



SHARON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWS

September 2016

Connections

ON MY MIND, ROB BLUMER

I was away the third weekend of August working with the Session of Calvary Presbyterian Church, in South Pasadena, CA. Its pastor once was an associate pastor serving with me in another congregation. It was a good time for a couple of reasons. The best reason first – our son lives about fifteen minutes from that church.

The other good reason, it served as a reminder to me that we Presbyterians are a connectional church. There are differences in the operations and contexts between every Presbyterian congregation, but our theology of church life joins us together.

We don't believe, for example, that any congregation stands alone as the complete Church of Jesus

Christ. We believe that we need each other for talent, wisdom, spiritual insight, and the life experiences other congregations offer to the discernment of Christ's will.



Presbyterians link with other Presbyterians, of course, but we realize that the Church of Jesus Christ is larger and more diverse than our own system of polity and (gasp!) our theology. (I must say, and

perhaps I speak for many of you, too, that I believe our theology gives us the best tools for seeking and discerning Christ's will.)

As a connectional church, I had told my former associate pastor that I'd be attending worship at her church and would let her session know of my experience of the congregation's hospitality toward me, a complete stranger. Wouldn't you know it? She encouraged a few of her members to visit at Sharon en route to the Worship and Music conference at Montreat, back in June. Ah...the connectional church. Once I process what I learn from them, I will let you know.

BRING A FRIEND

Sunday Night Live!



Sunday, September 11th at 5:45pm, Gym

This SNL dinner is a fundraising opportunity for our Girl Scout Troop 1460. Please join us for a delicious dinner, with a menu of spaghetti, salad, garlic bread, iced tea and dessert! Gluten free pasta will be available. There will also be a silent auction!

Fall Festival



Saturday, September 24th from 4:00pm-7:00pm

The Southpark Community Fall Festival is Almost Here! Come join us for the best fall festival on the planet. Enjoy hay rides, bounce houses, carnival games, snow cones, the world famous Cake Walk and more! Stay for dinner and enjoy delicious BBQ and live Blue Grass music. (\$8 BBQ plate | \$4 hot dog plate.)

Here's the event schedule:

Games, Pony and Hay Rides: 4:00-5:30

Cake Walk: 4:30 - 5:30

BBQ Served at 5:30 (while supplies last)

Lonesome Pine Blue Grass Band: 5:45 - 6:45

But wait...it only gets better. YOU can play a role in making this year's festival a whopping success. We need volunteers! You can sign up to volunteer by going to: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c4eaba82ca4f49-fall2>

"So Long Summer" Outdoor Worship



Sunday, September 25th at 10:00am

Enjoy one congregation wide service under the shade trees. Dress casually and bring a lawn chair or blanket. (Coffee and donuts and fellowship at 9:00am!)

Children and Youth Music Ministry



Sunday, September 11th at 5:00pm

Children, Middle School, and High School students (grades 1-12) are invited to make music and joyfully praise God this fall. Whether you can commit to just one Sunday or to a whole year, all are invited to grow, learn, serve, and lead through Sharon Presbyterian's children and youth music ministry programs. Hope to see you there! Contact Allison Schommer, allison@sharonpcusa.org to learn more or to register.

Christmas in July



We joyfully sang “O Come, All Ye Faithful,” “Joy to the World,” and other Christmas carols on a 90° day as we celebrated Christmas in July on July 17.

Far removed from the hustle and bustle, busyness, and commercialization that comes in the cooler month of December, it was a won-

derful time to pause in the summer heat and humidity to remember and celebrate the wondrous gift of God’s grace to us in the Christ Child.

Complete with a Salvation Army Christmas Kettle and a Santa-hat wearing bell ringer, we collected \$210.73 to help serve human need in our community.



At our after-worship fellowship, people of all ages enjoyed hearty conversations, festive Christmas carolers, melt-in-your-mouth red and green sugar cookies, frosty snow cones, and even some faux snow.

Because God is not bound by times and seasons, we know that, even in July, we can sing with gladness and cheer that the “Lord is come!”



Let the Music Begin

Autumn is upon us and the music ministries at Sharon Presbyterian are ramping up to renew our joyous efforts in supporting worship and the life of this special community of faith. All of our ensembles encourage new people to come and join in the fun. NONE of our groups have auditions. NONE of our ensembles require past experience in music. The Chancel Choir, for instance, includes singers with no previous experience...except maybe singing in the shower. SO COME! JOIN US!

The Chancel Choir rehearses on Wednesday evenings, 7:00–8:15pm and do NOT require singers

to attend every week. The Vocal Ensemble rehearses 8:15–9:30pm. The Morning Song Team, Children’s Choir, Spirit Ringers and Youth Ensemble generally rehearse Sunday afternoons.

Making music has always played an integral part in Presbyterian worship. Martin Luther said that “next to Scripture, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure.” Volunteering your time, whether you’re 8 or 80, member at Sharon or not, is not only spiritually and personally fulfilling – IT’S FUN!

And the music ministry is a family. Newcomers always feel welcome

in the warm embrace of volunteers who devote their time and talents to God.

If you are intrigued, please check our website at www.sharonpcusa.org/music to learn more about us. COME! JOIN US!



SPOTLIGHT

Sharon Presbyterian Weekday School



Fall brings excitement to Sharon Presbyterian Week-day School with a new year. This is my 16th year at SPWS and I always love getting to know new families and greeting the returning children.

For the 2016-17 school year, we have a wonderful staff. The teachers

have been getting the rooms ready and planning lots of fun activities for the children. The Toddlers will be singing and reading and going on lots of buggy walks. All of the children will enjoy the renovations done to the playground over the summer. Twos and threes concentrate on following directions and learning lots of new things through active play and games. Fours and T-K will have activities to get them ready for kindergarten, including learning about letters and sounds, numbers, and many readiness activities.



All of the children will do Chapel with “Preacher Rob” and with me. We sing songs from Cave Quest, the VBS theme that was used over the summer. The children are always so excited each week to go to Chapel and are excited to talk about Jesus.



We also do music, PoppySeed Theatre (a combination of music and drama) and Fit ‘n Play (movement) each month. We have special programs from Discovery Place and Children’s Theatre. We have an annual cooking program in the gym, a carnival day on the playground, a magician and other special visitors.

Hearing about all the activities in preschool makes adults want to be kids again! No wonder it is such a fun place to work! Drop by one weekday morning to see all that is going on! Have a great year!



Middle School Mission Trip at the Beach

On August 8th our middle school mission team departed for Myrtle Beach South Carolina. This year's middle school team consisted of eight boys, ranging from 6th to 8th grade, led by Susan Milkey, Amanda Buchanan & Martin Pruitt.



Though it can be hard to see if you're just at Myrtle Beach vacationing, Horry County is one of the poorest in the Southeast. Last October when torrential rains and massive flooding went through the lower half of South Carolina, the people who were most affected were those who had the least to start.

In partnership with First Presbyterian Church of Myrtle Beach and the North Carolina Baptist Men's Association, our Middle Schoolers learned the necessary skills and safety and helped to re-roof two separate homes. "It was really cool to meet the lady whose house we were helping with. I liked giving her the Bible that all of the volunteers signed. We also had a really great time at the beach during our free time" said Wills Koeniger. The boys put tin roofing on the first house and asphalt shingles on the second.



First Presbyterian of Myrtle Beach hosts a summer mission program, "Beach Castles," through which hundreds of youth volunteers from around the country get the opportunity to stay and work in Myrtle Beach.



Each year the Sharon Presbyterian Youth Group goes on two week-long mission trips and works with local mission organizations throughout the year.

For more information on how to support our ongoing outreach efforts contact Martin Pruitt, Director of Youth Programming at martin@sharonpcusa.org.

Coming up at SPY

We are very excited about the new school year and everything that we have coming up in this semester's Sharon Presbyterian Youth Group!

SPY will kickoff on September 11th with a joint parent-youth meeting at 5:00pm. We will have a devotion and talk about this year, our plans for youth group, trips, meals, retreats & other opportunities.

Dinner will take place at 5:45pm,

Sunday Night Live, sponsored by the Girl Scouts! Make sure to prepay for your meal reservation at www.sharonpcusa.org or call the church office. Following dinner we will have our traditional color war! All parents and youth are invited!

Please bring a check for \$35 to help cover our program costs, a copy of your youth's insurance card (front & back). Normal youth group will be-

gin on September 18th with middle school meeting at 5:00pm, combined dinner from 6:00 - 6:30pm, and high school from 6:30-7:30pm.

For more information, contact Martin Pruitt, Director of Youth Programming at martin@sharonpcusa.org.

From the Garbat-Welch Family

Dear Friends,

Please join us in welcoming to the world Azai Lutulu Garbat-Welch. Azai was born at 7:59 a.m. on Saturday, July 16. He weighed 8 lbs 2 oz and measured 21.5 inches long. Azai (rhymes with sky) is Aramaic and means strength/strong. Lutulu is Tshiluba (Democratic Republic of Congo) and means patience. Lutulu is my (Luta's) father's given name from his time as a missionary in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Jeremy and I have a family joke: "We just don't know how to do things the easy way. We always have to do things the hard way." The birth of Azai was no exception. After laboring for approximately 34 hours, it was determined that he was probably stuck and the doctors recommended opting for a c-section before we found ourselves in an emergency situation. During c-sections you can now request clear sheeting so you can see your child being born. As the doctor was attempting to remove Azai I remember thinking "it looks like she is wrestling an alligator on my stomach!" She later exclaimed that we made the right decision because he was definitely stuck. In the recovery room I was losing a lot of blood and began convulsing. They tried multiple ways to stop the bleeding without success. I was taken for a second emergency surgery to stop the bleeding and woke up early Sunday morning in the ICU. On Saturday I needed 8 units of blood trans-

fused and needed an additional 2 on Sunday to replenish what I had lost. I've been told that's more than the equivalent of my body's own blood volume! I spent 6 days recovering in the hospital. Without a doubt it was one of the most terrifying moments of my life.



As we talked with our doctors about what happened, it became increasingly clear that God's hand was intervening through the whole process. The hospital we were at is a teaching hospital – University of Louisville – and one of, if not the only hospital in the city that performs the B-Lynch suture procedure to stop uterine bleeding. The doctor who performed the procedure credited Dr. Carol Brees, a faculty member at the University of Louisville with teaching her the procedure. Dr. Carol Brees is a former mission co-worker with the PC(USA). I had the privilege of getting to know Dr. Brees when I worked with refugees

in Louisville before we headed to Malawi. The added perk for me, is the physician that developed the B-Lynch procedure is from Senegal. All the little connections, put together to ensure I was in the right place at the right time. God truly is merciful!

We believe Azai's name is a testimony to his entrance into the world. It took 8 years for us to have a biological child, and we were truly past the point of believing that would ever be a reality for us. Even with an 8 year wait, Azai decided to stay put for 41 weeks and 6 days and then take his time making his appearance. While I'm not sure I will ever consider patience a true virtue of mine, Azai has definitely taught us to be patient and wait on the Lord. Our God is always present, in the big and little details; even when we think we are alone God is always there.

We have been told that my recovery will take some time – 2 major abdominal surgeries, plus massive blood loss take their toll. We covet your prayers during this time! Specifically prayers for quick healing for me, and for grace with each other as we adjust to life with 2 kids and a Mama who isn't fully functioning.

In Christ's Service,
Luta, Jeremy, Jathniel, and Azai!

CELEBRATIONS



New Members
Skip and Jessica Webb with their son Owen Webb who was baptized on Sunday, August 28th



Congratulations to Eric and Lauren Murray in the birth of a daughter, Marjorie Alice Murray, who was born yesterday, August 25, 2016. The baby will go by the name "Jo." Charles and Beth Murray are the proud grandparents.

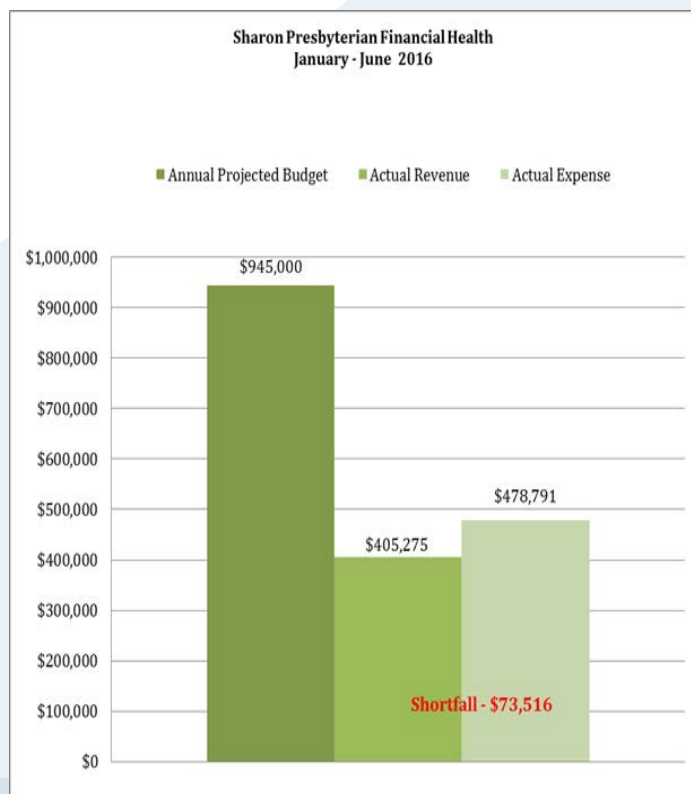


Congratulations to Sara LaBaron and Tom Kenyon on their recent marriage. Tom is the son of Malda Kenyon. They were married here at Sharon Presbyterian Church on Thursday, August 11, 2016.

IN OUR PRAYERS

Please remember in prayer: recently discharged from the hospital: Randy Pusser; **those at home:** Marguerite Allee, Carolyn Hutton, Sandie Shrum, Marvin Ward, Frank Black Jr., Earl Ferguson, Jim Bjorneboe, Chris Price, and our homebound members; **additional concerns:** Harry Burnett (Sara Hart's father); Gerry Callicut (Jana Barnett's mom); Meg Osowski; Wade Burnett Frye and Lane Joseph Frye (Herb and Mable Lockwood's great grandsons); Brian Buchanan (Chris Buchanan's brother); Jeremy and Luta Garbat-Welch (PCUSA Missions in Malawi); Presbytery of Huanta in Peru; Rusty Edmondson and Sara Armstrong (PCUSA Missions in Peru). The prayer list is reset on the second Monday of each month. To submit or resubmit a prayer request, please contact the church office at office@sharonpcusa.org. By request, concerns may remain private and names will not be published.

BUDGET





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DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE IS:

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