

PASTOR'S CORNER

The article on the front page lays a great theological foundation of why and how we worship God through hymns and songs. The hard truth is that we are struggling to musically worship God as well as we did five or ten or fifty years ago.

No one is to blame; not the organist, nor the choice of hymns or songs, nor the congregation.

I am searching on ways to improve.

Continued from front page . . .

Again, however, all of our actions in worship should point to God as the only one worthy of thanksgiving and praise, not draw attention to ourselves. Having said all of this, it is important to note the special responsibilities the session and pastor have for the oversight of music used in worship. Concerning the role of the session of elders, the Directory for Worship says: "The session shall make provision for the regular . . . offering of praise to God in song. . . .

The session has authority to oversee and approve all public worship in the life of the particular church with the exception of those responsibilities delegated to the pastor alone. . . . It is responsible . . . for those who lead worship through music, drama, dance, and other arts" (W-

I need input from each of you.

Please help me to find an approach that honors our past, but recognizes our present while we prepare for our future.

"O Holy God of the Psalms, hear our prayer. When we sing hymns, we are worshipping you. When we listen to songs that glorify you, we are worshipping you.

1.4004 d, e, and j). With respect to the pastor, the Directory for Worship states: "In a particular service of worship the pastor is responsible for . . . the music to be sung [and] the use of drama, dance, and other art forms. Where there is a choir director or other musical leader, the pastor and that person will confer to ensure that anthems and other musical offerings are appropriate for the particular service. The session should see that these conferences take place appropriately and on a regular basis" (W-1.4005 a4, a5 and b). The point here is that the session and pastor(s) are charged with the important task of caring and providing for the worship of the church, including its ministry of music. This is part of their calling as leaders in the church. In summary, then,

Help us to sing and listen so that our worship is pleasing to you.

In Jesus name, we pray. Amen."

Pastor Ray Lantz

Have You Any Room for Jesus? 386
Today if ye will hear His voice, lend us your hearts. Heb. 3:15

Source: Unknown
Adapted by Dennis W. Williams C.C. Williams

1. Have you any room for Je - sus, He who came your heart to fill?
2. Room for plea - ure, room for love, But for Christ the Cru - el - tied.
3. Have you any room for Je - sus, As in grace He calls a - gain?
4. Room and time now give to Je - sus, Soon will pass God's day of grace.

As He knocks and asks ad - mision, Sin - ner, will you let Him in?
Not a place that the sin - ner, In the heart for which He died?
O, too slow is time to re - spond, You will soon be call - ed in.
Soon your heart will cold and w - ant, And the Ser - vor's plea - ure cease.

Refrain
Room for Je - sus, King of glo - ry? Has - ten now, His word o - bey:
Swing the heart's door wide - ly o - pen, Bid Him en - ter while you may.

there is nothing in our Presbyterian guidelines for worship that would expressly forbid drums, joyous processions or exuberant praise. If we said no to that, it would be hard to pray the psalms with any authenticity or integrity! (See Psalms 100 and 150, for instance.) However, there is a strong concern in our tradition that all of our worship (and indeed all of Christian life) be for the glory and honor of God alone. Elders, pastors and ministers of music must work together to see that God is glorified through Christ in the Spirit, in ways that are: faithful to the biblical witness and rooted in the Reformed theological tradition, true and authentic to the diversity of cultures and customs of the body of Christ and responsive to the gifts of the Holy Spirit in this time and place.

PRESBYTIDINGS

October 2019

Pastor Ray Lantz

Worship: 10:30 a.m. Cookies and Coffee: 11:30ish

This Newsletter is a publication of First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City IL.

Website: www.firstpresbygc.org

"Are there guidelines for what kinds of music are appropriate in Presbyterian worship? Whose responsibility is it to decide ... the pastor, the session, the musicians or choir director?"

There are several sections in the Directory for Worship that are particularly relevant. First, on "Artistic Expressions" in worship, the Directory says: "The Reformed heritage has called upon people to bring to worship material offerings which in their simplicity of form and function direct attention to what God has done and to the claim that God makes upon human life. The people of God have responded through creative expressions in architecture, furnishings, appointments, vestments, music, drama, language, and movement. When these artistic creations awaken us to God's presence, they are appropriate for worship. When they call attention to themselves, or are present for their beauty as an end in itself, they are idolatrous. Artistic expressions should evoke, edify, enhance, and expand worshipers' consciousness of the reality and grace of God" (W-1.3034 2).

Here we see two important principles that are sometimes in tension with one another: a profound appreciation for the creative gifts of the Spirit and at the same time a healthy acknowledgement of the human tendency

toward idolatry (that is, art that deflects our attention from God as the sole focus of our worship). A second section that might be useful is this statement on "Music as Prayer": "Song is a response which engages the whole self in prayer. Song unites the faithful in common prayer wherever they gather for worship whether in church, home, or other special place. The covenant people have always used the gift of song to offer prayer. Psalms were created to be sung by the faithful as their response to God. Though they may be read responsively or in unison, their full power comes to expression when they are sung. In addition to psalms the Church in the New Testament sang hymns and spiritual songs. Through the ages and from varied cultures, the church has developed additional musical forms for congregational prayer. Congregations are encouraged to use these diverse musical forms for prayer as well as those which arise out of the musical life of their own cultures" (W-2.1003).

It is evident here that our tradition values song as fully embodied prayer and praise to God and that we encourage the use of musical forms from a variety of cultural settings. Indeed, our songs must arise from our own cultural and historical contexts if we are to worship God "in spirit and truth" (John 4). The following paragraph deals with the role of the choir in particular: "To lead the

congregation in the singing of prayer is a primary role of the choir and other musicians.

They also may pray on behalf of the congregation with introits, responses, and other musical forms. Instrumental music may be a form of prayer since words are not essential to prayer. In worship music is not to be for entertainment or artistic display. Care should be taken that it not be used merely as a cover for silence. Music as prayer is to be a worthy offering to God on behalf of the people" (W-2.1004). Here the Directory for Worship points out that the choir has a special responsibility to lead the musical prayer of the whole people of God. The choir's primary role is to empower the participation of all the people, not to showcase the talent or enthusiasm of the group or individual singers. There is also a section on "Enacted Prayer" in worship: "In the Old and New Testaments and through the ages, the people of God expressed prayer through actions as well as speech and song. So in worship today it is appropriate (a) to kneel, to bow, to stand, to lift hands in prayer, (b) to dance, to clap, to embrace in joy and praise, (c) to anoint and to lay hands in intercession and supplication, commissioning and ordination" (W-2.1005). As one can see from this section, we affirm the biblical model of active, lively participation in worship even though that hasn't always been the practice of many Presbyterians!



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GIBSON CITY INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR
OUR 148TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION & FALL SOUP SUPPER**

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2019 5:00 P.M. TO 7:00 P.M.

First Presbyterian Church, 401 N. Church Street, Gibson City, IL 60936

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



Soup, Bread, Crackers, Relish Tray, Birthday Cake and Door Prizes

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH G.C. QUESTIONNAIRE SYNOPSIS

Mailed out to 2500 households August 2019
In Gibson City, Melvin, Sibley, Elliott, Saybrook

Total Received To Date	53	Polite –No Comment–Belongs to another Church ...	20
Submitted Suggestions	26	Submitted without a name	8
Requested NO Gift Card ...	13	Appear to just want the Gift Car.....	2
Received a Gift Card.....	29	Submitted with no name or suggestions.....	4

(1) How can we make the First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City more welcoming so you would feel comfortable in coming into our building or attending one of our services? Would you prefer we hold services at a different location? If so, where? *Go to smaller facility, Go to the parks, Have neighborhood worship, Build relationships, Meet in restaurants, Get rid of pews, Update Technology, Go Mobile like a Food truck, Go to the crowds, Hold mini services at events, Use Social media, Facebook, Instagram more, Make mentors available for new members of the Community, Hold Newcomers Luncheon, You have a beautiful church in a good location, Love the look of your church compared to new ones. It's a wonderful church. I tell friends to go there.*

(2) Would you be interested in attending the First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City if we changed the time and/or day of our services? If we provided transportation? *Hold church on Wednesdays, 8:00 a.m. on Sundays, Saturday or Sunday afternoons, Hold church on Sunday at 9:00 a.m., Sunday at 7:00 p.m., Add midweek Bible Study, Transportation in the winter would be great, Transportation would be a plus – my church in Bloomington does it and its wonderful.*

(3) Would you be interested in attending the First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City if we changed the style of the service? Would you like instrumental music? What matters to you when you go to church? *Teach the Bible, Have Guest Musicians, Would like Bible Study instead of Sermon, Organ music is past its prime, Provide child care on Sundays, Prefer laid back service, Make sure visitors feel welcome, Start Bible Study, Follow the Bible to the letter as well as the 10 Commandments, Bring in inspirational singers, Like traditional service and too much music takes me out of the worship mode, don't change too much of music history but enough for the new generation.*

(4) Are there any outreach programs you would be interested in seeing the First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City start? Are there clubs you would like to see started or hosted at our church? *Use church for special events (speakers, concerts) funded by church, Give singles a place to meet, Give parents a night out by holding events for youth, Hold life groups for those with older children, Keep Lenten soup services on Wednesdays, Hold class on how to Use a iPhone and basic Facebook skills for Grandparents, Adult Bible Study, Seniors Club, Breakfast Club, Host Afternoon Tea, Mental Health support, more help for Veterans, Family Activities like a Board game night. Overeaters Anonymous*

(5) Are there any services we can provide to help your family? It is our desire to help the Community and those in need. We are asking for suggestions to guide us on identifying and prioritizing these needs. *Approach schools to help students in need, Start Shelter or Soup Kitchen, Donations of bottled water is needed at all outdoor children sporting events and you could put a sticker with your church name on it (The Community would be so grateful!), Assist the elderly in the Community with "honey do" lists, Ask the City leaders what the Community needs, Need more help for unemployed, Get help for elderly with things around the house including cleaning, yard work, snow removal and getting groceries, Host Food Pantry as current one twice a month not enough. Miss your soup suppers, Try holding Garage Sale to try and get people in your building. Would like to see someone help with small repairs for single women.*

October 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
		1 5:30-Special Session Meet.	2 9:45 Pastor Ray reading to HS students	3 Chamber Luncheon 5:30 Deacons	4	5 Recycle 9 am Bible reading at Holly Brook
6 10:30 a.m. Worship Luke 17:5-10	7	8	9 9:45 Pastor Ray reading to HS students	10	11	12 9 am Bible reading at Holly Brook
13 10:30 a.m. Worship 11:30—Nominating Committee Luke 17:11-19	14 Columbus Day—the church office will be closed	15 Pastor Ray in Louisville, KY	16 Pastor Ray in Louisville KY	17 Pastor Ray in Louisville KY	18 Pastor Ray in Louisville KY	19 Recycle 9 am Bible reading at Holly Brook
20 10:30 a.m. Worship Luke 18:1-8	21	22	23 9:45 Pastor Ray reading to HS students	24 5:30 Session	25	26 9 am Bible reading FPC to work at Alco Food Pantry—8 to 12:00
27 10:30 a.m. Worship Birthday Reception Soup Supper Luke 18:9-14	28 Happy 148th Birthday, FPC! 7 Messiah Practice	29	30 9:45 Pastor Ray reading to HS students	31 		

Pastor Ray will be preaching on the scripture listed in bold on each Sunday.

NEWS FROM OUR CHURCH...

17 locals among 159 honorees - Seventeen area natives are among 159 freshmen and sophomores who have been designated Chancellor's Scholars in the UI's Campus Honors program this fall.

The general studies program admits approximately 125 freshmen and 25 sophomores each year. They are chosen for their academic excellence and leadership potential.

Chancellor's Scholars participate in small-enrollment honors classes and seminars. "Close student-faculty interaction also is fostered by a mentor system, a lecture series on topics of general interest, dress-rehearsal visits to Krannert Center for the Performing Arts and International programming," according to the UI. "Other benefits include summer research and travel grants."

Tyler Ricks, grandson of Larry Ricks, received one of these honors. Congratulations!

The Nominating Committee will meet on Sunday, October 13th after the 10:30 church service.

Pastor Lantz will be attending a Na-

tional Conference from October 15th to October 18th in Louisville, Kentucky titled "Our Calling with the Generations: Intergenerational Engagement." Pastor Lantz will provide church members with a report on the conference instead of a sermon on Sunday, October 20th.

Prairie Pavement Preservation recently completed the repair and re-coating of the church parking lots.

Pastor Ray will be taking vacation from November 6th through the 12th.

Sandra Brucker's new address:
3319 West William Street
Champaign IL 61821

It has come to the attention of the office that the husband of our former Pastor Kathy Luke has cancer. Please keep them in your prayers.



Pastor Ray 'preachin'' the Word!



Poured Out Church Sunday, September 15, 2019

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES		K. P. Duty	Communion Set-Up
October	November	Oct: Janice Swanson Nov: Sharla Williams	October 6: Janice Swanson November 24: Carla Ashmore
02: Phyllis Brickman 02: Cheryl Schultz 09: Aizza Kerchenfaut 15: Barb Williams 22: Jeanette Hensley 24: Michael Mott 26: Harry Groom 28: FPC 1871	01: Doris Gerber 06: Carla Ashmore 07: Beverly Swanson 17: Shannon Spangler 18: Ellie Stolz 18: David Schmidt 20: Vonna Heustis 22: Brian Swanson 23: Noah Swanson 30: Ken & Darlene K.	Second Sunday Offering Oct: Random Acts of Kindness Nov: Am. Legion/VFW Baskets—Dale Ashmore Ushers Oct: Trudy Lantz, Val Hunt Nov: John & Barb Kirkpatrick Communion Servers Oct 6: Danny Heustis and Dale Ashmore Nov 24: Charles Schultz & Trudy Lantz	Flowers Oct: Janice Swanson Nov: Carla Ashmore
			