

# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MARIETTA

## Annual Meeting

January 29

1:00 Hymn

1:03 Opening Prayer, Call to Order, Quorum

1:05 Council and Committee Reports

Christian Education Council

Church-At-Large

Communication

Congregational Life

Family

Mission and Service

Planning

Witness

Worship

1:45 Stewardship

1:55 Search Committees Updates

2:10 Further announcements and Q/A

2:20 Hymn

2:25 Closing Prayer

# **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MARIETTA**

## **Council and Committee Reports**

### **Christian Education Annual Report**

Highlights of the CE Council this year:

Streamlined the process for approval of Bible study material Hosted an appreciation lunch for Sunday School teachers and other Bible study facilitators Held a "Feed the Hungry" program in October allowing FPC members of all ages to participate Collected over \$6000 to distribute among 12 service organizations

Goals for 2012

FPC will host 2nd annual "Feed the Hungry" program in October Help the new Director of Christian Education/Discipleship assimilate into our congregation

### **Church At Large Committee Annual Report**

#### **Membership**

The Church-at-Large committee is composed of 4 members:

- Elder - Chair Phil Medlin
- Elder Dan Williams
- Deacon – Moderator Trina Cain
- At-Large member – Pat MacPherson

#### **Purpose**

- To be a liaison between FPC Marietta and the Cherokee Presbytery, Southeast Synod, and the PC (USA) on all items that involve the Church or its members.

#### **Function**

- The Church-At-Large Committee will continue to maintain an ongoing surveillance of the actions of the Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly and report to the Session and then to the congregation the most significant actions and those that will directly impact our church.
- The Cherokee Presbytery has 4 meetings scheduled in 2012.
  - Tuesday, February 28, 10:00 a.m. @ Dalton First PC
  - Tuesday, May 22, 5:30 p.m. @ Cherokee Retreat Center
  - Tuesday, August 28, 5:30 p.m. @ Heritage PC Woodstock
  - Tuesday, November 27, 10:00 a.m. @ Presbyterian Village
- The FPC Pastors and 5 voting Elders will attend each Presbytery meeting this year. Other Elders and members of FPC Marietta may attend as non-voting guest.
- We will also have the option to identify & send one or members to the General Assembly in June this year.

## Responsibilities

- We will receive and evaluate solicitations and inquires that do not clearly fall within the purview of other session councils and committees, and propose responses for session consideration.
- We will ensure that the church is properly represented at all meetings of the presbytery and higher governing bodies.
- As in the past, we will keep the session and the congregation advised on issues within the PC (USA) that may have an impact on FPC Marietta.
  - One of those issues is the formation in 2011 an organization called the “Fellowship of Presbyterians”, convening a conference in Minneapolis in August of last year and again in January of 2012.
  - The August event was attended by Pastors John Wells and Keith Gunter, elder Phil Medlin and church-at-large member Pat MacPherson. Judy Bullard, an at-Large member also attended the second conference in January.
  - One can find information about this organization on our website at [www.fpcmarietta.org](http://www.fpcmarietta.org) and at the fellowship website at [www.fellowship-pres.org/](http://www.fellowship-pres.org/)
  - Also informational presentations are being conducted in Sunday school classes and small groups on a regular basis and will continue.
  - Please continue to watch for further developments as things progress.

Fellowship of Presbyterians

## A new denomination, continuing ties to PC(USA)

### A report from the Fellowship of Presbyterians conference

By Leslie Scanlon, *Presbyterian Outlook* national reporter

ORLANDO, FLA.

Most of the 2,100 people who came to the Fellowship of Presbyterians’ Covenanting Conference, held Jan. 18-20 in Orlando, are not yet ready to leave the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Instead, they’re still trying to discern what to do next.

But Fellowship organizers say about 100 congregations are ready to withdraw from the PC(USA) and step into something that’s new and still taking shape. The Fellowship has made that possible by formally creating a new denomination, the Evangelical Covenant Order of Presbyterians (ECO for short), which will begin accepting member congregations April 1.

Throughout this conference, Fellowship leaders cast a vision of a bold new church unafraid to take risks in mission; of like-minded evangelicals committed to mutual accountability; of taking the best of Presbyterian history and tradition and pointing it in new directions.

“I’m not really sure we have really dreamed for a long time,” said John Ortberg, an author and pastor of Menlo Park Church in California. “I think God is calling us to dream.” Along with the dreams came a bucket of nuts and bolts (pensions, health plans, per capita and more). The Fellowship’s board of directors approved revised theology and polity documents that form the new denomination’s constitution. They announced plans for another national gathering, to be held Aug. 23-24 in a place yet to be determined. It will be partly a gathering for mutual support and worship, partly a formal business meeting.

It’s also clear that most evangelicals aren’t leaving the PC(USA). Some aren’t ready to make the switch yet, some don’t want to go at all (although that could change if the PC(USA)

decides to allow its ministers to perform same-gender marriages). Relatively few are pursuing the idea of achieving union status with both the ECO and the PC(USA).

Evangelical congregations may have several reasons for staying in the PC(USA), said Jim Singleton, a Colorado pastor and president of the Fellowship. Some may feel it's too costly to go to the ECO; some may not want to risk rupturing a divided congregation; some feel they already do effective ministry and have solid relationships within PC(USA).

Some evangelicals staying in the PC(USA) also will join the Fellowship as a way of differentiating themselves — to align with other evangelicals in networks of mutual accountability, and to stand in opposition to the PC(USA)'s controversial decision last year to allow the ordination of sexually active gays and lesbians.

Here are more details regarding the Fellowship and the new denomination.

**ESSENTIAL TENETS.** Included in the ECO's theology document is a section on essential tenets, with which those being ordained in the new denomination or having leadership roles in its congregations are expected to agree. That section, however, is apparently still under revision. Laura Smit, a theology professor and its primary author, described it as a "paper-cup document" (to be used for a while, then replaced with something better), rather than a cherished crystal goblet handed down through the generations.

The essential tenets are "not a subscriptionist bullet-point list of eight essential things you have to believe to get in the door" of the ECO, said John Crosby, a Minnesota pastor and president of the ECO. Crosby said in an interview that the essential tenets are bedrock theological teachings listed in boldface in the document, and that the Fellowship's board of directors retains the authority to make changes in the constitutional documents for the next 18 months, while the ECO is taking shape. "Everything we do around here is a draft," Singleton said.

**FINANCES.** The Fellowship has begun raising money. It ended the gathering with a Covenanting Service where pledge cards were passed out and people were asked to sign a covenant of support with the broader Fellowship umbrella group, not specifically with the ECO. The Fellowship has set what its leaders call a "bare-bones" budget of \$500,000 for 2012. For congregations entering the ECO, the per capita would be 1 percent of the congregation's budget. Joining the Fellowship will cost \$250 a year for congregations and \$125 for individuals.

**NEW ECOSYSTEM.** Leaders spoke of having in the ECO a solid theological center; mutual accountability through peer evaluations of ministry; and an ethos that allows for flexibility, risk-taking and trust.

"This is not a safe harbor" but a vessel for those "who want to be in ships that sail out into the storm," said Joe Farrell, a Colorado minister who worked on the polity document.

"We've had this deep longing for belonging," said Marnie Crumpler, a minister with Peachtree Church in Atlanta. "This is our tribe. These are our people."

When asked why evangelicals should choose the ECO rather than the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Singleton said there's one clear distinction: The EPC has an "ambivalent" position on the ordination of women, while the ECO celebrates the gifts of women in ministry. **O**

For further reports, go to [www.pres-outlook.org](http://www.pres-outlook.org).

## **Communications Policy Committee Annual Report**

The Communications Policy Committee is a new committee created in 2011 and falls under the direction of the Session. A Communications Guide was created and approved by the session and will be available to the membership on the church **website**.

### Communications Mission / Function

All communications should support the mission of the First Presbyterian of Marietta by inviting, informing, including, instructing, and inspiring the congregation and community to learn about God and the saving grace of Jesus Christ. We facilitate the mission through clear, concise, timely, and accurate communications.

### Composition

- Elder. Chair – Phil Medlin
- Senior Pastor or designee – John Wells
- Director of Administration – Mark Barbour
- Publications Coordinator – Elizabeth Foster
- Deacon – Bill Lewis
- Two (2) at-large members from the congregation – Dot Dunaway, Cathy Lipsett

### Responsibilities

- The Committee is responsible for managing the content of the Communications Guide.
- The Committee will conduct a review annually at a minimum
- All members of the congregation will have access to this guide.
- The Director of Administration will ensure that all members of the FPC staff, officers and ministry chairs have access to this guide and that it is maintained on the FPC website.
- FPC Marietta is committed to keeping all personal information which we may have about our members confidential and secure and a copy of these guidelines is on the website.

## **Congregational Life Council Annual Report**

The Congregational Life Council oversees a number of programs that truly are the heart of our church. These programs promote fellowship and provide for the care and nurture of our members. Our goal this year is to truly enhance a caring culture here at First Presbyterian. Towards this end, I would invite all of you to consider participating in one or more of these worthwhile ministries. And, even more importantly, we encourage you to utilize the services they offer if you have a need. For more information about any of these programs, please contact the program chairperson, Becky Cameron, or Denise Beltzner.

### **Congregational Fellowship**

Church Picnic – Members of the Congregational Life Council

Dinner Groups – Beth Eckford

Ladies Night Out – TBD

Men's Small Groups – Erroll Eckford  
 Prayer Shawl Ministry – Sybil Little  
 Presbyterian Women – Sherry Silvers and Carolyn Tiede  
 Prime Timers – Elizabeth Foster

### **Congregational Care**

Adoption/Foster Family Connection – Patricia Sprinkle  
 Career Transition Ministry – Bob Sabin and Bill Lins  
 Congregational Assistance – Denise Beltzner  
 Divorce Support and Grief Support Groups - Denise Beltzner, on an as needed basis  
 Financial Ministry – Lee Pence  
 Intercessory Prayer Group – Eve Kool  
 Home Visitation – Glenn Biddle  
 Shepherding the Flock – Betty Bomar  
 Stephen Ministry – Claire Francis

## **Family Ministry Council Annual Report**

The Family Ministry Council was organized in the summer of 2010 to combine parts of two existing councils, Youth and the children's division of Christian Education. Family Ministry Council encompasses newborns through high school seniors and their families. Family Ministry Council consists of elders and deacons as well as quite a few staff members who help coordinate activities, programs, curriculum and special events for children, youth and families. Our youth director, preschool director, children's director, nursery director and Mother's Morning Out coordinator represent the staff on Family Ministry Council. Several at large members serve on the council as well. Denise Beltzner currently oversees Family Ministry Council. Denise works tirelessly to do an outstanding job for Family Ministry Council. A search committee is actively working to hire a temporary associate pastor of Family Ministry to take over Keith Gunter's role.

In 2011, the first full year of this newly formed council, many opportunities of fellowship, programs and service were demonstrated:

- The nursery was "exploding with little ones"!
- The preschool began a successful 5 year program!
- Children's ministry enjoyed learning activities, worship and service in Sunday School, Track 25, Kabaam, VBS, and Summer Mission Camp!
- Youth from 6-12 grades gathered once again to celebrate the beginning of school at Sharp Top!
- High school youth traveled to Jamaica, Honduras and Peru for mission experiences and opportunities that changed lives!
- Seniors in high school attended an empowering worldwide Christian Conference in Atlanta, Passion International, with 42,000 high school and college students!
- A highlight from 2011 was the church wide bake sale and auction for the Jamaica High School Summer Mission Trip. Many FPC members baked and donated incredible delicacies to raise support for the mission trip.

In 2012, Family Ministry Council has just witnessed two of our own high school seniors, nurtured and loved by this congregation, take their love for missions to the next level. After spending a week on a spring break mission trip in Honduras last year, Austin French and Benjamin Worley chose to graduate early and spend several months on an extended mission trip in their beloved Honduras. They left for their journey the first week of January. Family Ministry Council congratulates these young men and their families for being disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ! Our council's goal for 2012 is to empower more young people and families to be disciples!

### **Mission and Service Council Annual Report**

The ministry of FPC in the areas of Mission and Service continued in 2011 with good momentum, but also so many opportunities for the future. This ministry may be better understood through the various program areas.

FPC has a long tradition of supporting specific missionaries, beyond those causes supported by the PCUSA from our per capita giving. In this era of challenging budgets, our focus has narrowed somewhat, but our commitment remains strong. FPC continued support of long-term missionaries in India, Lesotho, Philippines, Oxford, and domestically. Additionally, FPC supported several "Home Grown Missionaries", including Brenton French for a Medical Mission to Kenya in May, Brianna Esa with Campus Crusade in Dominican Republic and Arizona, and Lauren Fike for campus ministries in Thailand.

Some FPC members have also have a passion for serving people in need due to natural disasters. We have found a particular opportunity to serve those left behind after the initial event, with its media coverage and insurance response. FPC began the year with work teams going to Nashville to aid those whose homes were damaged in the May 2010 floods. Later in the year, an effort was coordinated for a series of shorter trips to respond to victims of the tornados in Alabama and NW Georgia. Those efforts are continuing into 2012. Members interested in serving these areas can contact Dan valentine or David Mahan for further information.

FPC has long relationships with key ministries in Cobb County. This includes our own Club 3:30 ministry for latch-key children, as well as ministry partners in the community. We provide much more than financial support for these partners, with prayer support, coordination of volunteer opportunities, and making connections for our congregation to support the agency fundraising efforts, such as the Gobble jog for MUST Ministries. In 2011, we engaged in special efforts with two of our partners: with Cobb Pregnancy Services, FPC made a key funding commitment from the Mission Focus Fund, enabling CPS to move forward with critical plans for facility expansion. With MUST Ministries, we worked together to understand their long term plans for ministry, and we able to coordinate supplemental funding from Gift Trust proceeds to partially cover a shortfall when a key Federal funding source was abruptly ended.

One of our largest efforts in Missions has been with the Renacimiento community in Mexico. Working with our local mission partner Casa Samuel, ministry leaders Pat MacPherson and Collins Roux have expanded a relationship that began with Youth trips to build houses several

years ago, to a multi-faceted effort that includes adult mission trips (“Gringo Mission Trips”) that work with young mothers and youth; establishment of a Microfinance program that allows (mostly) women to start or expand a business as well as receive life skills coaching; and an ongoing ministry planning effort with Casa Samuel. Late in 2011, a generous donation made possible a dream this ministry team has held – the establishment of a medical ministry for this community with a permanent facility for patient care. FPC will be actively progressing this project as well as continuing the “Gringo Mission Trips” in 2012.

The Mission and Service Councils invite FPC members to join us in ministry in these areas, or to develop new ones. To God be the glory from these ministry efforts.

### **Planning Committee Annual Report**

Hopefully, everyone is aware of the fact that the lease on the “WareHouse” will expire June of 2014 with no options to extend beyond that date. Planning has been working several scenarios to handle the loss of space that the Warehouse has provided over the years. There are two primary options that are being examined as a result of this predicament and to determine the best course of action. Compounding the decisions on what to do about the Warehouse are the needed renovations to the Great Hall and to Holland Hall and their costs.

There are two options on the WareHouse ministries. The first is to consolidate the Programs that are in the Warehouse back to the Main Campus, 189 Church St., with some renovations to the Cotten building to facilitate Program need. A space utilization study was accomplished and determined that the Main Campus could accommodate all Programs, however programs and activities would have adjust to the dis-contiguous space and would limit growth. The second is to build a pre-engineered building of 10,000 sq.ft. on existing property and allow our Ministry Programs to continue and grow; this option comes with fixed set back time limits to fund and build in order to maintain continuous Programs. Other options exist as far as size and location of the building, but costs quickly become a factor.

### **Witness Council Annual Report**

One of the primary responsibilities of the Witness Council is to work with the session, the diaconate and congregation to fulfill our First Presbyterian Church mission statement as stated in Matthew 28:18-23, as follows:

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo I am with you always, to the close of the age."

We understand this to mean that we are called to:

- Praise and listen to God in worship and prayer,
- Proclaim God's grace in mission and in outreach,
- Offer our fellowship to all,
- Serve the needs of the people,
- Nurture ourselves and others in Christ through the Bible.

It is through the work of three of our six fellowship and service committees that we are most visible to the congregation:

- the most successful greeter program, involving a hundred or more volunteers;
- the Sunday morning hospitality and snack program, provided with the assistance of adult Sunday school class members, on a rotation schedule; and
- the July 4th table sales program, which provides substantial financial assistance to our church youth activities.

Other Witness Council committees, less visible but of equal importance, are the New Member Orientation Committee; Publicity Committee; and Alpha Program Committee.

It is important to note that while the chair of the Witness Council is an elder, all committee chairmen and members are from the diaconate, or members of the congregation appointed by the session. They truly are the workhorses of the Witness Council.

The "star" of our committees last year was the greeter program, chaired and energized by Dave Smith. Visitors and members alike were greeted with enthusiasm at the church entrances and gathering spaces. It seemed that "greeter" badges were everywhere! Dave promises even more and better trained greeters in 2012.

Competing for 'star' status this year are the New Member Orientation Committee and the Alpha Program Committee. Both have made extensive revisions and improvements in their guidelines and procedures, and are actively at work in making their activities more meaningful and effective. An especially innovative proposal involves the Alpha Program, a program designed to spread the good news of Jesus both here and into our community. The committee proposes to run the program as an FPC University class as opposed to a stand alone ministry, at just a fraction of the costs incurred in the past. Stay tuned. Things are happening on your Witness Council!

## Worship Council Annual Report

### 2011 Highlights

#### Music

- Holy Land trip was big success. Written up in both Episcopal and Presbyterian Association of Musicians newsletters
- Elizabethan Christmas feast was a new event and met with great success. Provided music outreach to community.
- Youth music groups Epsilon and Kirchenglocken just completed a successful mission weekend to Savannah and will have a mission tour to Philadelphia this summer

#### Wedding Guild

- 12 weddings
  - 10 member weddings
  - 2 non-member weddings

#### Funeral Guild (16 members)

- Assisted with 14 funerals during the year

#### Acolytes

- New Director, Melissa Gilbert
- Many thanks to Jeff Cain who has directed this program for several years.

#### Attendance

- Relatively stable 2011 vs 2010 with a slight decrease in attendance (2%). Decline from 2009 to 2010 was about 9%.
- About 75% of attendees are in three traditional services with the balance in the 4<sup>th</sup>.

### Goals For 2012

- Replacement of sound system in Great Hall (currently unfunded, some designated gifts)
- Architectural/acoustical enhancement of Great Hall (currently unfunded)
  - Chairs
  - Floor (already budgeted)
- Support of Worship with new Senior Minister