



A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES OF MURPHYSBORO AND PINCKNEYVILLE, ILLINOIS

WINTER, 2016

WHAT'S INSIDE . . .

<i>From the Pastor</i>	<i>Pg. 1, 2</i>
<i>Welcome Pastor</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>General Announcements</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Murphysboro News</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Pinckneyville News</i>	<i>4</i>

FROM THE



PASTOR

“GROUNDHOG DAY”

By Pastor Sam Foskey

Most people of my generation are, I suspect, familiar with the classic comedy “Groundhog Day,” starring Bill Murray as a local television weatherman who is forced to cover the Groundhog Day ceremonies in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, home of the world’s most famous groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil.

Now Murray’s character doesn’t want to do the story because he thinks it’s pretty cheesy, but he has to and so he goes. And while he is there he keeps repeating the same day over and over again. And this makes him very miserable.

As I am writing this, Groundhog Day was over a week ago, but the theological implications of both the day itself and the movie are just too good to overlook, so we have this column!

First of all, as the legend has it, if the groundhog sees his shadow, he will run and hide...and therefore it will be six weeks until winter. Whether or not this phenomenon can be considered an accurate method of meteorological prognostication, one can state with a great degree of confidence that the poor groundhog has no real need to fear his shadow.

Now, I have no idea if groundhogs really do such things or not, but we all know what it’s like to be afraid. And I suspect most of us have been afraid of certain things, only to find out later that our fears had been groundless. There’s a lot to be said in favor of facing one’s fears. Unless the entire Gambino crime family is coming toward you with semi-automatic weapons! Then I’d recommend running. Otherwise, hiding or running from our fears or denying them does not serve us well. The only way to overcome them is to face them, whether it is a bully, or a terrible health concern, or confessing something that we’ve done wrong. Running from such things only makes them worse.

A takeaway that we get from the “Groundhog Day” movie is that, while routines can be good and can enhance our productivity, we can get stagnant if we get so stuck in a routine that it becomes a rut. It’s been a long time since I watched “Groundhog Day,” but I believe that Murray’s character kept repeating the day because there was something important he was supposed to do and the “universe” made him relive the day until he did it.

A lot of us can get into ruts like that and for a lot of reasons. We get too comfortable in our “comfort zones.” We don’t want to take risks. We are running from responsibility. We procrastinate. We are cowards. And so we get stuck and stay stuck, not realizing that our lives could be so much better if we just had the courage, faith, and “gumption” to climb out of our ruts.

(continued page 2)

Churches are certainly guilty of operating in this manner. Most churches I know are in very deep ruts. Now tradition is fine -- I am a big fan of tradition -- but there's a difference between tradition and a rut. If we keep doing the same things over and over while expecting different results, that's not tradition, that's a rut, and an insane one to boot. Also, if we do not stop once in a while and evaluate our routines of practice and of the calendar, and ask, “Why do we do this?” then we are probably in a rut. Yet such behavior is characteristic of a lot of churches.

We can also become “Groundhog Day” churches by sentimentalizing the past. A walk down memory lane is fine, but the good old days were not unequivocally good. American churches were booming in the 1950's and the 1960's, but there was not a lot of diversity in mainline churches. There were a few women in the pulpits, minorities were not generally welcome, and LGBTQ individuals were, for the most part, still well inside the closet.

Now, believing that a groundhog can forecast the weather is a harmless superstition. Indeed, sometimes they do as good a job as a lot of meteorologists! But being a “groundhog day” church is not harmless. So it is important that we take a close look at how we “do” church and honor our traditions, but get out of our ruts. Let us not hide from our fears but, with faith in God, face them and deal with them head on. Then we can break out of our cycles of futility and stagnation and begin to face the present, and the future, with courage and hope.

IT'S TIME TO “CONNECT”

Welcome to our updated, quarterly newsletter, “CONNECT.”

The Murphysboro and Pinckneyville First Presbyterian Churches are connected, or yoked, and together support a pastoral agreement for Pastor Sam to serve and guide us.

It's an exciting time for both of our congregations. And it's an opportune time for us to connect through the news of each of our churches in what we hope will be a quarterly newsletter publication. *Enjoy!*



Sam Foskey was born in Adrian, Georgia and is a graduate of Adrian High School, Georgia Southern University, and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He taught in the public schools of Wrightsville, Georgia for 8 years until entering seminary in 1990. He has a BS in Psychology, a Master's in Education, and a Master's of Divinity.

Sam was ordained as a Southern Baptist minister in 1992 and served Baptist churches in Indiana and Georgia until 1999, when he moved to Carbondale to serve as pastor of University Baptist. He left there in 2008 and has been an interim minister since then. His most recent interim services were at the 1st Presbyterian in Harrisburg and 1st Presbyterian in Shelbyville.

Sam is married to Linda Benz of Carbondale and they have two sweet cats. Sam is a former Rotarian, former Board member of The Women's Center, and former member of the Regional Advisory Board of Caritas Family Solutions. Sam is also an active member of the Stage Company in Carbondale.

We all join in welcoming Sam to our 1st Presbyterian churches. *WELCOME!*

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

BOOK STUDY: Sailboat Church by Joan S. Gray will be the topic of study beginning April 3, 2016 – 12:30 p.m. in Murphysboro; 5:30 p.m. in Pinckneyville – and will run for five weeks. Sailboat Church is geared toward churches that are struggling, in terms of attendance and finances, and asks the question, Is your church a 'rowboat church' or a 'sailboat church'? 'Rowboat churches' try to do everything through their own efforts, while 'sailboat churches' put themselves under the influence of the Holy Spirit and go where the Spirit's wind blows them. Books are recommended. Ask the Secretary or the Pastor of a copy.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING OFFERING: This important ecumenical offering will be March 20. Its focus is to assist folks around the world who are victims of natural disasters. Your offering on March 20 will be greatly appreciated.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MURPHYSBORO, IL

Address: 51 Crescent Drive, Murphysboro, IL 62966 Phone: 618-684-3466

Secretary e-mail: neacephyllis@yahoo.com; Secretary office hours: Tuesday, Thursday-Friday, 12:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.; Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

UPCOMING EVENTS

LENTEN STUDY

Led by Peggy Carpenter, Ruling Elder
Sundays – February 14 – March 27
9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

This Adult Education, 6-week class will help you understand how the Stations of the Cross can be used as a personal devotion, and how the Stations apply to history.

EASTER BRUNCH

Sunday, March 27
8:30 – 10:30 a.m., Fellowships Hall

Come join your Church Family for a time of fellowship and ‘fine dining’ of a continental breakfast, including muffins, coffeecake, fruit and breakfast beverages. See you there!

BAKED POTATO FUNDRAISER

Thursday, March 17
11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Chili Potato, or Build your Own	\$6.00
Make it a meal (with water & brownie	\$1.00 more
Extra condiments (each)	\$.50 more
(cheddar, sour cream, butter)	

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

COMMITTEE REPORTS

DEACONS REPORT

On Sunday, February 14, at the 10:45 a.m. service, elders and deacons were installed and ordained. Lester Hensley was ordained as an Elder; Ann Demarco and Cara Doerr were ordained as Deacons. Coralee Lawder was installed as an Elder; Julia Morrill and Naomi Potter were installed as Deacons.

BUILDING AND GROUNDS

- Shingles missing on the Sanctuary part of the roof will be replaced
- It is hoped we can use the same summer help (grass mowing, etc.) as we did last year. He did a wonder job!
- Some wireless needs were met – Pastor Sam now has a lapel clip microphone.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

- Bible Study continues, based on The Fruit of the Spirit, a lesson on kindness. All women are invited and encouraged to join us for this exciting and insightful lesson, the fellowship, and refreshments.
- We will be participating and on kitchen ‘patrol’ for the March 17 Baked Potato Fundraiser.
- Also, Presbyterian Women will help in a big way with the March 17 Easter Brunch. *Please join us!*



Our Church Family extends its deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Gene Crawshaw, who passed away Thursday, February 4, 2016. His funeral was held at the First Presbyterian Church of Murphysboro on Thursday, February 11, 2016.

CONNECT WITH THE PASTOR . . .

PASTOR SAM FOSKEY’S CONTACT INFORMATION AND OFFICE HOURS:

Cell phone: 618-412-1188

E-mail: mboropvillepastor@gmail.com

Hours: *Pinckneyville* – Monday (all day), Tuesday mornings; Murphysboro – Tuesday afternoons, Wednesday and Thursday mornings



FIRST UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF PINCKNEYVILLE, IL

Address: 3811 State Route 13/127, Pinckneyville, IL 62274 Phone: 618-357-8017

Secretary e-mail: fupcpville@frontier.com Secretary office hours: Monday, Tuesday
9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. And Friday 9:00 a.m. – noon.

LENTEN SERVICES IN PINCKNEYVILLE

Theme - "Giving It Up"

February 14: 7:00 p.m. –

First United Presbyterian Church

Preacher: Rev. Cindy Bean, St. Paul's United Church of Christ

February 21: 7:00 p.m. -

New Hope Community Church

Preacher: Fr. Augustine Ibezimako, St. Bruno Catholic Parish

February 28: 7:00 p.m. -

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

Preacher: Rev. Sam Foskey, First United Presbyterian Church

March 6: 7:00 p.m. -

St. Bruno Catholic Parish

Preacher: Rev. Jim Barnett, First United Methodist Church

March 13: 7:00 p.m. -

First United Methodist Church

Preacher: Rev. James Clardy, New Hope Community Church

March 24: 7:30 p.m. -

St. Paul's United Church of Christ

Maundy Thursday Service

March 25: 7:30 p.m. -

First United Methodist Church

Preacher: Rev. Sam Foskey, First United Presbyterian Church

Good Friday Service



2016

COMMUNION SCHEDULE FOR PINCKNEYVILLE UNITED PRESEBYTERIAN

March 20

May 15

August 21

October 2

December 4

December 24

