

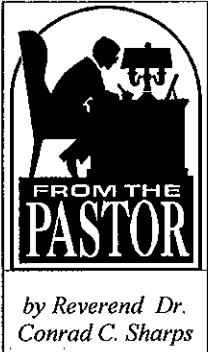


# First Press

*The First Presbyterian Church Newsletter*

October 2005

Rev. Dr. Conrad Sharps - Senior Pastor  
Rev. Hope Lee - Associate Pastor  
Rev. Dr. John R. Harland - Parish Associate



## Reaching Branches of Ministry

A very unusual tree grows in one of the parking lots of a Presbyterian Church in downtown Bradenton, Florida. I used to park under this tree when my church youth group joined the big downtown youth group for activities. I was always intrigued by this tree.

It's called a banyan. — a name derived from the Hindi word for traders, who set up their markets under its spreading branches. It's also called the tree that lives forever.

A species of fig, the banyan tree can reach a height of over 100 feet. But what makes it so unusual is the way it grows more in circumference than in height. The canopy of a mature banyan can cover several acres! As the tree grows, broad branches spread outward, sprouting aerial roots that descend into the ground to form new trunks which nourish and support further growth of the tree. Thus the banyan tree is constantly expanding and growing, actually moving forward with every new trunk it puts down.

In many parts of the world under the shelter of this tree's broad canopy, schools hold classes; village councils conduct business; artists display their paintings; merchants set up shop; villagers escape the searing summer sun; children climb and play. Alexander the Great camped under a banyan tree that was large enough to shelter his entire army of 7,000 men. One of the largest banyan trees known today has 350 large trunks and about 3,000 small ones. Yet by comparison, the banyan seed is so small that if you were to split it in two, your eye could not distinguish the subtle something which produces this mighty tree — a tree made up of a

thousand branches, intertwined together, merging the past and the present; forever changing; forever growing. Yet always the same. It's a perfect image of Christ and the Church: Christ, the trunk (the vine); His Church, the branches. You see Christians are the roots that support the branches and provide the nourishment needed for growth; for ministry, mission, witness and service.

Though to us our gifts to God's work might seem as small as the banyan seed in comparison to the tree, they are what enable the church to function on this earth. We never know when we give to God just how far-reaching the effects will be; but we can be certain that no gift is insignificant to God. Scripture tells us each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. That's what it's all about — serving others in Jesus Christ.

How are you using the energy, intelligence, imagination and love God has given you in life? As a church family we have many needs that God is meeting — through the commitment of your time, your talent and your resources. Help us today by continuing to support the ever reaching branches of the ministry of Jesus Christ through this church. Give yourself in prayer for our ministry, our staff, and our pastors. Give yourself by becoming committed and involved in some form of ministry: LOGOS, the youth, the choir, MACs, the various committees of our Session, the Stephen Ministry, Habitat, Micah's Place, etc.

Just as each root is necessary to support the branches of the banyan tree, you are vital to the well-being, growth and quality of the ministry of Jesus Christ through this church family.

Please submit articles for the newsletter as early as possible, but no later than the 20th of each month.

## Good-bye from Hope

*"Love those around you, but ask much of them.  
They will respond."*

In the fall of 2002, the deacons of FPC decided to take a little tour of the newly purchased manse on N. 5th & Alachua St.. One of the deacons commented, "do you think he'll like it?" The deacon was referring to the new Associate Pastor about to come on board that January. Now, of course, I only heard about this story second-hand, but I imagine that the deacon was not the only one surprised to find out that, in fact, the new Associate Pastor was going to be a she.

And so, there I was - the first female pastor in the whole history of First Presbyterian. As I prepare to leave you, my prayer is that your memory of me would not be that I was a girl.

I hope that you will remember the silly ways that I would go about recruiting folks to help out with various activities around the church, including things like "once-in-a-lifetime opportunities to get a behind the scenes look at the church yard sale," and how "given that there are 957 members of the church, if everyone took a Sunday, we'd each do coffee about once every five years or so and how you should sign up quickly because prime dates were going fast."

I hope that the choir would remember how each Sunday I would remind them how

much I depend on them to cover up my voice during hymns and how truly horrendous it would be if I had to sing a solo in the event that they didn't show up.

I hope the youth remember things like, "now I was thinking to myself... 'self, I need too...'", the Jell-O Bowl, and "not-so-much." Perhaps they will remember the time we went whitewater rafting in March and almost froze to death, the time we went mountain sliding in Denver, the time I prank called one of them at a hotel in Daytona Beach, and the time they threw Brandie Williams and I into a baby pool after we covered them in shaving cream.

But most of all, I hope that they, and the rest of the congregation, remembers how much I love them. And, out of that love, I have asked much of you. As my brothers and sisters in Christ, you have always responded faithfully. For my part, I always hoped that I could demonstrate the love of Christ in fun and humorous ways. This earthly life is way too short not to laugh.

So, I take my leave of you to go and serve at Valley Forge Presbyterian Church in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. But, God continues to do great things here at FPC...may you continue to do great things in the joy of Jesus Christ with a little smile and much laughter.



Please join the entire church family at a reception to honor Hope, in between services, on Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, in JTH.

### Fall Bazaar

Plan now for the Fall Bazaar on Saturday, November 5<sup>th</sup>. Plan to help by making items to sell or by working at the bazaar.



### October Communion

Communion will be served on October 2<sup>nd</sup> at both services.



# TEEN MISSION TRIP

Not only was the trip to Canada fun, but was emotional. We saw things we had never seen before. The first four days spent in Canada was with YouthWorks, and another youth group from Minnesota. We all got split up into groups and were sent to mission sites. Some worked with adults, some worked with kids, while others worked in the soup kitchen.

The people there were much more different than us, where home to them was a back alley or a step outside, and their next move was struggling just to find their next meal, or money to get drugs. The last couple of days we stayed in two different hotels and went site-seeing. Going on the white water rafting trip was something we all will never forget, since the water was extremely cold, and of course we went shopping.

The Canada trip was an experience never to be forgotten by those who went, and truly changed the lives of many.

-Casey Deviese

## Presbyterian Women's News

Presbyterian women enjoyed a time of fellowship as we gathered for our annual kickoff luncheon in September. Members of the PW coordinating team presented the introduction to the Horizons Bible study on the church's liturgical year. An offering was taken to help Presbyterian Women's worldwide missions.

In October, circles will start meeting. All women in our church family are invited to attend any of the circle meetings. Call any of the following leaders for information on their circle.

- ♥ Elizabeth Circle, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. Call Polly Hord at 261-4153.
- ♥ Esther Circle, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. Call Mim Walker at 261-7443.
- ♥ Hannah Circle, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. Call Bunny Selby at 277-4435.
- ♥ Lydia Circle, October 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. Call Joy Drewry's home at 261-0174.
- ♥ Martha Circle, October 12<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. Call Jan Turner at 321-0506.
- ♥ Ruth Circle, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. Call Elizabeth Kendrick at 261-6304.

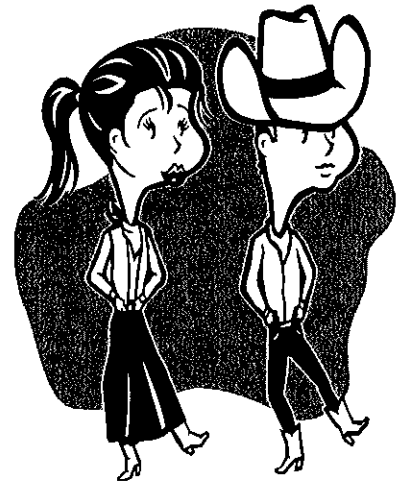
## First Ever Hoe Down

It is almost time for the first congregational Hoe Down! Everyone of all ages is invited to a barbeque, square dancing, line dancing, hay rides for the kids, music listening, foot stomping good time on Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup> from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. at Mike and Charlotte Bowling's property on the Nassau River. We have a terrific square dance caller lined up, as well as a line dance instructor. Both are qualified to work with beginners!

The entire event is free of charge, but your reservation is imperative prior to October 7<sup>th</sup>. Call now and scratch this off your to do list! Be sure to let us know how many children ages 2<sup>nd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> grade are included. Following are the directions to the Bowling's property (cut this out now and put in on your refrigerator or bulletin board):

1. Turn North on Chester Road. (across from North Hampton and Winn Dixie Shopping Center off A1A).
2. Proceed down Chester Road approximately 3.3 miles.
3. Turn left on Roses Bluff Road.
4. Continue down Roses Bluff Road (a little over a mile) and the hard road turns into a dirt road.
5. Keep going down the dirt road for another 1.2 miles. You will see a split rail fence with a sign that says "Welcome to River Bluffs"! There is a little yellow house just inside the gate where the caretaker lives. You have arrived.

In the awful event of rain, we will carry on at the church.



# Memorial Gifts (March 2005 – August 2005)

## To the Endowment Trust Fund

**In Memory of Jess Bowling**  
Sidney & Anne Barbanel

**In Memory of Ruth Burgess**  
Betty Waas

**In Memory of Marilyn Coggins**  
Lonnie & Mary Bail

Jan Bail  
Joel & Gail Bennett  
P.E. & Peggy Monteith  
Calvin & Josephine Shaw

**In Memory of Berley Geiger**

Bill & Sally Bailey  
Billy & Thelma Bethea  
Carpenter's Union #627  
Dell Dunman

John & Suzanna Harland  
Sewell & Marilyn Harlin

Polly Hord  
Myrtle Mikkelsen  
Elizabeth Ozmer

John Pope  
Mariella Schrantz  
Susan Steger  
Myrtle Walters

**In Memory of Bill Oliver**

R. Asbery  
Dorothy Baker  
Susan Brown  
Michelle Goyrau & Larence Stanley  
Polly Hord  
Thomas & Genearle Hughes  
W.R. Lotspeich

**In Memory of Robert Swantz**

Jacqueline Doyle  
Charles & Josephine Holt

**In Memory of Karen Yokum**

Herbert & Louanne Lind



## To the Philips Memorial Fund

**In Memory of Berley Geiger**  
Jim & Ann Thomas

**In Memory of Marilyn Coggins**  
Jim & Ann Thomas

## To the Education Fund

**In Memory of Jess Bowling**  
J & M Blancett  
Meredith & Mary Ruark

**In Memory of Marilyn Coggins**  
Nelson & Marilyn Showalter

**In Memory of Berley Geiger**  
Susan Steger

**In Memory of Kay Pierce**  
Jane Philips

**In Memory of Doug Whitman**  
Bill & Sally Ericksen  
Sung & Hope Lee  
Susan Steger

## To the Organ Fund

**In Memory of Berley Geiger**  
Keith & Marilyn Erdahl  
Bill Tucker & Martha Ratchford

**In Memory of Audrey Shaw**  
Keith & Marilyn Erdahl

**In Memory of Doug Whitman**  
Keith & Marilyn Erdahl  
Bill Tucker & Martha Ratchford


**In Memory of Karen Yokum**  
Joel & Alice Payne  
Bill Tucker & Martha Ratchford

## More Adult Christians

If you are 50 or over, please join the Senior Adult group on Thursday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, at Camp Montgomery, from 9:15 a.m. to 2:20 p.m. for Oktoberfest. This is a fun event and provides an opportunity to meet and fellowship with senior adults from around the Presbytery.

The cost is \$12.00 and is due in the church office by October 10<sup>th</sup>. The group will be carpooling from the church and will leave at 7:30 a.m. If you do not wish to go to Camp Montgomery, there will be an alternative function that day at a restaurant that is yet to be determined. Please watch the bulletin for more information.

## Flower Calendar

- ♥ October 2<sup>nd</sup> - Ann and Dan Kirby in honor of their 50th Wedding Anniversary, and Jim Shaw in loving memory of his wife, Audrey. 
- ♥ October 9<sup>th</sup> - Carolyn and Bill Guerrin in honor of grandchildren, Peyton, Cova and Brady.
- ♥ October 16<sup>th</sup> - Betty and Jimmy Long and Beth Rich in memory of her husband and their father, James L. Long.
- ♥ October 23<sup>rd</sup> - The Hardee girls, Susan, Celeste, Kathy, Ann and Betty in memory of their mother and father, Suzanne and Bill Hardee.
- ♥ October 30<sup>th</sup> - Merle and Jayne Conkin in honor of his sisters, Bette and Jeri.



Todd and Carolyn Lockhart moved to Fernandina with their teenage daughter from Asheville, North Carolina. Todd works for the U.S. Justice Department, and Carolyn works part-time at the North Hampton Information Center. When they have free time, they enjoy boating, reading and exercising.

### LOGOS Calendar for October

- ♥ October 5<sup>th</sup> - Florida Night (FSU, UF, Miami, UCF, etc.)
- ♥ October 12<sup>th</sup> - Circus Night
- ♥ October 19<sup>th</sup> - No logos
- ♥ October 26<sup>th</sup> - Dress Up Night (You will prepare your dress up attire in arts and crafts.)

### Session Notes

- The Deacons reported that Hope recently gave a mini-training on divorce, and its impact on the family. It was felt that the information would be very helpful in comforting those in need.
- The Finance Committee requested the submission of all budgets for the coming year.
- Communications and Evangelism reported that it would start inserting the pictures of new members in the monthly newsletter.
- A preliminary Child Protection Policy was adopted. The draft will be further reviewed and eventually submitted to our insurance carrier for comment.
- The Property Committee reported that it is still reviewing the stabilization of the Sanctuary and that grouting work will start soon. Estimates for the replacement of the Anchor Roof are still being received. The new organ is now in place but further work is needed in regards to the railing, steps, and carpeting. The Finance and Worship Committees are working on replacing the pew cushions. A handicap ramp for the office will be installed in early October.
- With mixed emotions, the resignation of our beloved Hope was received and accepted. We are certainly sad to see her leave, but she is going to lead her own congregation. Our best wishes and support go to her.

First Press is published monthly as part of the ministry of First Presbyterian Church.

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Bulk Rate  
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Sunday Worship Hours: 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.  
Sunday School: 9:50 a.m.  
Thursday Morning Prayer Group: 8:00 a.m.