

FIRST IMPACT

First Presbyterian Church
www.FPCNorfolk.org

Kenya Summer Team Needs Some Items! CAN YOU HELP?

The summer team departs June 23rd and is collecting some things for the children at the Joy Home, the Holy Family Center and the new Nazareth Children's Library. If you would like to help, please bring your items to the collection area in the preschool lobby at church. Thank you so much for the way you always come through when we ask for these donations each summer!

Colored Markers

Crayola Crayons (*other brands will melt in Africa*)

Pencils

Scissors

Activity Books

Small Puzzles (*100 piece or less*)

Small cars and dolls

Reading books

10 National Geographic magazines

6 Checker Boards (*Wal-Mart has good ones for \$2.50*)

Wooden Brain Teaser Puzzles (*Dollar Tree*)

Inexpensive Model Airplane Kits (*Michaels*)



Calling All Volunteers!

Vacation Bible School, July 16-20

Volunteers needed with Snacks, Games, Crafts, Drama, Decorations, Class Teachers, and more! Register now to be a VBS volunteer at <http://overboard.cokesburyvbs.com/fpcnorfolk>. Help our kids "dive deep" into their faith during Operation Overboard this summer!

Summer Sunday School Teachers June - August

Positions available in Little Lambs (*3-4 year olds*) up through Youth (*6-12th grade*)

Contact Hunter at hunter@fpcnorfolk.org for more information and for requirements.



Vacation Bible School July 16 - 20

Operation Overboard

Registration for FPC church members is now available, and open registration starts Wednesday, May 23rd.

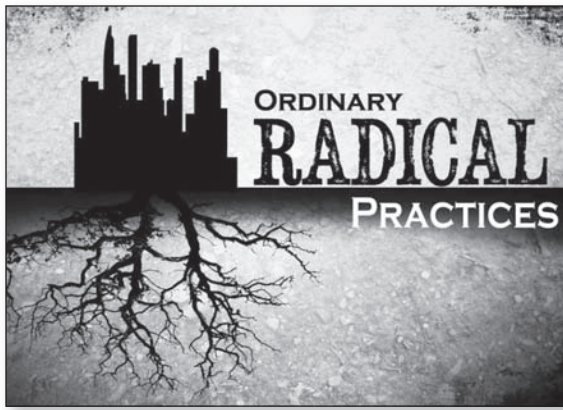
Go to page 6 for more details!



Healing in the LOST Art Show 7

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Ordinary Radical Practices

by Jim Gates

This month we continue our series on Ordinary Radical Practices. We will have a particular focus on the understanding of work as worship – that what we do in our nine-to-five is perhaps the most important aspect of our spiritual lives. Then, we conclude our year-long PRA•X•IS Experiment on Pentecost Sunday, May 27th. Don't miss our recap of the year!

If you have not done so already, please visit our website at www.fpcnorfolk.org and complete the final PRA•X•IS survey, so we can assess how effective this experiment was in helping us grow spiritually! If you completed the initial survey in September

and gave us your email address, you will also be able to see how these practices produced spiritual change in your own life. The survey itself will take perhaps five to ten minutes, but it is incredibly important for us to get your feedback. Thanks for taking the time!

FROM WHERE I STAND

by Jim Wood

I look forward to June for many reasons. Life is a little more relaxed in the summer months. The children in the preschool go into summer mode, meaning less structure, more play. Their giggles on a summer workday are contagious. I enjoy our summer sermon series too. We have the freedom to try something new for a few weeks. This summer our theme will be "Abide." We will study some of the greatest leaders in the Old Testament and learn what it means to abide in Jesus, the true vine.

Summer also means mission trips and the summer of 2012 will not disappoint. We will send teams out to Massanetta, Nicaragua and Kenya. If you are not at a place in your life where a mission trip makes sense, but you would like to be involved in some way, consider donating art supplies for the children at the Joy Home and for the Art Therapy Program our summer team will conduct for the Kenyan children this summer (*a list of items needed is on the front cover*). We will reach out to 250 children and adults during our two-week stay.

And while you're in the building dropping off your donations, mosey on down to the pre-school wing and take in those silly, giggly sounds of summer. But beware, they are contagious!



Pause for Thought

by Jim Wood

In the previous issue of *First Impact*, I shared with you my anticipation and excitement for the upcoming Resurrection Sunday Celebration. The Flowering of the Cross on Easter Sunday was everything I had visions of it being! As everyone **paused** in front of the cross to offer their flowers and pose for pictures, I **thought** of the smile that must have been on Jesus' face as He watched us celebrating that HE IS ALIVE.

Apparently there were many more smiles spreading around the world as our pictures on Facebook of the Flowering of the Cross were viewed, "liked" and "commented on" throughout the day. The report from the FPC Facebook page is staggering as I ponder the possibilities of even 1% of those who viewed our pictures deciding to worship with us...

PHOTO VIEWS

Number of times any of the photos in our post were viewed at full size:

44,182

STORIES

Number of stories created from our posts; when someone likes, comments or shares:

1,093

20 COUNTRIES REACHED:

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| USA | Spain |
| France | Switzerland |
| United Kingdom | Canada |
| Netherlands | Ireland |
| Argentina | Czech Republic |
| Kenya | Poland |
| Nicaragua | Italy |
| Uganda | Brazil |
| Germany | Portugal |
| Israel | Taiwan |

REACH

Number of unique people who saw our posts:

9,014

ORGANIC

Number of people who saw our post on their news feed or page:

1,968

VIRAL

Number of people who saw our post because one of their friends interacted with it:

7,046

EVANGELISM

GO TELL IT

A Report from the Neo Class

by Jim Gates

For the last four weeks (April 15-May 6), we had our first ever Neo Class on Sunday evenings. Neo is a four-week course that is designed as an introduction to the basics of the Christian faith. Our format was dinner, lecture and conversation at table groups. Topics included: “Who is Jesus?”, “Why did Jesus have to die?”, “What do Christians Believe?”, and “How do Christians Answer the Hard Questions of Faith?”



We had an exceptional mix of people: folks who were completely unchurched, new visitors to FPC, regular worshippers who were not yet Christians, and strongly grounded Christians who just wanted a theological refresher. I was struck again and again by the grace and openness in our table conversations. Never did I hear anyone suggest that anyone was wrong for challenging the status quo, nor did I see anyone embarrassed for their faith or lack of faith.

The breadth of discussion was impressive; I witnessed honest conversation about the believability of the story of Jesus, and also deep reflections on the nature of the resurrection and how it impacted our understanding of the Trinity. No topic was too simple or too complex for consideration.

Perhaps most exciting for me was the willingness of people to invite their loved ones and friends who are outside the Christian faith. So many of our members who made such invitations (and attended with their friends/family) approached me afterwards and commented how comfortable and enjoyable the class was for their guests. Certainly, I’m praying that an eternal difference will be made in those lives.

We will certainly offer this class again in the Fall – I hope you are able to join us then!

FPC 101

Our next FPC 101 is Sunday, June 3rd, from 4-8pm. FPC 101 is a class designed for visitors or people interested in membership at First Presbyterian. Each class typically has between 15-25 participants, plus staff, deacons and elders. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet our pastors and staff, and also to get to know some other new folks in the church.

Over the course of the evening, we cover a range of topics, including the vision and mission of our church, our emphasis on spiritual growth, the history of our church, our core theological beliefs, what it means to be Presbyterian, our finances and budget, and our understanding of membership. The purpose of this class is to answer any questions our visitors or new attendees might have, so in addition to our planned agenda, we often take interesting detours into a variety of subjects.

We do a tour of the church, share dinner together, and provide childcare for anyone who requests it. There are no costs associated with the class!

If you are interested, or know someone who might like to attend, please visit our website at www.fpcnorfolk.org and click on the Events and Registration tab to sign up. Alternatively, you can email me at jimgates@fpcnorfolk.org anytime.

We offer FPC 101 every other month, on the first Sunday of the month, so if June 3rd doesn’t work for you, consider coming on August 5th!

It's a local address. Do. Walk. Love.

MICAH 6:8ST



Spring Highlight for Residents of St. Mary's Home

by Allison Bough

Senior Master Sgt. John Borden Jr. was at Kunsan Air Base in South Korea when his daughter went to prom for the first time. But he still got to see the broad smile on Aly's face as her date held her hands and helped her dance in her wheelchair while a DJ played music. Aly, wearing a corsage her grandmother ordered to match her pink gown, was featured in an online video of the prom at St. Mary's Home that Borden watched thousands of miles away from Norfolk.

The Spring Prom held on April 30 this year was something special for residents of St. Mary's to remember. It's also just one of the many activities that children and young adults like Aly enjoy at St. Mary's. For example, Aly is a member of St. Mary's Girl Scout troop, which has explored Norfolk, visited Washington, D.C., created a butterfly garden at the Home, delivered donations to the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and, naturally, sold Girl Scout cookies.

St. Mary's Home cares for children and young adults with disabilities from all over Virginia and is expanding to care for adults older than 21. If you'd like to become more involved with St. Mary's, contact visit www.saintmaryshome.org or call 757.622.2208.

Sarah: The Invitation into her Heart

by Sheryl Wood

Sarah and her husband came to The Keim Centers (Crisis Pregnancy Center) pregnant, out of work, and filled with fear. The couple had already visited an abortion provider, but was \$20 short and couldn't complete the procedure. The Keim Centers were their last resort for help. "I had my mind made up before I walked in the door that I was ending the pregnancy," Sarah said. "I didn't see any hope."

After reading her positive pregnancy test results, Sarah met with a nurse and received an ultrasound. "They gave me a sonogram and it was a baby. The blindfold was off. It was a baby. It was a life." When she saw the fully-formed baby inside of her, Sarah was moved to tears of joy and asked the nurse to write "I'm here to stay" on their copy of the ultrasound image. Equipped with truth, the couple made a decision for LIFE. "The Keim Center made me feel very comfortable. They talked to me like I was a person. The [advocate] took my hand, looked me in the eyes and told me that through Christ anything is possible. And that is true."

In June, Sarah gave birth to a healthy baby boy, Gavin. She reconnected with The Keim Centers for practical support and opened herself to learning more about the Gospel. Shortly thereafter, Sarah made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ. "I invited the Lord into my heart, and I gave up my will and my life to Him. He's been knocking on my heart for a long time, and I finally answered."

Sarah continues to grow in her relationship with the Lord, sharing that she now sees God has always been working in her life. She is currently attending a new Christians class and will be baptized in a few weeks. Despite numerous challenges in her life, Sarah knows the joy of the Lord. "Even though God did not promise my life will be all better after I came to know Him, I can see that it has improved."



BEYOND THE 757

FPC Global Pilgrimages

Momma Joyce's Family Outing

by Rudy Miller

Most folks have memories of family outings from their youth, perhaps a trip to see grandparents or just a day at the beach. Those memories are an important part of being a family. Presently, the Joy Home has three families. The head of each family is a Mom. One weekend Momma Joyce took her family on a Kenyan family outing, and Kate and I were their guests.

We arrived at the Joy Home at 9:00am. All seven of Joyce's children were already patiently waiting including baby Emmanuel. We loaded into a rented vintage Peugeot station wagon and headed off to Rock Park. It was a one-hour drive and the children were wired with excitement except baby Emmanuel who was fast asleep within two minutes of our departure. Sound familiar?

Rock Park is an African children's amusement park complete with a merry go round, face painting and small paddle boats. Momma Joyce gathered her family to determine what rides they would choose and headed off to their first choice...a spinning car ride. Yes, one child got sick from the spinning and the rest were dizzy. Momma decided they all needed a break to settle down — the wisdom of a mother.

Lunch was a treat of chips (French fries) a small sausage and even sodas. Momma asked Moses to give the blessing, an indication that she is also their spiritual mentor. By three o'clock the children were ready to call it a day. You guessed it, everyone slept on the way home...except baby Emmanuel who had already had his nap.

Imagine a life without the relationship of a family or family memories. That is the reality of an orphan's life in Kenya. The Joy Home is dedicated to bringing not only the family relationship back to these precious children, but also encouraging them into a relationship with their Creator.



Destination: Jinotega, Nicaragua

by Charlie Stine

On August 4th a crew of 16 from First Presbyterian Church will board a plane in the wee hours of the morning to be "sent to the nation" of Nicaragua. This crew will then travel to the northern city of Jinotega to begin a week of fun, sweat, and prayers.

Since 2009 the Nicaragua mission trip has visited Jinotega. It is a beautiful city nestled between the mountains close to the border with Honduras. Vida Joven has three clubs there. We work beside our

Nicaraguan brothers and sisters doing various activities to build recognition among the youth of the city of the mission and outreach of Vida Joven. Our goal is to get to know the leaders, encourage them, and be a beacon of light. Our presence helps them because it is a novelty to see Americans having fun beside Nicaraguans in the love of Christ.

Our week will consist of a work project, helping them finish the club house that we started on several years ago. We will do a craft workshop and some sports activities in a high school near to the club. Our evenings will be filled with "clubbing", that is attending and participating in a Vida Joven club night, and meditations on the Kingdom of God as told through Jesus' parables.

I, personally, am looking forward to seeing old friends. I have been going to Nicaragua for about ten years. Over that time I have gotten to know many of the dedicated leaders of Vida Joven. I am looking forward to seeing Geraldine Altamirano and her family, laughing with Luis Guterrez, and talking with the many leaders and children who hang around the work crew. You can read more about these great people and our work in Jinotega at jinotegastories.blogspot.com. I look forward to telling you about my trip when I get home.



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

“Operation Overboard: Dare to Go Deep With God” Vacation Bible School

by Hunter Johnston

I am so excited as I think about Vacation Bible School this summer at First Presbyterian, July 16-20! Our kids are going to have a “swimmingly” good time in an action-packed week, from 9:00am - noon each day. They will swim with humpback whales and seahorses, scuba through a vibrant coral reef, and take a personal submarine to the ocean floor, where eels and octopi play!

Kids will have daily Bible lessons as they learn about people who had deep faith in God. All the activities will be applicable to kids and things they are going through in their own lives. Each day kids will rotate between group assembly, music, recreation, snacks, bible stories, science, crafts, and music.



FPC kids are going to love getting to know Ocho, our fun-loving, eight-legged VBS mascot.

Registration for FPC church members opened on Sunday, April 29; open registration starts on Wednesday, May 23. Vacation Bible School is open to any child who is finishing their three-year-old preschool year through kids completing fifth grade. You can register your kids at <http://overboard.cokesburyvbs.com/FPCNorfolk>.

If you are interested in serving as a volunteer for VBS, you can sign up now through our registration website. Childcare will be available for babies and toddlers of VBS volunteers.

We look forward to having you and your children take part in this awesome week as our kids choose to follow Jesus, learn how to depend on God, and find ways to change the world!



What's Happening: Children's Summer Sunday School

Childrens Praise and Worship

- Children, K-5, will begin 9:30 Sunday school each week all together!
- They will be lead as a group in worship and song by Joanne Whitaker until 9:55am.
- Following Children's Praise, kids will transition to Sunday School with their teachers for the remainder of the 9:30 block.



NEW “Buzz” Sunday School Curriculum

Buzz will fire up kids' imaginations and have them discovering God's love in incredible, tangible ways!

Coffee Kids: Grounds for Growth

by Hunter Johnston

Our own FPC children raised \$548.53 serving coffee on Sunday, April 29 through Coffee Kids: Grounds For Growth! All money will go the Nazareth Children's Joy Home in Kenya!

We are so excited to rejoice in the work the Lord has done through our children at First Presbyterian! If your child is interested in serving a twenty minute shift as a barista, email me (hunter@fpcnorfolk.org) or call me at 625-1697 ext. 324. We would love to have both adults and children volunteer as we grow our Coffee Kids program! We look forward to another successful Coffee Kids function Sunday, July 29!



ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

The Divine Descent: A Deliberate Prayer Experience

by Janell Rardon

“Visit the catacomb? Did he just say ‘catacomb?’” I turned and asked my husband, Rob. Having visited Rome in 2009, well aware of the ancient catacombs that exist in that part of the world, I thought, “Here in Norfolk, Virginia? How very interesting. Let’s go!”



The descent into the catacomb experience, the vision of FPC’s very own Kristine Rand, led to a very deliberate prayer experience — the highlight of my Lenten season. How often do we, modern-day-self-proclaimed-busy pilgrims of the Christian faith, actually stop, with fervent intention, to pray for the lost souls of those we love? If I am honest,

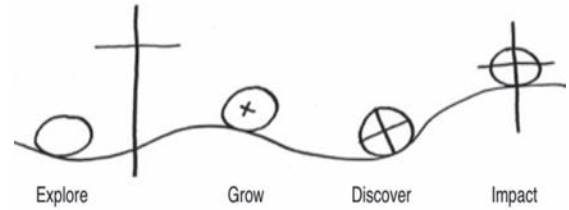
it is rare. Yet, with each step of descent, I felt the hand of the Holy Spirit guiding me to such a place. Contemplation embraced my weary soul and invited me to feast on the beauty of the experience. I heard whispers, “Stop for a moment. Breathe. Consider. Pray.”

The tactile experience of writing the name of a loved one on a torn and tattered strip of cloth and tying it to rugged, steel bars, initiated a spiritual transaction—the hope of resurrection for each name, locked in their very own catacomb of futility and faithlessness. As I wrote, I felt connected to the heavenlies in a new, fresh way. It is so easy to forget that there is an Almighty God who hears, isn’t it?

“Are you ready to go?” Rob asked.

“No, not really,” I smiled. “This is extraordinary. I don’t want to leave.”

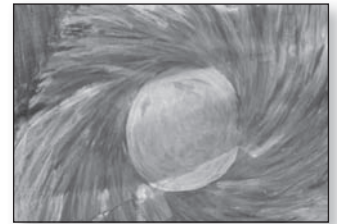
But, as Dante wrote so long ago, “To get back up to the shining world from there, My guide and I went into that hidden tunnel; where we came forth, and saw once more the stars” (The Divine Comedy, XXXIV. 134-140). Reluctantly we made our way out of the catacomb, both strangely renewed and ready to “once more see the stars.”



Healing in the Lost Art Show

by Lisa Allen

Participating in the FPC LOST art exhibit was a deeply gratifying experience. I was humbled with the opportunity to share artwork that in turn spoke to so many others.



I’ve struggled for years to make art—to find the time and motivation. But as an artist the need persists. Having a purpose and theme were just the needed structure. I painted with the theme in mind and gathered a few others. I paused at one piece, *Healing*. Honestly, I was embarrassed, it was aesthetically weak to me. I included it any way. Ironically, it ended up as an illustration in Jim’s sermon for the whole congregation to view, story and all.

What an honor to be part of the message that Sunday. I am touched that my pain might speak to others, that they might know they are not alone in their own struggles. Depression is a deceptive foe. It creeps in, and then shames us from speaking about it. So many in our church, leadership included, have modeled transparency, particularly with depression. What a freeing gift for all of us. The shame dissipates in our vulnerability to share our own hurt. I am so grateful for how God is at work among us, and how He comes to find us.

B90X by Cline Reasor

B90X has been transformative for me. What I found in reading so much each day was that I was pulled into God’s story of redemption. Since The Fall, God has offered us opportunities to repair our broken relationship with Him. Throughout the Old Testament we repeatedly failed to restore what was lost. Ultimately, God was desperate for us to find a way back to Him and offered us His son. He watched his Holy Son bear the sin of the world – every murder, every prejudice, the apathy of a wealthy man that does nothing to help a fellow human being scouring a garbage dump for survival, the relative disinterest His Church has in the millions of children sold into the sex slave trade. Jesus bore it all. Through the endless grace of Jesus Christ we have hope for a renewed relationship with our God. We don’t repair that relationship through rituals or “10-easy-steps”, but rather Jesus calls us to simply love God and love others. Not formulas. Relationship. Read His Word and be in communion with Him. God’s story tells us His grace is anxious for us. Claim it!

Youth Summer Trips

Calling all youth –
don't miss this opportunity
to sign up for our summer trips!

Jr. High (6-8th graders)
The Great Escape in Johnstown, PA
is July 30-August 4th.

Sr. High (9-12th graders)
Fun In The Son at Ocean City, MD is June 25-29th.

Contact Annie Blakey to sign up — annie@fpcnorfolk.org!



85

The number of people going on the Massentta camping trip from June 17 - 19!

Please keep us in prayer as we minister to others. We'll tell ya all about it in the July issue of First Impact!



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