

THE BRIDGE

BETWEEN CHURCH AND HOME



The Fruit of the Spirit is... Joy

Jesus came to bring us joy. Joy is the natural fruit of the Spirit-filled Christian. So, why don't we feel joyful all the time?

"We cannot make ourselves joyful," wrote Eugene Peterson. "Joy cannot be commanded, purchased, or arranged. But there is something we can do. We can decide to live in response to the abundance of God and not under the dictatorship of our own poor needs. (*A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*, quoted in the booklet, *Jesus, The Light of the World*)

So, while we cannot push a "joy button" somewhere down in our souls, there is something we can do. I think we can break it down this way:

1. Make the choice to rejoice – to praise God for everything.

As Peterson puts it, "live in response to the abundance of God and not under the dictatorship of our own poor needs." Change the channel. Turn your thoughts away from worry, anger, bitterness, etc. to thoughts of praise for God's loving care, mercy, unconditional love.

2. Be prepared. Expect the joy-busters.

You know what I'm talking about – the door of opportunity that slams shut, the scowl or critical word that hits where it hurts, the nagging worry that we're not worthy of good things happening for us. Be aware of those grinchers who have come to steal your joy. Don't let them take you by surprise. Counter them with truth from God's Word, like Philippians 1:6. "I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns." (NLT)

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What are you Grateful For?

Ecclesiastes 7:14 states **When times are good, be happy; but when times are bad, consider: God has made the one as well as the other. Therefore, a man cannot discover anything about his future.** For the past few years I have been struggling with and improving on my ability to hand it over to God. First Thessalonians 5:18 states, **give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.** It is this very verse that I have prayed about, meditated on, and have literally forced myself to come back to in my daily life as well as in those unexpected circumstances that "just happen". As related to the first verse, if we can not predict our future, then I am so grateful that I can hand it all over to God. If we are unable to hand it over to God, I feel like it creates a power struggle with God, and we know who is going to win so we might as well save our precious energy for other things that matter more.

Surrender and Thanksgiving is the message here. This doesn't mean that there is no responsibility on our part to make good choices and decisions with moral Christian standards. It means that when we are challenged with life's circumstances, the best thing we can do spiritually and emotionally as well as physically is to surrender it all to God and give thanks.

Gratitude has been recommended for over 2000 years from a biblical perspective and science now

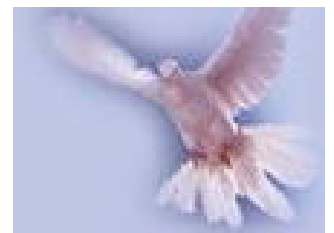
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Fourth @ First Vespers Series

Wings of Glory
Gospel Choir

February 28th

7 PM



Joy (Continued from page 1)

3. Take time to serve others.

I find that it's sometimes not enough to tell my mind to change channels. The oppressive thoughts come rushing back. I have to do something positive so I can begin to think something positive. You know the acronym for JOY - Jesus, Others, You. I find joy in being around other people, asking and thinking of their needs, trying to help where I can. I start feeling better. Sometimes, I walk away thinking, "I don't have it so bad after all."

4. Do the things that bring you joy.

For me, it's going for a bike ride or taking a walk on the beach. What brings you joy? Sprinkle those joy-producing activities into your schedule.

These are joyful times. They have to be. They're the only times we have.

Pastor Dave

(reprinted from Rev Dave's Raves - dweidlich.blogspot.com)

What Are You Grateful For?

(Continued from page 1)

shows us that the practice of gratitude from a physical perspective actually helps to produce new brain cells. This phenomenon was only recently discovered, as we once thought brain development was complete in late adolescence.

On that note, I would like to propose a new Small Group, **A Gratitude Group**. Unlike other small groups, there will be no commitment or time frame. It can be a drop in, or you can commit to it weekly or monthly. **The primary objective is to find a group of like-minded people who want to grow in Christ through gratitude in all things.** It will be a time to worship, share, praise and work on personal goals around creating a gratitude practice in your own life.

If you are interested in enriching your Christian walk through a weekly gratitude practice please e-mail me at mlarson4@comcast.net. The proposed date to start will be sometime in March. Tentatively, the group would meet at the church on Sunday evenings from 6-7:30. Any feedback or suggestions will be greatly appreciated.

-Melanie Larson

THANK YOU FROM CHRISTMAS CHEER

We would like to thank all who contributed canned goods, toys and funds to Christmas Cheer this past year. Also, thanks to those who donated time and energy in the distribution to the unemployed, underemployed, and homebound Seniors. Approximately 700 banana boxes were filled and distributed and toys given to 1,200 children, also about 100 new or refurbished bikes, with helmets.

We were amazed again this year at the generosity of Petaluma residents even in hard times from whom we receive the majority of donations.

MANY THANKS from the Executive Council of the Christmas Cheer organization.

ALEX ROSE PROJECT CONCERT AT 4TH @ 1ST

Combining a smooth jazz sound (mellow guitar and soothing sax), Alex Rose Project entertained a capacity house in her inaugural concert as part of the 4th @ 1st Vespers Series. Alex shared with the crowd her testimony and brought down the house with her soulful ballads and praises.

February Birthdays

2/1 Lynne Stevens	2/6 Sue Hopkins	2/18 Carol Weidlich
2/3 Lucille Napier	2/7 Isabella Eshoo	Mike Lefler
2/4 Andrew Schipper	2/8 Maria Bartruff	2/20 Althea Torliatt
Elizabeth Carson	Sara Dooley	Sharon Cleary
2/5 Karen Lew	Trey Hansen	2/22 Sandy Nichols
2/5 Sophia Virkus	2/9 Sarah Fox	2/24 Bill Brumbaugh
2/6 Chuck Pheil	2/14 Glose Kate	2/25 Scott Baker
Darlene Saladin	Michelle Moller	2/26 Janet Thacher
Carolyn Reis	2/15 Carol Wilcoxson	2/27 Phoenix Molinaro
	2/17 Jared Smith	

Monthly Newsletter of First
Presbyterian Church Petaluma
February 2010—Issue 2



LIFELINE SCREENING -- COMING TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH -- WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2010 IN OUR SANCTUARY

Pre-Registration Required - Call 1-800-324-1851 or online at www.lifelinescreening.com

Four facts you need to know about stroke prevention:

- 80% of stroke victims had no apparent warning signs.
- Ultrasound screenings can help you avoid a stroke.
- Stroke is a leading cause of death and permanent disability.
- Screenings are fast, painless, affordable and convenient.

LifeLine is trusted by hospitals nationwide.

Stroke, Vascular Disease & Heart Rhythm Package - All four tests for only \$149

Add an osteoporosis screening for \$10 more -

REHAB CENTER WORSHIP ENDED

Because the Petaluma Care and Rehabilitation Center is now only taking patients for short term rehabilitation services, there will no longer be a monthly worship service .

I would like to thank the following gifted people for providing music at the services during the past year: **Vivian Loh, Brent Russell, Emma Harrell, Dan Ancheta, Alex Cooper and Candy Donnelly**. I so appreciated your kindness and willingness to help in this way!

Thanks also to **Ken Lock, Linda Dragoo, Billie Fortlage and Joanne Lubbers** for participating with me in the services at the Center.

Nan Krelle

Session Update From Clerk of Session

Session actions in December and January included:

- Finalized the facility use agreement with the Bethel Fijian Fellowship effective through 8/31/2011.
- Approved adding Vivian Loh to the Personnel Commission.
- Approved the recommendation to hire Ruth Gilstrap as the Happy Day Director.
- Approved an Eagle Scout project to place benches in the courtyard as recommended by the Facilities Commission.
- Examined incoming Elders and Deacons, welcomed new Elders Connie Ahlman, Don Brown and Tammy Hollingsworth and accepted Elder Bill Linstrom's resignation from Session effective January 31, 2010.
- Completed the Elder's commission assignments and appointed Corporation officers for 2010.
- Set the annual congregational meeting for January 24, 2010 and completed the Annual Report for 2009 to be presented at that meeting.
- Held a special called Session meeting to work on the 2010 budget, agreed to continue on a monthly basis the 2009 budget with basic expenses and salaries. This will allow for congregational input on this disposition of budgetary issues. A draft baseline budget with an approximate \$30,000 deficit will be presented with an explanation the need for additional income to avoid further cuts to mission, salaries and facilities. This action included a commitment to adopt a 2010 budget at the February stated meeting.
- Approved a *Bridge to the Future* Survey for distribution at the January congregational meeting.
- Set 3/13/10 as the date for the annual Session retreat.
- Set combined worship service dates for 2010: **1/24/10** (with annual meeting), **4/18/10**, **7/4/10** (outdoor service) and **9/12/10** (kickoff Sunday).

2010 Deacon Assignments

FUNCTION	DEACON
Moderator	Ken Altenburger
Vice Moderator/ Secretary	Dana Altenburger
Communion	Alice Rundle & Rita Romero
Kitchen	Doreen Coe
Nominating Committee	Irene Rowley
Prayer Chain	Phoebe Antonio
Senior Activities	Doreen Coe
Social Secretary	Linda Dragoo
Support Services/ Senior Support	Nan Krelle & Deborah Hosler, assisted by Juanita Ashe & Vivian Loh
Transportation	Jim Roeters
Treasurer	Irene Rowley
Visitation/Home Communion	Joanne Lubbers, assisted by Juanita Ashe & Vivian Loh
Benevolence Subcommittee	Ken Altenburger, Nan Krelle & Irene Rowley

2010 Session Assignments

COMMISSION/CORPORATE OFFICER	ELDER
Worship & Congregational Care	Sue Russell and Donna Wall
Adult Christian Education	Tim Scheele
Student Ministries (SS, Youth, HD)	Keith Lew and Connie Ahlman
Mission	Don Brown
Outreach	Robert Dickenson
Stewardship, Budget, and Finance	Eric Goodrich
Personnel	Pam Sommer and Tammy Hollingsworth
Facilities	Don White
President	Tim Scheele
Treasurer	Eric Goodrich
Clerk of Session/ Secretary	Kathy Govan

PHOTO DIRECTORIES FOR 2010 ARE READY



New photo directories are available as of January 31st. A donation (\$5 suggested) per family will help offset the publication costs. Donations can be left in a donation box on the information table in the back of the Sanctuary.

There is also a sign-up sheet for an electronic copy (CD) of the directory. Please sign up if you prefer a CD of the photos. Please contact **Lara Dooley** at 707-774-5562, if you have questions.



ANNUAL SPAGHETTI DINNER FUND RAISER

All are invited to come with family and friends to enjoy a wonderful Spaghetti Dinner, which is sponsored and served by the FPC Youth Group on Sunday, January 31st, 6 - 8P in Koinonia Hall. Funds benefit the Youth Ski Trip and their Mission Trip.

Suggested Donation: Adults, \$12; Children, \$6; Seniors, \$8; Family maximum, \$35; Sauce to take home, \$8. See you there, and thanks for supporting us, all the Youth and their Leaders.

Adult FunTimers to Share Favorite Stories

Do you have a favorite family story – a famous or infamous person in your past? A favorite story that made you smile or cry or laugh? Do you like to hear others share their reminiscences about their life experiences? Come and share an evening of Storytelling with your Church Family.



We will meet on Saturday, February 13th at 6 PM in the Fireside Room for stories and glowing a fire (and something hot to warm the soul). Bring a story to share or just come to listen and laugh with friends. A savory or dessert to share would also be welcome.

This is an adult event - childcare is not provided.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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www.petalumafirst.com

WORSHIP IN FEBRUARY

Continuing the series, "Christ, Formed in You"

"My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until **Christ is formed** in you..."

- Galatians 4:19

Worship Sundays

9:00 AM - Contemporary Worship Celebration, with Nursery, Sunday School

10:30 AM - Classic Worship Celebration, with Nursery, Sunday School

Jan. 31 - "Christ, Formed in You—What You Need to Know"

Feb. 7 - "What You Need to Do - The Practices of Spiritual Growth" Communion

Feb. 14 - "Experiencing God - Integrating What We Know with our Experience"

Ash Wednesday Service - Feb. 17, 7:00 PM

Feb. 21 - "Bearing Fruit"

Feb. 28 - "Helping Others Grow"

the fruit of the Spirit is...



"Worship does not satisfy our hunger for God; it whets our appetite."

– Eugene H. Peterson.