

# First Press

## First Reformed Presbyterian Church

— A congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America. —

12900 Frankstown Road • Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15235

### Ministering in the Wilderness

*A summary of Rev. Mike Campbell's sermon from the WIC International Conference*

How do we glorify God in a fallen world? How do we persevere in the wilderness? The wilderness is a harsh place yet we see in the Old Testament that God redeems his people there. In the New Testament we see how the Apostle Paul suffered and triumphed in the wilderness - he was accused of obscuring the word of God and not being honest with finances. He was struck down, perplexed and persecuted yet he did not lose heart.

In 2 Corinthians 4 Paul persevered despite these formidable obstacles because he understood several important truths. First, he comprehended that he had the ministry "by the mercy of God." It was not just an intellectual knowledge of mercy. He did not lose heart because he "had been mercied": the Lord had taken the persecutor of the church and blinded him by the light of glory on the Damascus road. God had changed him, redeemed him, and softened his heart. The only way that we can persevere in the wilderness is the realization that we also have received this great mercy.

Second, Paul also understood the fallen character of the world. He did not pretend that it did not exist. Often as Christians we are naïve about the world—we are actually surprised by evil. We are not prepared. My family visits Lion Country Safari in Florida where there are wild animals roaming throughout the park without walls. There are huge signs warning "Do not feed the animals," "Do not open the windows in your vehicle" and "Do not get out of your car." In 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 Paul states that "even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing" because "the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers." Likewise we have to recognize the dangers in the world—there are forces that are anti-Christ, anti-Gospel, and anti-good. We see it in the brokenness of the world, godless thinking, and indifference to the truth of the Gospel. In 2006 we live in a spiritual world but one which will not tolerate a crucified Jesus. Why? Because a crucified Jesus means that we have a holy God and the world has never tolerated a holy God.

Finally, we have to understand the "other nature" of the Gospel. The word of God changes our focus. The Gospel is not about my glory, my protection, my comfort. Verse 2 states: "...we have refused to tamper with God's word." What causes us to twist God's word? We want to be accepted and liked. We want to receive the parts of the word of God that feed our ego and allow us to be comfortable. Instead, we need to find our identity in Christ, recognizing that "we have this treasure in jars of clay (symbolizing our weak human nature) to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us." (v. 7) We will be able to persevere in the wilderness if we understand God's great mercy and the true nature of the fallen world and that God wants us to change our focus away from ourselves.

### COMING EVENTS

**OCTOBER 17**

7:00 p.m.

*Joint Session/Diaconate  
Meeting*

**OCTOBER 21**

*Presbytery Meeting  
Faith PCA*

**OCTOBER 22**

5:30 p.m.

*Great Commission  
Prayer Meeting*

**OCTOBER 28 - 29**

*Reformation Conference*

### LOOKING AHEAD

**DECEMBER 9**

*WIC Christmas Event*



*From the rising of the sun  
to the place where it sets,  
the name of the  
L O R D  
is to be praised.*

Psalm 113:3

## Missions Focus: Bruce & Susan Young, MTW Spiritual Life/Japan

Bruce was raised in Japan as a third generation missionary to Asia. Bruce and Susan are in their 32<sup>nd</sup> year with Mission to the World (MTW). The Youngs minister through the MTW's Spiritual Life Department in Atlanta and continue their involvement in church-planting efforts in Japan. They travel several times a year to train leaders in Japan and oversee the translation of materials for discipleship into Japanese. As members of the Spiritual Life Department, they minister to missionaries throughout the world through conferences, mentoring new and experienced missionaries, and developing new mentoring materials. Recently, they trained MTW staff in the *Living in Grace* course, led a staff retreat, and participated in a conference of missionaries returning to the US for Home Ministry Assignment. They spent the month of July in New York training new missionaries cross culturally before they went on the field. Each year in November they go to Japan for a large church planting convention which reaches MTW missionaries, local Japanese pastors as well as missionaries of other denominations. In Atlanta, Susan teaches a Bible study for several Japanese ladies in their neighborhood. They also serve as a bridge introducing US based Japanese believers to MTW related ministries in Japan. Bruce and Susan have three grown children and are expecting their 2<sup>nd</sup> grandchild.

**Pray for:** the kingdom of God to be expanded through their training of Japanese nationals; that their ministry would help missionaries experience God's grace in and through their lives; praise that the Japanese translation of the book, *The Gospel for Real Life*, which was published by their mission is being read and selling well.

## October Birthdays

1	Jill Grunden Oreanna Porter	14	Jack Bechter
		15	Marlene Agate
2	Millie Salvaterra	16	Cathy Taylor
3	Terry Gardner Kay Holliday Emma Lintelman	17	Kate Carter
		18	Janet Baker
4	Lydia Sabella	22	Dee Malone
7	Hannah Airgood Beth Pifer	24	Bill Bolish
8	Samuel Dutton	26	Linda Lintelman
9	Lindsay Crawford	27	Sandy Knox
10	Velma Patterson Terry Smith	28	Ashley Reid Eleanore Thompson
11	Amanda Cahill Dan McClain	30	Will Anderson

## Financial Summary January 1 - August 31, 2006

### Operating Account:

Receipts \$ 278,481  
Disbursements\* \$ 324,736

### Account Balances -

Operating Checking \$ 7,514  
Operating Saving \$ 97,578

### Benevolence Account:

Income \$ 72,690  
Disbursements \$ 78,549

### Deacons' Fund (year to date as of 8/28/06):

Income \$ 16,533  
Disbursements \$ 7,778

### Account Balances -

Deacons' Checking \$ 16,105  
Deacons' Money Mkt. \$ 2,679

\*Operating Account disbursements include the cost of paving the parking lot which will be paid from the operating savings account.

First Reformed PCA  
12900 Frankstown Road  
Pittsburgh, PA 15235  
412-793-7117




# October



2006

*Sunday      Monday      Tuesday      Wednesday      Thursday      Friday      Saturday*

<b>1</b> 10:45 a.m. Lord's Supper  4:45 p.m. Joint Youth Group	<b>2</b>  6:45 p.m. Bowling	<b>3</b>  7:00 p.m. Plum Covenant Group	<b>4</b>  6:45 p.m. College & Career Bible Study	<b>5</b> 9:30 a.m. WIC Bible Study  6:30 p.m. Pioneer Girls, First Boys Club  7:00 p.m. WIC Bible Study	<b>6</b>  6:00 p.m. MOPS Scrapbooking Night	<b>7</b>  9:00 a.m. Missions Committee Meeting
<b>8</b>  4:45 p.m. Joint Youth Group	<b>9</b>  6:45 p.m. Bowling	<b>10</b> 7:00 p.m. McLane Covenant Group  7:15 p.m. Master Covenant Group  7:30 p.m. Murrysville Covenant Group	<b>11</b>  6:45 p.m. College & Career Bible Study  7:30 p.m. Crawford Covenant Group	<b>12</b> 9:30 a.m. MOPS  6:30 p.m. Pioneer Girls, First Boys Club, Ministry to Single Mothers	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b>  4:45 p.m. Joint Youth Group	<b>16</b>  6:45 p.m. Bowling	<b>17</b>  7:00 p.m. Joint Session/ Diaconate Meeting	<b>18</b>  6:45 p.m. College & Career Bible Study	<b>19</b> 9:30 a.m. WIC Bible Study  6:30 p.m. Pioneer Girls, First Boys Club  7:00 p.m. WIC Bible Study	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Presbytery Meeting at Faith PCA  12:30 p.m. Youth Group Girls Lunch
<b>22</b> 4:45 p.m. Joint Youth Group  5:30 p.m. Great Commission Prayer Meeting	<b>23</b>  6:45 p.m. Bowling	<b>24</b> 7:00 p.m. McLane Covenant Group  7:30 p.m. Murrysville Covenant Group	<b>25</b> 6:45 p.m. College & Career Bible Study  7:30 p.m. Crawford Covenant Group	<b>26</b> 10:00 a.m. MOPS at Schramm's Farm  6:30 p.m. Pioneer Girls, First Boys Club, Ministry to Single Mothers	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 9:30 a.m. Reformation Conference
<b>29</b>  (No Promises, No Youth Group)  6:30 p.m. Joint Reformation Worship	<b>30</b> Youth Group No Media Week (ends 11/5)  6:45 p.m. Bowling	<b>31</b>  7:30 p.m. WIC Prayer Meeting		<b>Each Sunday:</b> 9:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages 10:45 a.m. Morning Worship 5:30 p.m. Promises 6:30 p.m. Evening Worship		

2006 Pittsburgh  
Reformation Conference  
October 28 - 29

**Whatever Happened to the Power of the Church?**

Conference Speakers:

Rev. John Sartelle and Rev. Phillip Hardin

**Saturday, October 28**

- 9:00 a.m. Registration & Refreshments
- 9:30 a.m. Session #1: *Do You Have Power With God?* I Samuel 3.19-4.1a; 7.2-9, Rev. Sartelle
- 9:30 - 11:45 a.m. Children's Program (*Children must be registered by October 10*)
- 10:45 a.m. Session #2: *Making God Stronger*, Genesis 32.22-32, Rev. Hardin
- 1:15 p.m. Session #3: *Why Is It So Hard For Me to Pray?*, Matthew 7.7-11; Ephesians 6.18, Rev. Sartelle
- 2:15 p.m. Q. & A. with Rev. Sartelle

**Sunday, October 29**

- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School Discussion with Rev. Sartelle
- 10:45 a.m. Worship Service: *Do Your Prayers Shake the Earth?*, Revelation 8.1-5, Rev. Sartelle
- 6:30 p.m. Joint Worship Service with Pittsburgh NAPARC\* churches: *What Is the Best Prayer We Can Pray for Ourselves?*, Ephesians 3.14-21, Rev. Sartelle

\*North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council

*Contact the church office at 412-793-7117 for registration information.*