

# PASTOR'S CORNER

I want to take a moment to thank the members of First Presbyterian of Gibson City for the support you have shown for the Session and myself as we have navigated through the minefield that is COVID-19. Not once, even if you disagreed with a decision, have I heard a disgruntled voice. For that, I will be eternally grateful. The Session and I have tried to follow both science and common sense as we decided the what, how, and when of our common response to the virus. We know that we are not out of the woods yet. We continue to ask for your understanding, patience, and prayers. I close with what has been our guiding light through these difficult times, “Love God, and love your neighbor.”

Peace and Grace,

Pastor Ray Lantz

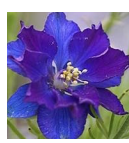
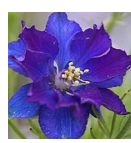
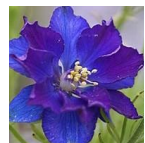
## Continued from the front . . .

The Spirit enables believers to achieve that God-given potential (a potential we could say is based on humans’ creation in God’s image) by producing the fruit of goodness in them. Paul believes the Spirit does this in believers because they are “in the Spirit” or “new creations in Christ” (especially in light of baptism; see Romans 6:1-4). What about nonbelievers? How is the innate potential to be good actualized in them? A possible answer is the same as it is for believers: the Holy Spirit. Even though nonbelievers are not “in the

Spirit” or “new creations in Christ” (i.e., they’re not being sanctified), God’s Spirit still works in and through them, enabling them to be and do good. John Calvin, for example, argues that anything good and true is from God, and specifically from God’s Spirit. As Reformed theologian John Bolt explains, “If we can theologically conceive of the Holy Spirit giving the gift of life to an unbeliever and even further giving an unbeliever natural gifts . . . why could we not conceive of a work of God the Holy Spirit that providentially influences an unbeliever’s heart and will so that he or she does constructive and externally virtuous acts?” Texts like John 3:8 bolster belief in this larger work of the Spirit: “The wind blows where it will, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” Jesus is saying here that while there’s lack of knowledge about the origins of both the wind and the Spirit, the effects of both are observable. So, for instance, we see the Spirit’s effects when adherents of other religions – or of no religion at all – work for peace and justice or help the poor and the helpless. Calvin and other Reformed thinkers emphasize that the Spirit’s work in nonbelievers is not the same as the Spirit’s sanctifying work in believers. The Spirit’s work in believers is different in both kind and degree because the Spirit indwells them so that they “walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit” (Romans 8:4). Indeed, as British theologian David Wenham asserts, “Undoubtedly Paul [as well as other New Testament authors] would have subscribed to the view that the Christian life can be a life of victory [over sin], if only we will recognize and appropriate the Spirit’s power.”

My goodness, do we need goodness. A Sunday comic strip of “Pearls Before Swine,” the comic by Stephan Pastis, serves as a spot-on illustration of the need for goodness in our world. Two of the strip’s principal characters, Goat and Pig, are scanning the news on their phones, and both recognize that the daily news has provided yet another example of “badness in the world.” Pig is keeping careful count on a whiteboard — he’s reached his 37th example of badness since he started keeping score. But Pig is undaunted. He walks and walks until he finds a man who seems down on his luck, and he hands the person a dollar. Returning to his whiteboard, he marks one down for “goodness” before remarking to Goat, “I’ll even this thing yet.” Pig’s example can serve as an expression of our own commitment. As Christians, we can work with the Spirit to actualize our potential to be and do good — and thereby help “even this thing yet.” We appropriate the Spirit’s power to do just that by listening to and obeying the Spirit through worship, prayer, the Bible, other people and however else the Spirit communicates with us. Yes, empowered by the indwelling Spirit, may we let our lights shine before others so that they may see our good works and give glory to God (Matthew 5:16). In doing so, may we also help fulfill the words of Desmond Tutu: “Do your little bit of good where you are; it’s those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.”

**William E.W. Robinson** is pastor/head of staff at First Presbyterian Church of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, and is the author of “[Metaphor, Morality, and the Spirit in Romans 8:1-7](#)”.



# PRESBYTIDINGS

## July 2021

Pastor Ray Lantz

Worship: 10:30 a.m.

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

Website: [www.firstpresbygibson.org](http://www.firstpresbygibson.org)

Meladee Ferguson: Administrative Assistant

Mary Clow: Ministry Coordinator

A Christian is . . .

“What’s your definition of a Christian?” A leader of a Sunday morning class at church asked me that question. The class’s study of other religions prompted the question, and they wanted to know what the pastor thought. My answer was that there are a number of possible definitions, such as “a new creation in Christ” or “a follower of the Lord.” Elaborating on such possibilities, we had a constructive conversation about what it means to be a Christian. Another viable definition is “one who exhibits the fruit of the Spirit in her life.” In fact, in other letters, Paul uses the Greek word translated “fruit” as a metaphor for converts to Christ (e.g., Romans 1:13; Colossians 1:6) and for the expressions of a godly life (e.g., Romans 6:22, 7:4; Ephesians 5:9; Philippians 1:11; Colossians 1:10). John the Baptist also admonished his hearers to bear “good fruit” and Jesus himself taught the importance of producing “good fruit.” We could say, then, that the presence of the Spirit’s “fruit” is a telltale sign of a Christian.

What is “goodness”?

In that telltale list of “fruit,” the sixth is goodness. In the New Testament, the Greek word translated “goodness” (agathosune) only occurs in Paul’s letters (Galatians 5:22, and also Romans 15:14; Ephesians 5:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:11). Scholars and Bible translations generally render the word as “goodness,” emphasizing its root idea of “good” (agathos). Some translations (such as the NRSV) render it as “generosity,”

accentuating the word’s connotation of “generous giving.” Paul doesn’t define or otherwise explicate what he means by “goodness” or “generosity” here or elsewhere in his letters. In Romans, however, the Greek word commonly translated “good” (agathos) is contrasted with Greek words usually translated “evil” or “bad” (see Romans 3:8; 7:19; 9:11; 12:9, 13:3; 14:16; 16:19). Some of these instances of “good” and “bad” may be understood as “beneficial” and “detrimental” (see Galatians 6:10). For Paul, then, it seems the virtue of goodness is opposed to the vice of wickedness or badness. Because in the Bible goodness is usually associated with God (see Psalm 25:8; Psalm 34:8; Psalm 100:5; Psalm 136:1; Ezra 3:11; Mark 10:17-18), perhaps Paul viewed goodness as an expression of godliness. That’s plausible, because goodness is produced in believers by God’s Spirit who dwells in them. In fact, without the Spirit, goodness wouldn’t be possible. However goodness is construed here, the word communicates very positive and high moral qualities. Basically, we know a good person or a good deed when we see one, and it’s often associated with other positive attributes such as kindness, compassion and helpfulness. Love heads Paul’s list of fruit in Galatians 5 because the other eight virtues may be understood as concrete expressions of love (see Paul’s emphasis on love in Galatians 5:13 and the words he uses to describe love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, including two that are related to the Greek words translated “kindness” and “patience” in Galatians 5:22).

So, we can think of goodness or generosity as one of eight facets on this diamond of love.

Born to be good?

In “[Born to Be Good: The Science of a Meaningful Life](#)”, Dacher Keltner argues that humans are born with the potential to be good. He explains, “We have evolved a set of emotions that enable us to lead the meaningful life, emotions such as gratitude, mirth, awe, and compassion.” He states the purpose of his book is to show that “survival of the kindest may be just as fitting a description of our origins as survival of the fittest.” In other words, as humans we’re wired not only “to pursue self-interest, to compete, and to be vigilant to the bad rather than the good.” Keltner doesn’t deny that humans are also born to be bad. He balances that argument, though, with evidence and studies that show we are wired to be good, too. Paul (as well as other Jewish, Greek and Roman thinkers in the first century) would likely nod their heads in hearty agreement with the assessment that humans are born to be bad. Indeed, Paul emphasizes the sinfulness of Jews and gentiles (see Romans 3:9-20).

Good by the Spirit

Paul probably would have scratched his head at the idea that humans are also born with the potential to be good (although scholars rightly note that Paul didn’t espouse a doctrine of original sin or total depravity). Based on Paul’s letters, we might say that the Holy Spirit actualizes the potential of believers to be good (see Romans 8:1-17).

Continued on back page . . .



# July 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 <i>Recycle</i>  <i>9 Bible Study At HB</i>
4 10:30 a.m. Worship  2 Corinthians 12:2-10  <i>Stolz Reunion in the fellowship hall</i>	5	6	7	8	9	10  <i>9 a.m. Bible Study at Holly Brook</i>
11 10:30 a.m. Worship  11:30 Congregational Meeting  Ephesians 1:3-14	12	13	14	15	16	17 <i>Recycle</i>  <i>9 a.m. Bible Study at Holy Brook</i>
18 10:30 a.m. Worship  Ephesians 2:11-22	19	20	21	22	23	24 <i>9 a.m. Bible Study at Holly Brook</i>
25 10:30 a.m. Worship  Ephesians 3:14-21	26	27	28	29	30	31 <i>9 a.m. Bible Study at Holly Brook</i>  <i>5:30 Session</i>

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

## NEWS FROM OUR CHURCH . . .

**Please note:** The previous week's sermon will broadcast at 7:45 a.m. every Sunday morning on WGCY.

**Please note:** Online Live Sunday Services will be available on our Facebook Page noted below:

First Presbyterian Church of Gibson City

[https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=142499619134911&ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=142499619134911&ref=br_rs)

**Meladee's new working hours:** Meladee will be in the church office from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please make note of these new church office working hours. Pastor Ray's hours will remain the same.

**New Email Addresses:** As part of the hardware and software upgrade for our church's technology, there are now new email addresses as noted below:

Pastor Ray:  
[Ray@firstpresbygibson.org](mailto:Ray@firstpresbygibson.org)  
Meladee  
[Office@firstpresbygibson.org](mailto:Office@firstpresbygibson.org)

**Heed now the call for the Congregational Meeting to be held on Sunday, July 11, 2021 at 11:30 a.m. for the purpose of discussing the sale of the Manse. No other business may be discussed.**



### GIBSON CITY BACK-TO-SCHOOL COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR

JULY 31, 2021  
8 AM to 12 PM  
RAILSIDE GOLF COURSE

**FREE AND FUN EVENTS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!**

- Blood Pressure checks
- Early Childhood development screening
- Face painting
- Lessons on how to make salsa from community garden ingredients
- WIN PRIZES and more!

Sponsored by:



BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES		<i>K. P. Duty</i>	<i>Communion Set-Up</i>
		<i>July: Deacons</i> <i>Aug: Val Hunt</i>	<i>August 1: Sharla Williams</i> <i>Sept: Mary Jane Roth</i>
		<i>Second Sunday Offering</i> <i>July 11: Building Improvements</i> <i>Aug 8: Head Start</i>	<i>Flower Vases to CM</i> <i>July: Carla Ashmore</i> <i>Aug: Sharla Williams</i>
		<i>Ushers</i> <i>July: Jean Williams and Val Hunt</i> <i>Aug: Gene and Mary Jane Roth</i>	
		<i>Communion Servers</i> <i>August 1: Trudy Lantz and Mary Clow</i> <i>Sept 5: Rick &amp; Anneliese Kerchenfauf</i>	



**July**  
**01: David & Ellie Stolz**  
**01: John and Barb Kirkpatrick**  
**24: Larry Ricks**  
**26: John Gesell**  
**26: Chad Johnson**

**Our church's 150 Birthday Celebration will be held in the fellowship hall on Sunday, October 24. Big plans, fun and food are on the menu!**

**August**  
**12: John & Ruth Davis**  
**14: Ray & Trudy Lantz**  
**15: Dale & Carla Ashmore**  
**18: Valeree Johnson**  
**21: Teresa Alexander**  
**22: Jordyn Schultz**  
**23: Dale Ashmore**  
**24: Tim & Janice Swanson**  
**31: Sandy Brucker**



## KNOW YOUR MEMBER



Elinor with fellow church members Dave and Ellie Stolz working on the church garden in 2014.

### ELINOR ANN NELSON

I was born December 27, 1934 at St. Joseph Hospital in Bloomington IL at 2 degrees below zero.

My grandparents came from Europe. My grandfather came to America by sailing ship "Columbus" from Prussia. Grandma came from Berlin on the "Queen Elizabeth."

I have always lived in the country, attending several country grade schools and a couple of town schools, as they consolidated twice.

When I was 13 I was confirmed in the Trinity Lutheran Church in Bloomington. About that time my three brothers were in Korea WWII and Vietnam and the Persian Gulf.

So I helped my dad with the milking and other chores. I loved to be outdoors. We had "grade A" milk cows which were lots of work as well as hogs

and chickens.

I graduated from Normal Community High School in 1952 and went to work right after at First National Bank of Normal as secretary to the President and a cashier. I was recommended by my short hand teacher.

I worked two years and was married to Robert G. Nelson of Gibson City on March 20, 1954. I again was working with cows, hogs, and chickens! That is probably why I love animals. Someone once said, "you should have been a vet."

Marrying a farmer, I started working in the fields, loved plowing corn, combining, etc. More than once I was on top of the corn crib moving the spout or fixing the chain on the elevator.

On March 2, 1959 our son Neil was born. The fall before Bob's father had a stroke and I spent seven years helping to care for him.

I started working to supplement our income at "Sewing Unlimited," making most of my clothes and clothes for others for a couple of years. After that I was hired by Gibson Community Hospital in 1977 to work the switch board and at the admittance desk. I worked there for 33 1/2 years and retired

in 2010.

I decided to volunteer for the Shepherd's Closet and after several years was hired as a worker. Since the covid virus workers were cut back.

The best place to raise chickens is the farm. I dearly love it and still live there. I enjoy gardening and I continue to mow the lawn with my new Cub Cadette.

Hopefully, the music at Melvin IL will return as I really enjoy the different bands.

I have been a 50 year member of the First Presbyterian Church and a few years ago I plowed the garden with my 9N Ford tractor at Ray Lantz's lot for the church and the people to enjoy. Does not seem possible I am 86 years old.

I have been active in church work over the years, was the Sunday School treasurer years ago and always enjoyed the rummage sales with which we worked.



## KNOW YOUR MEMBER



### NEIL R. NELSON

I was born March 2, 1953 at 10:55 a.m. in the Gibson City Community Hospital.

My grandfather had a stroke before I was born and Dr. Bucher came out to the house to check on him as he was bedfast. As I grew I saw how the Doctor took care of him and decided to be a doctor when I grew up.

I attended grade school, junior high school and high school in Gibson City and graduated in 1977.

I moved most of my things down to Eastern Illinois University the day Elvis Presley died. I took Emergency Technology at Parkland and was going to Eastern; worked at the Gibson City Hospital driving

an ambulance and also in Iowa City at a funeral home. In Iowa City I received my Bachelor of Science Degree in pharmacy in 1983. I worked at Carle Hospital in Champaign IL in out patient and inpatient pharmacy for three years. Then I went to pre-medical training at Southern Illinois University.



In 1989 the Dean at the University of Illinois at Rockford selected and sent me to Maastricht, the Netherlands to study heart surgeries and cardiology. I also attended meetings of International medical schools.

In 1986 I applied to medical school and was accepted, graduating in 1990. I then went to residency training in medicine and pediatrics graduating in 1994 at which time I returned to Gibson City with two practices: one in Gibson City and one in Colfax. I received the Top Doctor Award of Illinois in 2010. In 2012 I received the Country Doctor of the Year Award of the U.S.A.

I was an emergency room

doctor for 10 years, besides being a medical doctor for 25 years, retiring in Gibson City in 2015. I also worked for the Ford County Sheriff's Auxiliary for eleven years.

I volunteered for the Gibson Hospital Medical Board, Foundation Board and the Ford County Psychiatric Board. I was also a member of the Gibson City After School Program Board. I am a specialist in adult medicines and pediatrics.

I enjoy learning about ancient history and am interested in old cars. I love animals.



Officer Hunter Johnson (great grandson of Val Hunt) with his canine partner, Lexa. Mission dollars went to the Gibson City Police Department to help with training.



Danny and Vonna Heustis get assistance from Rick Kerchenfaut, Ron Clow and Tim Swanson in placing flags on the wooden cross outside the church in honor of Flag Day and the Fourth of July.



Mike Harrounm from Harvest Moon drive-In contacted our church to thank us for our recent donation. He was raised Presbyterian, is a Christian and wanted to do something to give back to the church for all we have done. He asked us to provide him some type of advertisement that he could run on the big screen so Pastor Lantz will be working on a presentation.

Heed now the call for the Congregational Meeting to be held on Sunday, July 11, 2021 at 11:30 a.m. for the purpose of discussing the sale of the Manse. No other business may be discussed.

Thank you for your generous donation to our Daisy Troop! Many thanks from Daisy Troop #2939 Sadie, Piper, Avery, Lila, Jordyn

Thank you so much. It was such a thoughtful gesture. First Presbyterian Church: Thank you so much for the flowers. I really appreciate it. God Bless, Sharon Heavilin

Thank you for the money. It came as a surprise, but will be a huge help with college. Love you all. You have done so much for me being a part of my life growing up. Love, Emma Swanson

Thank you so much for the scholarship from the McCormick Tutoring Foundation! It is a great help for college. I was thrilled to be chosen! Hope all is well. Love, Emma Swanson

Dear First Presbyterian Church, On behalf of the children and staff of Kemmerer Village, we would like to express our sincere appreciation for your recent gift of \$1000 restricted for storm damage on June 3, 2021. We continue to be grateful for your interest and support of our ministry.



Happy 90th Birthday to Ray Lantz Jr. shown here with sons Pastor Ray Lantz III and Tom and Doug Lantz.

*A special celebration of music will be held at 3 p.m. on Sunday, August 8, when Gibson Area Music Foundation again sponsors its Hymn Festival. Milt Kelly of Fisher will offer a selection of "Songs of Joy and Celebration" for group singing and will offer background information on each hymn. The event is free and open to all, with the church sanctuary offering comfortable seating, air-conditioning, and full accessibility via an elevator and indoor ramps. Accompaniment will be provided by musicians playing both a grand piano and a historic pipe organ. A special musical number by a community choir is also planned. Church policy does not require masks for individuals who are fully vaccinated. This event will be held at The United Methodist Church of Gibson City.*



Trudy Lantz is holding Teddy for the first time.



Aunt Ruth is holding Wesley for the first time.

Congratulations to our church Falcons for making the 4th quarter HIGH Honor Roll!!!!

6th grade: Charlie Kerchenfaut  
8th grade: Addison Kerchenfaut

11th grade: Anneliese Kerchenfaut

12th grade: Nicole Schultz and Emma Swanson

What brainy, smart, and highly intelligent young Presbyterians we are blessed to have in our church.

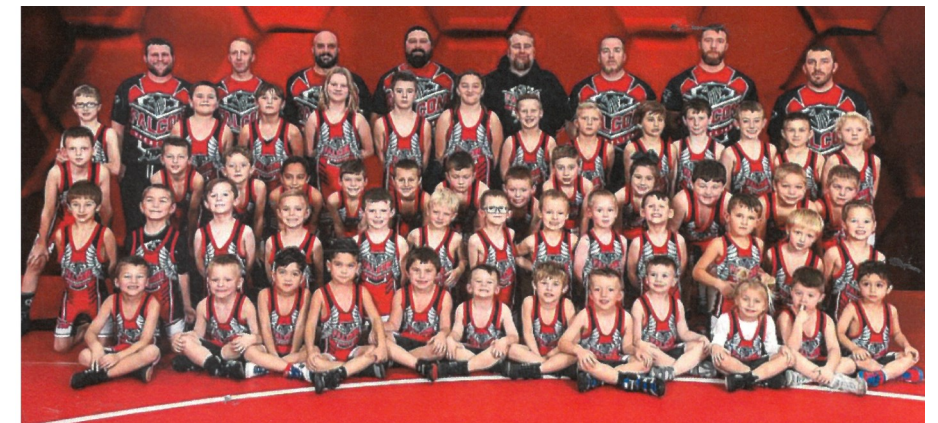


A blast from the past!

## OUR CHURCH FALCON FAMILY



Junior class officers, from left: front row, Peyton Leonard (president) and Anneliese Kerchenfaut (secretary of student affairs); and, back row, Zander Wier (secretary) and Braylen ean (vice president).



Thank you for your generous donation from Falcon Youth Wrestling Club.



Emma Swanson's High School graduation party was held on June 5th in the fellowship hall. What a celebration! It was attended by many family and friends.

Picture 1: (far left) Mom and Dad—Tim and Janice Swanson could not be more proud of their daughter, Emma.

Picture 2: (far left) Big brothers Jesse and Noah Swanson share Emma's special day with her. There is nothing like the special bond between siblings.

Picture 3: (left) Emma Swanson stands in front of a quilt that was made for her showing all the plays and musicals she has been in.





**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**  
**COVID-19 Updated Safety  
Rules**  
**as per the Session meeting  
held on May 27, 2021**

**VISITORS ENTERING OUR BUILDING  
MONDAY - SATURDAY:**

A mask is required at all times.  
 Social distancing of 6 feet should  
 be followed.

**SUNDAY SERVICES**

A mask is required when entering and  
 leaving the building.  
 IF FULLY VACCINATED, you may re-  
 move your mask during the service.  
 IF NOT FULLY VACCINATED, a mask  
 is required at all times.  
 Social distancing of 6 feet should be fol-  
 lowed.  
 Singing softly is acceptable.



**Pastor Lantz**

**The Plexiglass Shield at the Podium  
was removed.**

**June 24, 2021 MISSION COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS APPROVED**

**MISSION COMMITTEE SUGGESTIONS 6-24-21**

Corrected Starting Balance approved 5-27-21.....(\$50 credit).....	<b><u>\$ 71,450.00</u></b>
Moyer Library White Board for Conference Room,.....	\$ 300.00
Gibson City Ed Day Skate Park.....	\$ 5,000.00
Johnny on the Spot Porta Potties.....	\$ 500.00
Corn Belt Shrine Club Gibson City for Kids Day.....	\$ 500.00
Previously approved but not in total before now	
Whelchel family - home fire.....	\$ 2,000.00
Drummer Creek Catering.....	\$ 500.00
Tea & Grounds.....	\$ 500.00
Subtotal June.....	<b><u>\$ 9,300.00</u></b>
Total To Date 2021.....	<b><u>\$ 80,750.00</u></b>

**OUR COMMUNITY GARDEN**

JC Plumbing installed a frost free  
 faucet for the Community Garden.  
 They only charged for materials  
 and donated their labor.



Ron and Mary Clow donated a  
 swing to the Community Garden  
 so our gardeners could take a  
 break and sit in some shade under  
 the tree.



**Community Garden Update . . .**  
**All the plots have been taken and  
 planted. It has been fun and inter-  
 esting to see all the different plant-  
 ing styles being used.**



**Heed now the call  
 for the Congrega-  
 tional Meeting to  
 be held on Sunday,  
 July 11, 2021 at  
 11:30 a.m. for the  
 purpose of discuss-  
 ing the sale of the  
 Manse. No other  
 business may be  
 discussed.**

**Welcome**  
 to the  
**Gibson City Community Garden**  
 Sponsored by the  
**First Presbyterian Church**  
 in partnership with the  
**Railside Golf Course**