

THE FIRST  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH IN  
GERMANTOWN

# WINDOWS

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 4

APRIL 2013

**SPECIAL  
DATES OF  
INTEREST:**

•Wednesday  
April 3  
Session  
7:00 PM

•Friday  
April 5  
Job Fair  
8:30AM

•Sunday  
April 7  
IHN Moves In  
Bread and Cup  
4:00 PM

•Sunday  
April 14  
Deadline  
April edition of  
WINDOWS

•Saturday  
April 20  
Women's  
Retreat  
9:00 PM

## From The Pastor

Dear Friends,

In his book, *The Lost Continent: Travels in Small Town America*, Rev. Bill Bryson tells of traveling to Hannibal, Missouri, to visit the boyhood home of the noted author Mark Twain. He described the house as a "trim, white-washed house with green shutters, set incongruously in the middle of downtown." It costs two dollars to visit Mark Twain's home and to walk around the site.

Bill Bryson said he found the home to be a disappointment as he reported: "It purported to be a faithful reproduction of the original interiors, but there were wires and water sprinklers clumsily evident in every room. I also very much doubt that young Samuel Clemens' bedroom had Armstrong vinyl on the floor or that his sister's bedroom had a plywood partition in it." He said that the house, which is owned by the city of Hannibal, attracts some 135,000 visitors each year. Bill Bryson also explained that he was not able to actually go inside the house. "You look through the windows," he writes. "At

each window there is a recorded message telling about each room."

As he proceeded from window to window, he met another tourist who seemed to know a lot about the house. Bryson asked him: "What do you think of it?" The friendly stranger replied: "Oh, I think it's great. I always come here when I'm in Hannibal . . . two or three times a year. Sometimes I go out of my way to come here." Bill Bryson was fascinated, "Really?" he replied. "O yes," the man said. "I must have been here twenty or thirty times by now. This is a real shrine you know."

As the two of them continued walking and touring together, Bill Bryson said to the man: "You must be a real fan and follower of Mark Twain. Would you say the house is just like Mark Twain described it in his books?" "Oh, I don't know," said the tourist. "I wouldn't have the foggiest notion. I've never read any of his books!"

Visiting his shrine but ignoring his books. This is how many people live out their Christian faith. They visit the shrines . . . the churches . . . of Jesus

Christ, many on a regular basis, but they do not read his book and apply His teachings to their daily lives. How about you?

I encourage you to read your Bible. Some in our congregation have taken the challenge and they are reading through the Bible in one year. You can join them! Contact Dick Liberty or Dani Howard. OR you can pick up a devotional from the literature table at the beginning of the month. You will find a biblical passage and reflection on that passage for each day. OR you can just pick up your Bible and read. A place I often tell people to begin is with the Gospel of Mark, which is believed to be the first of the gospels written. It is a short gospel and is filled with wonderful stories, many familiar and some you possibly have not heard before.

Yes, continue to visit the shine or the church of Jesus Christ but be sure to read his book as well!

See you in church!

*Nancy*

## Challenge Offering—Heeding God's Call

Heeding  
God's Call



**In 2012  
288  
Philadelphians  
Were  
Killed by  
Guns!**

We are all familiar with the number of deaths per year from firearms. Less often do we hear of the catastrophic fallout in terms of the costs and family suffering of the survivors.

As a surgeon I have treated young men in the emergency room or the operating room for their second or third bullet wound.

The government at the state and federal level has done some good things such as requiring background checks at gun stores. Much more needs to be done.

Other measures can be done, such as:

1. Strengthening background checks to include not only gun

shops but also gun shows

2. Eliminating sales of guns to those with mental illness.

3. Limiting the number of guns sold to legal purchasers per month.

4. Limiting the size of magazines and the amount of ammunition bought at one time.

5. Making it a felony for gun shop owners to knowingly sell guns to straw purchasers.

6. Banning assault weapons.

Heeding God's Call is a faith based organization with chapters in Pennsylvania, Maryland and along the United States/Mexican border that is trying to eliminate the

trafficking of guns through straw purchase. In Philadelphia our church plus others weekly picket a prominent gun shop in Philadelphia to have the owner sign a pledge to not engage in the practice of selling multiple guns to straw purchasers.

This is a small step, but, as the Chinese proverb says, "A journey of ten-thousand miles begins with a single step." This organization deserves our support please give generously. For more information the web site is [www.heedinggodscall.org](http://www.heedinggodscall.org).

—Jack Roberts

## Financial Reports

FPCG Finances through  
February 2013

Inc \$108,444.00

Exp \$179,799.00

Net -\$71,355.00

### January

#### Challenge Offering

supporting

Friends of Vernon Park

raised \$625.19

### February

#### Challenge Offering

supporting

Every Murder is Real

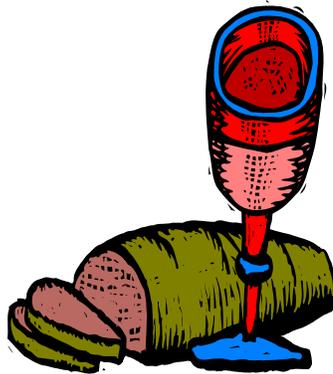
raised \$253.00

### April Community Outreach

Whosoever Gospel  
Mission  
\$2,500.00

Germantown Avenue  
Crisis Ministry  
\$2,500.00

## Bread and Cup — The Poetry Circle



FPCG's own Marlene Young has invited her fellow poets from The Poetry Circle to join her for a reunion as together

they headline this month's Bread and Cup Coffeehouse on Sunday, April 7 at 4:00 PM. The Poetry Circle was founded in 1994 under the direction of Orphiala-sertrella (Nikki) Taylor, at that time the poetry columnist for the *Philadelphia Tribune*. Also, back by popular demand, every performer at our open microphone will have a chance of re-

ceiving a \$25 gift card donated by a generous benefactor of Bread and Cup! As always, you are invited in joining in the building of community by bringing something for our refreshment table, bringing a song or poem to the microphone, or just bringing a friend or a willingness to make a new one at Bread and Cup.

## Adult Bible Study

Although Reverend Porter will be away April 7 and 14, the discussion Bible study of the Scripture passages read in worship will be in the Jennings

Room as it is most weeks at 11:30 AM. One of the best ways of keeping the Easter spirit alive throughout the year is to explore the richness of Scrip-

ture with others. Reverend Porter will be back to moderate the discussions on April 21 and 28.

## Women's Gathering — April 20

Join your sisters of the First Presbyterian Church in Germantown on Saturday, April 20, 2013 at First Church for a special morning gathering. The theme of our half-day event is In God's Image with the focus on Scripture Job 33:4, "The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives

me life." After registration and coffee from 8:30-9:00, we will mingle over breakfast and receive spiritual nourishment during the program including worship and group discussion, ending by Noon. Our speaker Rev. Evelyn Barnes, Star of Hope Baptist Church in Philadelphia, will help

participants embrace the joy of being made in God's image and inspire our Christian growth and spiritual resilience. There is no cost for the morning; a good-will offering will be taken. Open to members and their friends. Sign up at coffee hour.

# Daniel on Daniel

Dear Gentlepeople:

By the time that I was born, my parents had run out of names for their youngest and last child. So, I was later told that my eldest brother picked up the family Bible and opened it up to the book of Daniel. Well, that's the story as to how I got my name.

About a week before our last Session meeting while winding down from work, I opened my Bible to the Book of Daniel. I had read it before but not in a very long time. I remember that evening so vividly because I had cooked myself a very good dinner and now it was time to chill and regroup from a long day in criminal court. It seemed like my Bible, located on the living room table, was calling me to open it. So I sat down on my sofa with a glass of red wine and began to read the Book of Daniel. I took away from that story three things which prompted me to volunteer to write this letter on behalf of the Session: first, the cliché saying "The writing is on the wall"; second, the King's response to that message that his days were numbered; finally, the faith of the Prophet Daniel and especially that of his three Jewish friends.

First, the cliché of "The writing is on the wall": We all know the story about how the King of Babylon was having a party when a hand appeared out of nowhere and wrote a coded message on the wall. The interpretation of that message was that his

days were numbered. His kingdom was subsequently overthrown and he was murdered.

Gentlepeople, the Session is well aware that our church is in decline. Our days are numbered in years if we fail to act. The writing is on the wall, manifested by slow to no growth in membership, falling attendance by members, and the non-renewal of financial pledges within our congregation among members and some elders. The session is also aware of the relationships that have developed over the years between members and church staff and the impact that the release of two long-term employees has had on our members.

The second thing I took away from my reading is the King's response to that message that his days were numbered: My recollection of that story is that he did nothing to prevent his demise. Maybe he didn't have time or didn't care or resigned himself to his impending doom. Here at the church, we have time to turn our situation around. We have a caring congregation that has the capacity to do so. Neither should we resign ourselves to inaction which will lead to the closing of the church's doors within ten years. Gentlepeople, as a consequence, the Session has engaged Pastor Robert Rhebergen to help us address these issues and then work with the entire congregation.

Finally, the faith of the Prophet Daniel and especially that of his

three Jewish friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego: We all know the story of Daniel in the lions' den. However, my focus here is on the faith of his three Jewish friends and what was said before they were tossed into the furnace. My recollection is that the King issued a decree mandating that everyone had to either worship him and/or his idol. The penalty for not doing so was death. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were arrested for violating this decree but were given the chance to escape death by worshiping either the King and/or his idol. I think it was Abednego who spoke for all three and told the King that they would not worship the King and/or his idol and that their God would save them, but even if He doesn't save us we would still not worship you and/or your idol. Now, at FPCG, our lives are not at stake but the life of our church and our commitment to this community are.

The Session understand that at times these discussions about the future of the church will be very heated, but we must keep the faith. We all must realize that this process will at times be very painful and emotional and will require everyone to "...be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." Ephesians 4:32.

On behalf of the Session.

—Daniel Conner

# Confirmation Preparation Program

What it is, who participates in it, and what it looks like

When the idea of “confirmation” is discussed within churches, it can and does have a wide variety of meaning. Within the Catholic Church, it is considered a sacrament of the church. Within some Protestant churches, like the one I grew up in, it is closely linked with one’s first participation in the sacrament of Holy Communion. Confirmation preparation programs exist in most, if not all Protestant churches that embrace infant baptism because at its core the meaning of confirmation is linked to a person’s baptism. Confirmation is a public acknowledgement before one’s congregation by an individual of his or her faith in the love, grace and lordship of God in Jesus Christ. Confirmation is linked to baptism in that a person “confirms” the faith that they first entered into when they were baptized as an infant into Christ and into His Church. Since the individual could make no profession of faith in infancy (instead it was proclaimed over them and for them by the Church), “confirmation” is then the moment when the individual is given the opportunity to “proclaim with their lips” their faith before God and their congregation.

Confirmation isn’t really about membership within the church since baptism is the time where one is acknowledged as a member. Confirmation is more about a person standing up and formally and consciously taking their place within the life of the church. It is equally about the church celebrating the fulfillment of that person’s baptism, acknowledging

what God has done to bring about faith in the person, and encouragement and support for what God will do through that person’s faith in the world around them and in the life of Christ’s Church.

So what is FPCG’s Confirmation Preparation Program about? Historically, the church has understood the need for a concentrated time of preparation for individuals who are to be confirmed. This is a time where the major teachings of Jesus Christ are learned, the witness of Scripture to God’s work in our world is studied, the central historical doctrines of the faith are explored, unique denominational history and polity (the way we govern ourselves together as a church) and our understanding of the sacraments are explained, and disciplines in our corporate and individual lives are practiced. This program is designed to support discussions at home between parents and children.

At The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown we take seriously this time. Our congregation offers three years of preparation for confirmation that begin as early as when a child enters seventh grade. The first two years are spent exploring eight major stories within the Bible that help students understand the major motifs through the Scriptures (*Crossings curriculum*), and also examining important theological doctrines of the church as found in the Apostle’s Creed (*re:form curriculum*).

In the last year of our confirmation preparation program, each child is mentored by a mature and

responsible member of the congregation as they explore Biblical stories together that relate to living one’s life as a faithful follower of Jesus Christ in the life of the church and in the world around them (*Making Disciples curriculum*). Participants also explore in this year of the program the uniqueness of the Reformed church tradition in which the Presbyterian Church stands as a part of the larger universal body of Christ that is the Church (*re:form Traditions curriculum*). Finally, special time and teaching are devoted in this last year to aid participants in writing their statements of faith that will eventually be read before the congregation at the time of actual confirmation.

Five young people with the support of their families are presently participating in our confirmation program: Segun Ola, Kia Burton, Jason (LJ) Greene, Kristina Ohemeng-Boamah, and Matthew Reisse. Segun Ola has entered into the first year of confirmation preparation, while the other four participants are currently in their second year of our program toward confirmation. Please pray for these young people and their families and encourage them as they commit to this concentrated time of intentional teaching to help them mature and grow as followers of Jesus Christ, and as active members of our congregation.

Christian Heyer-Rivera,  
Director of Christian Education

On behalf of the Christian  
Education Committee



**Happy  
Birthday**

*The Basement*

*Drop-in-Center*

**Friday afternoons**

**2:30PM-6PM**

A center for senior  
high school students.

If you are interested  
in volunteering or  
expanding the vision  
of activities and out-  
ings of this ministry,  
contact Christian  
Heyer-Rivera.

*April*

- |    |                 |    |                    |
|----|-----------------|----|--------------------|
| 2  | Todd Gasper     | 11 | Vera Harrison      |
|    | Chuck Reisse    | 13 | Denise Cowie       |
| 4  | Linda Farlow    | 16 | Estalene Artis     |
|    | Rudy Stroh      | 20 | Fay Tomlinson      |
| 5  | Pernell Jackson | 25 | Mandy Adams        |
| 9  | Robert Seed     | 28 | Peggy Jane Garrett |
| 10 | Ruth Mower      | 30 | Valient Solomon    |
|    | Dolores Shanks  |    |                    |

## The Congregational Development & Fellowship Committee

As chairperson of the Congregational Development and Fellowship Committee (CDFC) I would like to formally introduce you to its members: Mandy Adams, Susan Mills Farrington, Debra Gary, Dani Howard, Mary Lundy, Rev. Kevin Porter, Bernice Roundtree, Cynthia Thomas, and Dave Wolford.

The members of the committee graciously and warmly thank you for your eagerness and willingness to participate and attend our affairs as well as donating, purchasing/preparing food, and helping with setting up, serving, or cleaning up after our events.

Last year with the retirement of Bea Gardner the CDFC sought four families or groups willing to be responsible for our Coffee Hour on a continual monthly basis. We are grateful and thankful for those that

answered the call. The Coffee Hour for the first Sunday of the month is supplied by members of the Serendipity Bible Study group. Lois Nafzinger, family and friends provide treats for the second Sunday. The third Sunday is spearheaded by the Henzes, Gayl and Herb, with the help of the Deacons. The CDFC handles the fourth Sunday, and the Presbyterian Women faithfully take care of the occasional fifth Sunday. Please thank these folks for their willingness to commit to this on-going event. Feel free to lend a helping hand with the set-up, clean up at the end of the hour or by purchasing food items.

Hopefully you have noticed the recent concerted effort to organize and clean the kitchen. You may find familiar items relocated to unfamiliar places. Cabi-

nets and drawers have been labeled to help acquaint folks to the changes. Please use the labels to correctly locate and return used, cleaned, and dried items to their proper place.

A special thank you goes to Albert McClay for graciously offering to pay the cleaning bill for the tablecloths used for our annual Christmas Dinner as well as thanking the One Hour Dry Cleaner for extending a discount to us.

Again, thank you for helping the Congregational Development & Fellowship Committee carry out God's charge of hospitality. Feel free to approach any member with concerns or suggestions you may have. Please know that we are receptive to your feedback.

Peace & Blessings,  
--Madeline Valentine,  
Chairperson



Seeing  
the World  
through the  
Eyes of  
Artists

With spring in full swing, I thought it would be interesting to dedicate this month's column to artists who see and paint life, including the seasons, in so many different ways.

Happy Reading!  
Deborah Thompson

## Children's Book Spot

### K-4

- Bass, Hester. *The Secret World of Walter Anderson*. Illustrated by E.B. Lewis. Candlewick, 2009.
- Bryant, Jen. *Georgia's Bones*. Illustrated by Bethanne Andersen. Eerdmans, 2005.
- Byrd, Robert. *Leonardo, Beautiful Dreamer*. Dutton, 2003.
- Christensen, Bonnie. *Fabulous! A Portrait of Andy Warhol*. Henry Holt, 2011.
- Danneberg, Julie. *Monet Paints a Day*. Illustrated by Caitlin Heimerl. Charlesbridge, 2012.
- Lossani, Chiara. *Vincent Van Gogh and the Colors of the Wind*. Illustrations by Octavia Monaco. Eerdmans, 2011.
- Markel, Michelle B. *The Fantastic Jungles of Henri Rousseau*. Illustrated by Amanda Hall. Eerdmans, 2012.
- Novesky, Amy. *Me, Frida*. Illustrated by David Diaz. Abrams, 2010.
- Parker, Marjorie. *Colorful Dreamer: The Story of Artist Henri Matisse*. Illustrated by Holly Berry. Dial, 2012.
- Rodriguez, Rachel. *Through Georgia's Eyes*. Illustrated by Julie Paschkis. Henry Holt, 2006.
- Shapiro, J.H. *Magic Trash: A Story of Tyree Guyton and His Art*. Illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton. Charlesbridge, 2011.
- Tonatiuh, Duncan. *Diego Rivera: His World and Ours*. New York: Abrams, 2011.
- Whitehead, Kathy. *Art from Her Heart: Folk Artist Clementine Hunter*. Paintings by Shane Evans. Putnam, 2008.

### Grades 5-8

- Beneduce, Ann Kay. *A Weekend with Winslow Homer*. Rizzoli, 1993.
- Bernier-Grand, Carmen T. *Frida: Viva la Vida! Frida: Long Live Life!* Marshall Cavendish, 2007.
- Burleigh, Robert. *Seurat and La Grande Jatte*. Abrams, 2004.
- Duggleby, John. *Artist in Overalls: The Life of Grant Wood*. Chronicle Books, 1996.
- Duggleby, John. *Story Painter: The Life of Jacob Lawrence*. Chronicle Books, 1998.
- Greenberg, Jan. *Romare Bearden: Collage of Memories*. Harry N. Abrams, 2003.
- Greenberg, Jan & Sandra Jordan. *Runaway Girl: The Artist Louise Bourgeois*. Abrams, 2003.
- Krull, Kathleen. *Lives of the Artists: Masterpieces, Messes (And what the Neighbors Thought)*. Illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt. Harcourt, 1995.
- Rubin, Susan Goldman. *Wideness & Wonder: The Life & Art of Georgia O'Keefe*. Chronicle Books, 2011.
- Rubin, Susan Goldman. *The Yellow House: Vincent Van Gogh & Paul Gauguin Side by Side*. Illustrations by Jos. A. Smith. Abrams, 2001.

# APRIL 2013

**1 Monday**      **Easter Holiday**  
Church Offices Closed

**2 Tuesday**  
9:30am      Classic Towns

**3 Wednesday**  
4:00pm      Keystone State Boychoir  
6:30pm      Line Dancing  
7:00pm      Session

**4 Thursday**  
6:00pm      Gospel Choir  
7:30pm      Voices-in-Bronze

**5 Friday**  
8:30am      Job Fair  
2:30pm      Drop-in-Center  
6:30pm      Elementary School Youth Group

**6 Saturday**  
8:15am      Keystone State Boychoir  
9:30am      Congregational Development & Fellowship  
  
10:00am      Open Gym  
10:00am      Bethanna agency

**7 Sunday**  
8:45am      IHN moves In  
9:40am      Chancel Choir  
9:40am      Power of Prayer- Westside Room  
10:00am      Worship Service  
11:10am      Children's Choir  
11:30am      Confirmation Class  
11:30am      Sunday School  
11:30am      Adult Bible Study  
11:30am      Gospel Choir  
11:30am      Chancel Choir  
4:00pm      Bread and Cup

**8 Monday**

**9 Tuesday**

**10 Wednesday**  
4:00pm      Keystone State Boychoir  
6:30pm      Line Dancing  
6:30pm      Christian Education Committee  
6:30PM      GACM Board Meeting

**11 Thursday**  
12:00pm      Heeding God's Call  
6:00pm      Gospel Choir  
7:30pm      Voices-in-Bronze

**12 Friday**  
2:30pm      Drop-in-Center  
6:30pm      Middle School Youth Group

**13 Saturday**  
8:15am      Keystone State Boychoir  
10:00am      Open Gym

**14 Sunday**  
  
8:45am      Deadline May WINDOWS  
9:40am      Chancel Choir  
9:40am      Power of Prayer- Westside Room  
10:00am      Worship Service  
11:10am      Children's Choir  
11:15am      Women's Retreat Planning  
11:30am      Confirmation Class  
11:30am      Sunday School  
11:30am      Adult Bible Study  
11:30am      Gospel Choir  
11:30am      Chancel Choir

**15 Monday**  
6:30pm      Prism

**16 Tuesday**  
  
**17 Wednesday**  
4:00pm      Keystone State Boychoir  
6:00pm      Worship and Music Committee  
  
6:30pm      Line Dancing  
7:00pm      Property Committee

**18 Thursday**  
6:00pm      Gospel Choir  
6:00pm      Administration and Finance  
  
7:30pm      Voices-in-Bronze

**19 Friday**  
2:30pm      Drop-in-Center  
6:30pm      High School Youth Group

**20 Saturday**  
8:15am      Keystone State Boychoir  
9:00am      Women's Retreat  
10:00am      Open Gym

**21 Sunday**  
8:45am      Chancel Choir  
9:40am      Power of Prayer- Westside Room  
10:00am      Worship Service  
11:10am      Children's Choir  
11:30am      Confirmation Class  
11:30am      Sunday School  
11:30am      Adult Bible Study  
11:30am      Gospel Choir  
11:30am      Chancel Choir

**22 Monday**

**23 Tuesday**

**24 Wednesday**  
4:00pm      Keystone State Boychoir  
6:00pm      Mission and Outreach Committee  
  
6:30pm      Line Dancing  
7:00 pm      Communication Committee

**25 Thursday**  
6:00pm      Gospel Choir  
7:00pm      Germantown Community Connection  
  
7:30pm      Voices-in-Bronze

**26 Friday**  
9:00am      AA Breakfast  
2:30pm      Drop-in-Center

**27 Saturday**  
8:15am      Keystone State Boychoir  
9:00am      Reader's Choice  
10:00am      Open Gym

**28 Sunday**  
8:45am      IHN moves out  
9:40am      Chancel Choir  
9:40am      Power of Prayer- Westside Room  
10:00am      Worship Service  
11:10am      Children's Choir  
11:30am      Confirmation Class  
11:30am      Sunday School  
11:30am      Adult Bible Study  
11:30am      Gospel Choir  
11:30am      Chancel Choir

**29 Monday**  
7:00pm      Evangelism Committee

**30 Tuesday**



**Next Meeting**

**Monday**

**April 15, 2013**

**6:30 PM**

# *PRISM*

## *Mission Statement*

"Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed unless it is faced." James Baldwin

PRISM grew out of a group that came together to view and discuss the film "Traces of the Trade." PRISM's mission is to insure that Christian principles and insights are used as we:

1. Understand racism and its manifestations in everyday life.
2. Apply this knowledge to specific situations inside and outside our lives at The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown.
3. Equip ourselves to recognize and challenge racism and develop multicultural diversity in our church and community.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN



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