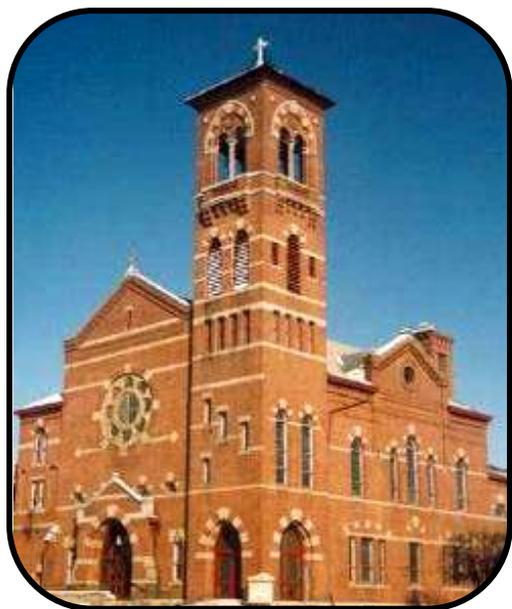


THE CALL

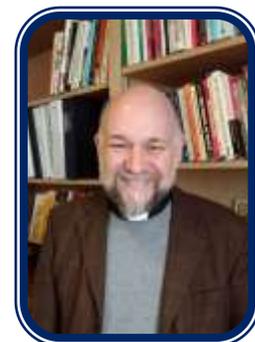


Church Happenings

Communion	July 1
Water Giveaway	July 4
Trustee Meeting- 4 p.m.	July 10
Friendship & Talent-Noon	July 11
Spiritual Formation Meeting- 6 p.m.	July 11

PASTOR LAWRENCE

An Open Letter to Attorney General Jeff Sessions on Romans 13



Dear Mr. Sessions,

I'm writing to thank you for bringing an oft-misinterpreted passage of the Bible to light in your recent attempt to defend the policies of your administration. I'm not writing to you to tell you how to do your job. I'm not a lawyer, but I am a pastor, and since you cited scripture, I will confine myself to the interpretation of scripture.

Recently, when you were visiting Indiana, you said:

"I would cite you to the Apostle Paul and his clear and wise command in Romans 13, to obey the laws of the government because God has ordained the government for his purposes. Orderly and lawful processes are good in themselves. Consistent and fair application of the law is in itself a good and moral thing, and that protects the weak and protects the lawful." - Jeff Sessions, June 15, 2018 (*Indianapolis Star*)

I believe the passage you were referring to was this:

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; for it is God's servant for your good. - Romans 13:1-4a

You may not have been aware of the history of this passage. It was cited in Nazi Germany by those in authority to induce the compliance, or at least the quiescence, of the German churches. Before that it was also cited in the United States by slaveholders to justify slavery. In other words, it has been used to justify all manner of evil done by the state because **the government is, in your words, "ordained" by God.**

Continued on page 3

JULY SERVERS

LAY LITURGIST:

David Schlemmer

GREETER:

ANNE WESTHAFFER

USHERS:

Dennis and Susan Wilson

REFRESHMENTS:

Judy Rust

COUNTERS:

Jean Stutz and Kathy Denny



WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Friendship & Talent

Friendship and Talent group's next meeting will be Wednesday, July 11. Come early to sign cards and visit, and we will eat at noon. Doreen Wilkison will lead us in the devotions. Remember, the delicious homemade lunch is only \$3.00 and all are welcome. We hope you can join us!



Summer is a great time to sort through unwanted items for the annual Rummage Sale coming up in the fall. The Rummage Sale this year will be on Thursday, October 18 and Friday, October 19. This is our main fundraiser, and the money received from the sale goes for mission projects selected by our Friendship & Talent/Presbyterian Women throughout the year. Bring your items to church and put in the upstairs Sunday School room with the zebra-striped door this summer & early fall. We thank you for all of your support.

Ice Cream Social July 22 at 2 p.m. Kingston Presbyterian Church

Everyone is invited to Kingston Presbyterian Church for their annual Ice Cream Social on Sunday, July 22 at 2:00 p.m. We hope you plan on coming as we had such a good time last year. Remember to bring your lawn chairs.

(Rain date is Sunday, July 29)



IN THE CHURCH LIBRARY

Mike Gommel

JESUS FOR KIDS (DVD)

Five animated films, each about ten minutes long, that will introduce children to the story of Jesus based squarely on the Gospels. The stories, geared for children 4-6 years old, include: The First Christmas, Jesus the Storyteller, Jesus the Miracle-Worker, Jesus the Healer, and The First Easter.

THE FANNY CROSBY STORY (DVD)

The mistreatment by a charlatan masquerading as a doctor blinded Fanny shortly after birth. Nevertheless, she became wife, mother, teacher, nurse, humanitarian, and the first woman to address the US Congress. Despite all she accomplished, we know her best as the author of thousands of hymns that are sung today.

THE C.S. LEWIS SIGNATURE CLASSICS by C.S. Lewis

One of the great intellectual giants and influential writers of the **twentieth century**, **Lewis' books still** attracts readers all over the world. This volume brings together eight inspiring books: MERE CHRISTIANITY, THE SCREWTAPE LETTERS, MIRACLES, THE GREAT DIVORCE, THE PROBLEM OF PAIN, A GRIEF OBSERVED, THE ABOLITION OF MAN, and THE FOUR LOVES.

Pastor's Letter—Continued from page 1

And, yes, the plain sense of this passage seems to be one of submission to the government. However, when we look at it in context of what goes immediately before and after the passage, it takes on a new light.

In the passage immediately before Romans 13, Paul talks at length about an ethic of love.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. – Romans 12:9-10

Authentic love, then, resists what is evil in society by doing what is good. This is not a legal mandate, but a moral mandate. Mutual love seeks the best for everyone, not just one's self, not just one's interests, but the whole of the community.

Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. – Romans 12:13-16

The faithful are actively encouraged by Paul to extend hospitality to strangers and associate with the lowly, those on the margins of society. Paul asks the faithful to practice empathy not only with those for whom life is good, but also with those **distressed by life's turns.**

Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. – Romans 12:17-18, 21

This is where Romans 13:1 picks up, immediately after this. Paul is laying out an understanding of how followers of Christ in community are supposed to live together as a minority sect within a dominant culture that is often indifferent or even hostile to them. The governing powers in this context were not friendly, they were to be endured and overcome. Not by direct opposition, but by creating the kind of community to which we aspire.

We cannot resist evil with evil because then we become the very evil we deplore.

We must find another way. And what is that way? By doing what is good. Note, Paul does not say blindly follow the law, he urges us to do what is good regardless of what the law says. If the law is good, then all is well. If the law is evil, then the church is seen to be supporting what is good. And what is this good? The ethic of love. Love trumps all.

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. – Romans 13:8-10

This idea of "love is the fulfilling of the law" is not new to Paul or Jesus, but this ethic has been found throughout the Bible from the very beginning. I would remind you of Shiphrah and Puah, the midwives from Exodus 1:15-21 who disobeyed **Pharaoh's command to kill all of the male children** born to Hebrew women. This was the law that they disobeyed. Instead they followed the ethic of love and compassion for a marginalized people and for this they are remembered.

In your remarks, Mr. Sessions, you aspire to a **society that "protects the weak."** This is a laudable goal and one worthy of the Attorney General of the United States. The church is here to bear witness and to practice an ethic of love. Just as the **United States seeks to become a "more perfect union" the church seeks to be "perfected in love."** We are not perfect, but that does not stop us or excuse us from our calling. The church must continue to practice an ethic of love even when it puts us at odds with the state. Like Shiphrah and Puah before us, we will be on the margins - watching, loving, and acting.

In Christ,

Rev. Lawrence Lee



PRAYER FOCUS FOR JULY:

God's Independence Day

From excerpts by Beth Patch and Phil Ware

Most Americans have celebrated Independence Day in their lifetime. Burgers and hotdogs sizzle on grills and fireworks burst in the sky. We eat, maybe hear *The Star Spangled Banner*, watch fireworks and go home. July fourth has become commonplace, another day for big sales events and flying an American flag.

Each Sunday is the Christian's Independence Day. Let's not forget to celebrate it. Let's not forget to remember the high cost of our freedom and to anticipate the day of our ultimate and glorious experience of that freedom when we see the Lord face to face. Let's not forget that our church family crosses all of earth's boundaries and awaits the Savior of all peoples, languages, tribes, and nations.

Dear Lord, let me not take my freedom, both physical and spiritual, for granted. May I always remember that a very high price was paid for my freedom. My freedom cost others their very lives.

Help me to live my life in a way that glorifies you, Lord. Give me the strength to be a blessing in someone's life today, and grant me the opportunity to lead others into the freedom that can be found in knowing Jesus Christ.

In your name I pray.

Amen

Doreen Wilkison, Care of Parish Team



God's Green Earth: Why Can't We Recycle Plastic Bags?

When we received our new recycle containers, they came with a new list of what we can recycle and what we can't. I wondered why the changes and particularly why we couldn't recycle plastic bags. It didn't make sense to me, but then I came across this website that explains it all:

THE WORLD OF RECYCLING IS CHANGING

Have you ever heard the phrase, "one bad apple spoils the bunch?" The same is true for recycling, where one non-recyclable item can spoil an entire batch of otherwise good materials. It may seem like such a small detail – a wrong item in the recycling bin – but it represents a global problem that's preventing thousands of tons of recyclables from ever seeing a second life.

This site is there to educate you on this important topic, and to offer tools you can use to make recycling sustainable for future generations. To learn more about the changing world of recycling, industry news, and trends, go to: <https://recycleoftenrecycleright.com/> (To follow the link, hold Ctrl button and click on the link)

To answer the question, "Why Can't We Recycle Plastic Bags?" The answer is because the bags get twisted around the other recyclables and jam up the machines that are doing the sorting. This can cause thousands of dollars to fix, and the recyclables can't be used. Although we cannot recycle plastic bags at home, they can be recycled by taking them to the drop-off box at the entrance of the nearest Walmart.



Heifer International "Farm Bundle" project

"Tools for Growth"



In April we initiated the "Farm Bundle" project with "Seeds of Hope," a Mission Committee project that has a set goal of \$1300 by the end of December. More than \$270 was donated (includes money from two pitch-in dinners) on the first of the 5th Sunday Special Offerings. So the seeds have been planted that will give communities sustenance and hope.

On July 29 the second Special Offering will be received for "Tools of Growth." "Growing and harvesting a fruitful crop is possible only with the proper tools, such as shovels and machetes. This necessary equipment can help bring a fruitful yield from the land." Your Special Offering gift "ensures food for families and the market, and provides training in cultural knowledge of seeds and agricultural techniques passed from generation to generation." Farmers and gardeners know that to produce the greatest yield the soil needs to be cultivated and the weeds removed. If not the plants would be crowded out and their harvest would not be as great.

You can watch the growth toward the \$1300 goal on the poster in Reception Hall. We hope you will help our seeds grow with a donation to the Special Offering.

SESSION NEWS

- ◇ Dr. Melinda Weaver has requested transfer of membership to our church.
- ◇ Laura Simmonds has requested baptism for her daughter Charlotte for July 22, 2018.

MISSION COMMITTEE:

- ◇ Will be donating \$100 to the Bread of Life Campaign titled "Farmers Feed the Flock."
- ◇ We will be giving away bottles of water during the July 4th parade.
- ◇ Kid's Closet received \$115.60 of the \$289 raised from Pentecost.

WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE:

- ◇ Sarah Mendendorf was approved as speaker for the Women's Praise and Thank Service on Nov. 18. The topic will be Foster Care.
- ◇ Gideons will be here to speak on Sunday, July 15.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE:

- ◇ A recommendation was made to increase pay for Diana Blanford and Anthony Adams by 5% starting July 1.
- ◇ Summer office hours for the month of July will be Monday thru Thursday 8:30 a.m. to

1:30 p.m. Office will be closed on Fridays.
(This is for July ONLY.)

TRUSTEE COMMITTEE:

- ◇ A bid has been accepted from Steve Warner concerning the concrete repair.
- ◇ Thanks to Darleen Fox, we have received a grant of \$9,000 from the Smock Foundation to help pay for the new sidewalk and steps.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

- ◇ The women donated \$300 to Bread of Life to support one acre in the soup kitchen's "Farmers Feed the Flock" Campaign.
- ◇ Marilyn Millis donated fabric that belonged to her mother from which Susan Wilson and Kathy Denny made 35 baby blankets and 20 burp cloths which were donated to the Pregnancy Center.

PASTOR LAWRENCE:

- ◇ Hopes to start a new Bible Study group.
- ◇ **Changed "Office Hours" to "Drop-in Hours"** on his schedule to help folks feel comfortable about coming to visit him at church.
- ◇ Is flexible with his time and will meet with folks in or outside of the church if the person will call and discuss the time and place. **Pastor Lawrence's number is: 1-218-591-9686**



**First
Presbyterian
Church**

202 N. Franklin St.
Greensburg, IN 47240

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Fax: 812-663-9381
E-mail: fpcgburg@etczone.com

*Seeking to Live God's Word
by Serving Others*

Visit us at:

www.

fpcgburg.org

Prayers

Each week, our church is praying for a member or family in our congregation.

We are also selecting a church in the Whitewater Valley Presbytery every week to pray for as well.

For the month of July we have selected:

Greg & Judy Rust
David, Jayne, & Kyle Schlemmer

Dennis Shepherd

Hazel Shonk

James & Carrie Shumaker

and

Christ PC, McCordsville

First PC, Muncie

St. Andrew PC, Muncie

First PC, New Castle

First PC, Noblesville

2018 Session

CLASS OF 2018

**BETTY ZILICK
MARILYN WOODS
MARY STRADLEY**

CLASS OF 2019

**JEFF LINCOURT
ROY SIMPSON
KATY PRAIRIE**

CLASS OF 2020

**CAREY ANNE CURRAN
DAVE SCHLEMMER
POLLY MATLOCK**

CLERK OF SESSION

DARLEEN FOX

PASTOR

REV. LAWRENCE LEE

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



Per Capita 2018— \$39.05

PLEASE KEEP THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR CONTINUED PRAYERS:

Shut-ins

Mary Gommel
8975 W. County Rd. 600S
Greensburg, IN 47240

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

Don McKinney
206 E. 5th Street
Greensburg, IN 47240

YOUR PRAYERS DO
MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



PRAYERS

**Clinton Shepherd
Glen Koeneman
Judy Lozier
Norman Mobley
Penny Dolph
Elias Pagel
The Family of
Gary Draping**



Wiener Wednesdays