

THE TOWER TIE

The Newsletter of the
First Presbyterian Church of Goshen

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The other day, a woman told me that when she was a child, she didn't understand adults when they said that they couldn't wait to go home to Jesus. As a child, she wondered why they wanted to leave life, which, to her, was so much fun. Now, she says, she understands the feeling. She wondered whether the world, with all of its war, hatred, killing, and destruction, was just going down the drain. Perhaps many of us feel this way. But her worry and fear and heartache raise some real questions of faith for all of us. What kind of spirituality or faith can live in the midst of such horrible events? How do we hold the tension of our faith, which is rooted in hope, with the reality of senseless death and willful murder?

In a few weeks, we Christians will walk in faith with Jesus to the cross. We will be with him in the garden as he prays to be spared the death he sees coming to him. We will watch and listen as we witness our ancestors acting in hatred, fear, and self-gain, while they put Jesus—the one we consider to be God incarnate—to death on a cross. He was tortured, nailed to wooden beams, and hung naked in public view. He was spit upon, despised, and taunted, even as he died.

This same Jesus had grown up and lived in a world in which his people, the Jews, lived much as the Palestinians do today in modern Israel: with few rights, little concern for their welfare, abuse, only a scrap of justice, and the open knowledge that they were oppressed on all sides. Violence was everywhere, and deaths such as that of Jesus were meant as public warnings to others who considered flaunting Roman law. There were groups of rightwing Jews who felt that God was on their side and actively did violence and murder in order to overthrow Roman rule. People suffered terribly, many starved, and there must have seemed little hope for the future.

It was into this world that our God came in flesh and blood to stand with us, to show us the path of courage and faith, but especially to bring to us the Gospel, which means "Good News." What does the "Good News" of Jesus have to say in that world and our world? If it's good news, what's good about it? This good news is for what Jesus was killed, so there must be something to it.

Well, shortly, we will witness and celebrate in faith the resurrection of this Jesus. In case we haven't made the connection before, Jesus' suffering and death is God's real, in-the-flesh presence with our world of suffering and fear. It is God's presence and suffering with those in other parts of the world who may be at the market or driving home when a bomb rips through the air and kills them. But, in all of this, we are meant to take the next step in our connection, and that is the resurrection of Jesus. The one who suffered real death and torture has overcome both. He overcame them in body, but more importantly, he overcame them in the very realm of human history and existence for all time. And this is the tension of faith: when we believe in Jesus' actions and words to the point where, even in the midst of suffering and evil, we recognize that not only has God, through Jesus, gone through this, but also that God is present with us in the midst of this suffering.

Thus, in the midst of our own suffering, we believe in the resurrection of life, which is to hope; it is to believe that God's hand is on the rudder of time and history; it is to believe that life is stronger than death in God's world; it is to believe that in spite of all the darkness, God has come into the world, and that can never be overcome. It is to know, truly and deeply within our hearts, that we live in a resurrected world, a world that Christ has redeemed and is bringing toward God's fulfillment. And as that reality fills us, we begin to know

hope, and that hope becomes the light of compassion and love that we carry into the world.

Emmanuel, God with us. The Holy Spirit, God in us. This is our light, this is our good news, which, as God intends, is ours to share by our words and deeds so that the light of hope and justice and mercy will spread to all the world. Is there still evil, oppression, darkness, and injustice? Yes. But is that all that there is? No. There is much, much more that is greater and more beautiful and that calls on our courage and faith and hope. That's why we remember and witness on Good Friday. That's why we celebrate and rejoice on Easter Sunday. We live in a resurrected world, and its hope and light can never be extinguished.

In Christ's love and service,
Pastor Kingsley

THE LENTEN SEASON OF MARCH 2009

The month begins with Lent I on Sunday, March 1, and it takes us through Lent V on March 29. The next Sunday, April 5, is Palm Sunday. It goes so fast.

This Lent, I am reflecting on and searching for stability in the face of chaos. Turmoil is everywhere and seems to be increasing on all fronts. Our daily news and things we hear from those around us are not very encouraging, to say the least. In my own life, I look for reassurance in the small things of life.



I am often reminded of the philosophy of Viktor Frankl, a noted Viennese neurologist and psychiatrist who melded religion and psychology. Frankl developed, through study and observation, a concept based on the premise that the primary motivational force of an individual is to find meaning in life. In one of his books, he recounts the story of Jews stuffed together in a boxcar on the way to a concentration camp. One man complains bitterly of his misery and of those around him; his friend says, "Look through the wooden slat, there, over there—a red cardinal perched on a tree limb in the snowy woods. Isn't it magnificent? Ah, such a sight!"

From that incident and others, Frankl fully believed and spent his life teaching that:

- Life has meaning under all circumstances, even the most miserable ones.
- Our main motivation for living is our will to find meaning in life.
- We have freedom to find meaning in what we do and what we experience, or at least in the stand we take when faced with a situation of unchangeable suffering.

It is the season of Lent, a season during which we contemplate the suffering of Christ leading up to his crucifixion. And yet, around each of us are people who are suffering in their lives. But in the midst of our suffering, we can find meaning, we can find joy, we can still reach out to someone else. We do have a choice. It is a paradox in a way—holding polar opposites—joy and suffering at the same time. But it is possible; we can choose to open our eyes and see what is truly there.

We can choose to see the cardinal on a snowy branch despite the misery that surrounds us, whether in our lives or the lives of those that touch ours.

May we have a joy-filled Lenten season as we come together to worship and lift our voices in song. We hope that you will be uplifted by the music you hear and can receive hope for the coming week.

Robert Clooney



**SUPPORT OUR RECYCLING
FUNDRAISER TO RAISE FUNDS FOR
THE NICARAGUA TRIP**



Donate USED cell phones, laptops, digital cameras and video cameras,
ink jet cartridges and ipods so we can raise funds
for our trip and help protect the environment at the same time -
EcoPhones Recycles up 95% of each item!

PLACE YOUR ITEMS IN THE BIN!

These donations are tax deductible - check out www.EcoPhones.com for more info OR
CONTACT: The Sproul Family (Elizabeth, Alan, Wesley and Mackenzie) 845-346-0013

MURDER ON THE PRAIRIE



Yeeehaaa—There is excitement in the prairie town of **Michido**. Yep, that is what is going on: excitement. Sheriff Clyde Williams is working hard to find out who shot that wealthy landowner, Richard Woods, in cold blood. There will be a gathering of his “kin” and the local townsfolk to see who will be arrested and tried for murder. So, get a ticket, break out that western wear, and come to Fellowship Hall at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 21.

Lulu Peachy, the dance hall gal; Red Eye Mitchell; Annabel Woods; Spring Leaf; and a cast of many will be on hand to give y’all a night of fun and entertainment. This cast features the talents of some impressive Presbyterian congregation members. Y’all will be fed a great meal at the old chuck wagon by some down-to-earth cooks. Tickets are limited to the first one hundred patrons and are a steal at \$25 a piece. (No tickets will be sold at the door.) Don’t be left out. Bring some singles and you can have someone locked in jail, too. Tickets are available in the church office (294-7991). Please, no spurs or horses allowed in Fellowship Hall. Leave them in the corral outside. See y’all there.

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS NEEDED

11:30 a.m. Coffee Hour hosts are needed. Please sign up on the sheet provided on the bulletin board in the lobby of Fellowship Hall.

Adult Christian Education

Adult Christian education classes are held in the Bradner Room on Sundays from 9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. All are welcome at any time. Even if you can't make every class, come to the ones that fit your schedule.

Topic: From Christ to Constantine

When: Every Sunday through March 29

Please join us each Sunday for an enlightening history class, "From Christ to Constantine," taught by our very own professor, Pastor Kingsley. This class will cover the first three centuries of Christianity, which were the most tumultuous, exciting, confusing, and effective years of the faith. You will leave this class understanding many of the dynamics that made it a world religion. Even if you can't attend every class, come to those you can. You are sure to leave knowing a little more than you did.

Topic: "Hosea: God's Love or Domestic Abuse?"

When: April 5, 19, and 26

Hosea is famous for its use of the marriage metaphor to emphasize God's love for us. But feminists criticize the way God punishes Israel as God's adulterous wife. They also object to the way God's seduction of Israel leads to a period of marital bliss. They note that domestic violence is often characterized by periods of bliss followed by more abuse. The course, taught by Starr Tomczak, will consider these views on Hosea from the perspective of biblical interpretation in the Book of Confessions of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Topic: *The Great Divorce* by C.S. Lewis

When: May 3 and 10

Synopsis of *The Great Divorce* taken from the Barnes and Noble Web site:

"What if anyone in Hell could take a bus trip to Heaven and stay there forever if they wanted to? In *The Great Divorce*, C. S. Lewis again employs his formidable talent for fable and allegory. The writer finds himself in Hell boarding a bus bound for Heaven. The amazing opportunity is that anyone who wants to stay in Heaven, can. This is the starting point for an extraordinary meditation upon good and evil, grace and judgment. Lewis' revolutionary idea is the discovery that the gates of Hell are locked from the inside. In Lewis' own words, 'If we insist on keeping Hell (or even earth), we shall not see Heaven: if we accept Heaven, we shall not be able to retain even the smallest and most intimate souvenirs of Hell.'"

This will be a book discussion class. More details will follow in the April Tower Tie. The book is approximately 160 pages long and can be purchased for about \$12 at your favorite bookstore.

BLANKET DRIVE

If you have not yet donated to our Church World Service Blanket Drive, there is still time. Just a check made out to The First Presbyterian Church and marked **BLANKETS** will send the comfort of a blanket worldwide wherever people are suffering.



PRAYER CORNER

The following members or friends are going through a time in which they have asked for prayer by the church.

Please keep the following people in your prayers:

Vince Ahrens
 Jefferson and Rich Billings
 Sarah Burrows
 Barbara Caruso
 Nancy Chase
 Jean Crandall
 Sylvester Damiani
 Amy DePew
 Pat Farley
 Gabby
 Fran Genovese
 Mary Gray Griffith
 Walter Jensen
 Merriebeth Kennedy
 Lyndsay Krutki
 Helen Matthews
 Jeff Monroe
 Eileen Myslinski
 Robert Neil
 Janet Oberg
 Peter
 Trudi Roach
 Kevin Ross
 Fred Schwarz
 Ken Skyer and Family
 Peggy Srirach
 Bill and Jean Strong
 Fannie and George Tietz
 Jen Vitko
 Isiah Warren and Family
 Eugene Walters
 Judy Yendall

Linda Almeas
 Karen and Paige Brooks
 Cheryl Campbell and Family
 Susan Caslick
 Grace Cook
 Phyllis Cummings
 Mary DeFreece
 Joshua DePew
 Steve Fischbein
 Mary Fulford
 The George Family
 Barbara and George Hankins
 Jessica
 Kim
 Laura
 The Family of Anita McCarthy
 Lisa Montalbano
 Richard Nash
 Amy (Thompson) Nguyen
 Ann Ott
 Jane Pines and Family
 Robyn
 Ted Sandstrom
 Barbara Scott and Family
 Sandy Soons
 The Smith Family
 Braiden Thew
 Brenda Travers
 Kim Valentini and Family
 Wendy Bynum-Wade and Family
 Orra and Dale Wood

Sylvia Baltimore
 Haley Buckley
 Mary Carr
 Brandy Charles
 Ethan Cox
 Richard Damiani
 Bob Dennis
 Everyone serving in the Military
 Ben Fisher
 Albert Gabella
 Ann Graham
 Kevin and Sara Hankins
 Alan and Glynnis Jorgensen
 Evelyn Kingsley
 Margaretta Macica
 Evelyn Mercado
 Richard Mudrick and Family
 Toni Neidel's mother
 Patty Northrup
 Amy Pemberton
 Jack Richner
 Dorothy Rose
 Kevin Schuler
 Valerie Simonian
 Walter and Louise Spencer
 Matthew Stewart
 Judy Thompson
 Lori Turner's friend
 Kenya VanZandt
 Jean Wade
 Paul and Phyla Wright

(If you or someone you know would like to be on this list or if you would like to take a name off the list, please call the church office and the name(s) will be included/omitted next month.)

PER CAPITA ASSESSMENT



Every year the Presbytery of the Hudson Valley charges every member church an assessment according to the current active membership. Our recorded active membership number is currently **377** and *our assessment per member* (not per family) for **2009 is \$26.42**, which is a total of **\$9,960.34** to be taken from our operating budget. Please assist with this expense and write a check for your family assessment and either mail it to the church or place it in the Sunday offering plate. Thanks for doing your share.

EXTRA MILE GIVING TREE

Our Extra Mile Giving Tree still stands in the Narthex and continues to be a great source of giving opportunity for many of our members and friends. Check out the Giving Tree located on the table by the front entrance and make your donation toward a special project of your choice. There are envelopes beneath the tree and can be used to either mail back to the church or place in the offering plate. **Thanks for you support.**



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY WISH LIST-----

The Prayer Shawl Ministry of the church is looking for donations of the following: yarn (no wool please), gift bags (suitable for a gift shawl), and tissue paper. We will take gently-worn gift bags (we do not prefer holiday themes). We are also accepting gift cards to Michaels, A.C. Moore, and Jo-Ann fabric and craft stores. Please help us to continue this outreach from our church. Of course, we wish for many more hands to help us create our gifts. The blessings we receive are just overwhelming. Thank you in advance. Items can be left at the church office or given to any member of the shawl ministry.
HUGS!



Easter Lilies

If you are interested in ordering an Easter lily for the Sanctuary in honor or memory of a loved one, please do so by Palm Sunday, April 5, 2009. Just fill out the form below and give it to Barbara Hankins or Carol Coon, or place it in the offering plate. The price for each plant is \$12.99 and they can be taken home after the Easter morning service. If you do not plan to take the plant, please indicate that on the order form so that we may pass it on to a shut in or leave it to continue to beautify the sanctuary for a few more Sundays. Checks should be written to "Presbyterian Women".

*Thank you,
Barbara and Carol, co-chairs*

Name: _____

Number of plants ordered: _____

Text to be printed in the bulletin

Prayer Shawl Ministry News & Notes

The shawl group began meeting on Saturday mornings several times a month, and we found it to be better for all of us. It is a relaxed time; we bring our projects and our ideas, and we work on our gifts. On February 7, we had eleven members working. The shawls are falling from our hooks, and we are also learning new stitches. Darlene Bartley gave us a lesson on the basketweave stitch, so I am sure some of our shawls will soon be taking on some new appearances. Remember, newcomers are always welcome to join us.

We were disappointed to learn that Michaels in Middletown can no longer donate to our cause. We are hoping that we will find some nice yarns at rummage sales and garage sales. If anyone would like to donate yarn or gift cards (for A.C. Moore, Jo-Ann, or Michaels fabric and craft stores) to our ministry, they would be gladly accepted. We are thinking of holding a yarn drive in the future. If you have any ideas on this, please let us know.

Many of the shawls are sent for illness, but they often are sent for other reasons. Recently, I sent one to a friend for a special birthday. Being that we didn't have a "Friendship Prayer" to put with it, one had to be composed. This is the prayer that was included with the gift:

For My Friend

This prayer shawl was made for you
to wrap around you when you're blue;
even when you are happy and carefree,
let it be a reminder of just me.
As the yarn worked through my fingers ten,
I sat and I remembered when,
when thoughts of you come my way,
which happens most every day.
I asked our Lord to watch over you,
to be there for your family, too.
So let this shawl reach out and touch
my dear friend who means so much.
And some day when we are tired and old,
our dear friends will be more precious than gold.
For God is good and he is kind,
he put us together for a time.
And so my friend, I say again,
my love to you I continue to send.
Blessings from God in all you do;
this hug comes from me to you.

God Bless You.

For anyone who is interested, we will meet again on March 7 at 9:00 a.m. We all want to thank Darlene Bartley, who has played hostess for a few of our gatherings. We all signed a Valentine's Day card, which was sent to Author Debbie Macomber, who inspired our ministry. Debbie's church, in the state of Washington, began a ministry this year. They are knitters. We are beginning to exchange ideas and prayers with other ministries. There are shawls sent from sea to sea across the United States. Again, thanks to all for supporting our ministry.

Hugs all around,

Wendy Paffenroth
Journal Keeper

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

World Day of Prayer will be observed at 12:00 p.m. on Friday, March 6. Goshen Christian Reformed Church, at 41 Route 17A, will host this year's service in their youth center building. We come to a deeper understanding of how we are one body in Christ through the 2009 theme, "In Christ There Are Many Members, Yet One Body," written by the World Day of Prayer members of Papua New Guinea. Please join us as we unite and pray together for our own societies and for the world. For more information, please call Linda Buckbee at 986-5480.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN NEWSNOTE

The Presbyterian Women Association's next meeting will be on Monday, March 9 at **7:00 p.m.** in the church parlor. All women of the church are invited to attend.

YOUTH GROUP

March 8—Trip to the IMAX Theater: The schedule of movies is not yet available for this date, but I'm hoping for either *Dark Knight* or *Madagascar 2*. Those interested in going should e-mail me so that I can plan for drivers. The show and show time will be sent to those on my e-mail list. If you'd like to join the e-mail list, please e-mail me at Barbaraanne62@aim.com.

March 22—Game Night: The youth group will meet at 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Anyone with suggestions for group activities should also send me an e-mail—this is YOUR group!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

We completed our rotation on John the Baptist. We all learned that John ate "bugs for lunch," and we watched the opening scenes from *Godspell* when John sings about preparing the way of the Lord. If all goes according to plan, John (Bill Keller) will be coming to visit our classes to tell them about his (John's) life.

We are now beginning a rotation on baptism, a perfect transition from the last rotation. We will learn the importance of baptism in our lives. We have a very good group of students who come each week and who are making the program run smoothly. The volunteers, of course, are wonderful, and we are planning our traditional Stone Soup Luncheon for March.

Susan Pierce
Sunday School Superintendent

BASKET THEMES FOR TRICKY TRAY

Each basket or container should hold different items pertaining to the theme. A tag listing the items may be attached. Baskets are preferred wrapped in clear cellophane bags and can be decorated so the items can be seen. The donation should be approximately \$15 to \$25 or more in value. The date for the Tricky Tray is **SATURDAY, APRIL 25**. Please support this effort.

Here are theme ideas, or you can come up with something different. Use your imagination and surprise us!

- Angels
- Animals (for animals or an animal theme)
- Art supplies
- Baking items
- Beach items
- Birthday items (for a child's, adult's, or over-the-hill birthday party)
- Breakfast items (mixes, coffees, jams, etc., for a relaxing breakfast)
- Candles
- Candies
- Car-washing kit
- Children's items (all age appropriate, for toddlers to teens)
- Coffee
- Comfort items
- Crafting items
- Food items (e.g., peanut butter and jelly, canned goods, variety of dressings, etc.)
- Games and/or puzzles
- Gardening items (everything for that special gardener)
- Gift certificates
- Glassware
- Holiday items (for any holiday)
- Italian or pasta theme (or other type of foods and supplies)
- Kitchenware (cooking items, dishtowels, potholders, etc.)
- Knitting/crocheting items
- Linen and things
- Lottery tickets (for a "Take a Chance" basket)
- Movie night items (popcorn, big bowl, DVDs)
- Muffins and jams
- Photography items (disposable camera, album, etc.)
- Picnic items
- Pizza night items (everything for a night at home)
- Reading materials
- Seasonal items (for winter, spring, summer, or fall)
- School supplies
- Sewing items
- Spices
- Spirits
- Sports (pick a sport and make the basket for that special sports nut)
- Stationary supplies
- Tea
- Wedding items
- Wine



Let your imagination come up with something unusual and different. Maybe your place of business would donate a prize. We will also have a sweepstakes table with larger prizes. Everyone's help would be appreciated, and please volunteer to work with us that day. We need the support of all members of the church.

This year, the Tricky Tray will be at the C. J. Hooker Middle School, as we had such a large turnout last year. We cannot accommodate the crowd in our Fellowship Hall. Watch the bulletin and the April Tower Tie for updated information.

We would like as many baskets as possible. **Thank you.** If you have any questions, please see Darlene Bartley or Barbara Skyer.

BREAKFAST WITH THE EASTER BUNNY

WHEN: **SATURDAY, April 4, 2009**

TIME: 8:30-10 A.M. OR 10-11:30A.M.

WHERE: **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN GOSHEN**

COST: \$6.00 PER PERSON, PAID IN ADVANCE



Included in the price of each paying child's reservation will be games, crafts, activities, and an egg hunt.

The Easter Bunny will be on hand to greet everyone.

QUALITY PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES WILL BE AVAILABLE TO CATCH THAT SPECIAL MOMENT ON THE EASTER BUNNY'S LAP!

Pictures will cost \$5 and can be paid for at the time of service.

LIMITED SEATING; DON'T DELAY!!

Reservations accepted in the church office through March 20th.

Questions? Call Beth Laskoski 651-3294 or Jeanette McDowell 294-8334

RESERVATION FORM for "Breakfast with the Easter Bunny"

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

E-mail address _____

Preferred Seating Time:

on **Saturday, April 4th** _____ 8:30 to 10:00 **OR** _____ 10:00 to 11:30

Number of adults
and older children _____

Number **AND AGES** of children participating
in breakfast and activities _____

(Activities include an outdoor egg hunt. Please bring your own baskets and dress for the weather.)

TOTAL NUMBER X \$6.00 COST PER PERSON = \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: First Presbyterian Church, 33 Park Place, Goshen, NY 10924.

Forms and checks can be dropped off or mailed to the church office.

Please mark envelope "For Breakfast with the Bunny."

TIDBITS FROM THE TOWER

HAPPY MARCH BIRTHDAYS TO:

1	<i>Gina Gruber</i>	13	<i>Matthew Quinn</i>
2	<i>Josephine Bartley</i>	22	<i>Jeff Kingsley</i>
4	<i>Deborah Spencer</i>	25	<i>Jeffrey Gati, Jr.</i>
5	<i>Wendy Paffenroth</i>	26	<i>Robin Paulus</i>
7	<i>Betty Lobb</i>	27	<i>Brooks Church, Sr.</i>
8	<i>Robert Lobb</i>	28	<i>Tyler Cox</i>
9	<i>Karen Magee</i>	29	<i>Kay Kent</i>
11	<i>Patrick Farley</i>	30	<i>Grace Cook</i> <i>Michael Roper</i>

HAPPY MARCH ANNIVERSARIES TO:

15 *Bill and Carolyn Keller*



*If you are also celebrating a special day, we wish you much happiness.
If you would like your birthday and/or anniversary included, please give your
dates to Pat in the church office.*

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

- *Luke Garofalo-Wade who passed his EMT class and state exam and is working for Mobile Life.*
- *Whitney and Jim Schindley on the birth of their son, Alexander James on February 3, 2009. He weighed in at 9 lbs. and 21 ½ inches. Proud grandparents are Gar and Linda Clark.*
- *Our newest members who joined the church on February 1: Robert and Jennifer Fitzpatrick, Tina McCloud and Danielle Puelzl.*

UPDATE

Lorraine Delatorre's granddaughter, Shannon Budnick, called with an update on Lorraine. She is suffering from the early stages of Alzheimer's and is now in a home. Lorraine's address is:

Achieve Rehabilitation and Nursing
170 Lake Street
Liberty, NY 12754

If anyone would like updates on Lorraine you may contact Shannon at:
362 Wild Turnpike
Rock Hill, NY 12775

A LETTER FROM DAN CONLEY

So, we had volunteer shadowing for three days. I stayed with this guy, Aaron, from Oregon. He teaches welding at a vocational school a few miles outside of Apia. It was a good experience. Aaron and I really got along well, so that was good. I went to his school and watched him teach, and he explained some of his challenges. First, vocational schools are second-chance schools, so the kids are smart and they want to be there, but they, for whatever reason, couldn't pass the year-thirteen exam, which would make them eligible for a university. The main reason is that they don't have good English skills. But the kids are good, well behaved, and they have a desire to learn the trades. Otherwise, they wouldn't even bother coming to school. So, for that it is good. He only has three kids in one class and five in the other. Small classes with good kids make it easier to teach, and he doesn't have to waste his time with disciplining them.

But there are limitations. Aaron is constantly running out of materials, not getting the parts to fix broken machines, and has to do a lot with nothing. It was good because that is what I'll probably have to deal with. I will be going to a Methodist vocational school on the other big Samoan island, Savai'i. About a thirty-minute ferry ride from the Apia harbor. It is the same size as Upolo, the island with Apia, and has basically the same stuff: equal number of volunteers, etc.

Also, the power kept going out. You just can't weld without power. So for about half the time we played cards or muu (a Samoan version of checkers that is much more challenging and more fun with basically the same rules but just a little different). Aaron said it happens pretty often, and you just get used to it.

The main problem with Samoan vocational schools is that there are no standards. If you graduate from the school, they give you a certificate, but to employers, that certificate doesn't mean that you actually know how to do anything. They are trying to create a more standardized format around the country so a certificate would prove that you have some specific skills. But, until now, it doesn't exist.

Then, yesterday, Aaron took me surfing. Very cool! Very hard! Very tiring! Aaron is from northern California and surfs a lot. He had an extra board that was my size, and we went to the main surf spot on this island. But according to Aaron, it wasn't a good day to learn. The waves were either really small, then three monsters would come—seriously, like ten-foot waves. But I got used to being on a board, paddling on it (which is much harder than swimming because you can't use your legs), and also sitting on it. You sit, face the waves, then do a 180 and attempt to catch it at the right time. We started paddling out, road over one big one, no problem; then Aaron was telling me to paddle hard because we were about to die. This huge wave came and crushed me. The waves here are bigger than anything I have ever seen. You have no control. If you get caught when the wave starts to break, you have no hope. I consider myself a very strong swimmer. I'm hopeless. The other bad thing is that the beach isn't sand. It is rock, so you can get hit hard against a rock on the bottom if you are too shallow. But it was fun.

I tried, unsuccessfully, to ride a few waves, but I fell every time before I could stand up. Some of the waves were so big that they flipped me right off the front of the board. HUGE WAVES. One time, it happened and I just flew headfirst, and I had a millisecond where I was thinking, "I'm dead. I'm going to go headfirst into a rock." But it was really fun, just being out on the water and stuff. Aaron said I was really good for my first time, so that was good.

That is about it.

Dan

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Confessing Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we shall seek to use our gifts through worship, ministry, and mission, to gather the Church in from the world, to continue to nurture one another, to serve a world still broken, and to exemplify through common values and purposes Christian discipleship to the greater glory of God.

ELDERS

Class of 2009

**Bruce Crandall
Bill Keller
Karen Magee
Tom McDowell
Cathy Wade
Michele White**

Class of 2010

**Loretta Richner
Scott Roper
Barbara Skyer
Doug Wade
Rob Warner
Orra Wood**

Class of 2011

**John Bruno
Linda Clark
Geri Corey
Dominick Fontana
Bill Hodges
Kathy Stringer**

Clerk of Session: Sue Varden

BOARD OF DEACONS

Class of 2009

**Richard Ayres
Linda Boardman
Carolyn Keller
John Knox
Denise Quinn
Ray Ruckdeschel
John Snook**

Class of 2010

**Diana Bowe
Andrea Branson- Snook
Deb Hourahan
Jon Hourahan
Lisa Montalbano
Lori Turner
Cheryl Zis**

Class of 2011

**David Castellano
Jean Crandall
Patrick Farley
Helen Gardellis
Kelly Grob
Barbara Lippert
Ken Skyer**

**Moderator of Deacons:
Presbyterian Women:**

**Richard Ayres
Barbara von Pentz, President**

STAFF

**Robert J. Clooney, Director of the Ministry of Music
Pat Schwetje, Church Secretary
Barbara Skyer, Church Treasurer
Nancy Smith, Financial Secretary**