

First Presbyterian Church  
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# FIRST PRES

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May, 2010

## **Kerry-Gram**

*“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.”  
(Acts 2:1-4)*

The word “pentecost” comes from the Greek and it simply means the fiftieth day. In the Jewish liturgical tradition, Pentecost refers to the fiftieth day after Passover a day when God’s giving of the Ten Commandments to Moses is celebrated. In the Christian tradition, Pentecost is the fiftieth day after Easter when we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the church.

The two traditions are closely related. When the Hebrew people were still enslaved in Egypt, Moses (instructed by the Lord) asked Pharaoh unsuccessfully for the release of his people. Each time Pharaoh refused, a plague was inflicted upon the Egyptians. The last plague was the death of all first born males in the land. The Hebrew people were commanded to mark their doors with the blood of a lamb so that the Spirit of the Lord would *pass over* their households and spare them.

Christ, the first born of all creation, is our Passover. His blood marked our lives so that our sin-stained selves might be forgiven and passed over. We have been spared the death that comes from sin. Now, Christ alone will be our judge – our imperfection has been transformed by baptism and we are sealed to

Christ’s own body. God the Father beholds the Son and loves him without restraint. We who claim membership in the Church born on that first Pentecost may claim the unrestrained love of the Father, too. This truly is love divine and all loves excelling. Alleluia!



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## **NEW BULLETIN STYLES**

Beginning in mid-May, we will be trying different styles for the Sunday church bulletin, and evaluating the merits of each one for use as our regular bulletin. The thought is to look for one that is comfortable for our members, while at the same time finding one that is welcoming and informative to visitors. We are looking for a bulletin that serves both purposes. With God’s guidance and help, one will be identified that furthers our church’s vision and mission. Please be in prayer for the success of this venture.

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## **OASIS**

Serving a hot and nutritious breakfast to the folks at Oasis is one of the very important ministries of our church. Various church groups are scheduled to take turns performing this service. If you wish to take part, you can volunteer by calling the church office or by making it known next time your Sunday School class or other group is scheduled to serve. Also, please remember this ministry in your prayers.

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***FOLKS DON'T CARE  
HOW MUCH YOU KNOW  
UNTIL THEY KNOW  
HOW MUCH YOU CARE***

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### CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

**JOHN FAY** graduates from Hampden-Sydney College on May 9. John graduates with a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Spanish. Congrats to John! Susan reports that she and Jack are excited.

**NICOLE BELANUS** continues her music career with recent releases of recordings. Nicole has been recognized as an up and coming young singer in the area and was recently featured on WHRV radio. We wish her the best with her career.

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### HOMELESS SHELTER

Thanks and God Bless to all who helped with our shelter this year.

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### YOUTH GROUPS MEET

Our **two** youth groups met on April 25<sup>th</sup>. Diane and Dave Turner provided a wonderful lunch after church that both groups and their leaders shared with gusto. Karen Diggs and Pat Sparks led the middle and senior high group in an intense planning session as they considered their activities for the next several months. Jennifer Patgorski and Pastor Kerry led the 7 – 10 year old youth group with discussion on biblical characters, a game of “bible keep-away,” and sandwich-making for Oasis Social Ministries.

The youth groups meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of every month. We ask for two adult volunteers to help lead and that a simple lunch be prepared and provided. Please email Pastor Kerry at [kkwesterwick@gmail.com](mailto:kkwesterwick@gmail.com) to serve this ministry.

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### PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

The Presbyterian Women will have their **2010 Birthday Party/Spring Gathering** on Saturday, May 22 at 10:30 AM at which time new officers will be elected and installed; the Budget for 2010-11 will be approved; a memorial for those PW who have

passed away since last year will be observed; the Birthday Offering will be explained and received; and a delicious lunch will be enjoyed by all.

Profit from the Lenten Lunch was \$140 and from the Spring SERRV order was \$91.97. These proceeds help us meet our benevolences to HER Shelter, PARC, EdMarc and Presbyterian Home and Family Services as well as a gift to our missionaries, the Adamases.

The Presbyterian Women's program year will conclude at the end of June and resume in September 2010. However, the women are always available in time of need.

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### ZUNI PRESBYTERIAN HOME

The Zuni Presbyterian Home asks for your prayers and financial support as they seek to repair the facility's swimming pool. The estimated cost of the repair is \$180,000. More information is posted on the pastor's bulletin board or on the internet at <http://www.phfs.org>.

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### MISSIONARIES TO VISIT IN JUNE

**DANIEL AND CAROL CHOU ADAMS** are scheduled to visit our church on Tuesday, June 15, as part of their final Mission Interpretation on retiring. Plans for an event that evening at the church are being finalized by the Witness Committee and will be announced soon. Please set that date aside if you want to see Dan and Carol and hear from them.

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### MEALS ON WHEELS

This important mission to our community requires just a few hours each month. Meals are delivered by volunteers from the First Presbyterian Church family on the third Thursday. It means a lot both to the recipients of the meals and to the ones who deliver the meals. The Meals on Wheels program is always in need of volunteers. If you would like to volunteer, please contact the church office.

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### STAMPS FOR MISSIONS

Stamps contributed to the Stamps for Missions program are auctioned or sold to collectors to raise funds for Presbyterian Church-sponsored projects in Congo. Projects there include continuing education events and other training, printing of Bibles and hymnbooks, improving and supporting medical facilities, and helping citizens of Congo start their own businesses. Last year, over \$12,400 was raised through this program.

Norma and Lanier Halterman are the program coordinators for FPC, and want anyone who contributes stamps to keep the following things in mind:

1. **U.S. Flag and Liberty Bell stamps** are not of any value to the program because they are so common.
2. **Foreign stamps** are particularly desirable because they are of interest to collectors. Save and donate stamps on letters and packages from friends or relatives overseas.
3. **A border of at least ¼ inch on all sides of the stamp is needed.** If desired, the entire or part of the envelope may be submitted and the Haltermans will trim it to the right size.
4. **Contributed stamps** should be placed in the marked box in the Mary Rice Conference Room.

Thanks for your cooperation and for your donations to this program.

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### NO BAZAAR THIS FALL

There will not be a Fall Bazaar this year. The Bazaar, though a great deal of fun, is a massive undertaking. As we embark on our new ministry together, the Session and Diaconate believe our energies are best focused elsewhere. If you had planned on donating items to the Bazaar we encourage you to consider other alternatives. In the past, Bazaar proceeds supported repayment of the Courtyard Fund and continued support of this Fund is always welcomed with joy and thanksgiving.

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### SEARCH FOR NEW CUSTODIAN

With regret, the Session reports that Mr. Alvin Flynn is no longer in our employ. Please pray for his success elsewhere. The Session is ethically bound to keep all personnel matters confidential so we pray your understanding. While the search for a new custodian is well underway, the Session asks that everyone pitch in and help keep our beautiful church clean. From emptying trash cans to picking up papers in your pews, every effort helps. Thanks for your understanding and cooperation.

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### SESSION ACTIONS

*[Readers please note that at each Session meeting Rev. Westerwick leads those present in a study of the Bible or a Book of Order practicum. This is helping the Session to grow in the word of the Lord and to become more effective leaders.]*

The regular stated meeting was held on Monday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, with Rev. Kerry Knox Westerwick moderating. Rev. Westerwick led the Session in a Bible study based on Colossians. She reminded the Session that “Christ has set us free – Christian Freedom – the nature of Christ Is Love.”

**PASTOR’S REPORT:** Visits, etc., were listed, and it was confirmed that there will be a Sessional Retreat on June 5.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Christian Education** reported that the recently combined Adult Class has chosen the name “Friendship Class” and new door signs will be ordered. A younger children’s class has been started, with attendance around 5, led by Gail Pittman. A new class for young adults will begin in September. VBS will be held in the evenings of July 26-29, (Monday – Thursday), probably at Monumental Methodist, with St. John’s Episcopal participating. Staff and helpers for VBS are needed. Rally Day is scheduled for September 12.

**Endowment** – Session approved a revised Endowment Policy.

**Property** reported that two benches in the courtyard are being repaired/refinished by Aaron Knight. Six new metal benches have been purchased, with Don Taylor paying for one, and the Open Ends Sunday School class paying for another; some money left from last Bazaar could be used, but donations would be welcomed. Also, additional bricks have been placed in courtyard. (Last month it was reported that Alice and Rudy Simpson had painted the Social Hall. This was correct, but it wasn't reported that the paint was donated by Carl and Kendall Rhodes.)

**Grounds** reported that plantings will be changed to use perennials whenever possible. Carl Rhodes and Lloyd Laughlin were thanked for their help with maintenance of flower beds and lawns.

**Stewardship & Finance** reported that numbers for March did not look good – partly because expenses were skewed due to bills paid in March and not in February. Also it was reported that the reception for Kerry's installation came in under budget.

**Witness** reported that cards had been found to include with flower deliveries. Also reported that old long-range planning brochures, as well as tickets inviting visitors to come as a guest to a Wednesday night dinner. Reported that \$12,409.32 was raised for Stamps for Mission. The Presbyterian Women will give a retirement gift (check) to the Adams' when they are here in June.

**Worship** – Clara Spanos was thanked for decorating the cross for Easter. May 8 will be the Steeple to Steeple Tour of which our church is a participating church – Anne Porter will be docent, Kerry Westerwick will be in attendance for Presbyterian overview, and Edna for music overview.

**Personnel** reported that church does not have a custodian at present, but are in process to find/hire someone.

**Old Business:** Session served at Oasis – approx 90 served. The couple who asked to use our church for wedding did not follow through.

The newly elected Church Officer Nominating Committee is Alice Butler, Mike Broadhurst, Penny

Brangan, Jennifer Patgorski and Gail Pittman. They are getting organized.

**New Business:** Anne Porter and Pat Sparks are our Elder Commissioners to the Presbytery Meeting on Saturday, September 24 at Yorkminster.

### **MUSING: EARTH DAY EVERY DAY**

**APRIL 22 WAS “EARTH DAY” AROUND THE GLOBE**, for Christians and non-Christians alike. Earth Day has been set aside to remind us to think about the ecology, about the impact of humans on other parts of nature, and about our responsibility for the resources of the planet we live on.

**UNFORTUNATELY, MANY CHRISTIANS DISMISS EARTH DAY** as a day for “tree huggers” and lectures about climate change. They make jokes and snide remarks about Earth Day and those who observe it. It is true that some observances of Earth Day have more merit than others. However, Christians who are cynical about Earth Day may be missing the larger point – or perhaps missing an opportunity.

**PSALM 24 TELLS US THAT “THE EARTH IS THE LORD’S”** and that “he founded it” and in Genesis we read the story of creation and how the Creator – God – did it and in what order. Those who love God – and presumably that includes all Christians – would not like to see God's creation disrespected or destroyed. Though “tree huggers” may be dismissed as nuts, we Christians can not – must not – dismiss our responsibility toward the earth that God created.

**WHEN WE WASTE THE EARTH’S NATURAL RESOURCES**, when we are careless with trash and poisons, when we ignore pollution of rivers and lakes and oceans, we show disrespect not only for our surroundings, but also for our God himself. How so? How do waste, pollution, and general carelessness show disrespect for God?

**CONSIDER THIS:** You build a house with your own hands, and then give that house to your children with the stipulation that your children keep it in good repair, so it can be passed down to future generations. The house is intended to provide shelter for generations of your descendants, but the

pipes are allowed to become clogged and break, the paint is faded and flaking, empty food cartons and bags lie around on the floor and counters.

Generally, the place has been neglected and allowed to fall apart, and is not going to be a blessing to future generations and the treasure that you built it to be. Has your house – your gift – been disrespected?

**THE FIRST TWO CHAPTERS OF GENESIS** tell the story of God creating the earth with sky, dry land, and waters, filled it with living creatures and plants, and created humankind “to rule over... all the earth” “to subdue it” and “to work it and take care of it.” God has built the house for us to live in and care for. Does our treatment of it show respect and gratitude for God’s gift?

**GOD’S CREATION IS NOT FOR ONE DAY A YEAR**, but for every day of the year, for as long as time lasts. Being Christian must include showing love and respect for God and being grateful for all God’s blessings to us. Treating the earth with loving respect and gratitude is no less an act of worship than it is to hear his word and sing his praises.

**EARTH DAY IS A REMINDER**, not of some political agenda or utopian ideal, but of our very real obligation to God for his wisdom, love, and providence.

Lane Pittman

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### **DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER**

Articles or information to be published in the newsletter must be submitted to the Newsletter Editor no later than the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month before the item is to appear. Submissions may be made by U.S. Mail, telephone, or email.

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*Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.*

## **PEVA NOTES**

### Presbytery Events

#### **May**

**1**, Yorkminster: Congo Trip Fundraising BREAKFAST  
**5/2**, Royster Memorial: PEVA-WIDE CHORAL CONCERT

**3-5**, Sprunt Lectures, Margaret R. Miles, Lecturer,

**3-8**, Montreat: Worship, Play, & the Arts

**6**, PEVA: EDUCATORS LUNCHEON – Noon

**8**, Olde Town: STEEPLE-TO-STEEPLE TOUR 5/8, MW: FIRST FRIDAYS – Gardening

**11**, Covenant PC: Southside Pastors LUNCH

**18**, Hilton PC: Theologue Study Group

**22**, Ocean View Golf Course: ODU Campus Ministry GOLF TOURNEY

**23**, Carver Memorial PC: Benefit CONCERT

#### **June**

**4-6**, MW: SINGLE PARENT FAMILY GETAWAY

**10-13**, Massanetta: PW SUMMER GATHERING

#### **July and beyond**

**7/18-25**: Chiapas MEXICO MISSION TRIP

**10/22-23**, 1st VB: HIT THE BULLSEYE '10 CONFERENCE

**11/6**, 1st Norfolk: EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

### Other Notes

*[The following was taken from General Executive’s remarks to the 4/24 PEVA mtg.]*

In 2009 PRESBYTERY-WIDE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE dropped by 430 people, a decrease of more than 5%. Only 13 of PEVA churches showed an increase.

Perhaps even more important than worship attendance is the number of NEW DISCIPLES being made by PEVA congregations. In 2009 God blessed our 62 congregations with 500 new disciples. A “new disciple” is someone who joined your church either by profession of faith or by reaffirmation of faith. We rejoice in this.

Out of this 500, 354 came from only 15 of PEVA churches. A church might be growing by transfer of letter, but that is not kingdom growth. Also, note that those 15 churches are either large or medium size churches. If we are going to come anywhere close to our goal of making new disciples and making an impact on Hampton Roads, we must help all our churches grow, regardless of size. Kudos to churches that are growing by making new disciples as well as by transfer and renewal. That's a wonderful sign of health.

Unfortunately, 70% of our new disciples came from 24% of our churches. If we are serious about introducing more people to Jesus Christ, inviting them into a personal relationship with Christ, and helping them to grow toward becoming a fully devoted disciple of Jesus Christ, to the end that we will impact Hampton Roads, we have got to have our small churches become medium size churches, and our medium size churches become large. Small congregations are defined as having less than 100 in your average weekly worship attendance, and large churches have more than 300.

The ray of hope is that we think the unveiling of the Healthy Growing Congregations Initiative to begin in September is going to give our pastors and our sessions some tools and skills to make that happen.

Please also note that DONNA RAE BARROW joined the PEVA staff on April 1 as the new Resource Center Director. She looks forward to meeting everyone and a fruitful ministry!

***Please include all of the churches of PEVA, their staffs and sessions in your prayers.***

Follow Pastor Kerry's blog on the web at:  
[revkerry.blogspot.com](http://revkerry.blogspot.com)

## MAY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

### Birthdays

1	Polly Moore
2	Sue Parker
6	David Culpepper
11	Clara Spanos
12	Christopher Powell
15	Joyce Wright
18	Hunter Webb, III
	Elizabeth Turner
21	Bob Graupmann
23	Kelly S. Kerr
26	Glenn Council
	Diana Taylor
30	Scott Taylor

### Anniversaries

12	Doris Leitner
18	Lane & Gail Pittman (1996)
28	Elizabeth & Michael Fitzwater (1995)
30	Bob & Sue Parker (1945)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR MAY 2010

May 2	8:55 am First Fellowship/Lord's Supper 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship/Lord's Supper Off Nom Com mtg/F'ship SS Cl rm
May 5	6:00 pm Pot Luck Dinner 7 :00 pm Adult Choir
May 8	9:00 am Steeple to Steeple
May 9	8:55 am First Fellowship 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship
May 12	Adult Choir
May 15	Youth Traveling Car Wash
May 16	8:55 am First Fellowship 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship 12:00 pm Hospitality Hour
May 17	7:00 pm Session
May 18	7:00 pm Diaconate
May 19	6:00 pm Dinner/Program by Fin Com 7:00 pm Adult Choir
May 22	10:00 am PW Gath in fellowship hall
May 23	8:55 am First Fellowship 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship
May 26	7:00 pm Adult Choir
May 30	8:55 am First Fellowship 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship
May 31	<b>Church Office Closed</b>