

### Small Churches Can Thrive – “Grow or Die” Aren’t the Only Two Options

I’d been on the job for about three months when it came time for the joint planning meeting with the session and deacons. It was my first call to a small congregation in a medium-sized building. I was old enough to remember what church was like back in the ‘70s, when vacation Bible school was a community event and Christmas and Easter meant extra chairs around the perimeter of the sanctuary. The church to which I’d been called didn’t even fill up on the big holidays.

So I went into that first leadership meeting with my new “Reverend” title and armed with information and statistics. As a second-career pastor I knew my way around the communication business. I also knew that church were supposed to grow to be successful-and gosh darn it, we were going to do just that.

I went into that meeting with all my fear and anxiety about serving a dying church. The leadership meeting started right on time and I proceeded to rush through all my great ideas. I talked about new communication strategies, adaptive change, appealing to millennials, mission and vision statements and probably about a hundred other things that I thought were vital at the time. Many of the leaders sat quietly.

What was going on? I wondered. Why were they not excited to try all of the new things? How could they be so blasé about what their low numbers were showing? Did they want to dwindle away?

Over the next year in ministry we got to know and love each other. They knew some of my idiosyncrasies and I knew some of theirs. Still, the next joint meeting wasn’t that much different. I went in with my PowerPoint and statistics and they patiently endured – again. Toward the end, a deacon raised her hand.

Presbyterian Today June/July 2018  
(continued next page)



JULY

- 1 WSCO Food Collection, Good Samaritan Offering & Communion
- 4 Independence Day
- 8 Watermelon
- 29 Sundaes Sunday

No Choir Practice



AUGUST

- 5 WSCO Food Collection, Good Samaritan Offering & Communion
- 11 Community Dinner – St. Andrews, Lake Shore and Murray Hill

No Choir Practice



**St. Andrews Presbyterian Church**

6317 103rd Street  
Jacksonville, Florida 32210

*Being the Face of Christ  
In our Community.*

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**JULY/AUGUST 2018**

**Secretaries**

*Donna Kirksey  
Judy Medearis  
Judith Yeaton*

**Active Elders**

*Michele Banks – CE&F/M&E  
Summer Hackney – CE&F/M&E  
Frankie Hawkins - CCN  
Bonnie McNally - CCN  
Mary McNair – BFS&P  
Elaine Mechelke – B&G  
Linda Miller – CE&F  
Diane Parker – Worship  
JR Wood – B&G*

"I don't want to seem rude," she said. "But it seems like we do the same thing every year and nothing ever changes. It doesn't seem to make a difference."

Another elder pushed back against the need to change at all. I announced, rather harshly, that I was not a hospice pastor. We had to increase our numbers. An elder, who was (and is) wiser than me, pointed out that they had heard the same dire stories and statistics about decline for quite a few years, but every year God managed to pull them through, often times with a few new members. Not enough to show statistical growth, since so many were dying, but enough to maintain.

After another year or so together, we baptized an older child. I asked all the people in the sanctuary who had been baptized to stand and invited the boy to see the new family he would be joining. Then I asked everyone to sit except the people who had been baptized in that church. I expected about half of the congregation to be standing, thinking that since it was a small town, most of them had probably been baptized in the church. I was very wrong.

Of the 30 or so people who were in the room that day, only two remained standing. It was then that I realized that the church I had been serving for more than three years, the church that I thought never changed, had in fact been changing all along. While they never had 50 people join in a year, for 15 years they had welcomed a few people who felt the presence of Jesus in that sanctuary and chose to come back week after week to meet him there.

It was then that I realized that the given narrative for leaders with small congregations is simple: Grow it or close it. Today, I know that this is a false dichotomy. There is a third option. Small churches can thrive. Thriving small churches don't get written up as success stories. Their pastors aren't invited to speak at church conferences. In fact, there aren't many resources geared just to them. Yet these small congregations continue to meet with Jesus and welcome others to join them. They remain grateful, as God remains faithful.

Sue Washburn

Pastor of Reunion Presbyterian Church  
Mount Pleasant, PA

## OUR PRAYER LIST



*Bill Allen, Diane Bailey,  
Diane Baylor, Betty Best,  
Marsha Best, Barbara Bradshaw,  
Diane Breitsprecher, Pat Bukovac,  
Betty Byrd, Barbara Canipe,  
Kim Cope, Carolyn Copeland,  
David Cullum, Kathy Dahl,  
Connie Davis, Joyce Doty,  
Lynda Edwards,  
The Eubanks Family,  
Phyllis Freitag, Sheryl Harman,  
Sandy Hunt, Le & Lona Hofsted,  
Cecil Jackson, Safia Kalup,  
Marion & Frances Kelly,  
Dale Kerup, Jess Katy Lilly,  
Redick Loring, Julia Mago,  
The Marshall Family,  
Ray Massey, Johnny McNally,  
Judy Medearis, Priscilla Myers,  
Merri Kay Nelson, Julie Normal,  
Bart Parramore,  
Charleen Pavlakovic, Tim Pierson,  
Walter Poley, Ralph Ramsey,  
Vickie Roberts, DiAnne Scott,  
Larry Scronce, Charles Severance,  
Vivian Sims, Butch Stafflenio,  
Ralph Story, Jack Strickland,  
Bill Strubbe Jr., Phyllis Stubbs,  
Pat Sundt, Clarence Sweat,  
Betty Tanner, Robert Tarkinson,  
Sam Taylor, Marion Tillman,  
Heath Towers, Leslie Wade,  
Margie Waller, Penny Waller,  
Bill Webb and Don Wight*

# VISITS TO OUR SHUT-INS



Anyone interested in visiting and/or taking Communion to our shut-ins, contact the Office.

**JULIET** (Join Us Ladies Into Eating Together) First Tuesday each month @ 6:00pm location TBD.

**Adult Bible Study** – Thursdays @ 11:00am in the Youth Room

## Worship

Even though Summer is upon us and the choir is taking a well deserved rest, your Worship Committee is still hard at work.

First and foremost, Chairman Diane Parker has been hard at work securing pastors for us every Sunday. This is an ongoing job as we also must plan for Liturgists, communion, candles, and all the little behind the scenes things that go to make up a smooth worship experience for everyone.

NOW, Our BIG NEWS for the summer is a “Three Church Progressive Dinner” which is tentatively planned for Saturday, August 11<sup>th</sup>. The representatives from St. Andrews, Murray Hill and Lake Shore think this will be a fun thing to do and will allow us to get to know one another even better. The plan is for St. Andrews to prepare the salad (1<sup>st</sup> course) at 5:00 pm, Lake Shore will do the main course (menu to be decided) and Murray Hill will host a feast of desserts. You can’t go wrong with this set-up. Are you unsure how to get to Murray Hill Presbyterian Church and/or Lake Shore Presbyterian Church?? Have no fear. We will be car-pooling as parking is somewhat limited and we hope for a LARGE turnout from our church as we have the largest congregation of the three churches. So PLEASE block off August 11<sup>th</sup> in your calendar of events and support this fun venture. We will be talking this up on Sunday mornings so “stay tuned”.

Don’t forget to check the flower chart in the Narthex for empty dates and sign up where you can. It’s so nice to have fresh flowers each Sunday and Gladwell’s does a very good job at a most reasonable price. The cost per Sunday is only \$30.00.

Finally, please keep our Pastor Search Committee and all our committees in your prayers as we continue to work on your behalf, “Being the Face of God in Our Community.”

Yours in Christ, Judith Yeaton



*Buildings & Grounds*

B&Gs was busy as usual with grounds clean up and air conditioners being replaced (3).

We also constructed a fence cage to help prevent future vandalism and installed security cameras. Thanks crew!

Bill fixed a toilet valve and helped Elaine with garden projects as well as numerous other jobs at our Rock.

I would like to thank my wife, Dick and Herman for helping with Church picnic, y’all were great!

Please keep all doors locked, even when leaving for just a minute and remember to set air conditioner temperature at 77 when leaving a room. (Money)

Hoping to do some pressure washing in AM when possible over the summer. HEAT!

If you have any skills you can provide to help B&G, please contact myself or any member of B&G.

Thank you all!

Serving our Lord at his Rock!!!!

JR Wood

## Fellowship and CE

Thank you very much to everyone who helped with the annual picnic - the fish fryers, the people who set up and cleaned and everyone who brought food and those that attended and ate the delicious goodies. We had over 40 people this year and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Thanks again!!!

On July 8<sup>th</sup> after Church service join us in the courtyard for a slice of cool watermelon to help beat the heat. Then on July 29<sup>th</sup> we will have “Sundae Sunday”, ice cream with your favorite toppings. So please come join us for “fellowship” and some yummy snacks.

Michele Banks



### July

3 Donald Kollah	12 Dick Massey
5 Linda Stickland	15 Pat Thomas
8 Kristen Brightwell	15 Sam Taylor
9 Miriam Story	19 Bryce Parramore
10 Virginia Black	22 Alan Brightwell
10 Nancy McCall	26 Kathy Vynanek
10 Suzi Starkey	28 Walter McNair

### August

1 Joel Still	17 Scott Brooks-Cope
4 Jim Miller	17 Brent Hume
5 Cheryl Parramore	18 Joe Fowler
6 Shirley Haynes	26 Betty Tanner
6 Helen Starks	29 Charleen Pavlakovich
13 Connie Davis	30 Susan Jones
13 Mary McNair	30 Judy Medearis
14 Aaron Simms	31 Marie Jean
17 Michele Banks	

## **Meanest Mother in the World**

I had the meanest Mother in the World.

While other kids had candy for breakfast, I had to eat cereal, eggs and toast. While other kids had cake and candy for lunch, I had a sandwich and fruit. As you can guess, my dinner was different from other kid's dinners too.

My Mother insisted on knowing where I was at all times. You'd think we were on a chain gang or something. She had to know who our friends were and what we were doing. And she would call and talk to their Mothers to make sure we had told her the truth. No, she didn't trust us either.

I am ashamed to admit it, but she actually had the nerve to break the child labor law. She made us work. We had to wash the dishes, make our beds and learn how to cook. We even had to do yard work, before we could play with our friends. That woman must have stayed awake nights thinking up things for us kids to do. And she insisted that we tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. My mean Mother said if someone would lie to you that would steal from you too.

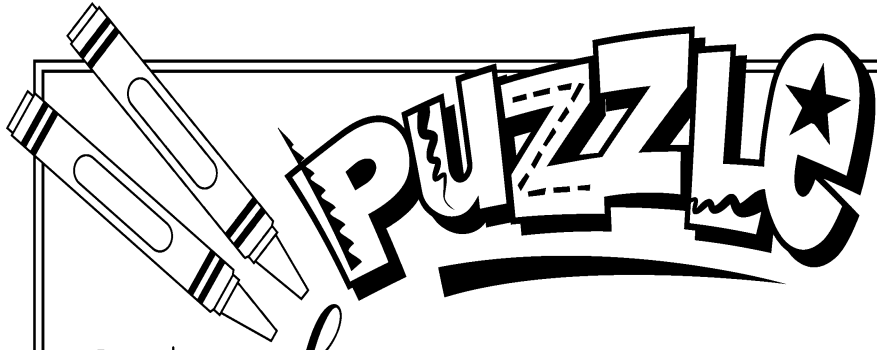
By the time we were teenagers she was much wiser and our lives became more unbearable. None of this tooting the horn for us to come running out; no she embarrassed us to no end by insisting that friends come to the door to get us.

I forgot to mention that most of our friends were allowed to date at the mature age of 12, but our old fashioned Mother refused to let us date until we were 16.

She really reared a bunch of squares. None of us were delinquent or busted for drugs. And who do we have to thank for this? You're right our mean Mother.

I tried to rear our children to stand a little straighter and taller. And it didn't faze me in the least when my children called me mean. After all, I thank God for giving me the meanest Mother in the world. Our country needs more mean mothers like mine.

Rest in Peace Mean Mom,  
Rev. Ronald Smith



# Wonders of creation

Our Creator is in control of the entire universe!

*Directions: Beginning with column 1, go down each column until you come to a dot. Write the letter that's found to the left of the dot on the blank below to complete Psalm 147:4, NIV. (Some columns have more than one letter.)*

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PSALM 147:4, NIV

Answer: He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name. Psalm 147:4, NIV



July

26 Bart & Cheryl Parramore

August

4 Walter & Jan Poley	17 Bill & Michele Banks
7 Dick & Sue Massey	21 Trevor & Eileen Moulton
14 Bill & Helen Starks	22 Ralph & Sue Ramsey

**BFS&P**

**Financial Report**

May 2018- Income: \$8,277.77, Expenses: \$5,675.67 = Positive \$2,602.10  
 May YTD - Income: \$43,861.39, Expenses: \$44,147.67 = Negative (\$286.28)

Fellowship Hall A/C had the copper pipes stolen April 2018, rendering them in operable. Police & Guidestone Insurance were contacted. Two new units were installed May 2018 by Merritt Heating & A/C.

**May 2018 Costs were as follows:**

\$8,990.00	2 new units for Fellowship Hall by Merritt Heating & A/C
-\$1,731.02	Guidestone Insurance payment
<del>-\$4,758.98</del>	Guidestone Insurance payment
\$2,500.00	Amount paid by SAPC (from Savings Acct.)
<u>\$599.38</u>	Cost to fence in new units to prevent future destruction (from Savings Acct.)
\$3,099.38	Total cost to SAPC for repair/replacement of Fellowship Hall A/C units

Your financial support and attendance at SAPC is needed! Although salary costs are currently down (still searching for Part-Time Stated Supply Minister), we still have bills!! Utilities, insurance, building maintenance and committee work continues!!

**Part-Time Pastor Committee**

Please continue to pray for our Part-Time Pastor Committee and our congregation throughout this process and know God has already picked our new Part-Time Pastor. He or she will be a blessing to our congregation in the near future. A 'job' in the PCUSA is referred to as a "Call from God" it is more than a job or career -- it is a calling.

Rev. Sandra Hedrick, Presbytery, is continuing to promote our need for a Part-Time Stated Supply Minister thru the local Presbyteries and has contacted local denominations that agree with our doctrine.

If you have questions or concerns about the search process, feel free to contact the Part-Time Pastor Search Committee (Mary McNair, Linda Miller & Frankie Hawkins).

Mary McNair

**July & August Sermons**

Rev. Graham will be in the pulpit with us on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, and August 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. The topics of his sermons and related scriptures are:

- July 15, Luke 10:25-37, "Who's in the ditch?";
- July 22, 2 Samuel 9:1-13, "A Royal Invitation"; and
- July 29, John 6:1-15, "Picnic with Jesus: A Real Miracle"
- August 12, Joshua 14:6-14 and 2 Samuel 18:31-40 "Such a Reward";
- August 19, 1 Kings 21:1-29, Galatians 2:15-21, and Luke 7:36-8:3 "Sinners and Those Who Love Them"; and
- August 26. Job 2:11-13 "Job's Friends".

Godspeed,  
Rev. Daniel Graham

**Thrift Shop Alert**

The Thrift Shop will be closed July 4th.

## Directory Updates

### Address/Telephone Numbers

Helen & Joseph Ballester  
2929 NW 12<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Gainesville, FL 32605

## Attention Veterans and Family Members

Need help with VA benefits you earned? Visit VA.gov and check it out! Good info on Health Care, Compensation and Education as well as Funeral Information; also has telephone contacts for all of the above.

If you have any other questions I will try and help. All require a DD214 from the veteran (Discharge Papers).

JR Wood, Former Vets Service Officer (VFW)

## Mission & Evangelism Committee

Thank you to everyone who assisted with the Mothers' Day Tea. It was well attended and enjoyed by all. We are already planning next year's Tea. Hope to see you there. The Fall Yard Sale will be held Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup>. Spaces are being rented for \$15. Donations will be needed. For further information contact the Hope Chest Thrift Store, which is open every Wednesday from 8:00am – Noon.

Michele Banks

*A Note from  
the Clerk*



*St. Andrews has numerous activities in July and August. Please bring your family and friends and participate.*

*~ Summer*

## Christian Education Committee (CE&F)

We are still in the process of clearing out the Youth Room and redecorating. The goal is to have this done by September, so stay tuned for exciting updates.

Michele Banks

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**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER  
NEWSLETTER ARTICLES  
DUE**

**\*\*\* AUGUST 20th \*\*\***

Articles can be e-mailed to  
Terry Hallihan  
**99gwhfth@comcast.net**  
Or placed in the Newsletter box  
in the office

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