

September 28, 2011

A Word from Pastor Eric

There are many personality traits that God wants to cultivate in our lives. The Apostle Paul names the “fruit of the Spirit” as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self control. But there is another characteristic that is especially important for us to develop as followers of Jesus Christ, and that is the quality of generosity.

Jesus calls us to reflect God’s own character. If there is anything that can be said about God, it is that God is a giver. Think about all the blessings God has given to us: life, health, beauty, joy, love, companionship, good food, sleep, all the bounty of the earth—and eternal life too! God is truly generous beyond description. God wants us to become generous too.

This is not a small issue. Our approach to giving and sharing not only says a lot about the state of our relationship with God; it also points to the direction in which we are headed. People who give generously are people who will grow and become more like Jesus. People who are afraid to give or who hold back from sharing will find their spiritual growth hindered. Why? Because giving both requires and encourages faith and love. To give, you have to trust that God will sustain you even as you make that sacrifice. The more you learn to give, the more your faith will grow. Giving also requires a worthy motivation, and you can’t really give without love. If you don’t love the person or mission to which you are giving, you won’t give graciously or with joy. You will give out of resentment or guilt, and that is almost worse than not giving at all. The Bible tells us that God loves a cheerful giver, because a cheerful giver is one who has learned to love others and freely give out of that love.

Southminster will be holding its annual Consecration Sunday on October 16. This is a chance for each of us to listen prayerfully for God’s guidance regarding our giving. While I know and respect the fact that we all have limits, I also know that the more we entrust to God, the more room God has to work in our lives. This isn’t about balancing a church budget but rather about our Christian character and spiritual growth. Christ calls us to become generous people, so that we may grow in faith and love and become more like the God in whose image we have been created. I pray that we may all be attentive to the voice of the Holy Spirit as we make decisions about our giving.

Inviting to Worship



Sermon and Liturgical Schedule

- October 2 **World Communion Sunday**
Rude Guests, Weeds, and Lost Change: Parables of Jesus: The Great Banquet
Pastor Megan preaching

- October 9 *Rude Guests, Weeds, and Lost Change: Parables of Jesus: Talented*
Pastor Megan preaching

- October 16 **Stewardship season concludes**
Rude Guests, Weeds, and Lost Change: Parables of Jesus: Barn Builders
Pastor Eric preaching

- October 23 *Where Is God When It Hurts? The Reality of Pain*
Pastor Eric preaching

- October 30 *Where Is God When It Hurts? The Meaning of Pain*
Pastor Eric preaching

The Window



From the Worship Council

Did you know that parts of each week's worship service, including the sermon, can be viewed on-line via Southminster's Facebook page? So, whether you are out of town for a weekend, for a season (such as snowbirds), or away at college for the school year, you can watch/hear all of the sermons at Southminster. Join Facebook, and look for us under *Southminster Presbyterian Church, Dayton, Ohio*.

SPC Fortune Cookie

One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. -- *Proverbs 11: 24 (NIV)*

Gemstones from the Gallery

We hope you had an opportunity to visit the Gallery last month, featuring information about the services provided by our local first responders, coordinated with Invitation Sunday. In October, the Gallery will feature art projects by our children, done in Sunday morning and evening classes as well as during Children and Worship, and will be based upon the creation story and the parables of Jesus. Be sure to stop by and see these stories through the eyes and the hands of our children. If you have any ideas for a display later this year, please contact Kurt Jacobsen at 434.3943.

Flower Calendar

All Sundays in October and November are filled with flower orders. If you would like to honor a friend or a family member with flowers on a special occasion, please call Liz Taylor at 847.2587 to ask about later dates.

Volunteer Opportunities



Acolytes are needed. If your son or daughter (grades K through five) would like to serve as an acolyte, please contact one of our acolyte coordinators: Laura Torres (886.1883), Karen Locke (748.9233), or Gretchen Campbell (384.7742).

Liturgists are needed. If you are interested in contributing to the worship experience in this special way, please contact Lisa Hoban, Church Secretary, 433.1810.

Should We Have One Service or Two?

The final count is in, and the Worship Council has taken to heart the voices of our congregational members. I want to thank everyone for their time to respond through the comment card or to speak directly with members of the Council. We could not make a prayerfully informed decision on your behalf without your input. As a reminder, the important question was *Would you prefer one Sunday service instead of two throughout the entire year?* The final count came to 156 responding Yes (almost 49%) with three additional votes specifying a desired time (1%), and 125 responding No (39%) with 27 (9%) responding *No Preference*.

After much prayer and deliberation, the Worship Council recommended to the Session that we maintain the current schedule of two services throughout the year with one service during the summer. Session unanimously approved this recommendation. While the numbers show a near-majority interest in one service, it is not an overwhelming number, with a very large percentage interested in maintaining the current schedule. The Worship Council could not in good faith recommend changing the service schedule without a clear and overwhelming mandate to do so. We do not feel we have that overwhelming mandate. One lesson we have learned from the experience of many other churches is that imposing the will of a slight majority on a large minority is a sure recipe for the disruption of community life. Although this decision may be a disappointment to some of our members, we hope you will understand that we did our best to listen to every voice and to make the best decision for the long-term wellbeing of the entire congregation. Please feel free to contact me (salbright.smpc@gmail.com or 513.932.4231) if you have any concerns or comments.

Yours in Christ,

Stephen Albright

Learning in Community

Remember in your prayers...



Military: Sean Leibrock (Afghanistan; Pastor Kevin and Patricia Lawler's son), Brian Vaughn (Germany; Charlotte Mort's son)

Our sympathy

To Charlotte Mort and family in the death of Charlotte's husband, Charles, who died on September 9. A funeral service was held at Tobias Funeral Home on September 12 with Pastor Jackie Nowak officiating.

To Cheryl Hartman and family in the death of Cheryl's mother on September 11.

To Irene Tipsword and family in the death of Irene's mother, Dorothy Shumaker, who died on September 13.



Thank You

I would like to thank my Southminster family and friends for the deep concern and love that were shown to us with the passing of Ken. The many cards, visits, and food that were given for comfort—all were appreciated.

May the peace of Christ be with you. . .

Fondly,
Joyce Morse



Thank You

To our dear friends of Southminster, thank you so much for the lovely gift you have given to us in Russell's memory. It gives us much comfort to know that Russell was so loved by the congregation. He was his happiest while sitting at the organ console performing beautiful music for the pleasure of his beloved Southminster Presbyterian Church.



Sincerely,
Charles and Maureen Elias



Thank You

My family and I are deeply grateful for the outpouring of love, prayers, concern, and compassion shown to us during my husband's recent hospitali-

zation and death. The staff and the congregation have given the care and support that have helped to sustain me during the difficult times. I am truly blessed, and I have a much clearer understanding of the term *Church family*.

Charlotte Mort



Thank You

I would like to thank all of you for your kind thoughts and prayers during the difficult time of my mother's passing. I also thank everyone who sent me cards. I would like to thank each of you individually, but I know I would miss someone. It is a blessing to belong to such a caring and compassionate group of friends.

Irene Tipsword



Share Your Garden: A Word of Thanks

Thanks to everyone who generously donated vegetables and herbs from their gardens for the Share Your Garden opportunity. Members of the congregation who shared in the harvest really enjoyed the fresh produce, and your goodwill and eagerness to support the project enabled us to contribute \$114.10 to the Food Pantry. Thank you for your generosity in helping us minister to people who are hungry.

Ministry of Compassion and Assistance



Hometouch Ministry

Many thanks to Pat Custer, who faithfully writes a letter each week about what is happening in our Church and shares this with our homebound members. She includes a devotional and a puzzle with the letter and mails these early each week. The letters help our homebound friends to keep in touch with Church life, and many have expressed a deep appreciation for Pat's personal mission. Pat, you are terrific!



Ministry of Compassion and Assistance



Youth Ministry at Southminster

Wednesday nights for middle school and high school students is back! Meet in the Ark from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Here is our schedule for this month:

- October 5: Come and talk with Dr. Kelley about dating and relationships! She is a practicing

OB/GYN in Centerville and is here to answer your questions.

- October 12: Dr. Kelley is with us for week two! Bring your parents (they will meet with her separately) to meet Dr. Kelley and continue our discussion on faith, dating, sex, and relationships.
- October 19: Come at 5:30 p.m. and help to set up for our first Community Meal! Enjoy the free meal at 6; then head up to the Ark at 6:30 for Youth Group.
- October 26: **Trunk or Treat!** Put on your costume, and come play with the children of Dayton Urban as we host a Halloween celebration with them!

Serving at the Men's Shelter. On Sunday, October 23, all students in grades six through 12 are encouraged to worship at 8:30 a.m. and then join us in the Community Room kitchen at 9:30 to start cooking for the Gateway Men's Shelter for homeless men in Dayton. At 11 a.m. high schoolers will leave to go serve the men lunch downtown. If you are a middle school student who is excited about serving the hungry in Dayton, let Pastor Megan know! We are working to set up a partnership for middle schools with Target Dayton, a church and meal provider for the homeless.



Men's Breakfast, October 8
Mark your calendar for the next Men's Breakfast! On Saturday, October 8, come to the CFC, where delicious, hot coffee will be available at 7:30 a.m., with breakfast served at 8 a.m. This month's menu will be scrumptious pancakes, eggs, and bacon.

Sgt. Kurt Althouse, administrative sergeant of the Washington Township post of the Montgomery County Sheriff's Department, will share the highlights of his varied 19-year career with the Department and his current responsibilities on behalf of the Township.

Come—and bring a friend—or make a new one! This is a great opportunity to meet other men of the Church and in our community and to enjoy casual fellowship. Prepaid reservations (\$5) are required by Tuesday, October 4, and may be made by sign-

ing up with George Lawson on Sunday mornings, by phone to 307.5940, or by e-mail to lawson59gm@aol.com.

Learning in Community Leaders to Be Commissioned on October 9

On October 9, during both services, leaders of infants through our oldest adults, in educational and other group settings, will be commissioned. These are all the people who have responded to God's call to Christian education and formation at Southminster including Nursery staff and volunteers; Sunday children's teachers, shepherds, and greeters; youth leaders; and Growth Group facilitators and assistants. We hope to see you at one of these services!

About Child Care for Activities at Southminster

We hope you will take advantage of the many opportunities to grow in faith with Southminster! Do not let child care needs keep you from attending events and groups. Child care reservations can be made, as long as requests are made at least five days prior to the event. Southminster's two staff Child Care Workers, along with volunteers, are available to provide care on Wednesday evenings and Sunday evenings, as well as at other times, as needed. Questions? Contact Pastor Jackie (Jackie@sminster.com, 433.1810, or on Facebook at Jacqueline Nowak).

Old Testament Scholar Walter Brueggemann to Speak at Southminster

Save the date! On Sunday, November 13, from 3 to 5 p.m., we have a unique opportunity to meet Walter Brueggemann, recognized the world over for his work, and to hear his lecture on *Hope and Healing in a Broken World*. His presentation is free of charge to members of Southminster and to members of the Presbytery's Equipping for Ministry Network and \$5 a person for others. Contact Pastor Jackie at Jackie@sminster.com or 937.433.1810 for reservations or for more information.

SPC hosts, greeters and refreshments are needed for this event. Time commitment is negotiable, as is food provided. Please contact Pastor Jackie (Jackie@sminster.com, 433-1810) to offer your hospitable self.

H.E.R.O.E.S. Care



H.E.R.O.E.S. stands for **H**omefront **E**nabling **R**elationships, **O**pportunities, and **E**mpowerment through **S**upport. And it's specifically for our **he-ros**—for members of all branches of the military and their families, through pre-deployment, deployment, family integration, and post-deployment. It grew out of the alarming increase in the number of suicides among members of the military and of the effects of post-traumatic stress disorder on a growing number of returning military and their families. H.E.R.O.E.S. Care is a comprehensive, local-presence, responsive support system designed to recognize and intervene for action before problems escalate to a crisis level.



Four well-established non-governmental organizations (NGOs), through their networks of tens of thousands of trained caregivers and thousands of professional mental health care and service providers, make up H.E.R.O.E.S. One of these four NGOs approved and authorized by the U.S. Department of Defense is Stephen Ministry—the same Stephen Ministry that offers one-on-one caregiving to people at Southminster and at thousands of churches in the U.S. and Canada. It's the first and only faith-based organization approved by the DoD to work with the military and their families, with specially advanced-trained Stephen Ministers called Hometown Support Volunteers providing needs assessment and initial care.

If you have or know of a need for this kind of support, please contact Pastor Jackie at Jackie@sminster.com or on Facebook or one of the Stephen Ministry leaders, Marj Lawson, at lawsongm@aol.com.

Becoming the Parent God Wants You to Be

I once heard a story about a dad who, after fixing breakfast for his boys, would walk them down to the bus stop. As the boys were getting on the bus, the dad would yell out, "Go to school MAD, boys!" The boys would turn towards their dad, smile, and say, "O.K., Dad, we will." This went on for several days; and a neighbor who also was at the bus stop finally asked the dad, "Why are



you telling your boys to go to school mad? I don't need to tell my kids to be mad. They already are mad about going to school so early in the morning." The dad smiled and said, "I'm not telling the boys to be mad at school. I'm telling them to go to school and MAKE A DIFFERENCE."

How can your children make a difference, from preschool to college and onward? Our children have the opportunity to make a difference every day wherever they are, and hopefully they are making a "good" difference. Here are a few suggestions to help our children make a difference:

- Be a good listener.
- Follow directions.
- Show respect for yourself and others and for your belongings. (Don't throw your book bag on the floor; hang it up. Take care of your school supplies and your desk. Keep track of your coat, gloves, and lunch box. Pick up trash before being asked.)
- Share.
- Cooperate.
- Show compassion.
- Be a leader or a supportive follower.

These are just a few suggestions. Ask your children what they can do to make a difference in your home, at school, and in our community. Many of our children are already making a difference by supporting the Food2Go program and Shoes4theShoeless. There are other opportunities coming up here at Southminster to make a difference in someone's life—for instance, the free community meals starting in October and the meals the youth will be preparing for the men's shelter in West Dayton. No matter what your child's age, there are ways to make a difference. If your child is still an infant or toddler, you can lead by example. Teach your child how to share and to be cooperative with others.

So wherever you are and wherever you go, be MAD (Make a Difference) with a smile on your face!

Peace, Priscilla Stapleton

M M: R & R (Men's Message: Read and Reflect)

Malcolm found his friend seated on a stone in the churchyard. "See," said the schoolmaster, "how the shadow from one grave stretches like an arm to embrace another. In this light, the churchyard seems the very birthplace of shadows." A brief silence followed. "Does the morning or the evening light suit such a place best, Malcolm?"



"The evening light, sir," he answered at length, "for you see the sun's like dying, and death's like falling asleep, and the grave's the bed, and the sod is the bedclothes, and there's a long night ahead."

"Come here, Malcolm," said the schoolmaster. "Read that," he said, pointing to a flat gravestone covered with moss. But the inscription nevertheless stood out clearly: *He is not here; he is risen.*

While Malcolm gazed, trying to think about what his master would have him think, the schoolmaster resumed: "If he is risen—if the sun is up, Malcolm—then the morning and not the evening is the season for the place of the tombs—the morning when the shadows are shortening and separating, not the evening when they are growing all into one. I used to love the churchyard best in the evening, when the past was more to me than the future. But now I visit it almost every bright summer morning and only occasionally at night."

"But, sir, isn't death a dreadful thing?" asked Malcolm.

"That depends on whether a man regards it as his fate—or as the will of a *perfect God*. If God be light, then death itself must be full of splendor—a splendor probably too keen for our eyes to receive. . ."

Shared by Don Dameron

CareNotes

It is human nature to try to move forward in our lives after a loss, but then we run into reminders of absent loved ones at special life milestones. It might be an anniversary, a birthday, a special family occasion, or a holiday that reminds us of our loss and can make an otherwise happy occasion bitter-sweet. *When Life's Milestones Remind You of Your Loss* is a little CareNotes booklet that ad-

resses this situation. It may be found in the CareNotes display in the Coffee Corner.

Many titles are presented in this display as well as in the displays in front of the Church Office and in the Community Room. Please take one for yourself, or share one with a friend.

Southminster to Host Flu Shot Clinic

Get your flu shot at Southminster on Sunday, October 16, from 9:15 to 11:15 a.m. in the Chapel. Payment may be through Medicare, Medicaid, fee-for-service, and by cash. The cost is \$27.

Questions? Contact members of the Health and Wellness Committee of the Deacons/Community Council: Roxy Laycox (901.6876 or gristmill1217@woh.rr.com) or Suzi Dameron (435.5821 or britelake@yahoo.com).

Blood Drive

The Community Blood Center has asked Southminster to host another blood drive. So the Health and Wellness Committee will sponsor a second blood drive this year, on October 29. The hours are from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Community Room. Register at online@donortime.com; the code is 714. If you have not donated blood in the past eight weeks, you are eligible—so reserve your spot soon. **Save three lives by donating one pint of blood.** If you have questions, please contact Suzi Dameron at 435.5821 or at britelake@yahoo.com.






Blood Pressure Checks

For over a year, the Health and Wellness Committee has been taking blood pressure checks on the second Sunday of each month. We average about ten participants. We'd like more people to take advantage of this free service.

Health Resources

Many members of Southminster have signed up to be a resource for other members as they face one of the issues listed. Our hope is for members to be well and healthy—and our Committee is here to help! This list has also been helpful to our pastors and hospital visitors.

October 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<p>1 9:00 Men's Bible Study 9:00 Growth Group 3:30 p.m. Yeo/Cho wedding</p>
<p>28: 3:00 & 11:00 Worship/Communion [Rev. Megan Collins preaching] 9:45 Growth Groups 12:00 4th & 5th Grade Fellowship Planning Meeting 3:00 Growth Group 5:00 Growth Group 5:00 Children's Choir 5:00 Children's Art 5:30 Children's Chimes 6:00 Family Meal 6:30 PB'nJ</p>	<p>3 9:00 Moms In Touch</p> <p>4:00 Cello 7:00 BS Troop #516 7:00 Venturing Crew 7:00 Kettering Chorus 7:00 Stewardship Council</p>	<p>4 9:00 Kindermusik 10:00 Growth Group</p> <p>7:00 Grace Circle 7:00 Literacy Tutoring 7:00 Beginning Ala-Non 8:00 Ala-Non</p>	<p>5 9:00 Kindermusik 10:00 Staff Mtg.</p> <p>5:00 Intercessory Prayer 6:30 Growth Group 6:30 Sanctuary Choir 8:00 Bells of Southminster</p>	<p>6 10:00 Growth Group</p> <p>3:00 Centerville Wee Elk Cookie Dough Pick Up 6:30 Toastmasters 6:30 Stephen Leaders 7:00 Growth Groups 7:30 Stephen Ministry</p>	<p>7 11:30 Elderberries</p>	<p>8 7:30 Men's Breakfast 9:00 Men's Bible Study 9:00 Growth Group</p>
<p>9 8:30 & 11:00 Worship [Rev. Megan Collins preaching] 9:45 Growth Groups 4:00 Service of Wholeness 3:00 Growth Group 5:00 Growth Group 5:00 Children's Choir 5:00 Children's Art 5:30 Children's Chimes 6:00 Family Meal 6:30 PB'nJ 6:30 Care Connection #4</p>	<p>10</p> <p>4:00 Cello 7:00 Kettering Chorus 7:00 Session 7:00 BS Troop #516 7:00 Venturing Crew</p>	<p>11 9:00 Kindermusik 10:00 Growth Group</p> <p>7:00 Literacy Tutoring 7:00 Beginning Ala-Non 8:00 Ala-Non</p>	<p>12 9:00 Kindermusik 10:00 Staff Mtg.</p> <p>5:00 Intercessory Prayer 6:30 Growth Group 6:30 Sanctuary Choir 8:00 Bells of Southminster</p>	<p>13 10:00 Grief Support 10:00 Growth Group</p> <p>6:30 Toastmasters 7:00 Growth Group</p>	<p>14 9:00 Mom To Mom 11:00 Family Network</p>	<p>15 9:00 Men's Bible Study 9:00 Growth Group 10:00 DAR</p>
<p>16 8:30 & 11:00 Worship [Rev. Eric Pasanchin preaching] 9:45 Growth group 12:15 Invitation Council 3:00 Growth Group 5:00 Growth Group 5:00 Care Conn. #5 5:00 Children's Choir 5:00 Children's Art 5:30 Children's Chimes 6:00 Family Carry-In Meal 6:30 PB'nJ</p>	<p>17 9:30 Moms In Touch</p> <p>4:00 Cello 7:00 Investment Council 7:00 Kettering Chorus 7:00 Community Council 7:00 BS Troop #516 7:00 Venturing Crew</p>	<p>18 9:00 Kindermusik 10:00 Growth Group</p> <p>7:00 Finance Committee 7:00 Literacy Tutoring 7:00 Beginning Ala-Non 8:00 Ala-Non</p>	<p>19 9:00 Kindermusik 10:00 Staff Mtg.</p> <p>5:00 Intercessory Prayer 6:00 Community Meal 6:30 Growth Group 6:30 Sanctuary Choir 8:00 Bells of Southminster</p>	<p>20 10:00 Growth Group</p> <p>6:30 Toastmasters 7:00 PWS</p>	<p>21</p> <p>5:00 Date Night</p>	<p>22 9:00 Men's Bible Study 9:00 Growth Group</p>
<p>23 8:30 & 11:00 Worship [Rev. Eric Pasanchin preaching] 9:45 Growth Group 3:00 Growth Group 5:00 Growth Group 5:00 Children's Choir 5:00 Children's Art 5:30 Children's Chimes 6:00 Family Carry-In Meal 6:30 PB'nJ</p>	<p>24 9:30 Moms In Touch</p> <p>4:00 Cello 6:30 Children's Christian Ed Committee 7:00 BS Troop #516 7:00 Venturing Crew 7:00 Kettering Chorus 7:30 Learning Council</p>	<p>25 8:30 Centerville Women's Civic Club 9:00 Kindermusik 10:00 Growth Group</p> <p>7:00 Worship Council 7:00 Literacy Tutoring 7:00 Beginning Ala-Non 8:00 Ala-Non</p>	<p>26 9:00 Kindermusik 9:30 Ruth Circle 10:00 Staff Mtg. 10:00 Centerville Women's Civic Club</p> <p>5:00 Intercessory Prayer 6:30 Sanctuary Choir 6:30 Growth Group 8:00 Bells of Southminster</p>	<p>27 10:00 Growth Group</p> <p>12:00 Personnel Committee</p>	<p>28 9:00 Mom To Mom</p>	<p>29 8:30 Blood Drive 9:00 Men's Bible Study 9:00 Growth Group</p>
<p>30 8:30 & 11:00 Worship [Rev. Eric Pasanchin preaching] 9:45 Growth Group 3:00 Growth Group 5:00 Growth Group 5:00 Children's Choir 5:00 Children's Art 5:30 Children's Chimes 6:00 Family Carry-In Meal 6:30 PB'nJ</p>	<p>31 9:30 Moms In Touch</p> <p>4:00 Cello 7:00 BS Troop #516 7:00 Venturing Crew 7:15 Building and Grounds Committee</p>					<p>Note: This is the information that was provided on September 15. For changes or corrections on this calendar, please call Carl Kienzie after 7:00 p.m. Mon thru Thurs at 433-1810 ext. 106 or email Carl@smminster</p>

August 2011

To All congregations in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

One of the actions taken by last summer's 219th General Assembly (2010) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was to affirm the Charter for Compassion. ([http://oga.pcusa.org/publications/charter For Compassion.pdf](http://oga.pcusa.org/publications/charter%20For%20Compassion.pdf)).

The charter is the product of a multi-faith, web-based collaboration. It was created in response to growing misunderstandings, misrepresentations, and, thus, increased hostility between religious traditions around the world. The charter calls for treating each human person with "justice, equity and respect" out of deep compassion for each; teaching appreciation for cultural and religious differences; and nurturing "informed empathy" with those who suffer.

The charter's emphasis on the role of compassion in motivating response to the suffering of any others is fully consistent with the biblical tradition and Reformed theology. Our *Book of Order* reminds us of the role of compassion in the life of followers of Jesus:

"...In daily life, Jesus took ordinary acts of human compassion – healing the sick, feeding the hungry, washing feet – and translated them into ways of serving God" (W-1.2004).

"God sends the church in the power of the Holy Spirit to exercise compassion in the world,

- "a. feeding the hungry,
- "b. comforting the grieving,
- "c. caring for the sick,
- "d. visiting the prisoners,
- "e. freeing the captives,
- "f. sheltering the homeless,
- "e. befriending the lonely" (W-7.3001).

"...Concern for the world may be enacted in prayer and ministries of compassion, justice, peacemaking, and witness" (W-3.5302).

"Discipleship may be expressed...beyond the church cooperating with all who work for compassion and reconciliation" (W-4.3002).

The charter's call for a positive response to religious and cultural differences echoes the long-time Presbyterian support for basic human rights, including the right to determine one's own beliefs and participate in the religious community of one's choosing. In 1949, the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America endorsed the UN Declaration of Human Rights, beginning an ongoing series of declarations by assemblies in the area of human rights, including religious rights, that continues to this day.

The *Book of Order* affirms the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s commitment to taking a positive approach to cultural and religious differences:

"The church in its witness to the uniqueness of the Christian faith is called to mission and must be responsive to diversity in both the church and the world" (G-4.0401).

"The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at all levels seeks new opportunities for conversation and understanding with non-Christian religious entities" (G-5.0102).

General Assemblies provide practical and theological guidance for such efforts. Presbyterians, congregations, mid councils, and General Assembly programs resist forces of division that seize on our God-given diversity to spread misunderstanding and mistrust. We affirm that humanity is bound together. We work for peace. We live with compassion. And we witness to our faith in Jesus Christ who calls us to love God and love our neighbors.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Gradye Parsons
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Serving As Stewards

The Bases for One's Generosity

What does it mean to commit to generosity?

Now, before you leap to the obvious response, please know that the answer is not necessarily *the bottom line*. Is financial Christian giving one facet of generosity? Absolutely! Is this an important element of generosity in Southminster or any other church? Absolutely! But the answers to this question are as many as there are people who respond.

Southminster Presbyterian Church is replete with missions: providing food for people in need, physically providing assistance to the people of Mexico, offering shelter in times of disasters, nurturing a young church in Romania, ministering to people in hospitals or in crisis, taking the elements of Holy Communion to people who cannot negotiate the visit to Church, and ministering in countless other ways by providing needed services and expressing almost limitless altruism. The success of all these ministries is possible only through the generosity of the people of Southminster. To effectively carry out these many missions, we are collectively using gifts provided to us by our Creator. We recognize that willingness to work in behalf of others is a gift from God. Reaching out to the distressed and needy and providing a shoulder to lean on are gifts from God. Bringing laughter to the faces of people whose mental acuties may be diminished is a gift from God. In a word, *generosity* is a gift from God. St. Peter reminds us of the sentiment: *Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.* (1 Peter 4:10)

Clearly, while it is not necessarily the bottom line alone that defines generosity, the Church still requires a strong financial base to effectively *give life* to the many gifts from God that have been allocated to us. To sustain Southminster Presbyterian Church and make her missions flourish, we must continue to recognize the imperative of the bottom line and commit to it, to the best of our abilities, capacities, and personal circumstances.

There are 42 people from Southminster whose generosity calls them to serve in leadership capacities as Elders and Deacons. Countless others have filled these same positions in years past. The willful expenditure of time and expertise is a hallmark of those who would do their utmost to steer the best course for Southminster on many fronts.

They are committed to Southminster. As a further measure of their commitment, a very significant proportion of these leaders have already pledged their financial support to Southminster for 2012. Jesus said you can discover the core of a person's passion by noting where that person's financial resources are lodged. The Scripture for this is as follows: *For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.* (Matthew 6:21)

What is the common thread that insinuates itself among all who work to return to God manifestations of the many graces bestowed upon all of us? The answer is **commitment**. It is commitment to God, to Southminster, and to the people served by Southminster, both within our congregation as well as far beyond the walls of the Church. Commitment is a way to return to God his gift of generosity to us and to enable that generosity to be a witness to God's love at work in the world. In your conversations with God, let him know of your commitment to him, his Church Universal, and Southminster Presbyterian Church.

Frank Nagy
Christian Giving Committee

Free Community Meal Is Coming!

Our new free community meal ministry starts Wednesday, October 19! Signup sheets for servers, greeters, and cleaning teams for the next few months are posted in the Narthex. All are invited to come and join us for a meal from 6 to 7 p.m. in the CFC. Eat dinner—and then feel free to stick around and talk, read a magazine, play dominoes, or relax with coffee. A children's time will be provided from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Trunk or Treat Is Moving to Dayton Urban This Year!



We are joining up with Dayton Urban Ministries again this year to offer a fun night of games and trick or treat-

ing through the car trunks of our Church members for both the children of Southminster and the children of Dayton Urban. This year has a new twist: We are heading to Dayton Urban to hold the event there! We will have a caravan from the Church parking lot of cars decorated for trick or treaters and families with children who would like to attend.

Please mark your calendar for Wednesday, October 26. More information will be coming soon in the bulletin! With Halloween candy already on the shelves, you are invited to bring donations of candy or decorations to Pastor Megan's office any time. If you can bring a decorated car trunk to the event, please sign up with Megan so we make sure we have enough cars going.

The Castle, the Food Pantry, and Food4Summer

Do you want to donate food for The Castle, a program that works with mental health issues in Centerville? Look for the sign-up sheet in the Narthex, and place your food on the metal cart by the Church Office. Ongoing food collections are available for the Food Pantry and for Food4Summer; look for the barrels at the downstairs entrance.

Alternative Gift Market

Mark your calendar for the Alternative Gift Market on Saturday, November 5. The AGM here in Dayton is hosted by Southminster, along with several other local churches, in our CFC. You can browse information booths and learn about more than 30 international mission programs and six local ones and then donate to the causes you choose. In exchange for your donation, you will receive Christmas cards and handmade ornaments to give as gifts over the holidays instead of a traditional gift. Last year our Market raised over \$20,000! Come and be a part of this wonderful event!



Opportunities for Service

Southminster is a part of mission throughout the Dayton area, including the House of Bread, our Family Nutrition Program, the FISH Food Pantry, Food4Summer, St. Vincent's, the Christmas baskets for local families, Clothes That Work, and Habitat for Humanity. Many of our members volunteer individually in other mission programs such as Hannah's Treasure Chest. No matter what your skill, ability, or time availability, we can find a way for you to be a part of mission in the world! Talk to Pastor Megan if you want to get plugged in!

Food4Summer



On behalf of the Food4Summer program, I want to thank the congregation for all the donated food items—especially the children who brought food during the week of Vacation Bible School. An amazing amount of food was delivered to Centerville United Methodist Church!

Each week during the summer, over 75 families received food; and your generosity was such a blessing. Thank you!

Priscilla Stapleton

Highlights of the August Session Meeting

At its September 12 meeting and following a time of worship, the Session

- approved the written plan for Pastor Eric's sabbatical, from June 11 to September 9, 2012. This opportunity is in accordance with Southminster's sabbatical policy, approved by the Session on February 8, 2010,
- moved and approved that Southminster not change the Sunday morning worship schedule. More information will be provided via the Sunday worship bulletin and in *The Window*. Gratitude was expressed to members of the congregation for their input to the survey on this important topic,
- received copies of the One Year Bible, along with a list of daily readings. Members of Session have covenanted to grow their personal relationships with God by setting aside time each day to read the Bible, by being in prayer, and by seeking God's guidance for their lives and for the life of the Church,
- was updated on the roof repair project (damage caused by hail storms),
- moved and approved to call a congregational meeting for October 30 for the purpose of electing Church officers,
- moved and approved for Session members to participate, along with children from Southminster and from Dayton Urban Ministry, in the annual Trunk or Treat on Wednesday, October 26, to be this year at Dayton Urban Ministry. Members of Session have covenanted to together serve people in need, once a year, in place of that month's regular meeting,
- received the Clerk's report, reflecting the loss of Elder Ken Morse and the funeral service for former organist Russell Elias,

- received the reports of the Pastors and of the Community, Learning, Stewardship, and Worship Councils, and
- prayerfully reflected on each part of our mission: *Inviting to Worship - Learning in Community - Serving as Stewards*, praying for comfort for Joyce Morse and for Charlotte Mort and their families, for the improved health of Jack Kemper, and for strength for Irene Tipsword with the imminent death of her mother; celebrating the start this month of the new Growth Groups; and praising the ministries of our youth, especially as they excitedly share food and time at the Gateway Shelter for Men.

Note that copies of full minutes of recent Session meetings continue to be available for pickup in the Church Office and on the Stewardship table in the Narthex.

Sabbatical for Pastor Eric

Based on writings of respected congregational resource organizations such as The Alban Institute, recommendations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Presbytery of the Miami Valley, and interviews with pastors and churches of similar profiles, your Personnel Committee began, in 2008, to explore a sabbatical policy for Southminster. Its research yielded the following conclusions:

- *Sabbaticals offer a time for personal and professional development.*
- *Sabbaticals help pastors avoid burnout.*
- *Sabbaticals encourage longer pastorates, which, in turn, make for stronger churches.*
- *Sabbaticals give congregations an opportunity to be more self-sufficient and give other clergy an opportunity for leadership development.*
- *Sabbaticals are the nature of the pastor's role as a spiritual leader.* Remember the 40 days in the wilderness? Remember when Jesus retreated from the crowds to pray and be filled? We all need times away to live a balanced life (doing and reflecting).

In summary, a sabbatical enables a pastor to return to the responsibilities of the Church with new energy, spiritual vision, and effectiveness.

In February 2010, the Session adopted the Personnel Committee's recommendation that full-time pastors shall be eligible for a paid sabbatical after five years of service to Southminster, for a period of no more than three months, to be taken during the summer and with coverage by other pastors and ministry leaders. (The full policy is available at www.sminster.com; go to *Documents*, then to *Southminster Personnel Policy Manual*, then to *Appendix N*.)

Prior to the September 12, 2011, Session meeting, Pastor Eric presented his written request for a sabbatical, to be taken from June 11 through September 9, 2012, which was approved at that meeting. Excerpts from Pastor Eric's sabbatical plan include the following:

- *It's my intention to use this time of sabbatical as a time of true Sabbath (rest, renewal, and connection with God). This past year has been extremely demanding and stressful for me because of the major staff transitions we have faced and the many deaths our Church has experienced, even as I have expended significant effort to advance our ministry. I earnestly desire to be a long-term pastor for Southminster and am aware that the likelihood of this happening is greatly enhanced by periodic sabbaticals focused on renewal.*
- *After an initial week or two of disconnecting by getting out of town and reconnecting with members of my extended family that I never see, my plan is to return to Dayton. . . and focus my time on reading, getting into better physical shape, and taking part in somewhat random service opportunities at local venues. . . I want to be involved in the community outside the Church and meet new people. . . to take time getting acquainted with the Washington Township Fire Department, for which I anticipate becoming a chaplain. I could also use this time to get acquainted with my colleagues at other local churches. . . I would also like to dedicate time to various forms of prayer. In essence, I will find relaxation and renewal by spending time with family, reading, exercising, praying, and getting to know my community in a leisurely way. . . I grant you, this is not as exciting as sabbaticals undertaken by some of my colleagues. . ., but I do not have the freedom to leave my home and family for an extended time.*

- *Megan will become the primary preacher and worship leader during my sabbatical, and essential pastoral administrative functions will devolve upon her. At the same time, budget preparation, planning for the fall Growth Groups, and the financial stewardship campaign will need to happen without my usual involvement and without equivalent pastoral support. This will obviously cause our membership/leadership to stretch and grow in new ways.*

Your Session is excited about this opportunity for refreshment and renewal for Pastor Eric and for leadership growth for Pastor Megan and lay leaders. Questions? Contact me or any member of Session.

Marj Lawson
Member of the Personnel Committee and Clerk of Session



Please note that the Church Office Hours have changed. The church office is now open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

Please remember the deadline for the newsletter is always the 15th of the month.

Jerry's Corner

October is almost here--and when that happens, what do we all say? "What happened to summer?" Or "I'm glad summer's gone; I love fall." Now you'll have to admit that living in Ohio and having four seasons is better than living somewhere where it's hot or cold all the time. But I like a little time in the winter to go to Florida for a week and let someone else shovel the snow.

Repair work on the hail damage at Southminster begins soon. We anticipate this project will be well on its way to completion by my next *Jerry's Corner*.

Quote of the month: *If in doubt, turn it out.* Remember to turn off the lights when you leave a room—at Church or at home!

Jerry

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Time Sensitive Material