

ERIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWS

January 2010

Matthew 25:21 "The master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'"

Dear Friends,

I cannot believe that we're starting a new year without Marjorie Swanner in our congregation. In many ways, Marjorie exemplified what it is about Erin that makes our church special. It just seems so strange to be without her in our midst, and I know that everyone who truly loves our wee church will greatly miss Marjorie.

Marjorie joined the church when she was ten years old and devoted her whole life to God at Erin. She remained a member here for over 87 years, which must be close to a denominational record. Sunday after Sunday, month after month, and year after year, Marjorie was always here. She remained loyal through the best and worst of times for Erin. She didn't jump ship or church hop as so many do in today's society. She kept coming back to Erin because her heartfelt faith was devoted to this congregation.

We will never know the likes of Marjorie again. We're a highly mobile society and people don't stay in one place, one town, or even one State for most of their lives. I guess we're just living in different times, but it makes me wonder if we're missing out on something beautiful and worthwhile that Marjorie must have experienced – the love and friendship of Christian families over several generations.

I reckon that Marjorie must have known some people who were the original founders of our church. We've only been in existence for 133 years and Marjorie was a part of us for 97 years.



When she thought about our congregation, she must have remembered the thousands of people who sat in our pews in all the three sanctuaries that we have worshiped in. That just amazes me.

Like everyone else, I am truly thankful to have known Marjorie in my life. Years ago, when I first came to Erin, Charlie Weaver, who was once the Dean of UT, said to me, "Marjorie Swanner likes you, so if you're good enough for Marjorie, then you're good enough for me." I think that spoke volumes of how esteemed and deeply respected Marjorie was in our congregation.

We have lost a wonderful person in our church, but the heavenly congregation of Erin has gained a true servant of Christ. We feel sorrow at our loss, but we also claim victory in the Name of Christ. Marjorie Swanner was a beautiful example of what it means to be a lifelong Presbyterian Christian to us all.

May God bless our church throughout this New Year.

John



HAPPY
NEW YEAR

January Sundays

January 3

**2nd Sunday after Christmas
Communion**

Psalm 147:7-14 & John 1:10-18

Celebration of Life – Marjorie Swanner

January 10

Baptism of the Lord

Isaiah 43:1-7 & Luke 3:15-22

“Why Baptism?”

January 17

2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 62:1-5 & John 2:1-11

“Why Communion?”

January 24

3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Psalm 19:8-14 & Luke 4:14-21

“Why Christ?”

January 31

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 1:4-10 & Luke 4:21-30

“Why Jesus?”

KC schools will be closed
Monday January 4 & 18



BODY RECALL

**Class is in full swing beginning January 11, 2010.
Same time, 4:00pm; same days, Monday,
Wednesday and Friday; same place, Noah's Ark
Room at Erin Presbyterian Church.**

**The winter session will continue
into spring, with a break for
Easter holidays, and classes will
continue through May.**

Keep moving with a purpose!



January Birthdays

(This may not be an accurate list and some names may be missing. If so, please accept our apologies)



Joe Tate	January 3
Audry Cafego	January 4
Suzanne Levering	January 4
Maud Hoover	January 4
James Montgomery	January 4
John Moxham	January 4
Lanie Webb	January 4
Gary Blackburn	January 5
Mary Nelle Cate	January 6
Tracy Foster	January 6
Jeff Waters	January 6
Chloe Webb	January 6
Margaret Dugger	January 7
Mae Brandon	January 10
Maeve Smith	January 10
Pat Fitch	January 11
Alee Strand	January 11
Kelli Crisp	January 12
Shane Crisp	January 16
J. Ross McKenry	January 17
Tara Link	January 19
Laurie Stapleton	January 19
LouL Tate	January 19
Al Wallin	January 21
Jada Cable	January 24
Tim Jenness	January 26
Mike Jackson	January 28
Thomas Pearson	January 29
Andy Jaynes	January 30
Carl McHargue	January 30
Dana McKenry	January 30
Lora Yard	January 30
Kathy McClellan	January 31

First Days of February

Ginger Thompson	February 2
Randy Bishop	February 5

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The Erin Presbyterian Church News is published monthly. Comments and submissions are welcome. Please submit articles by **Monday, January 25th** for inclusion in the next month's issue. Please send articles and/or calendar events via e-mail to "admin@erinpresbyterian.org".

PW NEWS

Circles – Circle II meets at 6:30pm, Monday, January 11th at Mary Scarbrough's house. Circle IV will meet Tuesday, January 12th at 10:00am in the parlor. Hope to see you all then.



Many thanks to all those who brought items for the Sunset Gap Christmas Shop. Also, thanks to those who donated money to help a mother and two children have a good Christmas. When we arrived with all the contributions from Erin, we were greeted with open arms, many thanks, and a lot of help unloading our car. Thank you for your kindness.

SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY

SAM Sack Lunch will meet Thursday, January 21 @ 12:00 noon, immediately following the SAM Council meeting at 10:30am. Our guest speaker will be Dr. Bill Bass, founder of the UT Body Farm, and mystery author! Bring lunch and a drink and join in the fellowship!

DISCIPLESHIP

MOPS NEWS Mothers of Preschoolers

MOPS will meet on Thursday, January 14th and 28th, from 9:30-11:30 am in the Family Life Center. Come join us in starting up in the New Year!

Sr. Highs will resume programs January 10th! We will begin a new curriculum, so contact Becca if you have ideas for spring "extra" activities!
www.erinyouth.blogspot.com

Session will meet Thursday, January 21st, 7:00pm.
Elder Training Sessions:
Sunday, January 10
Wednesday, January 13th
Sunday, January 17th

From the Christian Ed Coordinator

As I write this, 2009 is drawing to a close. By the time you read this it will be 2010—a new year, with all of its hope and promise. Many people I know make resolutions at this time of year—they resolve to lose weight, or quit smoking, or be nicer or work less. And these resolutions are made with the best of intentions—if not the highest success rate! To me, resolutions are hard for us to keep because they usually involve some long term change we want to make in our lives—and real, lasting long term change takes time and effort to accomplish. And unfortunately, wishing for that kind of change in the context of a New Year's resolution isn't enough to sustain us through the long road we have to walk in order to bring about real transformations in our lives.

Now, that's not to say I'm against trying to change our lives for the better, or that I think the New Year has nothing to offer us as far as making our lives different or better (if they need to be.) Certainly the New Year is a good time to reflect on where your life is going—where you've come from over the past year, and where you want to go in the future. Not only is the New Year symbolic of a new beginning, but the short cold days and long dark evenings allow us to slow down a little and take more time to ponder the deeper meanings of life.

So here are some suggestions to help begin the contemplative process:

Turn off the TV in the evening. Just because it's cold outside doesn't mean you have to veg out in front of the television. Take short walks, read a book, play a game with your spouse and/ or children. Reconnect with yourself and your family.

Read a devotional book or a book on Christian spirituality—especially by an author you've never read before.

Read the gospel of John—considered to be the most spiritual or theological of the gospels. Pay attention to words, phrases or stories that catch your attention or that stick in your mind.

Review your calendar from the past year. Was it too full of activities that exhausted you or drained your energy? Did it have an imbalance of quiet time and busy time? Look for places where old habits of activity or behavior can give way to something new and fresh—then make that change happen. Letting go—of what we've always done, of what we think we're expected to do—isn't usually easy; but the reward is a life lived more deeply, more authentically, and more in tune with our Creator.

May 2010 bring you joy, peace, love, and a renewal of spirit that comes from Christ our redeemer.

Peace, Sharon

Help! Someone Stole My Faith Identity!

The other day I was reading about a substitute teacher in California who wants to bring back Christmas carols into the public schools. She stated that it was important that children learn about the influence that Christianity has had on our history and society. In the midst of her interview with a journalist, she then said something peculiar: *in my next life, I hope to come back as a Roman Catholic.*

This lady, who was advocating on behalf of the Christian faith, believes in reincarnation, which is not a Christian belief. It made me wonder how many other misconceptions about our faith that modern people are carrying in their hearts and minds. So on Sunday mornings, at the Connections Class, I'm going to be teaching a new series called "**Losing My Religion.**" It will be all about the cultural influences, inter-faith connections, and hidden persuaders that are chipping away at our Christian faith.

I'll also be discussing the falsehoods of the **Emergent Church** which is leading young people astray. As well as the class discussion, I'll be writing an online email study for anyone who would like participate, but who cannot manage to attend the class. Details will be soon available in a bulletin insert and online at the church's website – www.erinpresbyterian.org.

The "**Losing My Religion**" classes will take place in the Noah's Ark room from 9:45AM till 10:30AM. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Rev. John Stuart

Monday Night Bible Study: God Hides in Plain Sight

The Monday Night Bible Study resumes on Monday 11th January at 7:15pm in the church parlor. We'll be looking at a new book by Dean Nelson called "**God Hides in Plain Sight.**" It's all about finding God in the midst of our lives and looking for His presence in sacred moments. The book is well written and easy to understand. Dean Nelson is an international journalist and writes for the New York Times, the Boston Globe, as well as Christianity Today. He also has an interesting blog which you can find on the internet at <http://deannelson.net/>.

Dean Nelson has traveled throughout the world covering stories of human interest — India, where he wrote about the slums of Bombay; Kosovo, where he interviewed and wrote about victims of terrorism; Africa, where he wrote about members of the Black Panther Party who live in exile in Tanzania; Tibet, where he wrote about religious persecution; Central America, where he wrote about poverty and contaminated water, and elsewhere.

His book on the seven sacraments, *God Hides in Plain Sight: How to Find the Sacred in a Chaotic World*, was published by Brazos Press in September, 2009.

Participants in the Bible Study can obtain copies at www.amazon.com.

The studies start at 7:15pm in the parlor and all are welcome to join in the lively discussions. The pastor facilitates the study.

FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY

Starting Anew! Join us @ 10am on Saturday January 2 for "Putting Away of the Greens."
Share stories as we put away the holiday décor and turn our thoughts to 2010. Don't forget to bring your favorite CD to share!



Our next **First Wednesday Dinner** is scheduled for January 6 at 5:45pm in the Family Life Center. *Registration is important!* Use the bulletin sign-up form or call the office by Monday afternoon to register if you plan to attend.

**LET'S DO
DINNER
WILL MEET**



January 5 @ 5:15pm for a delicious dinner at the Chop House (on Kingston Pike). Please contact Helen to RSVP at 986-8711. See you then!

Breadbreakers

Breadbreakers will meet January 23rd @ 6:30 pm. Contact Suzanne Levering for more information. To sign up, call the office at 588-5350, or fill out a sign-up sheet in the Sunday bulletin. Child care is available upon request.



Ministry Teams Volunteer Fair
Sunday, January 24th

Erin's Ministry Teams are the framework to the structure of our Church. Our Session is made up of members from 6 ministry teams including, Fellowship, Discipleship, Stewardship, Property, Outreach and Creative Expressions. On Sunday January 24 each ministry team will have a booth set up in the narthex and parlor to encourage all to learn and have the opportunity to discuss each area of our church. This is a great way to become educated on each aspect of Erin to ultimately assist in finding your area of ministry. Please stop by each of the booths for information.

Thank you!
Erin Session



STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

Now and the Future!

Do you feel the blessing that has, and is occurring around us here right now? God has blessed us with the resources for a "new and improved" Erin Church. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the

saints." Our Capital Campaign is an ongoing accomplishment and blessing.

For the future, it is a continuous prayer that Erin Church has the facilities and conducts a ministry to bring others in this community closer to God. Now that we have this physical blessing and the blessing of various ministries, we must be good stewards of them with our talents, time, effort and continued financial support. Just like at home, we must take care of what we have at Erin, and financial resources are needed for that. As a congregation, we are the only Stimulus Package Erin has!

The Stewardship Team

December Stewardship Figures

	Jan 1 - Dec 30, 09	Jan 1 - Dec 30, 08
Income		
Capital Campaign	109,380.00	0.00
Bequests	2,000.00	33,146.05
Creative Exp	8,080.50	7,866.68
Property	21,080.31	26,708.00
Discipleship	7,179.02	8,210.58
Fellowship	9,014.86	9,040.00
Stewardship	842.47	901.96
Memorial	2,654.00	875.00
Outreach	13,234.62	16,504.74
Offerings	358,928.36	323,626.34
PW Income	769.25	724.00
Worship	5.15	630.00
Total Income	533,168.54	428,233.35
Expense		
Creative Exp	21,159.22	21,305.55
Property	108,288.60	63,073.29
Discipleship	24,111.06	25,007.16
Fellowship	9,706.03	14,363.46
Outreach	38,638.69	54,225.91
Stewardship	214,367.74	108,373.46
Worship	3,219.93	3,754.48
Pastoral		
Ministry	109,439.71	103,332.49
Memorials	3,070.72	2,664.70
Session	1,223.93	571.46
PW	707.25	336.12
Total Expense	533,932.88	397,008.08

**PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK OF
January 3, 2010**

TENNESSEE

Family and Friends of Marjorie Swanner
Family and Friends of Carroll W. Cate
Family and Friends of Margaret Casteel
Bob Hoover
Hillary Pearson
Ann Long (friend of Bud & Lora Yard)
Cole Hammond (young friend of the Vowells)
Alma Siedentopf
Mae Brandon
Velma Blackburn
Betty Davy (mother of Sharon Carter)
Marion Sanks



CALIFORNIA

Linda Gaspar (sister of Dave Leckie)

SOUTH CAROLINA

Sara Mantle (friend of Sara Leckie)

VIRGINIA

Ted Ambrose and Family (brother of Estelle Duncan)

MARYLAND

Robert Cutts (friend of Ray and Donna Schall)

OHIO

Steve Rak (friend of Jim & Ginger Thompson)

MILITARY SERVICE

Joseph McLeod (son of Allyson Streckfuss)

Todd Breasseale (son of Loretta Breasseale)

Brian Alger (brother of Susan Hannah)

Jamey Waters (grandson of Ruth White's cousin)

Andrew Alger (nephew of Susan Hannah)

Don Gunter

**HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY
NEW YEAR AND A
BLESSED 2010!**

ERIN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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