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 From: [etlaurel@aol.com](mailto:etlaurel@aol.com)  
 To: [etlaurel@aol.com](mailto:etlaurel@aol.com)

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## First Presbyterian Church News

501 N. East Street, Benton AR 72015  
 501-315-7737 [fpcos@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpcos@sbcglobal.net)  
 The Reverend Dari Victoria Rowen, Interim Pastor

**May, 2010**

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### The Church at its Best:

The members of our church family acted in such a way that my heart was truly warmed a couple of weeks ago. The care and concern for each other was touching. It was more than touching though; it was a response to a

Welcome to the May, 2010 issue of *First Presbyterian Church News*, our monthly online newsletter for all our members and friends of the church.

We appreciate your suggestions, articles, and help in making sure everyone stays well-informed, so give your feedback to any session member or to Emily Laurel, our newsletter coordinator, at [etlaurel@aol.com](mailto:etlaurel@aol.com) or 501-778-9564.

### Just what is it that an Interim Pastor does?

There are always questions and concerns during a period of change. I am here as your Interim Pastor in order to provide stability while the congregation is between installed pastors. As I incorporate my training as an Interim Ministry Specialist into the daily workings of the church, I find myself more and more convinced that the statement "all ministry is interim ministry" is true. After all, we are all here but a short while in the scheme of things. Basically, there are interim pastors and there are permanent pastors. While I am an Interim Pastor coming into this position knowing my time with you is limited; let's face it, a permanent pastor isn't really permanent. The average pastorate these days is between 3-5 years. I think this time span anything but permanent.

During worship I have tried to share with you some of the interim process. I will continue to do so over the next few months. I keep saying that we will be looking back at the history of the congregation in order to look forward without being held tightly chained to the ways things have been done in the past. It is always good to see where you have been before determining where you would like to go.

I am hopeful that as many of you as possible will participate in the process. I have a basic timeline and plan for how we will go through

need along the lines of the way Jesus might have acted in a similar situation.

Long time members Earl and Donna Mobley decided the time was right to make the move to New Mexico in order to be closer to family. They placed their home on the market with no idea of how long it might take the house to sell. Well, believe it or not, the house was sold in only four days! This threw things into high gear. The packing began. As you might imagine after over fifty years of marriage, they had accumulated a few things. Down-sizing is a challenge for us all. Americans sure collect a lot of stuff. The Mobleys are no different than the rest of us.

The stress was mounting as the time to move came closer. With about a week to go prior to completing the closing of the deal with the buyers, the Mobleys received news regarding their back fence. The fence had to be moved in order for the sale to go through as scheduled. Can you imagine? Here they are just over a week until scheduled to move and this glitch came along. How do you get a fence moved RIGHT NOW? There were no fence workers available to take on the job within the time frame the Mobleys had.

the steps. I am currently working behind the scenes to get the records held in the office brought up-to-date. It will be a great gift to the new pastor to come on board with an organized and user-friendly work environment. "Cleaning out the closets" is an important task to complete during the interim period.

With the approval of Session in May I will form what is called a Transitional Steering Team. This team will be made up of Session members and non-session members. There will be 6-8 men and women, young and not-so-young, people who will assist me in compiling the information gained through different exercises and information gathering we will undertake in the near future. This group will assist in discerning the overall themes of where we have been, where we are now, and where we are headed. The compilation of information will always be available and presented to the congregation. There will be no information that is off-limits. This will be a transparent process for we all need to learn and be on the same page as we seek to ready ourselves for the next installed pastor and step our feet onto the path of the future.

There will be more specific information forthcoming once approved by Session to proceed with things. If you feel you might be called to serve in such a manner, please let me know.

Always, if you have questions or concerns let's sit down together and have a conversation. My job is to try to maintain stability during this time of change and uncertainty. I am here to answer your questions to the best of my knowledge. I am here for you.

There will be more to come as the time is right.

*Dari Victoria*

## **May Events and Activities**

### **Please note:**

**The church office will be closed on Monday, May 31 for Memorial Day, and we will observe summer hours every Sunday Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.**

**Morning Worship 9 AM  
Fellowship 10-10:15 AM  
Sunday School 10:15-11 AM**

**Ladies Night Out** (dinner & a movie)  
Tuesday, May 4, 5:45 PM at Applebee's

**First Friday Fellowship** (informal get-together of friends and family) - bring your favorite appetizer or beverage  
Tuesday, May 7, 7 PM, at the home of Ray and Faith Hogan, 3917 Commonwealth Drive, Benton (in the Bryant area). 501-847-7260

**Christ, Committees & Chow** (meal-Christian Education)  
Tuesday, May 11, 6 PM

**Second Thursday Fellowship & Potluck** (everyone invited for lunch)  
Thursday, May 13, at noon in the fellowship hall.

It was Sunday morning when the breaking point came. Donna was beside herself. There was seemingly no way in which the fence issue could be resolved such that the closing on the house could take place as scheduled. That is, until FPC-Benton got involved in the situation. People were concerned for the couple. A few folks were discussing the dilemma at church that morning. It was decided that those available to go would do what they could to remedy the situation.

I decided to go by, chat with the Mobleys, and check in with the guys tackling the fence. It was right after Sunday lunch when I arrived at the Mobleys. What should I see when I peered into the back yard? There was only a six foot portion of the fence remaining. There were two men there from the church, along with four youth.

The fence was down in a matter of minutes after my arrival and all the materials were hauled off. The backyard was free of the fence and the barrier to the real estate deal was removed.

It was touching to see the church come together to assist one of our own when in need. The men worked tirelessly. They came together and took down

**Andrea Price Wedding** (daughter of Mike and Brenda Price)  
Saturday, May 15, 3 PM

**Stated Session Meeting**  
Tuesday, May 18, 6 PM

**Gold Party** (bring your gold--take home a check)  
Sunday, May 16, after church

**Bob and Peaches Calhoun's 50th Wedding Anniversary celebration**  
Sunday, May 23, after worship

**Lauren Bennett Wedding** (daughter of Ann Clemmer and granddaughter of Martha Veasman)  
Saturday, May 29. 5 PM

**Gideon Sunday**  
Sunday, May 30, 9 AM (NOTE: new summer worship time)

To view the complete calendar of activities for the church online, go to the First Presbyterian-Benton website ([www.fpcbenton.com](http://www.fpcbenton.com)).

### **Young People at First Presbyterian**

Easter was great fun for kids of all ages, including a petting zoo with bunnies and chicks. Thanks to the senior high kids for hiding the eggs for the Easter egg hunt.

We had six kids attend Senior High Youthquake April 9-11. Maruka Reecer served as a youth leader and small group leader. Sam Anderson, Brad Fugere, James Hogue, Tyler Fields, Nathaniel Hafferty, and Liz Snyder attended.

Vacation Bible School is scheduled for June 20-24 this year. The theme is "Raiders of the Lost Ark and other Bible Adventures." Christian Education needs volunteers to serve as teachers, group leaders, and activities. Contact Maruka Reecer, our youth director, for additional information and to volunteer your help at 501-317-5072 or [mreecer@gmail.com](mailto:mreecer@gmail.com).

A trip to Mo-Ranch in Hunt, Texas, is scheduled for July 10-15. Taylor Snellback and Ron DuBois will be representing First Presbyterian-Benton.

Six kids (Sam, Brad, Tyler, James, Nathaniel, and Liz) will be attending Montreat July 24-31. Maruka and Ron will attend as youth leaders and/or small group leaders.

### **Notes from a Session Member**

The April session meeting involved quite a lot of intense debate as there were strongly differing points of view. Our decisions were not reached easily but, thanks to our prayers and discussion, we believe they are the best decisions for our church family for the long run.

Probably the most important action taken was to approve Worship &

that fence. Several church members called Donna to offer their friendship and support. A meal was provided for the couple that evening. It was amazing to watch the church pull together to take care of someone in need. Not only did the folks minister to the very physical need of removing the fence but also folks ministered to their emotional needs as well.

This couple was lifted up in prayer. They were taken under the wings of the loving congregation that is First Presbyterian Church, Benton. The love of God was visible and palpable that afternoon in the Mobley's yard. Thanks be to God for the love and concern in support of others that rests in this congregation. I count myself blessed to be a part of these faithful disciples.

*Dari Victoria*

Rev. Dari Victoria provides pastoral care for our church family. If you need assistance with any pastoral concern, please contact Dari Victoria at the church, 501-315-7737 or by cell telephone at 870-820-4616.

Rev. Dari Victoria will be out of town May 24 - 31. If you need assistance during that time, contact Marcia Snyder, head of the Board of Deacons, for

Music's recommendation to have "**summer hours**" from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend. Elder Doyle Webb brought this recommendation to Session from the Worship & Music Committee in response to suggestions from church members. It seems that many other churches change to a summer schedule every year, and First Presbyterian-Benton followed this practice for more than a decade with good results (attendance increased rather than decreased).

What are the advantages of earlier worship services? With our regular 10:45 AM service in place, no one can plan activities until after lunchtime on any Sunday; and we remain involved with church activities as late as mid afternoon if we have a luncheon or other event scheduled after church. The summer schedule will allow our families to worship earlier in the day, leaving them free to plan lunchtime and afternoon activities. We trust that everyone will enjoy the opportunity to begin their day with worship, knowing that others are attending worship and then are able to plan family activities for the rest of the morning.

Another topic of discussion was our **2010 Survey of Church Members**, which is quite comprehensive. It consists of several different sections: 1) Information for Member Directory, Information for Business Directory, and information to be used "in case of emergency;" 2) a form offering information about each committee or ministry team with a request for each member to choose one on which to serve in 2010; and, finally, 3) a form listing many of the opportunities for service in the church with a request for each member to indicate every area where he or she might be willing to serve (called a Time and Talent Commitment).

The survey is used to collect statistical information for Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), which is why certain questions are asked (age, race, etc.). In addition, it is used to update our business listings on the church's website, and we are requesting information that would be used in the event of an emergency or disaster situation. The other two forms are used to learn your preferences in service for the church. Please take the time to complete these documents and return them to the church office as soon as possible.

Our **privacy policy** is stated on our website, [www.fpcbenton.com](http://www.fpcbenton.com). In a nutshell it states that your private information is not released without your permission except in specific circumstances. If you have questions about the survey, once you have received it, or if you wish to discuss your responses, please contact any member of session or Emily Laurel at 501-778-9564 or [etlaurel@aol.com](mailto:etlaurel@aol.com).

On a different note, be sure to mark your calendar now for August 5-6 as we are planning our **annual church retreat** for those dates. No location has been decided, so if you have any ideas for a great place to be together, contact any member of session.

Some other things that you will see happening in the coming months include a continuing education opportunity that will be held on Wednesday evenings in the fall for anyone who wishes to learn more about being a Presbyterian in general and about our church in particular (**Presbyterian 101**).

assistance at 501-837-6211. In addition, you can contact any member of the session or call the church office at 315-7737 Monday-Thursday from 9 AM - 1 PM (office is closed on Fridays).

#### Quick Links...

[Our Website](#)  
[Presbyterian Church](#)  
[\(U.S.A.\)](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

### Prayers of the People



We are praying for our people.

PLEASE PRAY FOR MEMBERS OF OUR CHURCH FAMILY:

Pauline Turner  
 Letha Friend  
 Lila Viner  
 Horace Lovell  
 Phyllis Webb  
 Margaret Downs  
 Gerald Broadway  
 Charlotte Morrison  
 D.L. Webb  
 Mignon Pevey  
 Brenda Bryan

PLEASE PRAY FOR THESE INDIVIDUALS:

Hallie Beard  
 Reggie Pierce - friend of Ron & Brenda Sasfai  
 Barbara Neely  
 Dana Wiggins - daughter-in-law of Kaye and Frank Dunn  
 Penny Garver - friend of Jo and Tim Wright  
 Randy Russell - grandson of Arlene Rainey

Also beginning in the fall we will offer a fellowship program called **Young Presbyterians Night Out**. Christian Education is spearheading the Presbyterian 101 class and the new fellowship opportunity.

### Financial Corner

At the April, 2010 stated session meeting the church's financial situation was reported to be as follows (figures are as of March 31, 2010):

#### General Funds

Revenues	\$ 30,166	
Other Funding	2,400	transfer from capital campaign funds
Expenditures	<u>-33,981</u>	
Over/(Under)	\$ -1,415	
	<u>1,468</u>	carry over from 2009
Variance	\$ 53	

#### Capital Funds

Revenues	8,450	
Expenditures	-2,400	transfer to general fund (1)
Debt Reduction	<u>-10,000</u>	
Over/(Under)	\$ -3,840	
	<u>3,882</u>	undesignated carry over from 2009
Variance	\$ 42	

(1) Transfer to fund the Director of Children & Youth position.

A detailed first quarter financial report and spreadsheet will be available in the church office and in the narthex area on Sunday, May 2. Please read these documents to bring yourself up-to-date on how our contributions are being used for God's work.

If there are any questions, contact Jimmy Fields at [jfields@aristotle.net](mailto:jfields@aristotle.net) or by telephone at 501-425-9279.

### Choir & Music Notes from Lisa

Thank you to everyone involved in making our music for Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter services special. Special thanks to Donna Anderson for the emotionally moving solo "Why" and to the Sanctuary Choir for preparing and bringing three special Easter anthems, along with flutist Karen Coker.

I sincerely appreciate the talent, time, and commitment of all of these people! God was truly praised in these wonderful services.

#### Music Specials for May

May 2 - Communion: "Let Us Be Bread"

May 9 - Mother's Day:

Music Appreciation and Robe Dedication Sunday

"Wait 'til I Get on My Robe"

"My Song of Praise"

This anthem is given to the glory of God and in honor of Lisa Hester by her mother, Janice Parker.

May 16 - "Rise Again," Fred Wilson, solo

May 23 - Pentecost Sunday:

Fred Bush - nephew of  
Arlene Rainey  
Joe Grant - friend of  
Marti and Steve  
Snellback  
Wil Laule  
Bill Haas - friend of Ron  
& Brenda Sasfai  
Patty Gossage  
Devon Gentry - infant  
nephew of Brenda Bryan  
Charles Bessy - friend of  
Arabelle Wade  
Richard Widup - son-in-  
law of Carl & Cheryl  
Winters  
Charles Patton - brother  
of April Counts  
Jimmy Roy - friend of  
Dori Wilson  
David Cole - brother-in-  
law of Barbara Laule  
Vinnie Donnor - friend of  
Vickie Cowart  
Joe Godbehere - friend  
of Fred Wilson  
John Major Depingre -  
nephew of the Knotts  
Judy Jennings - sister of  
Barbara Galbraith  
Phyllis and Hope Hankins  
- friends of the  
Galbraiths  
Betty Neely - sister of  
Brenda Sasfai and  
Barbara Neely  
Mrs. Ethel Womack -  
mother of Barbara Webb  
Ken Ball - brother-in-law  
of Joyce Porter  
Dick Anderson - father  
of Barbara Laule  
Carita Taylor - friend of  
David and Lenore  
Monkus)  
Parker Caple  
Barbara Sasfai - cousin  
of Ron Sasfai  
Shawn Wood

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR  
MILITARY:  
Staff Sgt. Brad Hancock -  
to Iraq, May 2010, friend  
of Marti and Steve  
Snellback

"We Thank You, Lord," with Karen Coker-flute  
This anthem is given to the glory of God and in honor  
of their 50th wedding anniversary by Bob and  
Peaches Calhoun.

May 30 - Trinity Sunday, Presbyterian Heritage Sunday and  
Memorial Day Weekend:  
"One by One"

**Music Ministry Recognition and Robe Dedication Sunday is May 9**  
Sunday, May 9, is a special day in the life of the Music Department  
(and the church). First Presbyterian-Benton has had many changes  
take place over the past few years. Beginning with the renovation  
of the sanctuary and installation of the Jardine pipe organ, it was  
inevitable that more improvements would be in the works. Then  
Christmas 2009 the choir moved from the sanctuary balcony to  
the corner opposite the organ, now tagged the choir corner.

With the choir in such a visible location, purchasing choir robes  
became a high priority. Earlier this year the process of buying choir  
robes as an honorarium/memorial was set into motion. Fourteen  
robes have been purchased through this process, and Session has  
approved the purchase of additional robes for a total of 30 choir  
robes. The robes, a rich burgundy color with our Presbyterian seal  
embroidered on the shoulder, arrived the week before Easter and  
were first worn on Easter morning 2010.

It is not too late to purchase one or more choir robes at an a  
pproximate cost of \$150, so let Lisa know if you are interested in  
remembering or honoring someone this way. In addition, Lisa is  
assisting those who wish to purchase choir anthems as a way to  
honor or memorialize a special person. Approximate cost to  
purchase an anthem is \$40 (25 copies are needed). The church now  
has 15 anthems purchased and more are needed. Contact Lisa for  
more information at [lphester@juno.com](mailto:lphester@juno.com).

The dedication of our beautiful new choir robes will be during  
worship on Sunday, May 9. The sanctuary choir will be singing two  
special anthems, "Wait 'til I Get on my Robe" and "My Song of  
Praise."

Make Sunday, May 9 a day to join your church family in worship.

## Building & Grounds Update

### Building Exterior:

- Mowed grass and applied liquid weed killer (Ron Sasfai/Roger Jette).
- Pressure washed various areas outside the church (Frank Dunn/Donna Anderson).

### Building Interior:

- Repaired kitchen fork drawer's broken bracket (Ron Sasfai)
- Began replacement of cracked tiles in fellowship hall (Alan DuBois).
- Arranged for replacement of spot light in sanctuary, behind

Troy Duncan - to  
Afghanistan, Spring  
2010, son of Carolyn  
Duncan  
Kevin Creed, AR  
National Guard,  
grandson  
of Carolyn  
Duncan  
Tech Sgt. Kurt Tull, -  
Afghanistan, son-in-law  
of David & Lenore  
Monkus  
Pvt. Jared Paxton -  
friend of Barbara Neely  
SPC John Vestal -  
nephew of Hazel Horn  
LTC Scott Stanger - Iraq,  
friend of Russell &  
Trisha Betts  
George Snyder III  
Lance Cpl. Branden  
McCullough, USMC  
Major Jack Keene  
PFC Mike Speer  
PFC Taylor Edmondson -  
AR 39th National Guard  
Kilo Company, USMC  
Lance Cpl. Drew Short,  
USMC  
The leaders of our  
country

Please contact the church  
office, 315-7737 or  
fpcos@sbcglobal.net for any  
changes.

## Celebrations

**Happy birthday to:**  
Jonathan Gilbert 5/1  
Jimmy Fields 5/2  
Kyle Fugere 5/3  
Frankie Moritz 5/4  
Alyssa Snyder 5/5  
Christie Friend 5/6  
Jeanette Morehead 5/11  
Blake Wood 5/11  
Lauren Baker 5/14  
Heather Kilpatrick 5/17  
Misty McClure 5/18  
Kass Hogue 5/19  
Carl Winters 5/20  
Melia Snyder Kizer 5/20  
Edna Dorian White 5/22

the organ, and in choir loft above piano (Middlebrook  
Electric).

- Fixed cover plate in west men's bathroom per request from sexton (Ron Sasfai).
- Requested Perkins Fire to provide start date for conversion of alarm system.

### Follow-up

Determined after a recent rain shower that there is no evidence of water leaks after roof repair.

Help is always welcome for our "honey do" list. Contact Ron Sasfai at 501-837-1835 or [bsasfai@aristotle.net](mailto:bsasfai@aristotle.net).

Thank you for taking the time to read *The First Presbyterian Church News*. We hope you are finding it useful and interesting. Please contact Emily at [etlaurel@aol.com](mailto:etlaurel@aol.com) or 501-778-9564 with your comments, ideas, topic suggestions, and offers to volunteer.

Until next month,

**Sincerely,**

Emily Laurel & Cary Shillcutt  
Communication & Strategic Planning Committee  
First Presbyterian Church  
501 N. East Street  
Benton, AR 72015  
501-315-7737 [fpcos@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpcos@sbcglobal.net) [www.fpcbenton.com](http://www.fpcbenton.com)

David Monkus 5/24  
Rae Ann Fields 5/24  
Ginny Duncan 5/25  
Cindy Burchfield 5/27  
Leigh Horn Hartwick  
5/27

**Happy Anniversary to:**

Justin & Charlotte Rue  
5/10

Bob & Peaches Calhoun  
5/15

John & Kellie Fugere  
5/26

Max & Rachel Tilley 5/27  
Dick & Madelyn Knott  
5/28

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