

First

NEWS

Presbyterian Church

May 2014

Pastor Drew's Views

Away we go!

Little did I know when I got the first call from Johnna Johnson on 3/14/14 that my life would change so drastically and that my first day on the job at FPC Griffin would be by 4/14/14. What a ride! Once again, as they say, God works in mysterious ways. Now that is an understatement! And as I said in worship, when the train called "God's Will" comes through town, you better get on! It's always the best one to ride. Jennifer, Emily, Jackson, Jimmy, Eden and I have enthusiastically jumped on here at FPC Griffin and we could not be more thrilled. Thank you.

I want to thank Johnna Johnson and the PNC for the time, energy, prayer and excellent work they have put into the difficult, but rewarding, process of calling your new pastor. They asked great questions. They were intentional about good communication. They made all the Ellings feel very welcome. Most of all, the PNC was clearly Christ-centered and Spirit-led. That is what they clearly wanted in your next pastor, but it is also what they obviously practiced themselves. Actually, I am not surprised. This is simply who you are as a congregation. Believe me, Jennifer and I have noticed, and God has used it to draw us in.

I want to thank Rev. Dr. Earl Stewart as well. He has been just the shepherd this congregation needed over the past two years. I appreciate his thoughtfulness, humor and encouragement in my first days as your pastor.

I love when Jesus says, "*I have come that they may have life, and life to the full*" (John 10:10). What I like is that He didn't say "*I have come so they can go to heaven someday*" or "*I have come that they may have life someday*". Either one would still be good news, but Jesus clearly wants even more than that for the world. Instead, Jesus says His purpose is to offer us life starting today. Eternal life, real living, starts today in Him and through Him. I have been asked what my vision for the church is. That's it! Living real life, starting today, with you.

Away we go!

Pastor Drew

Philippians 1:3-6

Six-Foot, Nine and Counting

The PNC is grateful after a grueling marathon colored by an amazing sprint, to introduce God's choice for our church, Drew Elling. All six feet, nine of him, complete with a heart for missions and evangelism. When we first met with Drew, we were captured by his idea that we should "just do church" for each other, our community, and the world because, as he is fond of saying, "We are blessed to be a blessing."

Drew was born and raised in Centerville, Ohio, a suburb of Dayton. Oh yes, he is a big Buckeye, Reds, and Bengals fan. (We will just have to cover that with Grace.) He graduated from Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania in 1992 with a bachelor's degree in radio and television broadcasting. While he was there, he did the broadcasting for the football team, which went to three national championships and won two. He now understands that God was training him in communications skills for the ministry.

It was Drew's move-in day as a freshman at Westminster when he first met his wife, Jennifer, a big time Steelers fan. She helped him to move into his dorm. Unlike Drew, Jen had moved many times in her life, so she knew what she was doing. Her parents moved 27 times in their first 25 years of marriage. While she spent a lot of time in the South, including two years in Columbus, Jennifer considers Pittsburg home because she lived there long enough to begin and finish high school. Jennifer was involved in student ministry and worked as a camp counselor. They married right out of college. Jen was working as a DCE, and Drew went to work at New Wilmington Presbyterian in campus ministry until he entered Gordon Conwell Seminary.

Once the children started coming, Jen quit her job. Drew was in Seminary, so to support his growing family, he worked nights at UPS. Later, he worked at Christian Book Distributors where they generously gave him benefits and tuition reimbursement.

Drew has been both an associate and solo pastor at churches in Ohio, Pennsylvania, and, most recently, in Peachtree City. Drew and Jen think of themselves as a ministry team.

Drew enjoys golf, and the family enjoys outdoors activities like camping, hiking, rafting, and biking. Drew found riding 600 to 700 miles during a very difficult time in his life to be a great way to spend time with God and to reduce the effects of stress. The family also enjoys hitting the golf cart paths in PTC. At home, they like to pile on the couch and watch movies together with their two dogs and three cats.

Drew and Jennifer have four talented children. Emily, their oldest, is a gifted singer and ballerina. She loves to dance in worship and is a member of Compass Dance, a Christian dance company. She was recently inducted into the National Honor Society. She is a junior, so she is looking at colleges.

Jackson, a freshman in high school, is a musician. He is a drummer who would love to be part of a praise band. He has already done some guest appearances. This summer he will attend The Stage, a summer camp for musicians who want to learn how to be a part of a band.

Jimmy is the athlete, but he would rather play sports than watch them. He may be trying football soon. Jimmy is also mechanically minded and he likes to have his grandfather teach him how to build things.

Eden is a musician and an athlete. She plays basketball, dances, and wants to learn how to play guitar. She sings, too, and is already writing songs. She would love to be a singer-song writer.

We are very blessed to have Drew and his family become a part of our church family. Drew is looking forward to the church being the church and is excited to let the Lord show us where to go as we worship and serve together. He is also waiting to see how God builds on what's been done. If you want to get to know Drew through his writing, check out his blog at www.sixfootnineandcounting.blogspot.com. He also tweets and his twitter account is @six9andcounting. And if you would like, please friend him on Facebook.

Join us in welcoming this wonderful family to our church. Let's spoil them!

Worship Ministry Team

The Worship Ministry Team met April 8th at the church. It has been a very busy month for all of us.

Many thanks to all of those who helped with the extra things to be done during Lent and Holy Week. To the guys(Tom Baynham, Roy, Jason, Seth, Art, Roger) who helped put up, replace, and change the shroud on the cross outside as needed or indicated, we do appreciate you. To George Kirby and Emily Tingle for placing and changing the shroud on the cross inside, thank you. Having a visible reminder of this special time in our church year inside and out was special.

To the Allison, Baileys, and Villers for preparing communion three times during April, we thank you. To Lou Baldwin, Emily Tingle, Cindy Baynham, Diane Gordon and Pat Brown who placed all of the lilies in the church; the lilies were lovely and added so much to our Easter Day celebration. Thank you to all of you who purchased lilies so that this could be done. Those not picked up at the end of the service were distributed to our shut-ins.

How would we ever get all of anything done without Millie, our very special secretary? No matter how many last minute curves we send her way, she always smiles and gets it done. Thank you, Millie. All of the bulletins and inserts were terrific.

As we begin a new era in our church history, we, the Worship Ministry Team, look forward to new challenges and exciting activities. We will be meeting on the first Monday of each month. If you are interested in being a part of this ministry, please join us or call Pat Brown or Lou Geerlings for information.

Mother's Day Offering 2013

On Sunday, May 11th, Mother's Day, First Presbyterian Church will follow a tradition of many years and receive the offering that supports the *Caring Hands Fund* for Presbyterian Homes of Georgia. This is a ministry to God's most senior citizens, and the funds provided help provide exceptional care and services for more than 400 elderly residents who have outlived their financial resources. In the 65 years this ministry has existed, no resident has ever been asked to leave due to depleted life's savings.

Currently, the four homes in Georgia provide a life-long home to more than 1,000 senior residents. Last year, The *Caring Hands Fund* provided more than \$3.5 million in support of these residents. This year, an anonymous donor has promised to match all funds received in this special offering.

Presbyterian Homes is about people, not numbers. But this special ministry is counting on each of us to help frail and vulnerable residents in need by giving to the Mother's Day Offering on May 11th. On that day, special offering envelopes will be provided in the bulletin. Should you choose to contribute to this cause, you may write a check to the church indicating that it is for Presbyterian Homes of Georgia, and that amount will be listed on your contribution statement. If you use the envelopes provided and mail the contribution to the main office in Duluth, First Presbyterian of Griffin will have no record of that contribution. That is a personal decision. Either way is fine.

In recent communications with Presbyterian Homes of Georgia the following information was shared with us:

1. Only 9% of funds received are used for administration.

The homes are operated by an independent Board of Trustees, and all monies collected serve directly the residents of Presbyterian Homes of Georgia. None goes to PCUSA.

If you would like to know more about this organization, you can go to www.phgainc.org

Opportunities to Serve

May 2s and 3s Nursery workers

May 4 - Tim & Becki Brown
May 11 - Brian & Karen Chipman
May 18 - Seth & Emily Brown
May 25 - Marion & Elsie Musser

Children's Message

May 4 - Seth Brown
May 11 - Lou Baldwin
May 18 - Drew Elling
May 25 - Eddie Huffman

May Ushers

Stewart Esary, Captain,
Judy Hamilton
Karlene Hollender
George Hollender
Louis Thacker, Alternate

Communion Servers May 4

Roy Villers, Captain
Marion Musser
Lou Geerlings
Doug Tingle
Bob Gordon
Trey Jones
Lou Baldwin
Sid Esary
Eddie Huffman
Stewart Esary

MAY SESSION MEETINGS

May 11th at 8:30 am for prayer
May 18th after the service

Ministry Team Leaders - please email your team minutes to
millie@fpcgriffin.org by noon on Thursday, May 22nd.

May Elder in Charge

Lou Geerlings

Missions and Outreach

Please join us on Sunday, May 25th for a presentation by the Regional Director, Lynne Rienstra, from Samaritan's Purse, a mission that our church supports. This important international ministry is active throughout the US and world spreading the *Good News* while providing much needed disaster relief at a moments notice, medical care, church planting, operation Christmas child, heal our Patriots program, a Children's Heart project, etc. People often ask, "Why did you come?" The answer is always the same: "We have come to help you in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ." Our ministry is all about Jesus—first, last, and always. As the Apostle Paul said, "*For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake*" (2 Corinthians 4:5, NIV). We will meet in the Traylor room at 9:45 a.m.

Youth

I just wanted to take some time and thank the entire church for their support of the youth program here. I have been doing this for a long time and I can honestly say that this church is the most supportive church I have ever worked for. Not just financially but also supporting the students spiritually and emotionally. Because of your generous support we have raised enough money to not only for our mission trip this summer but we also have some funds to use towards local mission projects right here in Griffin. Trust me it is a joy to work at FPC and an even bigger joy to brag on what God is doing here in and through all of us.

Please take some time this month and pray for our students at FPC. This is a tough month with tests and finals coming up. Please pray that they are able to focus and remember what they have learned this semester. If you get a chance let them know you are thinking and praying for them. Bake them some study cookies :)

In Christ-Seth

Pastoral Intern

Right before I began to put this newsletter article together I was mapping out all of the end of the semester projects, internship responsibilities and ordination requirements I have left. After that I looked at the amount of time I have to complete all of these things and well needless to say I began to panic. How was I going to get all of this done? When am I going to find the time to do all of this? When am I going to spend with my family? When will I sleep? A plethora of questions began to march across my mind. The stress began to take over my mind and heart. Before I knew it I was bowing down to a god....

It was right about then that I looked to the left of my laptop and noticed a quote from Martin Luther which reads "Whatever your heart clings to and relies upon, that is your God, trust and faith of the heart alone make both God and idol." This landed on me like a ton of bricks. How many times have we placed our circumstances on a throne and gave them permission to demand of us our total loyalty? Only the Lord, who rescued us from sin and death through the person and work of His Son Jesus Christ, deserves the total loyalty of our hearts and minds. The only way that I am going to make it through the next couple of weeks joyfully is to fix my whole self upon my loving Lord. This is the only any of us can make it through any circumstance of life with joy.

After contemplating Luther's quote I was led to Psalm 100:5 which says, "For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations." The Lord is always good. His love reigns over me forever and this cause me to take joy in him. This is what we need to speak into our stress and anxiety. Let us not bow to gods but let us bow to the God!

Because He Lives
Jason Minter

Our Thanks to You

This extra-special thank-you note sent to you today
Holds more appreciation than any words can say,
For you're among the nicest people we have ever known,
And you'll never be forgotten for the thoughtfulness you've shown.
Love, Josie & Pam

Congregational Care

Wednesday, May 7 will be our last regular Wednesday fellowship dinner. Fried chicken, creamed corn, tossed salad and dessert, with drumsticks for the kids, will be served that night. On May 14th we will be having a cookout on the pavilion. The church will furnish the meat (hamburger and hot dogs) as well as the drinks. A sign up sheet for all other picnic supplies and food will be placed in the narthex for everyone to sign up to bring their favorite picnic food. This meal will be to honor Earl, Jason and Seth. Reservations are not required but are very much appreciated.

On May 4th after the worship service a reception will be held in the Traylor classroom to welcome Rev. Drew and his family. Please join us as we welcome them to our church family.

The Congregational Care team is always looking for new members to join in our ministry to the congregation. Please contact Roy (678-688-2113), Janice (770-227-6096) or the church if interested. We value your input and efforts as we touch the lives of our congregational family.

Some activities that are in progress:

- Create a path to the Woods assisted living residence that can be used by a golf cart
- Create a relationship with the Woods so that their residents can attend services here
- Greeting card project
- Begin a Men's fellowship group

Church-wide Memory Verse for May

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11:28-30

This is a new
address for
Marty!

Marty Lang
200 Rockaway Road, Apt. 232
Peachtree City, GA 30269
MartyLang837@comcast.net

A Plan to Read Through the Bible in a Year

www.esv.org/biblereadingplans

Our Heartfelt Sympathy

to Lynn Mitchell and her family for the loss of Ralph on April 30.

May 2014

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7 GBSFW 9:30 AM Wednesday Activities	8	9	10
*Andy Musser *Johanna Johnson	*Jane Gaston		*Jessica Broun	*Hayden Norris	*Kate O'Quinn	*Barbara McTigue **Marion & Elsie Musser **George & Karlene Hollender
11	12	13	14 GBSFW 9:30 Church wide Cook-out 5:45 PM	15	16	17
	*Xander Broun	*Ina Jones	*William Harwell	*Maureen Geboy **Ralph & Ina Jones		*Sylvia Hollums
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
*Chip Reahard		*Earl Stewart *Trevor Dunn			*Leslie Villers	*Connie Kendrick
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	Memorial Day Church Office Closed	**Mike & Helen Wiley				*Marion Musser

*-Birthday
**-Anniversary
GBSFW - Griffin Bible Study for Women

Wednesday Activities

Fellowship Supper	5:45 pm
PYF Bible Study.....	5:30 pm
Programs & Studies	6:30 pm
Adult Choir Rehearsal	7:30 pm

Sunday Activities

Sunday School	9:45 am
Worship.....	10:50 am
PYF	5:30 pm



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Presbyterian Women Bible Study

*Monday, May 5 at 10:15 am in the Traylor Class Room
Last meeting of the church year*

*We will be studying Lesson 9, "God's Abiding Presence,"
found on page 79 of Study Book.*

Please read background scripture:

Exodus 25-31; 33:7-11; 34:11-40:38; Deuteronomy 30:11-20'

Key Scripture: Exodus 25:1-9; 33:7-11; 40:34-38; Deuteronomy 30:11-20

Let's have a food shower for the 5 Loaves, 2 Fishes Food Pantry. Please bring non-perishable food items which we will put in cart for delivery. Thank you.

Next meeting will start our new Study Year on Monday, September 8, 10:15 am