

THE MESSENGER



| NEWS FROM FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FORT COLLINS |

**STONE
SOUP
PROJECT**

**CULTIVATING
GOD'S FIELD**

**DESSERT
WITH
DR. CHRIS
ISICHEI**

**GIVING
IT ALL
AWAY**

What's Inside | CONTENTS

3	Pastor's Corner: Giving It All Away
4	Congregational Nominating Committee
5	Pastor Nominating Committee Update
6-7	Stone Soup Project
8	Cultivating God's Field
9	A Season of Transition
10	Goodbye Sendoffs
11	Have I Taught Them?
12	Church of Character: Alertness
13	Library Corner
14	Many Hands Do Amazing Work
15	Dessert with Dr. Chris Isichei
16	VBS: Hometown Nazareth

From the Editor | CULTIVATING

A wise gardener once told me not to plant too much in Colorado before Mother's Day. Our unpredictable spring weather can frost, hail, and flood to destroy seedlings and hopes for a fruitful garden.

I believe Mother's Day is here for FPC—in more ways than one—and we have made it through the unpredictable spring. The ground is fertile and ready for growth all around the church. The recent Discernment Class considered "God's Field" in I Corinthians and how to cultivate it (p. 8). Pastor Paul encourages us to water the soil of service (p.3), and during our Spring Work Day, many hands did just that by pruning, painting, and polishing for FPC (p.14). Perhaps teachers are considering how they are growing up a child (p. 11). Later this month, "Master Gardener" Dr. Chris Isichei will share how we can help plant seeds of hope in Jos, Nigeria (p. 15). And faith is sure to sprout at Vacation Bible School this summer (p. 10, 16).

The soil is ready. The planters are here. The Son is shining. And the Gardener has much work to do. Be sure to watch and listen for ways He wants to use you in the field this summer!

—Cathy Richardson

THE MESSENGER

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PUBLISHING GUIDELINES | THE MESSENGER is a publication for the people, passions, and mission of First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins. The newsletter seeks to inspire, inform, instruct, challenge, and motivate its readers to become engaged in the ministry of FPC. We pray that adult readers in all life stages will aspire to be faithful disciples for Christ.

Articles that support FPC's purpose and mission will be **accepted on the 15th of each month**. All articles must be sponsored by one of the church's five Centers and are subject to the approval of the Editor. Submissions will be edited for length and suitability.

Article submissions will be accepted via e-mail to crichardson@firstpresfc.org. Contact Editor Cathy Richardson for more information, (970)482-6107.



GIVING IT ALL AWAY

I have a close friend who is a recovering alcoholic. I'll call him Dave to protect his anonymity. He has been continuously sober, one day at a time, for almost 30 years, and along the way I suspect he has become wiser than most people I know. In fact, Dave has embodied certain truths that have changed the course of my life. For example...

- Desperation is my best teacher. I have never truly experienced life-change without first coming to admit and accept my powerlessness.
- I can't do life alone. Apart from a safe community that accepts me exactly where I am today and stays together through thick and thin, I don't have a chance.
- What anyone else thinks of me is none of my business.
- I didn't cause people to be the way they are, I can't change them, and I can't cure them. The only drama that matters is the one going on between that person and God, in which He may have some small part for me to play. . . or not.
- Resentments will rot my life more quickly than anything else.

I could go on and on. But the one truth that Dave taught me that still surprises me the most is this: if I don't serve, I will die.

Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

—Matthew 16:25

Seriously. I can't keep what God is giving me unless I give it away, unless I serve others. This is what Jesus was teaching when he said, "Whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 16:25). If I don't surrender my will to my Savior's will, I begin to die spiritually and sometimes physically as well. But when I do surrender my will to His, serving Him however and wherever He desires, life flows in. I actually discover who He made me to be. I find the life I always desired in my deepest heart.

That's the joy of our preaching series in these five weeks in May and first week of June. It's about the mission of Jesus, the service to others in which He calls us to join Him. At least two of our missionaries will be with us helping us see what God is doing around the world. Whatever we have been given, we'll be challenged to give it away in service to someone, either close at hand or far away. It's not first and foremost about duty or obligation, although God has every right to impose those on

us. Nor is it primarily about changing the world, although making a difference is important. No—service is at its roots a reflection of the very nature of God. It is where we experience salvation the most because we draw so very near to who God is in His being, as we have come to know Him in Jesus Christ.

Dave has modeled all of this for me. He gives away what he knows to countless other people. And the marvel is that in seeing others on a successful path and sharing with them the joys of the journey, Dave becomes more whole and experiences more joy because of his service.

So I'm looking for ways to serve today. To join Jesus in His mission. And I hope you'll come with me.

—Paul Parsons

Nominating Committee | A CALL FOR LEADERSHIP

2015 CHURCH NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Church Nominating Committee (CNC) is soliciting recommendations for candidates from our church membership to serve as Elders, Deacons, and members of the 2016 CNC. We know that you have just come through a time of prayerful consideration for recommendations for our newly elected Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC). You did your job very well indeed! We hope that you will continue to support our church by participating in the important business of selecting leaders to enhance spiritual growth and forward-looking ministries of the church. The CNC is committed an open selection process and welcomes all recommendations, including recommendations of oneself.

ELDERS are the spiritual leaders of the church who work alongside our pastors in exercising leadership and nurturing spiritual growth of the congregation, listening for God's call to the congregation and deciding how best to respond to that call. Elders serve a three-year term.

DEACONS are leaders who focus on the compassionate ministries of the church, helping to support the congregation in caring for one another inside and outside of the church. Deacons serve a two-year term.

CHURCH NOMINATING COMMITTEE uses recommendations from the congregation to prayerfully consider, identify, and nominate people to be elected by the congregation to serve in leadership roles (i.e. Elders, Deacons, and CNC members). CNC members serve a one-year term.

Please give your careful consideration to recommending members of our congregation for these important roles. You will find recommendation forms in this issue of *The Messenger*, as well as in the church office and in the bulletins for Sundays, May 3 and 10. All recommendation cards are due no later than May 18. A separate card is needed for each person you wish to recommend for consideration. Please drop your cards in the dropbox located in the office entrance to the building on Sunday or in the office during the week. Recommendation forms are found on page 5 and are also available in the church office.

Members of the CNC would be happy to discuss your interest in any of the positions and will try to answer any questions you may have regarding the positions or nominating process.



Lee Gray (Chair)



Maryrose Preston



Mike Bohart



Kathryn Rudd



Pam Genson



Tom Tonoli



Mark Nossokoff

**LEADERSHIP
RECOMMENDATION FORM**
First Presbyterian Church Fort Collins

RETURN THIS FORM BY MAY 18

I recommend

for the office of

- ELDER DEACON
 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Reason for nominating (required):

Recommended by (optional):

Please place recommendations in the offering plate or turn them in to the church office. 2015 CNC members: Lee Gray (chair), Mike Bohart, Pam Genson, Mark Nossokoff, Maryrose Preston, Kathryn Rudd, and Tom Tonoli.

PASTOR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

UPDATE

The PNC is happy to announce that the Mission Study and the Ministry Information Form (MIF) were unanimously approved by Session at a special meeting on Sunday, May 3. Approval of these documents by Session and the Committee on Ministry (COM) is the final step in the pastor nominating process before being able to begin accepting candidates for our Senior Pastor position—a step we are very excited for!

The Mission Study is a “state of the union” of FPC, describing current conditions and hopes for the future. It will be made available to the congregation once approved by COM. The MIF is the “job posting” for potential candidates. Both will be presented for COM approval at its meeting on May 14.

Thank you, once again, to all who filled out the recent church questionnaire. We were able to use the information to solidify the Mission Study. Your help and your prayers have definitely made our job easier, so please continue to keep the PNC in your prayers as we will soon be moving into the next phase of our search.

—Pam Pierce

STONE SOUP PROJECT

CONSTRUCTING A NEW HOME FOR THE GONZALEZ FAMILY

FPC is a long-standing supporter of Fort Collins Habitat for Humanity. We have totally sponsored two complete homes, have partnered with eight other area Presbyterian churches for one home, and have participated annually through donations of funds, supplies, and volunteers for several **Stone Soup** home construction projects.

THE STONE SOUP STORY

Stone Soup is a good-tasting soup that begins with a simple stone and boiling water and becomes more with the addition of a little bit of this and that, unique contributions from all involved. It is also a story of faith.

In the story, a soldier goes into a village and is told that there's not a bite to eat in the whole province. As the story goes, he says, "Oh, I have everything I need. In fact, I was thinking of making some stone soup to share with all of you." He pulls out an iron cauldron, fills it with water, builds a fire under it, and drops in the stone. Slowly, everyone in the village brings cabbage, salted beef, whatever they can, and then they share the feast.

THE FEAST

- Permanently change the life of a hard-working family by helping them build and buy their home
- Build a visible and lasting community symbol of faith in action
- Provide a welcoming environment for faith exploration for over 400 volunteers
- Increase giving and volunteer service in faith organizations
- Show collaboration of the interfaith community

In 2015, FPC is joining with the Lutheran Thrivent organization and several other local churches for a **Stone Soup** project to help construct a new home for the Gonzalez Family.



The Gonzalez family knew that the process required to become a Habitat homeowner would not be easy, so they told none of their family or friends that they had applied. It wasn't until learning they had been selected that they finally told family members, and their response was overwhelmingly positive and supportive. For Partner Families, this support is invaluable to the Habitat experience of building and purchasing their own homes.

"When I told them, everyone in my family said that I was living the American Dream. I would like to set an example for my children because I've been working really hard and it's paying off."

Our chance to help them realize their American Dream will come in June. An

exclusive “Team Build Day” just for FPC has been scheduled for June 13. Our Team Build Day is a **one-day** commitment for a large group to help this deserving family.

Sign-ups for our Team Build Day will be through the Fort Collins Habitat Website. More information about how to sign up to help will be available throughout the next month. Many of our members have helped with both Habitat and fire-recovery shed projects in the past. You might experience a bit of “arm-twisting” as June 13 approaches; however, no previous construction experience is necessary.

And **ladies**, opportunities are not restricted to male participants. Have you ever wondered about all those expensive tools that your significant other uses in the shop/garage? Come learn about them at a Habitat build site!

To find out more about Habitat for Humanity or to begin establishing a volunteer profile, visit FortCollinsHabitat.org. For more information, contact Jim Fischer at fcnative@comcast.net or (970)222-6050.

—Jim Fisher



Fort Collins

Habitat
for Humanity®



Welcome to the World!

Katelyn Marie Mack

daughter of Ginny and Adam Mack
born April 30, 2015

Micah Nolan Reid

son of Laura and Kevin Reid
born April 30, 2015

Are you expecting? We want to celebrate with you! If you are pregnant or expecting to adopt soon, we would love to share the wait with you. Expectations are posted on our bulletin board across from the nursery. Won't you share your happy news with us? Please contact the church office at (970)482-6107.



Participants in the recent Discernment Class read First Corinthians 3:6–9 and were asked to discuss “If our church is ‘God’s Field,’ how cultivated does it look?” Becky Echeverria was encouraged to share her response:

**I think our church is a freshly plowed field ready for planting.
The Sower is deciding the type of seed to scatter.
Brambles and weeds surround our field hoping to encroach on the fertile land.
A change, like spring, is in the air.
There is hope and anticipation of possibilities.
The sun is warming and the breeze is light.
The workers gather hoping to help with the monumental work ahead
Heaven is breaking through!**

—Becky Echeverria

A SEASON FOR TRANSITION

SAYING FAREWELL TO MONTY DUMLER

The third chapter of the Book of Ecclesiastes opens with the statement, “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven...” Each of us experiences a variety of changes and transitions throughout our journey in this life. These shifts are sometimes easy, sometimes hard, sometimes anticipated, and at the same time often unanticipated.

It is with a great sense of personal loss and sadness I announce longtime Audio/ Visual (A/V) Coordinator Monty Dumler has discerned it is time for some modification in his life and that he will leave his position at FPC at the end of May. The good news—Monty is not leaving the church, but rather switching priorities in order to spend more time with his children and to reestablish his recording studio, which has been on “hold” for the recent past and to pursue other interests. We can take delight in the fact Monty will still be around the church and helping in the A/V Ministry as his time permits.

Monty has served with outstanding and exemplary distinction for the past five years. During his time at FPC, the congregation has been recipients of his faithful service and his exceptional expertise and knowledge in the field of A/V capabilities.

February 14, 2010 marks that date Monty began his ministry at FPC. Since that time, the A/V Ministry has seen vast improvements, upgrades, and expansions in the quality of this critical area in the life of the church. Most recently, under Monty’s watchful eye and care, the church added live streaming to the many things under the umbrella of the A/V Ministry. This new tool has made it possible for many to stay in touch and



participate in the worship life of FPC via the Internet. This has been particularly helpful and meaningful to those folks unable to attend because of illness, being homebound, or living outside of Colorado. Live streaming is proving to be an increasingly valuable asset in the ministry, as well as a great gift to the local congregation and beyond—and this is largely due to the efforts of Monty.

Monty is loved and appreciated by all, and he will leave big shoes to fill! So I invite everyone to thank him in this final month of his official service to FPC. I will greatly miss Monty and all he has done and meant in the ministry of this congregation. He has truly been a faithful and good servant, and now I invite you to join me in praying that our Lord will richly bless Monty in the days and years ahead!

—Marvin L. Crawford

Vacation Bible School is coming soon!

Registration is now open for
Hometown Nazareth VBS,
June 8–12 at FPC.
Visit firstpresfc.org
for more information.



Even though we don't always like them, "goodbyes" are an important part of living in relationship with others. As a church family, we love the idea of being able to offer a caring sendoff to those who are moving away or leaving our church. The only way we can do this, though, is to have individual congregation members take the initiative in helping organize a community Sunday morning goodbye.

Here's what can happen if you, or several of you together, offer to host a goodbye sendoff: With two to three weeks advanced notice, the pastors can make an announcement in worship, the staff can notify those serving coffee to expect special treats provided by the organizer (if you choose to do so), and staff can set up the microphone if desired to make a short goodbye announcement.

So... that leaves it to any of you in the congregation to host a simple community goodbye when you know someone is leaving. Simply:

- Call Virginia or Michelle in the church office to say you'd like to organize a goodbye.
- Coordinate the date between office staff and the guest(s) of honor!
- Provide special treats if desired.
- Inform the church office if space for treats is needed and/or if the microphone setup is desired.

If we all work together on this, we can send people off in a special way that communicates our love and care. Thanks for your partnership in this endeavor!

A large red sign spelling "GOODBYE" held up by several hands.

HAVE I TAUGHT THEM?

CONSIDERING THE IMPACT OF A TEACHER



It is the teacher in me that knows the school year is coming to a close, and young parents are wondering what their children have learned. We, who have raised our children have all been through that....and we remember those times. If you too are wondering what they learned... read on. Perhaps this article by Phillip Done can help you answer some of those questions.

—Marge Rice

Have I Taught Them?

Tomorrow is the last day of school. I know my third graders will forget how to multiply over the summer. I know they will forget the difference between an adverb and an adjective, how to spell spaghetti, and when the Pilgrims sailed to the New World. But have I taught them that it is better to tell me that they did not do their homework last night than to lie? Have I taught them that it is better to include someone in a four square game than to tell him he cannot play?

Have I taught them how to work in groups of four when there are only two red markers and everyone wants the red one?

Have I taught them how to say “Good morning” when they pass someone in the hall and “Good-bye” when they leave the room?

Have I taught them that Thomas Jefferson could not live without books, and neither can I?

Have I taught them how to think when the answer is not right there in the text?

Have I taught them that imagination really *is* more important than knowledge?

Have I taught them that most of Thomas Edison’s experiments didn’t work the first time either?

Have I taught them the satisfaction you

feel when you do your best?

Have I taught them to laugh, not at other’s mistakes or when someone’s name is different from your own?

Have I taught them that learning is lifelong and shown them my French homework?

Have I taught them that it is OK to make mistakes and shown them my math homework?

Have I taught them how important my God is to me?

If I have taught them these things, then I do not care if they forget when the Pilgrims sailed to the New World... or how to spell spaghetti.

(excerpted from *32 Third Graders and One Class Bunny: Life Lessons from Teaching*, by Phillip Done.)

A CHURCH OF CHARACTER

ALERTNESS

The character quality for May 2015 is alertness (versus carelessness). Alertness is being aware of what is taking place around me so that I can have the right response.

God. The more we know God, the more sensitive we are to His Spirit and can discern when He is warning us from a certain path. Knowing God's Word is the key! It must be studied and

more we will know Him. This relationship with God helps us to be more sensitive to His Spirit—thus recognizing temptation when it arrives.

Alertness is often the first prevention against sin in a believer's life. In I Corinthians 10:13, Paul states, "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will

not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." When temptation comes to lure us into sin, God has promised to provide an escape.

So how can we be alert to sin and to God's divine escape route? First, know

pondered. Psalm 119:11 states, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you." And Psalm 1 says, "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night." The more we study and meditate on God's Word, the

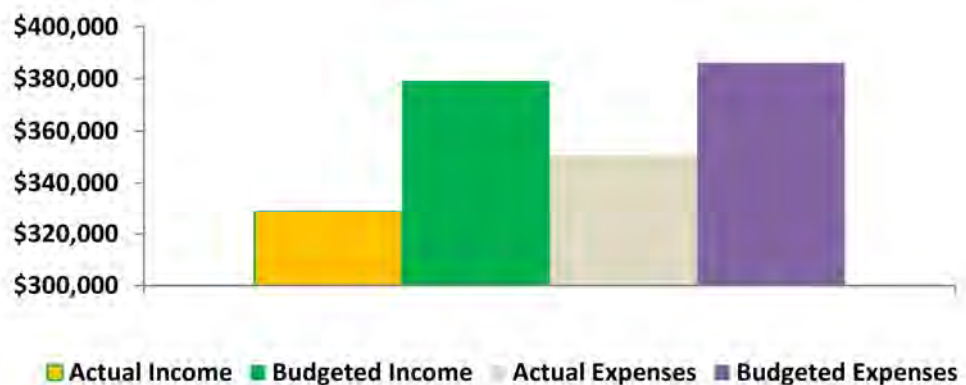
wisdom that you may be more aware of yourself and give you the strength you need to change directions when temptation lurks around the corner. Rely on and trust God and the power of the Holy Spirit in every way, every day!

A thorough understanding of God's Word will lead us to a more intimate relationship with Him. While cultivating this relationship, we must also remain alert to ourselves. Alertness requires that you are aware of situations that could lead to sin. Ask God to grant you

"Sin can undo in an unguarded second the character which required years to form."
– Charles H. Spurgeon,
In The Power for True Success:
How to Build Character in Your Life

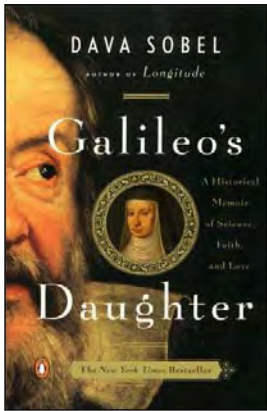
FPC FINANCIALS YEAR TO DATE APRIL 2015

The Session wants to communicate to the congregation the financial state of affairs of the church on a monthly basis. This chart is meant to do that in a more readily accessible manner. If you have follow-up questions, contact the Business Office.



LIBRARY CORNER

NEW BOOK IN THE LIBRARY



The latest acquisition to our science and religion book collection, funded by the Templeton Grant, is Dava Sobel's *Galileo's Daughter: a Historical Memoir of Science, Faith, and Love*. Sobel stumbled on a

letter that Maria Celeste wrote to her father, Galileo. This eventually led Sobel to translate a 19th century book of Maria Celeste's letters from Italian into English. From this she created her best-seller. Sobel became obsessed with Galileo, the Italian Renaissance mathematician, astronomer, and physicist, and his relationship to his eldest daughter.

Maria Celeste lived cloistered at a Florentine convent from the age of 13. When she was not writing these letters, which became Galileo's earthly source of solace, she spent her spare hours making citron candy, lace collars, and herbal remedies for her father.

She also managed her imprisoned father's household from within the convent walls. Her letters tried to give spiritual advice to her father from her deep faith. Unselfishly she wrote, "Because the great intellect and knowledge that the Lord God has given you to serve Him and honor Him far more than I ever could, so that with this consideration I come round to cheer myself and take greater pleasure from your well-being than mine." The letters also provide more intimate family biographical information, as well as an account of the challenges that science was beginning to bring to an established and confident Roman Catholic Church.

— Jane Rolston



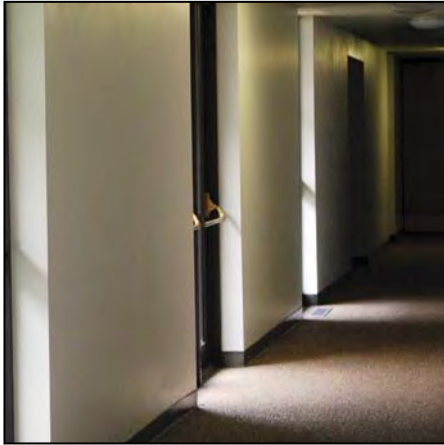
WAYNE CLEGERN (November 29, 1929–April 10, 2015)

Professor, writer, FPC member, and friend, Wayne Clegern recently passed away at the age of 85. Until very recently, Wayne had written the Library Corner book review for *The Messenger* for ___ years. Because of his keen insights and wide-ranging interests, Wayne's reviews drew many readers seeking the books of his choice into the church library. His reviews were inviting and penetrating.

The Library Committee and the editor of this publication appreciate the dedication Wayne had to the Library Ministry. His legacy is a treasury of theology, history, and educated commentaries. Wayne's book reviews may be found online at the library Website fpcfcschoolaid.net.

SPRING WORK DAY RECAP

MANY HANDS DO AMAZING WORK



The Spring All Church Work Day was a huge success. Forty people accomplished the following projects:

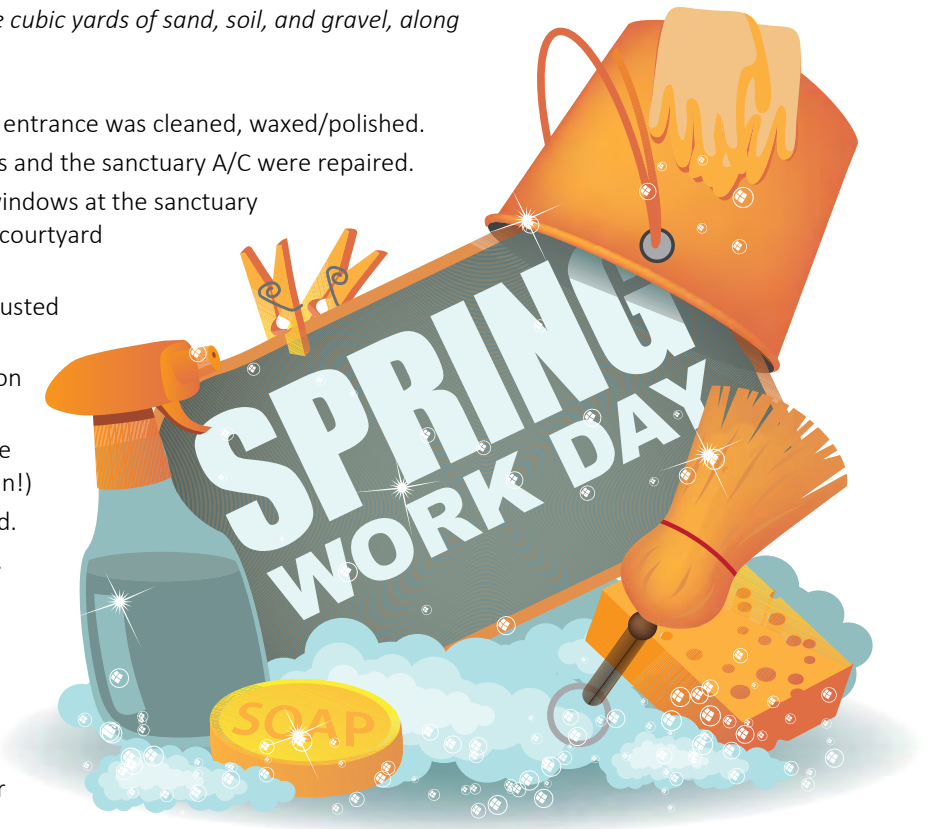
- Removed junipers and rock/plastic from the center east parking lot island. Replaced with mulch.
- Cleaned sand and debris from the edges of the parking lot.
- Nearly all the landscaping was trimmed and pruned, debris removed.
- The main and sanctuary courtyards were trimmed and cleaned.
- The playground was cleaned of leaves, leveled, and the fence scrubbed.

NOTE: The above projects produced approx. five cubic yards of sand, soil, and gravel, along with three pickup loads of organic debris!

- The lettering above the sanctuary entrance was cleaned, waxed/polished.
- The fencing around the dumpsters and the sanctuary A/C were repaired.
- The outside framing around the windows at the sanctuary and lobby entrance and the main courtyard were cleaned.
- The office lobby was thoroughly dusted and the wood polished.
- All the window sills in the education wing were cleaned.
- The white tables in room 103 were scrubbed (and they are white again!)
- The sanctuary hallway was painted.
- Coffee and donuts were provided. (And devoured.)

That is approximately **120 hours** of loving labor given to our facility! Thank you to all involved!

—Dale Hoerner



dessert with dr. chris isichei



SUNDAY, MAY 17

7 PM

First Presbyterian Church

**Event to benefit the
Faith Alive hospital
in Jos, Nigeria.**

FAITH ALIVE HOSPITAL in Jos, Nigeria

WADSO and FPC invite the northern Colorado community to support what Dr. Chris prioritizes for Faith Alive-Nigeria's wish list. Come and learn how you can help us respond to urgent needs like these:

- provisions (food and clothing) for the thousands of Nigerian fleeing the north and seeking refuge in Jos
- new vehicle for use as ambulance, hearse, and mover of supplies between FAF-N's satellite sites, to replace deteriorating vehicles that are costly to repair
- revitalization of home-based care to severely ill patients—drastic budget cuts have reduced this ministry
- finishing the antenatal unit for pregnant women and new families.

Sponsored by: WADSO (West African Development Support Organization)
and FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Fort Collins



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Register now for



For children
age 3
through
5th grade

Vacation Bible School at FPC

June 8–12, 2015

9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Register at

www.firstpresfc.org

