



Ash Wednesday - February 22

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the liturgical season of Lent. Lent is the period of six weeks, from Ash Wednesday to Palm Sunday. The word comes from the old English and refers to the lengthening of the days as we approach the spring solstice. In church tradition it is an opportunity for Christians to repent; to turn in a new direction from the parts of our lives which are inhibiting a full relationship with God, and to seek spiritual renewal.

The Service Schedule for Ash Wednesday is as follows:

12:00-12:40 p.m.

**Reflective Service on our Lenten Theme:
Journey to the Cross
Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the
Sanctuary w/ Optional Distribution of Ashes**

**6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m. Agape Meal followed by the
Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in
Shirk Hall w/Optional Distribution of Ashes**

The mid day service has become a tradition for Ash Wednesday providing forty minutes of quiet during which people may prepare to enter this season of reflection and renewal. Matt Weaver will provide a series of meditative pieces on the organ, which are interspersed with scripture and readings on our Journey to the Cross theme for Lent. Communion is served by intinction. The distribution of ashes will be available for those who wish to receive them. The ashes are an outward sign of our inner desire to repent (change) and renew our lives.

The Ash Wednesday evening service at 6:00 p.m. has become a family tradition as we gather around the table to share a simple meal, reflect on the meaning of Ash Wednesday, receive Communion, and have the option of receiving ashes as a sign of our desire to repent (change) and renew our lives. Reservations are requested for this meal in order to prepare enough food. Sign-ups will be taken on Sunday mornings [Feb. 5, 12, & 19] in the foyer. The meal is "pay-as-you-can" at the door.

"Planned Giving Tools 101"

A special presentation is offered at The Gathering on Sunday, February 5 at 9:30 in the Activities Room. Bernie Bostwick of Ambassador Advisors will give an overview of the various options and opportunities for people who are considering endowment giving. As an expert advisor in philanthropy, Bernie has helped individuals plan how to use their resources wisely, in a way that benefits both their families as well as the institutions they love.

One way he does this is by focusing on the desires of their heart and creating tax-favored strategies that protect and transfer their wealth, based on a Christian foundation. He wants to enable each individual to be more effective with their resources and to maximize the blessings left to ministries, non-profits and heirs.

Please note: Anyone attending will be under no obligation to meet with Mr. Bostwick later unless a request is made to him. If you have any questions about this session, call Bill Adams at 397-6560.

Sharing Love

Our Stephen Ministry program is entering its 12th year of care-giving for this congregation and the community of Lancaster.

Through retirements over the last several years, we are currently in great need of folks like yourselves, especially men, to accept God's call to serve.

A spring training course, hosted by James Street Mennonite Church, will begin Sunday, March 4th. To receive an application or further information, please contact leaders:

Becky Mowrey, 299-0238

rmedu96@gmail.com

Sandy Horn, 392-3578 bridger60@aol.com, or

Candee Buckbee, 330-4836

candace@fpclanc.org

*Be devoted to one another in brotherly love.
Honor one another above yourselves.*

~Romans 12:19

Organ Restoration Update

Our magnificent Aeolian-Skinner organ in the sanctuary is 65 years old this year. Its external parts look fine, but inside the console and the inner workings of the pipes themselves, there are several mechanical devices that are failing and leading to some problems on Sunday mornings.

In an attempt to keep our organ at optimum condition, the Trustees have signed a contract with the curators of our instrument, Soli Deo Gloria Organs in Millersville. The contract includes replacing the keyboards on the instrument and replacing the combination action (which allows many different sounds to be set up in advance for use at any given time). They will also work on several ranks of pipes that are not working as they should.

The crowning effort will be the addition of a solo tuba stop to the antiphonal division (in the balcony). This stop was a dream of Reg Lunt. It will have the ability to lead above the sound of full organ or (because it will be enclosed) be the crowning addition to the sound of full organ.

The complete cost of this renovation / restoration will be \$217,520. We have received a generous gift in the amount of \$100,000 by one of our members which established a fund to pay for the project. The work is scheduled to begin in June, 2012, and there is a need to complete the fundraising. Our current organist, Matt Weaver, or our consultant to the project, Dr. Tim Sidebothom are willing to meet at any time with interested contributors.

Dr. Sidebothom says, "I am thrilled that we are starting down the road that will end in returning this historic landmark instrument to its finest state since it was built in 1947."

First Presbyterian Church
140 East Orange Street
Lancaster, PA 17602
February Steeple to People



Pastor to People *What to Say?*

If you have not been able to be in church since January 22, 2012, you may have missed my latest update on the health of my wife, Cherie. I wish the news were better. On Thursday, January 19, 2012 I shared the following post on Caring Bridge; the blog we use to keep those who are interested up to date. You are welcome to receive updates by going directly www.caringbridge.org/cherieriggs. Here is what I wrote on 1/19/12.

It has been a while since we have had anything to share. No news is good news when it comes to cancer treatment. Unfortunately, this entry is news that we would just as soon have never had to share.

We are currently at Fox Chase Cancer Center Hospital where Cherie was admitted last night (1/18/12). Over the weekend she had increased problems with balance, and on Tuesday evening they reached the point of being of much graver concern. A CAT scan has revealed progression of her disease which has moved us to a "new normal;" one where the options have become much more limited.

Dr. Goldstien came late this morning. Some of you will remember that she is the doctor who has always found "something up her sleeve" to continue Cherie's treatment. We have been praying for years that Dr. Goldstien's sleeves would continue to grow longer and longer.

Today Dr. Goldstien came in with her sleeves rolled up. She has run out of treatments to offer for this new progression of the disease. Our

only options are to take palliative measures to protect the quality of life Cherie currently has and to become more prepared for the ultimate healing which will come when she is free of this life and enters the life which God has prepared for all of us on the other side of death.

We have always believed that Cherie's success in beating the statistics of breast cancer has been a three legged stool of excellent medicine, positive attitude, and the power of a praying community. While we still have all three, it appears that medicine has done all it can do for her longevity. Now we must trust her attitude, which is still positive, and the power of a praying community.

The Heidelberg Catechism, one of the Confessions in the Book of Confessions of the PCUSA, begins with this question: What is our only comfort in life and death? And it gives the following answer, in part: That I with body and soul, both in life and death, (a) am not my own, (b) but belong unto my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ.

Tonight we rest in this comfort, which is the only comfort we have ever been sure of in our journey with this disease. We covet your prayers, and thank God for each of you who are concerned enough to offer them.



**Deadline for
March STP
February 17**
Submissions to
Laura in the church
office [laura@fpclanc.org]

Lenten Preaching Series

Our preaching theme for the services in the Sanctuary during Lent will be Journey to the Cross. We will use the events in Jesus life as he made his way to Jerusalem to reflect on what it means to follow him all the way to the Cross.

- February 26** Mark 5:1-20 *The Restoration*
- March 4** Mark 5:21-43 *The Healing*
- March 11** Mark 14:1-9 *The Anointing*
- March 18** Mark 14:43-51 *The Arrest*
- March 25** Mark 14:66-72 *The Denial*
- April 1** Mark 15:1-15 (Palm Sunday)
The Trial
- April 8** Mark 16:1-8 (Easter Sunday)
The Resurrection

Lenten Mid-Week Services Wednesdays from Noon - 12:30

Mid week services during Lent (February 29, March 7, 14, 21, 28) will focus on healing as part of our overall Lenten theme of Journey to the Cross. The services will be held in the Sanctuary from 12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m. For those on their lunch hour, there will be a sandwich luncheon available immediately following the service.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be observed each week, and for those who wish, there will be anointing with oil and prayers for healing as worshippers come forward to receive the Sacrament.

Each service will include singing of two hymns, a prayer of confession, a brief meditation focusing on the Cross, communion, and anointing for healing. The services will last about 30 minutes to allow those who need to get back to their places of work adequate time to make the trip back to their offices.

If you work downtown, encourage your office friends to join you. If you are driving downtown, bring a friend.

A Living Dramatization at FPC: Looking for Actors!

On Maundy Thursday, April 5th, First Church will present a dramatic presentation of "The Living Picture of The Last Supper" based on Leonardo da Vinci's famous painting. The drama includes a re-creation of the world-famous painting and soliloquies from the Twelve Apostles. Anne Meeder will be directing this drama and Alisa Bair will be directing the musical interludes.

"The Last Supper" calls for male actors, age range 20ish to 50ish, who will play the roles of the disciples. Participants should feel comfortable speaking alone in monologue style. Parts will be memorized and rehearsals will be held at the church.

Please email Anne annemeeder@gmail.com if you are interested in being a part of this special drama and are able to attend the rehearsals and performance. She would love to hear from you!

Experience Taizé Worship

"Singing is one of the most important forms of prayer. A few words sung over and over again reinforce the meditative quality of the prayer. They express a basic reality of faith that can quickly be grasped by the intellect, and that gradually penetrates the heart and the whole being . . ." ~from Songs & Prayers from Taizé

Come experience the contemplative beauty and simplicity of a Taizé service, led by the Rev. Alicia Conklin-Wood, this Lenten season (services are approximately 45 minutes in length):

- Wednesday, February 29 - 6:30 PM - Chapel**
- Wednesday, March 14 - 6:30 PM - Chapel**
- Wednesday, March 28 - 6:30 PM - Chapel**