

PASTOR'S REPORT

2012 finds me in the midst of my seventeenth year as pastor of Second Presbyterian Church. During the year I continued to plan my sermons according to the recommended texts in the common lectionary. Sometimes this results in my preaching on the same passage as is being studied in the Adult Sunday Bible Study class. Special services during the year included Ash Wednesday worship, Maundy Thursday Candlelight Communion, Good Friday Service of Shadows, Thanksgiving Eve (at First Presbyterian this year), and the Christmas Eve Communion and Candlelight Service.

Two Bible Studies were offered in 2011, on Tuesday mornings and evenings. The winter-spring study was a topical study, using the Apostles' Creed, and Scripture texts related to it. The Fall study was on the book of Deuteronomy. The winter-spring study for 2012 has already begun, a study of the gospel according to John.

On June 7, 2011, the deciding vote was cast and the presbyteries approved the new Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and Form of Government, two sections of the denomination's *Book of Order*. I had worked on that project since 2008, having served as co-moderator of the General Assembly's Form of Government Task Force. I made several trips in the first half of the year to speak at presbytery meetings about this proposal, and made a few more trips after it was adopted, to interpret the implications it has for congregations and sessions. In addition, I presented two webinars on this subject for the *Presbyterian Outlook*. I am anticipating that I will make my last presentation on the new Form of Government on January 21 at Princeton Seminary in New Jersey.

Second had the unique privilege of hosting the Moderator of the General Assembly, Ruling Elder Cindy Bolbach, who preached during worship on February 13. I served with Cindy as co-moderators of the Form of Government Task Force.

Towards the close of 2011, Session reviewed the changes that have been made necessary by the adoption of the new Form of Government, and acted to amend its manual of operations in several areas, and recommend similar changes to the congregation's bylaws.

One of the newly-elected ruling elders in the Class of 2014, Sue Gochenour, needed to be ordained, so I provided the required pre-ordination training for her over three sessions held in December.

Christmas has fallen on a Sunday five times in my 31 years of pastoral ministry, most recently this past Christmas. This always creates an unique situation where we gather for the traditional Christmas Eve candlelight service with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, followed by Sunday morning worship a few hours later on the day set aside to celebrate the incarnation and birth of Jesus Christ. Christmas will fall on a Sunday again in 2016,.

Along with the elder commissioner elected by the session, I attended all four of the Shenandoah Presbytery meetings held last year, at Covenant, Staunton (February), Charles Town (May), Timber Ridge, Lexington (August), and Opequon, Winchester (November).

Within Shenandoah Presbytery, I concluded my service the chairperson of Presbytery Council at the end of 2011. On January 1, 2012, I began to serve as the acting Stated Clerk of the presbytery. I do this on Mondays, which I have used as my day off at Second for several years now.

Last July marked my seventh trip to Baja to help lead the Highland Augusta Mission Community-sponsored Baja Mission Trip. Fifty-two people participated, including Andy Easley from Second. The 2012 trip is July 15-21.

– Dan Williams
Pastor