



# THE PIPER

Piping Along News of Interest

JUNE 2019

Dear Church,

I'm delighted to share with you that **Sandra Caselli, Tim and Cheryl Cassel, Bradley & Jessica Long, Aaron & Ruth Lorson, and Bill & Jackie Sammon** are becoming our newest covenant partners at First Presbyterian Church! Some of you might be asking, "What is a covenant partner?" Well, I'm glad you asked! Prior to joining the ECO denomination several years ago, we used to say becoming a "member". Now that we are in ECO, we have a different understanding of joining. As you look carefully in Scripture, you will see a much more engaged and connected view of being a part of the local church.

In the past, some members saw membership as "joining an organization", almost like joining Costco or the country club. Members decide if and when they go to the store or utilize the club. However, that is not a biblical understanding of being a part of Christ's body. Because of this, when people are joining, we ask them to "covenant with one another" and we use the term "covenant partner" rather than member. A covenant partner makes a promise and commitment to being "all in", desiring and working toward the health and flourishing of the church. This involves regular attendance in worship, participation in a small group or Sunday class, using your gifts to serve, and contributing toward the ministry and mission of First Pres. A vibrant and growing church happens when everyone jumps in and does their part. So, in order to accomplish the vision and mission God has called us to, we need to count on every covenant partner participating. Join us in being fully devoted to Christ and to one another!

During the four weeks of the Connection Class, visitors and longer term members enjoy gathering to experience and learn what it means to live out being a covenant partner through small group discussion and Bible study, as well as, teaching. If you have not gone through this class, I highly encourage you to participate. I believe you will be glad you did! If you have questions about this, or would like to talk about it, be sure to contact me. I would enjoy having a conversation with you.

By His grace and for His glory,  
*Pastor Scott*



High school fellowship at Tropical Smoothie on a Sunday afternoon in May. We got to hear the testimony of a recent JMU grad who is headed to the Middle East as a missionary for the next two years to tell others about the hope we have in Jesus.

## On the Calendar

- June 2** New Sunday School Series starts
- June 9** Meredith Chapel Communion Service, 2pm
- June 9-14** Renew Camp
- June 24-28** Summer JAM Camp, 9am-12pm
- June 25** Session Meets, 6:30pm, Room 201
- June 30** 10am Worship Service & Picnic with Summer JAM Program, sign up online!



## Summer JAM Camp, June 24-28th

Whether volunteering to help, inviting your neighbors, or bringing friends, it's a time to connect with our community for the glory of Jesus!  
Grab some invites in the lobby and pass them out!

Register at: [www.firstpreshbg.org/summer-jam-camp/](http://www.firstpreshbg.org/summer-jam-camp/)

## *The Chappells experience Cuba*

Betty and I accompanied our daughter and son-in-law, Amy and Patrick, on a trip to Cuba March 23-29th. We went to encourage believers and learn from them how to better put our faith into practice. Patrick and Amy have established relationships with pastors there. One pastor is providing teaching and encouragement to other pastors. Most work to support themselves in addition to their pastoral role. Most of our days were spent visiting pastors, praying with them, and listening to what God was doing in their lives.

Cuba is a complicated country. The average salary for many is \$20 a month. People can't live on that salary so they find creative ways to meet their needs. Transportation is a huge problem. Driving is an occupation, not a convenience. Public transportation is inefficient and unpredictable; one can wait hours to catch a bus.

In the current environment one can worship at small house churches. In spite of the difficult life that is reality, the Cuban Christians we met were joyful because they know heaven awaits. We carried many useful items to our Cuban brothers and sisters, most of them given by our congregation.

### **Some highlights of the trip:**

Listening to Patrick preach while Amy translated.

Amy met a Cuban woman at the airport who was crying. Her young daughter has cancer. She welcomed Amy's prayer. A local pastor will follow up.

A young couple Amy and Patrick knew invited us for dinner. It was special.

We met a Chinese family that sold their home in Beijing and moved to Havana to witness for Christ. The Chinese sister played keyboard and sang beautifully. We ended our visit singing "Amazing Grace" each in our native tongue: Chinese, Spanish, and English. We are one In Christ.

We visited a medical doctor and his family. He and his wife are both full-time physicians, and he is a full-time pastor. During a Thursday morning worship service we saw five adult baptisms. We brought items for their ministry: stuffed animals, books, balloons, and Kerus quilts that he will take to children in a nearby children's cancer hospital.

We visited a pastor working at a remote church with a small congregation. We were there to encourage him. His wife was disappointed she didn't have anything to serve us. We gave her coffee which she happily served to us. Patrick gave the pastor a cellphone that had been sent by a covenant partner of First Pres. With a Cuban sim card, he will have access to an email account and therefore not feel so isolated. The couple was grateful for the gifts we brought, but more thankful for caring enough to visit them.

We learned that the owner of the guest house where we stayed had inoperative lung cancer. His wife was grateful for Amy and Patrick's prayer for healing.

### **Lessons learned:**

When Christian Cubans say the Lord's prayer "Give us this day our daily bread" is a literal prayer, not figurative. Nearly every day involves a search for food.

The Cuban church brings to mind the church described in Acts. Wherever the gospel was preached and people responded, a church came into existence. They were a worshipping community, guided by the scriptures. They cared for one another.

The Cuban brothers and sisters have a vision for the church. They want to teach sewing to women and provide computers to help children with homework. They also want to establish a hospice network of Christians who will host families from out of town making it easier for them to visit their loved one. They want to share the love of Christ.



## **Pray for Cuba**

- ◆ Pray that more churches will come into existence.
- ◆ Pray that the love Christians show one another will motivate unbelievers to come to Christ.
- ◆ Pray that our Cuban brothers and sisters know that we love them.
- ◆ Pray that they feel empowered by the Holy Spirit to persevere while living very difficult and complicated circumstances.

## *Professions of Faith*

Part of the confirmation process is for each confirmand to give a profession of faith to the Session. The Session enjoyed hearing these testimonies during the April meeting, and we thought the congregation should have a chance to hear a few as well. Glory to God!

**Profession by Sydney Whetzel:** When I was a little kid, I thought I was a Christian because I went to church, and attended a Christian school. I thought I did not have anything to worry about. Well, soon that all changed. When I was about twelve years old, I was in a situation that I knew I could not handle alone. I sat myself down in my bedroom and cried out to Jesus, telling Him I could not do this alone. Then I gave my life to Christ. I was praying every night, and loving Jesus. He is my dearest friend, and He is closer than a brother. I knew God would never let me go. A few months later, a local children's director, Mrs. Lisa Updike came to speak at a chapel. She gave us a model devotional plan, and I have been trying to keep a daily devotional ever since. This is my quiet time with the Lord .It makes me feel at ease.

Often times, I experience night time anxiety. It is a terrifying thing to go through. Being at the Modgnik retreat least fall really helped me realize that Jesus was there for me. He is always fighting for me.

I have also struggled with giving my burdens to God. It is so hard not to worry about other people and their walk with the Lord, but I just have to realize that God is with them, and He has not forgotten about them. All I can do now is pray and set a good example.

I believe that God created the world in seven days, and He sent His Son to die for me on the cross. I believe that Jesus rose on the third day, and I know that He has a plan for my life.

He is my personal Savior, and I love Him so. I know that He has my back in everything. In my time of struggling, He is with me. It is in those moments that we need to press into Him more than we ever have before.

When we feel far from God, He has not left us, but rather, we have wandered away from Him. He is forever holding our hearts. There is nothing that we could ever do to make Him not love us.

**Profession by Jack Larson:** At The Edge 2017, I had the privilege to be alone with God at night, under a tree. As I wondered about Him, a thought struck me. God had created the stars and planets, all life and energy, out of absolutely nothing. I examined the roots and branches of the tree. How could anyone but God even imagine the entirety of a thing so complex? The way it drew water from the ground, the way the leaves absorbed light, and the way the branched twisted and entwined. All had been carefully thought out by a loving Creator. No human being could understand everything about this one tree. Yet God created a universe so large that what we know is just a grain of sand resting on the beach of what we do not know.

God undoubtedly exists. I thought about Genesis 1:27, "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." I believe this verse means that people should see God in us through our actions and words. However, when we sin, we taint the image of God that others see in us. Sometimes people sin so much that the image of God is unrecognizable. And this is why Jesus died to save us.

When we stand before The Lord, He will see Jesus's perfect, flawless image instead of our tainted ones, because nothing we ever do will be enough to deserve heaven. It is by Jesus, and only by Jesus, that we are saved. I have tried to be more like God in everything that I do, although I know that nothing I can do will compare to His expectations. I only hope that in my short time on Earth, I can help God in any way possible.



### *A big Thank You to those mentoring our confirmands!*

Ben Edwards & Terry Rhodes  
Lia Gonzalez & Gloria Price  
Vivian Grayson & Pat Haden  
Jake Harrison & Ron Dunham  
Margaret Hart & Tanya Thompson

Emma Jenkins & Lila Gardner  
Ashley Landes & Sue Smith  
Jack Larson & Carl Larsson  
Sydney Whetzel & Martha Graham

### **Mission Trip Opportunity**

Pastor Scott will be leading a trip to visit our sister church in Jimma, Ethiopia October 18-28. If you'd like to go, contact Pastor Scott (sthayer@firstpreshbg.org) or Renee McCulloch (srmcculloch@comcast.net).



June 1 – Barbara Harkins, Seth Hill  
June 3 – Jonathan Krauss  
June 4 – Joshua Briggman  
June 5 – Dot Spicer, Camden Langridge, Sawyer Lemn  
June 6 – Richard Haxton, Mary Decicco, Margie Robison,  
Cathy Slusher  
June 7 – Jack Darrah  
June 8 – Nancy Fletcher, Gene White  
June 9 – Mary Jane Gregory  
June 10 – Jody Pugh, Stephanie Pence  
June 11 – Rich Ours, Deborah Roberts, Mark Obenshain,  
Avery Craig  
June 12 – Bee Heitz  
June 14 – Kate Davis  
June 15 – Phyllis Branner, Meredith Hendricksen,  
Ava Rosson  
June 16 – Brianna Zumbro, Benjamin Larson, Ryan Larson  
June 17 – Lorna Morris, Marshall Price, Karen Whetzel,  
John Siciliano  
June 18 – Don Voas  
June 19 – Will Thompson  
June 20 – Val Kaylor, Emily Depoy, Bryan Rosson  
June 21 – Mark Whetzel, Jason Bales  
June 22 – Gayle Phillips, Laura Lee Conklin, Margaret Hart  
June 23 – Janet Thompson, Amanda Knestrick  
June 24 – June Hosaflook, Jackson Fendley  
June 25 – Thomas Wong, Matthew Ford  
June 26 – Nan Sowers  
June 27 – Jo Ann Raines  
June 28 – Jerry Simmons, Craig Smith Sr., Joe Grandstaff,  
Joshua Craig  
June 29 – Betsy Jarvis, Sandy Shomo, Russ Gregory,  
Jean Hylton, Mitch Depoy, Andrew Krauss  
June 30 – Doris Joecks, Steve Joseph, Dan Logan,  
Jennie Cerullo, Emily Larson  
July 1 – Mac Hutson, Dan Clements, Lisa Moomaw  
July 2 – Mary Neff, Wilson White, Bill Westwood, Vic Smith,  
Jeanie Dunham, Kitty Cline  
July 3 – James Henderson  
July 4 – Sam Pyles, Clarissa McIntyre, Levi Berkey  
July 5 – Scott Dove, Kimberly Garcia, Ben Craig,  
Vivian Grayson  
July 6 – Colleen Long, Jane Parker, Bea Ammons,  
Don Flegel, Kate Campbell, Mary Jean Callender

June 6—John and Jackie Buchanan celebrate 60 years  
June 8—David and Lisa Grayson celebrate 22 years  
June 8—Richard and Kimberlee Hartzler-Weakley celebrate 17 years  
June 10—Joe and Sallie Funkhouser celebrate 52 years  
June 10—Tom and Cherylen Martin celebrate 41 years  
June 11—Fred and Carole Bates celebrate 54 years  
June 12—Tiny and Lo Palmer celebrate 73 years  
June 12—Reccy and Wilma Thomas celebrate 43 years  
June 13—Taylor and Laura Pence celebrate 4 years  
June 14—Richard and Donna Williams celebrate 61 years  
June 15—Kale and Norma Barb celebrate 56 years  
June 15—Steve and Anne Zumbro celebrate 28 years  
June 15—Mike and Kristen Ramsey celebrate 23 years  
June 16—Rob and Carolyn Frank celebrate 39 years  
June 16—Jeff and Val Stapel celebrate 29 years  
June 18—Bob and Cindy Hill celebrate 31 years  
June 19—John and Gwen Sloop celebrate 49 years  
June 19—Ed and Debbie Price celebrate 43 years  
June 20—Wilson and Evelyn White celebrate 56 years  
June 20—Joe and Kay Grandstaff celebrate 20 years  
June 21—Jack and Mary Broaddus celebrate 50 years  
June 21—Chris and Jenn Bryant celebrate 22 years  
June 22—Patrick and Amy Werner celebrate 11 years  
June 23—John and Kappy Barnes celebrate 40 years  
June 23—Tom and Bethany Kuster celebrate 7 years  
June 24—Roger and Judy von Seldeneck celebrate 52 years  
June 24—Dan and Katie Hylton celebrate 13 years  
June 25—Don and Janet Thompson celebrate 59 years  
June 25—Mal and Maureen Lane celebrate 53 years  
June 25—Lee and Paula Corder celebrate 43 years  
June 25—Frank and Annette Sprinkel celebrate 42 years  
June 25—Dale and Wendy Lam celebrate 31 years  
June 26—Bill and Janice Callender celebrate 31 years  
June 26—Tom and Becky Templeton celebrate 26 years  
June 27—Myron and June Hosaflook celebrate 49 years  
June 27—Tom and Jennifer Sowers celebrate 27 years  
June 28—Bob and Mary Sease celebrate 44 years  
June 28—Michael and Loretta Clark celebrate 42 years  
June 28—Thomas and Lisa Moomaw celebrate 22 years  
June 28—Mike and Amanda Houston celebrate 16 years  
June 29—Walt and Judy Wine celebrate 56 years  
June 29—Pat and Glenda Rooney celebrate 51 years  
June 29—Adam and Tonia Campillo celebrate 23 years

*I would like to thank my church family for the visits,  
cards, and flowers. They were much appreciated  
when I was the TLC Person of the Week.*

*Bobby E. Miller*

### ***We Express our Sympathy to:***

The Moyer family, in the loss of Darlis Moyer, on May 5th.  
The Thompson family in the loss of Sue Thompson, on May 4th.  
Kathleen Cross, in the loss of her mother, Susan Hare, on May  
18th.