



## PASTOR LAWRENCE

### Our Hearts the Earth

If you've heard me preach then you've heard me pray this prayer:

*Eternal God,  
be as the farmer  
and our hearts the earth.  
Open up our hard hearts  
with your plow called truth,  
and plant therein the seed  
which is your Word.  
And over time,  
over seasons of sun and rain, frost and snow,  
may our hearts bear a harvest of love,  
in your name. Amen.*

It's a prayer I've been praying before every sermon I preach for years and years. It's my personal centering prayer and I developed it early in my ministry in the 90s. I can't say it's entirely *my* prayer because it pulls heavily from Biblical imagery that helps me focus as I prepare to preach.

I offer this meditation on the imagery from this prayer to help you understand what I'm praying and why I'm praying it.

**God as Farmer** – I grew up in farm country and the idea of God as a farmer resonates with me. Farmers give and give and work hard. They never seem to take a break. They roll with the punches. In the gospels, Jesus talks about a sower going out to sow some seed and it doesn't always land on good soil. (Matthew 13; Mark 4; Luke 8)

**Our Hearts the Earth** – We are God's field, God's workplace, the object of God's devotion. In our day, the heart is the seat of passion and love. In Jesus' day it was the seat of judgment and reason. As I pray, I think the heart can be both an instrument of passion and reason. Our desires bared, God works on us. (1 Corinthians 3:5-9)

### Church Meetings

COMMUNION	May 7
Men's Bible Study –10:30 am	May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
Family Faith Night 6:00 to 7:00 pm	May 3, 10, 17 Finale
Prayer Circle - 10:15 a.m.	May 14
PW Bible Study - 10:30 am F & T Lunch - Noon	May 10
Investment - 4:45 pm	May 4
Trustee – 4:00 pm	May 8
Care of Parish - 1:30 pm	May 10
Worship & Music -5:30 pm	May 11
Mission, O. & Adv.-6:00 pm	May 16
Session - 5:30 pm	May 23

### MAY SERVERS

LAY LITURGIST: Darleen Fox  
GREETER: Larry Clark  
USHERS: Mike Gommel and  
Jerry Fox  
REFRESHMENTS: Kathy Denny



## WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

### Presbyterian Women

On Wednesday, May 10th, the Presbyterian Women will meet in the Memorial room at 10:30 a.m. for Bible Study. Please join them for Lesson 2—*Who Is Jesus?* according to Matthew, presented by Lois Laskowski. A ten-minute DVD introduces the lesson, followed by Lois' own presentation which promises to be interesting.

### Friendship & Talent

Friendship and Talent will meet at 12 noon for lunch. This is our annual salad pitch-in. Please bring a salad to share. Also, bring a few copies of the salad recipe you are sharing that day. You can "buy" other folks' recipes for a quarter. The quarters will be used for our BINGO quarters we give to Morning Breeze for their residents to use for BINGO games. This is our P.W. Birthday Offering celebration so there will be birthday cake for dessert. Jean Long will give devotions about the Birthday Offering Recipients for 2017. Offering envelopes will be available to contribute to the mission causes the Birthday Offering gives to. Hope we see you there!



## IN THE CHURCH LIBRARY

Mike Gommel

### THE A TO Z GUIDE TO BIBLE SIGNS & SYMBOLS

How might our understanding of God's Word be deepened if we recognized the significance of the signs and symbols found within its pages—signs that were clear to the original readers? Throughout the Scriptures, signs and symbols weave a consistent message of god's presence, grace, and faithfulness. This resource will help you appreciate key biblical images that reveal God's purposes and truth. Each of the more than one hundred entries includes multiple illustrations, explanations, and key Bible passages. Sidebars, quotes, and photos make this guide approachable and engaging.

On the 20th of May, First Presbyterian Church will celebrate 191 years of service. In honor of this occasion, I've made copies of a few of the Worship Bulletins found in the Archives. They are on display in the Reception Hall. Happy anniversary!

May is also *Military Appreciation Month*. The men and women who have served in the past and those who currently serve are deserving of our praise and thanks. God bless them all!

## MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Men's Bible Study will continue to meet at the home of Gary and Kathy Miller: 1805 N. Tyrel Ave. E (off of Barachel Lane) on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.

## Prayer Circle

The Prayer Circle will meet on May 14th at 10:15 a.m. in the Library! Come a little early and join us for this special prayer time when we pray for our pastor and our congregation.

## Family Faith Night

FFN finale will be held at the church on May 17th. We will end our Wednesday night classes with Pizza and a movie for our last night.



## GRADUATES' RECEPTION

There will be a Graduates Reception after worship service on Sunday, May 21st as well as a pitch-in dinner to honor these graduates. Please join us to congratulate these students.

Our graduates this year are:

Reid McClintic  
Alden Westhafer  
Rebecca McClintic

Look for full bios on these graduates in the June newsletter.

(If you have a graduate you would like to add to our list, call Diana at 812-663-2197.)

## Ice Cream Fundraiser

M & O Committee will hold an Ice cream fundraiser on Friday, May 26th from Noon until 5:00 p.m. The cost is a FREE-WILL offering. The proceeds will purchase Aldi gift cards to be donated to the Agape's Food for Children program.

## Reminder

There will **not** be an end-of-month pitch-in for the months of June, July, and August due to so many members being out of town this summer.



## PRAYER FOCUS FOR APRIL

### National Day of Prayer

This year the National Day of Prayer will be on Thursday, May 4. Join with us as we pray for America. This day of prayer is a vital part of our American heritage. The first call to prayer was made in 1775. The Continental Congress asked all the colonies to pray and ask God for wisdom in the formation of a nation.

This recognition of the importance of prayer has continued throughout America's history. In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln called for a day of "humiliation, fasting, and prayer." A joint resolution was made by Congress in 1952 which was signed by President Harry Truman declaring that day an annual, national day of prayer. Then in 1988, President Reagan set the national day of prayer to be observed on the first Thursday of May every year.

God is good, and He desires to bless our nation. We may be turning away from Him and His ways, so we must humble ourselves before the Lord. We must repent of our sins and follow God. Then the Lord will heal our land.

II Chronicles 7:14 -- "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

*Polly Matlock—Care of Parish team member*

#### Our Hearts the Earth—Continued from page 1

**Plow Called Truth** – To plant a seed the soil must be opened. For us to receive God's Word we must be opened. And I believe the instrument of that is Truth. Truth opens our eyes, our hearts, our minds, so that we can receive the Good News. Truth, as we know, is not always pleasant. Often it shatters us.

**The Seed** – The Seed that is sown is the Word of God. My job is to preach the Word and to scatter the Seed on the soil every Sunday. Sometimes it finds root. Sometimes it doesn't. Sometimes it falls on good soil. Sometimes the soil is rocky or shallow. Sometimes it falls in the weeds. Doesn't matter. My job is to throw that Seed far and wide and let God take care of the growth.

**Over Time** – We don't get results right away. Farmers and gardeners invest in the future. When they plant the field or garden, they know they won't see results tomorrow. It takes time. When I preach, I don't know what the results will be, or when, or if I will ever see any results. God's Word grows over time.

**Sun and Rain, Frost and Snow** – Our growth is shaped by the seasons of our life. Sometimes conditions are optimal, sometimes they aren't. Sometimes the harshest conditions bear the best fruit. (Romans 5:3-5) Sometimes optimal conditions bear no fruit. Through times of plenty and through times of want, God is with us and God's Word works within us.

**Harvest of Love** – The goal is to increase the Love in the world, as well as the other fruits of the Spirit: Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control. (Galatians 5:22-23) If these fruits increase, the labor has not been in vain.

So, this is what I pray and this is why I pray it. And, every Sunday, as I pray this prayer, I would ask that you would pray that I, too, will be transformed by God's Word.

Peace, Pastor Lawrence  
218-591-9686

[pastor.lawrence.lee@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.lawrence.lee@gmail.com)

## Prayer Circle, May 2017

Praying, whether silently or aloud, whether alone or with another, whether it is a short or longer prayer, will strengthen one's faith and trust in God. It will also be a strength when we pray for other people.

Seeing God answer our prayers, either quite quickly or over a period of time, will encourage and strengthen our faith and trust too. And, as we pray for understanding the way God answered our prayers, we will see growth of faith and trust. These will help teach us how to pray and praise God with deeper and more personal faith and trust.

Even if we are uncomfortable praying or do not know how to say what is on our minds and hearts, we can be strengthened in our faith and trust in the Triune God, our Creator. God will honor our desire, effort, and each attempt to communicate through the Spirit of Christ in us.

God knows what is on our minds and hearts. Yet, God wants us to speak openly, letting it be **known we have faith and trust in the Lord. The mere expression of "Help God" will build and expand the way we communicate with the Trinity.**

God will hear our every word and cry, aloud or silent. As we recall the scripture of Christ saying God knows when a sparrow falls from the sky and we are worth more than many sparrows, we can be more encouraged and our faith and trust will be strengthened.

So, what is prayer? It is common words we use every day expressed to God about whatever is on our minds and hearts.

*Dennis Shepherd, Chair of Care of Parish*

### Church, Session, and Committee News

#### Financial Update—

**At the end of the first quarter of 2017, the church's portfolio is benefiting from a strong economy. There is a net gain in value in spite of the withdrawal of an additional \$15,000 above the \$6,600 monthly allotment from investments.**

The major expense came from our pastor transition **as we paid Bob McAulay's 3-month severance package and picked up Pastor Lawrence's salary costs.**

The Lillian Lynch Capital Improvement Fund covered the expenses of two new sanctuary furnaces. The Trustees are still facing the replacement of the nursery furnace/AC with some necessary electrical upgrades.

The maintenance and upkeep of our old building plus the mission and outreach of our congregation require a continuous source of funding. We are grateful for our growing church attendance and giving. Giving from the congregation is slightly ahead of last year. Please keep your gifts and pledges current so that Greensburg First Presbyterian Church will truly be **"The Growing Place" where we are "seeking to live God's Word by serving others".**

Susan Wilson, Treasurer

#### A Word from Mission Committee—

The total amount of money donated to the One Great Hour Special Mission fund was \$810.20. Thank you to all those of you who donated to this worthy cause.

**It is also time to start thinking about this year's Day of Caring.** We welcome any ideas and/or suggestions you may have.



#### Pictorial Directory—

As most of you already know, we are making an in-house pictorial directory of the members of the church and our regular attendees. Our goal is to have the pictorial directory ready for **distribution by September. If you haven't had your picture taken, see Marilyn Woods after services on Sunday.** If you are a member that lives in another town or state and wish to be included in the directory, you may email a picture of yourself, husband and wife, or your family to [fpcgburg@etczone.com](mailto:fpcgburg@etczone.com). Title it **"Pictorial Directory"** and include what personal information you wish to be included in the directory. If you have any questions, please contact the office, Marilyn Woods, or Betty Zillick.



# God's Green Earth: Ecological Gardening

The first step in Ecological Gardening is Organic Gardening. Organic gardening has been around since the 1920's. Remember how we used to farm food before we discovered chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and preservatives?

What Is Organic Gardening?

The word organic is bandied about a lot in connection with food and gardens these days, but what does it really mean? In simple terms, growing organically could be described as growing in harmony with nature, without using synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides or other such products that upset the balance of the ecosystem.

For farmers or commercial growers, however, it can be quite complex. New federal programs are charged with making sure that agricultural products labeled as organic **“originate from farms or handling operations certified by a State or private entity that has been accredited by USDA.”**

The "organic" food label identifies food grown with practices that: Rely on natural biological systems for pest and weed control; improve the quality and fertility of the soil; protect water quality; reduce soil erosion; reduce the impact of agriculture on our environment; produce high quality, great tasting food; don't use genetic engineering; don't use sewage sludge as fertilizer.

**Happily for gardeners, organic gardening at home is a personal choice, so it's a lot more straight-forward. Organic gardening is more than simply avoiding synthetic pesticides and fertilizers. It is about observing nature's processes, and emulating them in your garden as best you can. And the most important way to do that is to understand the makeup of your soil and to give it what it needs. If anything could be called a 'rule' in organic gardening, it's this: feed the soil, not the plant.”**

To feed the soil, gardeners must restore the resources their gardens consume, by adding organic matter. That includes adding compost, and possibly growing cover crops – so-called green manure – that are tilled back into the soil. You can use compost as a replenishing additive, to make both clay and sandy soils more plant-friendly, or as mulch on top of your garden beds. (Compost- is decomposition of organic matter.) The garden itself is the source for many of the ingredients in compost, including grass clippings, plant waste, and shredded leaves in fall. You can also add kitchen waste such as vegetable and fruit scraps and peelings, coffee grounds, eggshells, and dead houseplants to your compost pile, and, if you wish, chicken, cow or horse manure. Adding compost means healthier soil, and eating fruits and vegetables grown in healthy soil means healthier people.

Benefits to You:

- By eating organic foods, you limit your exposure to synthetic insecticides, fungicides and herbicides, because organic farming avoids using these chemicals.
- Additionally by eating organic foods, you limit your intake of growth hormones and antibiotics, because organic meat and dairy farmers are prohibited from using hormones and antibiotics in organic livestock and dairy production.
- Finally by eating organic foods, you limit your intake of genetically modified foods because organic farmers cannot raise genetically modified crops or livestock or use production aids that are genetically modified.

Next month we will talk about the next step in Ecological Gardening.

Information on this month's article can be found at: [www.burpee.com](http://www.burpee.com)

**First Presbyterian  
Church**

202 N. Franklin St.  
Greensburg, IN 47240

Phone: 812-663-2197

Fax: 812-663-9381

E-mail: [fpcgburg@etczone.com](mailto:fpcgburg@etczone.com)

Web: [www.fpcgburg.org](http://www.fpcgburg.org)



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Marilyn Woods — Mission, Outreach, and Advertising  
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Betty Zillick — Personnel  
Dennis Shepherd — Care of Parish  
  
Rev. Lawrence Lee — Pastor  
Carey Anne LaSor — Co-Clerk  
Darleen Fox — Co-Clerk

THINKING ABOUT VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME TO HELP A LOCAL ORGANIZATION?

- Bread of Life • 812-662-4887
- New Directions • 812-662-8822
- Meals on Wheels • 812-663-6099
- AGAPE Center • 812-222-4273
- Big Brothers, Big Sisters • 812-663-7556
- Kids Closet • 812-663-2084
- Decatur County Special Olympics • 812-663-4690
- Decatur County United Fund Adult Literacy Program • 812-560-3820
- Hospice of South Central Indiana • 812-314-8000



PLEASE KEEP THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR  
CONTINUED PRAYERS:

Shut-ins

Aspen Place, 2320 N. Montgomery  
Rd., Greensburg, IN 47240

Anna Clemenz— Room 405  
Bill Baumgartner— Room 517

Hazel Shonk  
At Home, 1029 E. Tara Rd.,  
Greensburg, IN 47240

Barb Blare  
At home, 207 Orchard Drive,  
Greensburg, IN 47240

Gary Miller  
At home, 1805 N. Tyrel Ave. East  
Greensburg, IN 47240

YOUR PRAYERS DO  
MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



Prayers

Judy Lozier  
Barbara Blare  
Monique Rust-Metzing  
Alice Rust  
Janet Niemeyer (Linville)  
Michael Yarmuth  
Brenda Oldham  
Bob Stewart  
Iris Scheibler  
Travis Blanford  
Dottie Bilbrey  
Claude Bilbrey  
Steve Gookins  
Betsy Moll

Easter Sunday  
Alleluia!



Baby Arya blessed us with her presence on Easter Sunday. This beautiful baby girl is the daughter of Phillip and Katie Clark, and granddaughter of Larry Clark.