



# First Light

Volume 27, Issue 7

July 2017

here's the scoop!



JULY 9, 2017  
6:30-8:30pm

@ the Ekblad's Home

559 Eagle View Court,  
Fairbanks, AK 99712

**\*ICE CREAM CREATION COMPETITION!**

BRING YOUR FAVORITE ICE CREAM RECIPE CREATIONS  
TO BE ENTERED INTO THE COMPETITION AND BE NAMED

*The King or Queen of Cream!*

\*Only one entry per family may be entered into the competition

## SUMMER COMBINED SERVICES AT 11AM JULY 2 & AUGUST 6

THROUGH MAY 2017	
TOTAL RECEIPTS	250,081
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	<u>266,074</u>
NET	<u>(15,993)</u>



**\*Session took a break in June and there are no current updates.**

547 Seventh Ave. Fairbanks, AK 99701  
www.fairbanksfirstpres.com  
(907) 452-2406

### *Faith, the Spirit, and Our Shifting Moods*

On Pentecost Sunday this last month I preached on The Baptism of the Holy Spirit, which I believe to be a vitally important thing for every believer. That said, there is a lot of confusion surrounding the subject. Let me remind you that when we come to faith in Christ we receive the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God dwells in us; he makes his home in us. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not about the Spirit's indwelling, rather, it's about the Spirit's empowerment. I mentioned in that message that the Spirit is "in us for us and comes upon us for our mission in the world." In other words there's empowerment the likes of what we see all through the book of Acts.

Clearly faith is a vital element in our lives. I have found that often it's when I step out in faith, asking God for his Spirit anointing to come upon me that he gives me empowerment (read Luke 11:9-13). I believe God for that. Now I'm led to step out and exercise faith in the gift I trust God has given. That's when I usually see God move in power. So faith to ask and faith to obey come together and God and God moves.

My moods may cause me to doubt, but I choose to believe the promise of God and I have seen God faithfully come through so many, many times. In speaking about our moods and faith, a quote from C.S. Lewis comes to mind.

*"Now Faith, in the sense in which I am here using the word, is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods. For moods will change, whatever view your reason takes. I know that by experience. Now that I am a Christian I do have moods in which the whole thing looks very improbable: but when I was an atheist I had moods in which Christianity looked terribly probable. This rebellion of your moods against your real self is going to come anyway. That is why Faith is such a necessary virtue: unless you teach your moods 'where they get off', you can never be either a sound Christian or even a sound atheist, but just a creature dithering to and fro, with its beliefs really dependent on the weather and the state of its digestion. Consequently one must train the habit of Faith.*

*The first step is to recognize the fact that your moods change. The next is to make sure that, if you have once accepted Christianity, then some of its main doctrines shall be deliberately held before your mind for some time every day. That is why daily prayers and religious readings and churchgoing are necessary parts of the Christian life. We have to be continually reminded of what we believe. Neither this belief nor any other will automatically remain alive in the mind. It must be fed. And as a matter of fact, if you examined a hundred people who had lost their faith in Christianity, I wonder how many of them would turn out to have been reasoned out of it by honest argument? Do not most people simply drift away?" (C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity)*

Lewis was not talking about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but what he had to say applies. I have found that I must train my mind and my heart through prayer, pursuing intimacy with God, Scripture reading and meditation and obedience in order that I might apprehend the things of God. Paul said in Romans 12:1f I must "...be transformed by the renewing of my mind..." and that towards a more biblical world-view.

May God meet you and deepen your understanding and experience as you pursue him,

Pastor Andy



2	Billy Brewer	16	Oliver Brewer
2	Connie Arp	17	Barbara Moody
4	Rebekah VanderLugt	17	Jill Gates
6	Janette Hanneman	18	Kathy Rahmandar-Halfhill
7	Charlotte Wilbur	18	Jerod Dunlap
7	Judy McNinch	19	Bob VanHatten
7	Stephanie Brewer	19	Ian VanHarper
9	Diane Miller	20	Heidi VanHarper
9	Eleanor Denton	23	Michele Marney
10	Scott Gilbert	23	Amy Logan
11	Margaret Vander Lugt	23	Elsa Beene
13	Sarah Albert	26	Erin Plattner
14	Cindy Aldrich	26	Walter Lord Jr.
14	Roxie Fink	31	Allyson Benson
15	Aidan Moody		

## First Light

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Of First Presbyterian Church  
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**Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 20th day of each month. Submissions may be dropped off at the church office, mailed, faxed or emailed to Claire.**

### Pentecost 2017

“Do you know what you’re ordering?” Lifting my head from the menu, I glanced at the guy standing over me- at first thinking he was the waiter, but the waitress was there standing behind him. He was holding a plastic bag. So, I wasn’t quite sure what was going on. He was African-American, late 20’s, an athlete from his build... my friend Tommy a former Army Ranger, was looking at him over the top of his menu with same questioning gaze I had. “Yeah, I think so,” I said.

“It’s taken care of.” And out of the bag he pulled a stack of bills- at that point I realized the sack was full of money. Trembling, he started laying out bills on our table, he got half done- and turned around and handed the rest to the waitress, and said “this is a tip...take it all.”

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Twenty minutes earlier I had picked Tommy up from New Hope church in Renton, Washington. He’s a pastor in our presbytery. We were heading down the road when Tommy said, “I changed my mind lets go to this great Middle Eastern restaurant instead of where I first thought.” I turned at the corner, and made my way to Ishtar (- which, just let me say, if you’re in Kent, WA and want a great place to eat lunch or dinner, Ishtar is the place, 4 stars on Yelp). Ishtar is a Muslim (halal) restaurant run by super friendly Iraqi’s.

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Trembling, the guy with the money bag handed the waitress the rest of the cash in his hand. Tommy and I looked at each other and both said something to the effect, “Friend, why?” He looked down, his lips and chin quivering, tears beginning to stream down his face, said in a barely audible voice, “Yesterday I was supposed to go out with three of my good friends. I couldn’t make it. They were all killed in a terrible accident.”

Stunned, I’m trying to think of a question to ask to invite more, without being invasive in such a raw open wound. All I could think of was, “Friend, can we pray for you?” He sat down in the chair next to Tommy, elbows on his knees, head down, hand to eyes which were now full of tears and just began sobbing, heaving... tears freely flowing. “Yes, Please...” he whispered through the sobs... “Brother,” I asked, “what is your name?”

Through the sobbing, he finally got his name out, and Tommy- being the closest to him, laid his hand on our new friends shoulder and prayed a simple succinct prayer. He stood up, wiped his eyes and took Tommy’s card, the pastor of a multi-racial church 3 miles away. Our new friend gave Tommy and me a hug and he hung on for dear life. I found myself whispering in his ear, “God saved you for a reason. I can’t begin to know the pain you feel at your friends’ loss, but God saved you for a purpose. Life is worth living.” He wouldn’t let go.

*“A mans heart devises his way, but the Lord directs his steps” Proverbs 16:9*

He left, we sat back down and just looked at each other. I turned to the waitress (a Muslim gal), and asked, "Did you hear that story?" She said through wide eyes, "He paid for everyone in the restaurant." I said, "God was watching out for him." And she said, "Yes He was." She asked what we wanted to order, Tommy said, "The entire left side of the menu." We all laughed.

A restaurant full of Muslims where we didn't plan on being, an African-American man sideswiped by his own mortality with a bag of cash paying it forward, two Presbyterian pastors looking at a menu who end up praying in Jesus' name for this man, and this man connecting with the pastor of a gospel centered church just a few miles away. That, my friends, is Providence.

God always has the first and last word. He is always initiating. The call on our lives is to simply be present, to pay attention, to be ready to bear witness to the hope that is within us – with gentleness and respect – and to relax. God will do the rest.

Pastor Dave

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## ***What does it mean to be a good neighbor?***

**SUNDAYS, 10AM @ FIRST PRES!**

June 18 thru July 30

This class will meet every Sunday except for July 2 from 10am-10:55am in the Fireside Room









We hosted an amazing week of Vacation Bible School at the beginning of June. With over 100 kids in attendance, we kept all of our teachers and volunteers busy!

A huge thank you to all of you who were able to come out and help—both in preparation for VBS and for the week itself. It was a successful time for teaching, playing and learning about how we were created by God.

Miss Connie

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## Spicy Mustard Youth News!

### How About Just 'Mission?'

This month, our annual Spicy Mustard Youth Summer Mission Trip will be to.... Fairbanks!

After hearing Pastor Andy remind us that the biggest mission field is our own backyard, taking Paul Richardt's class on Justice, and hearing Pastor Dave and Brian Rozell remind us to love our neighbors... our *actual* neighbors, we will be staying in town for our 2017 Mission. We will be serving alongside local service organizations like the Food Bank while also learning more about our community and our community's needs while growing in prayer, worship, and fellowship.

We start off the Mission Week with a retreat floating the Delta River. Please pray for our float trip and the Mission to follow, July 14-20.

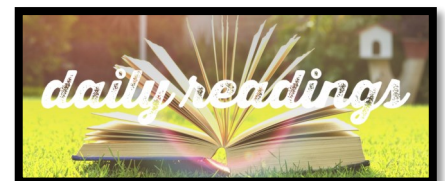
If you know of any locals in need of a team of a dozen teenagers working for a day, please let me know!

David McConnell-Booher

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## Daily Lectionary Readings for July 2017

[www.pcusa.org/devotions/lectionary/lectionarylist.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/devotions/lectionary/lectionarylist.htm)



**First Presbyterian Church**  
547 Seventh Ave. at Cushman St.  
Fairbanks, AK 99701

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## **Elders on Session**

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Jerry Cleworth  
Dave Dreydoppel  
Michelle Harpole**

**Terry Reichardt  
Ted Riggs, Sr.  
Brian Rozell  
Perry Schneider  
Joyce Tapper**

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