comfort zone.

Mandi consciously choose music that was an inspiration to the kids and coordinated with our curriculum. She is an inspiration to us all.

She will no longer serve as our Children's Music Director because she wants to focus more on being a full time school teacher, member of the National Guard, busy mom, wife and marathon runner.

We appreciate all the time she has dedicated to First Presbyterian Church and look forward to seeing her on Sunday's in worship.



Children's Ministry



Linda Reffert

THANK YOU! Two weeks out from VBS I stood at the pulpit and asked you all for SO many things for VBS. I asked for volunteers for Decorating and VBS itself; supplies for Science & Snacks; and I asked you to invite friends and neighbors to join us. Today was the first day of VBS and it was delightfully clear that you all came through for us! You donated more than I ever imagined – both financially and in supplies. We went from seriously shorted staffed to fully staffed. And, we went from 34 kiddos to 61. This is just amazing! I would love to list everyone's name here who is helping or who donated. But I just can't. But please know your generosity is appreciated and it made a difference!

I want to tell you about VBS Science. It's not part of any VBS curriculum. We wanted to get away from all the gizmos and gadgets that today's professional VBS curriculums try to sell us. And we wanted to do something fun and meaningful. Science is a curriculum that Bellevue East teacher (and First Pres member) Nora Boyd, writes and teaches each year, in response to that desire. She designs it to fit our VBS theme of the week and of each day. Nora said her goal is "Discovering God's world through Science." We believe there is no reason for Science and Faith to be mutually exclusive. We want kids to learn that they actually go hand in hand.

Each day the kiddos create something or perform a science experiment that demonstrates both a scientific principle and a faith principle. It's really cool! For example, tomorrow the kids are going to make slime. They will make it and take some home.

Students will learn about chemical reactions and how substances can transform when combined with specific other substances. The Bible Point of the Day is "God's word is comforting". Nora will send the slime home with the kids and encourage them to play with their slime when they are stressed or anxious or need to calm down. Of course, Nora will also talk to them about how digging into their Bibles can provide comfort and calming too.

On Wednesday - and I can only tell you this now because by the time you read this, it will have passed – the kids are going to make exploding treasure chests. The Bible Point of the day is "God's word is surprising". If the science works as it should, and the chemical reactions happen as planned, I do believe they will experience the surprise of Science, don't you?

I am sad to say that this is Mandi Cricks's last time to be the VBS Music Director. At least as part of her duties as the Children's Music Director. Mandi has resigned her position here because she is just plain pulled in too many directions with one full-time and 2 part time jobs as well as being part of a very busy family and maintaining her training as a marathon runner. It has been pure joy to work with Mandi and I hope you will take the opportunity to thank her for her service to our Lord and to our church over the last few years. I am especially thankful she is not leaving us, just this position!

Our last Intergenerational Sunday School which will be held on Sunday, August 6th at 9 AM in the Parlor/Library. We will be assembling hygiene kits for Logan Middle School and make Bible Verse Memory Rings to keep or to give away as gifts. I hope you will join us!



August Youth Fellowship (YF) News



Shelli Dart

Micah 6:8 “He has told you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

What a busy summer it's been! With the mission trips back to back I missed a month of Sundays and missed seeing everyone. It will be nice to get back to our regular schedule even though the summer has been wonderful.



Our trip to the Stewpot in Dallas was fantastic. Our group received rave reviews for being willing to tackle any task, their helpfulness and friendliness. We were able to visit and help with many different parts of their

ministry in the mornings, their Kids Club in the afternoons and served dinner for homeless and at risk people at the Bridge. It was not a physically intensive work trip but the emotional effect it had on us all made us just as tired out by the end of the day.

The scripture from Micah was our theme for the week and the scripture, our work and our devotion time

really resonated with the youth. We are looking for more opportunities to do mission work locally and are looking forward to letting you all know our plans in September.

August 11 - 12 is the Camp Calvin Crest retreat - Last Fling before that School Thing. This is always a fun filled weekend with other youth from area churches. The cost is \$30 going down Friday and returning Saturday after lunch. Invite a friend and kick off the beginning of school with a lot of fun.

August 27th is our annual Lake Party at Hansen Lake. Everyone brings a go-with and the church provides hamburgers and hot dogs. Friends and parents are welcome.

I hope you all had a wonderful summer and will enjoy a great start back to school. Remember summer worship hours go until Labor Day weekend then we are back to Illuminate and Sunday School the week of September 10th.

Find a way to brighten someone's day - love kindness!



August Youth Events

Aug 11 - 12 **Camp Calvin Crest Last Fling Retreat**

Aug 27 **Hansen Lake Swimming Party**



~ August 2017 ~

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 10:30a Staff Meeting (CR) 6p Mission Mtg (VVR)	2	3 7p Fellowship Mtg (VVR) 7p Troop 467	4	5
6 Pantry Sunday 9a Inter-Generational Sunday School 10a Worship Service 11:30a Deacons Mtg (VVR) 7p Venture Crew 26	7 1:15p Heritage Ridge 2p Harmony Court 2:45p Richmond Village	8 5:30p Christian Education Mtg (P/L)	9 8:45a PEO (VVR/FH) 6:30p Building & Grounds Mtg (CR)	10 6:30p Membership (VVR) 7p Troop 467 7p Worship Mtg (CR)	11	12
13 10a Worship Service	14	15	16 6p Choir Picnic 6p Finance Mtg (Admin Ofc)	17 7p Troop 467	18 5:30p Decorating Float	19 8a A to A Parade
20 10a Worship Service	21 7p Venture Crew	22 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	23	24 12p Ladies Lunch (Famous Dave's) 7p Session (VVR) 7p Troop 467	25 1p PieceMakers Quilt Group 3p Eastern Star Dinner (FH/CR/VVR)	26
27 Next Sunday Pantry Sunday 10a Worship Service	28	29 7p Bell Choir Rehearsal	30 7p Choir Rehearsal	31 7p Troop 467	Notes:	



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August Birthdays:

1 Sara Renner	17 Nancy Worm
2 Florence Maurer	17 Kathryn Robertson
3 Morgan Fenster	18 Lori Irvine
4 Mattie Carver	18 Nancy Shultz
4 Matt Fenster	18 Linda Reffert
6 Steve Tamayo	19 Gary Marks
7 Noelle Kilpatrick	21 Mary Lehr
7 Faith Morrison	21 Don McCon
7 JoAnne Nielsen	21 Carl Seaman
10 Kate Radosta	22 Sue Howard
11 Gene Cash	22 Dave Norton
11 Clayton Lytle	22 Mary Jo Schiefelbein
12 Steve Renner	23 Walt Griffiths
13 Dan Wilson	25 Betty Kieran
13 John Ellison	25 Marilyn Parker
15 Val Jean Hansen	25 Nick Sulser
15 Dan Robertson	26 Mike Elliott
15 Don Glenn	28 Denise Seaman
16 Marylou Hegarty	29 Blake Urwin



Worshipping, learning, and serving together in the name of Jesus

