



**All are  
Welcome**

# The Pinnacle

May, 2015

*The Presbyterian  
Church of Jackson Hole.*

*Where every member is a minister!*



\*SPRING BRUNCH

\*NICARAGUA  
HIGHLIGHTS

\*THE TABLE

\*A TASTE OF THE  
SUMMIT

\*THE MEN'S  
RETREAT

\*THE FINE  
FURNITURE SALE  
FUNDRAISER

\*A SUMMER  
CELEBRATION AT  
MIKE YOKEL PARK

\*THE FLAMINGO  
FUNDRAISER

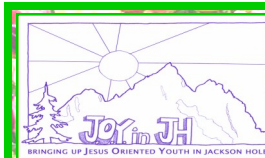
\*YOUTH ALLIANCE

\*THE GLOBAL  
LEADERSHIP  
SUMMIT

\*THE MOTHER'S DAY  
MUFFIN BRUNCH



VIEW THE PINNACLE **IN COLOR** BY VISITING  
THE CHURCH WEBSITE at [WWW.PCJH.ORG](http://WWW.PCJH.ORG)



## Spring Brunch

Sunday, May 3rd

9am & 11:30am

In the Fellowship Hall

**Don't miss this opportunity to support families in need  
of tuition assistance and enjoy a wonderful  
Sunday brunch!**

**All proceeds go to J.O.Y. Summer Camp**

### Every Member a Minister

Dear PCJH Family,

Addie, Nina and I just returned from Nicaragua with our PCJH service team. It was an INCREDIBLE trip!! I'd love to share some highlights with you...

#### Nicaragua Highlights

This was my fourth trip going to Central America with Agros since 2005. This was my second trip to Tierra Nueva, the village PCJH has partnered with. Last time I went was three years ago. Wow how things have changed!! The villagers have been working hard with Agros' direction and have accomplished some amazing things together. Here are a few things that have changed since three years ago... there is now a road into the village; there is potable water; there are beautiful homes and gardens and flowers; there are latrines at every house; there is a school; there are thriving crops; there are smiles on people's faces full of joy. I am so proud of PCJH and that we have partnered with an exceptional development organization such as Agros. The gospel is not only preached in words but in deeds as the cycle of generational poverty is being broken. Amen!!

I loved witnessing the relationships that have formed among the villagers and our PCJH congregation. They have pictures of people from PCJH in their homes. There are "Live Like Karen" stickers in almost every house. Many villagers asked me... "How are Bob and Debbie? How is Wes doing? Michael? Caryn? Kathy?" Our relationship with the people of Tierra Nueva is an extension of our PCJH family.

We brought our daughter Nina (5) and Vivian Barrett (6). These two girls were champs!! I was so impressed with how they engaged the other children of Tierra Nueva and didn't let language be a barrier. They spoke the language of love and laughter. I will forever remember images of Nina walking hand in hand with her new friends in the village. I hope this trip encourages other parents and children from PCJH to go on mission together as a family.

Our time in Nicaragua was incredibly healing for me as we remembered the anniversary of Karen Colclough's death. The villager's love, concern, and prayers for us were incredible. They gave us a tremendous gift that was waiting for us as we arrived at the village. They had a professional artist from Matagalpa paint a gigantic portrait of Karen. It is absolutely beautiful! Some women in the village put their limited resources together to pay for the portrait. What a gift of love!!

The trip renewed my passion and commitment for the work of God through Agros. I encourage you all to take a week and go to Nicaragua if you are able. It will impact your life in profound ways. The next trip is already scheduled for early November. Contact Bob Kopp if you are interested [bkopp@waldenasset.com](mailto:bkopp@waldenasset.com).

#### The Table

PCJH has partnered with a new church development in Casper, WY called *The Table: Doubters and Disciples Together*. The pastor of *The Table*, Libby Hugus, will be at PCJH on **Wednesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:45pm**, along with her husband Jeremy Hugus. I hope you can come and hear what God is doing through this new Presbyterian Church in Casper. We will meet in the Genesis room after our community dinner on May 6<sup>th</sup> to hear a presentation from Libby and Jeremy. *The*

*Table* is part of the Presbytery of Wyoming and PCJH made a financial gift of \$12,000 to *The Table* in 2015 in order to help this new worshipping community get off the ground and reach people for Christ in Casper.

#### A Taste of the Summit

I will be hosting a "taste" of the Global Leadership Summit on **Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am**. As many of you know, we will be hosting a live telecast of Willow Creek's Global Leadership Summit on August 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>. Many of you have questions about the event and are wondering what it is all about. During the "taste" of the Summit I will show some videos of speakers from the 2014 event and be available to answer any questions you may have. This is a great opportunity for people of influence in our church and community to hear about the event so that we can all be ambassadors for the event when people in the community ask about it.

#### Men's Retreat

Men, sign up for the men's retreat!! It will be at a retreat facility in Driggs on May 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>. It is going to be incredible! We have a very dynamic speaker flying in just for the event. As Proverbs says, "As iron sharpens iron, so does one man sharpen another." Sign up today with Steve Weber at [sweber@pcjh.org](mailto:sweber@pcjh.org).

#### Fine Furniture Sale

Our annual Fine Furniture Sale is scheduled for **Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 to 12:00pm** in the Fellowship Hall. This is a large fundraiser for the ministry and mission of PCJH. Tiffany Tate is coordinating the event and needs volunteers and furniture. Please contact her [tiffanytate1@gmail.com](mailto:tiffanytate1@gmail.com).

#### First Communion Class

Each year I offer a class for parents and children in order to teach them about the Lord's Supper and the meaning behind it. Typically I suggest children 8 years and older, but I am open to younger kids if they are ready. The class will be offered on **Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> at 9:00am**. At least one parent is required to attend along with their child. This is an opportunity for parents to partner with the pastor in teaching their kids about the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Please RSVP with me at [bpascal@pcjh.org](mailto:bpascal@pcjh.org).

#### Summer Celebration at Mike Yokel Park

The Congregational Life committee is busy planning a fun fellowship event to kick off the summer. On **Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>**, we will all meet at Mike Yokel Park at **12:00pm** for a potluck lunch. This is a great way to meet other people from PCJH and have fun together as we get to know one another better. Contact Cindy Dahlin for more details at [cindydahlin@hotmail.com](mailto:cindydahlin@hotmail.com).

As you can see, there is a lot going on here at PCJH. How is God calling you to enter into relationship with God's people and participate in the life of the church?

**Every Member A Minister,**

~Pastor Ben

## Meet the PCJH Staff & Ruling Elders

### Pastoral Staff

Rev. Ben Pascal – Senior Pastor  
Rev. Steve Weber – Temporary Associate Pastor

### Worship Staff

Kenny Hadden – Worship Coordinator  
Keith Phillips – Pianist

### Administrative Staff

Jo Holton - Church Administrator & Facilities Director  
Lindsey Parr – Communications & Congregational Life Coordinator  
Pam Flores – Congregational Host  
Barb Huhn – Pinnacle Newsletter Publisher  
Kim Bogen – Bookkeeper  
Sanchez Family – Custodial Crew  
Bill Fox – Maintenance Specialist

### Kitchen Staff

Steve Murphy – Wednesday Fellowship Dinner Chef

### Children, Youth and Family Ministry

Ricky Emlyn – Director of Children, Youth and Family  
Jordan Shive – 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Intern  
Abby Powell – 1<sup>st</sup> Year Intern  
Darla Jackson – Nursery  
Renee Knutson – Wednesday After School Teacher

### Little Lambs Preschool

Effie Edwards – Director & Teacher  
Diane McGee – Assistant Director & Teacher  
Martha Davila – Teacher  
Mrs. Cho – Teacher  
Katie Moteberg – Teacher  
Pat Wright – Teacher

### J.O.Y. Summer Camp

Diane McGee – J.O.Y. Summer Camp Director  
Stephanie Murphy – Assistant Director

### Upward Basketball

Linda Hanlon – Upward Basketball Director

### Elders

Ken Blount & Kathy Robertson - Adult Ministries  
Alli Lane - Small Groups  
Cindy Dahlin - Congregational Life  
Nancy Dunlap - Worship  
Karen Fox - Children, Youth & Family  
Larry Huhn - Buildings & Grounds  
Larry Jorgenson - Clerk of Session  
Alan Lund - Finance  
Patty McDonald - Personnel  
George Scarlett - Nominating  
Katie-Chloe Stock - Mission

## Men's Weekend Conference



May 15-17, 2015

*Becoming the Man God Means  
For You to Be*



Guest Speaker: Rev. John Moser

**Register Today – Brochures  
Available in PCJH Office**

## What's For Dinner?

Every Wednesday that is the question we hear most often around PCJH. There is a delicious buzz that occurs as our chef Steve Murphy and his crew go into action mid-day each Wednesday. Something good is cooking in His Kitchen!

As we near the end of our school year and our weekly Community Fellowship Dinner at 6 p.m. on Wednesdays, would you consider a gift to help make sure this popular and tasty ministry goes forward? While there are suggested donation amounts for the dinner and donations may be given in the jar at the head of the serving table, one-time, end-of-the-year gifts to this outreach program will also enable us to finish out the year and be ready to go again in the fall.

Thank you.

# The Fine Furniture Sale for the Presbyterian Church of Jackson Hole is in May!

Please donate fine furniture for a tax write-off by 5/28/15.



The Preview Night is Friday, 5/29  
from 5:00-6:30 (no buying)

The Sale is Saturday,  
5/30/15 from 9:00 a.m.-  
12:00 pm.

Please call 307-690-6189 for more  
information or to make a donation or  
for us to pick it up.

We can accept sofas, end tables, bedroom  
sets, kitchen tables, accent tables,  
mirrors, high quality dishes, high  
quality linens, chairs, rugs, and  
accessories. We cannot accept TV's,  
entertainment centers, mattresses,  
fitness machines, nor large desks.



## ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

We once again thank our generous congregation for your offering to One Great Hour of Sharing. We were able to send \$880.00 to our Presbyterian Church (USA) "headquarters" for the work of the church, serving people in need at home and abroad! Specifically, 36% is received by Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, while Self-Development of People and the Presbyterian Hunger Program each receive 32%!

THANK YOU ALL!!  
THE MISSION COMMITTEE



### Save the Dates

**Wednesday, May 6**

After School Program  
6:45-7:45 MS Youth Group

**Wednesday, May 13**

After School Program  
6:45-7:45 MS Youth Group  
7:45-9pm HS Mission Team Meeting

**Wednesday, May 20**

After School Program  
6:45-7:45 MS Youth Group

**Wednesday, May 27**

After School Program  
6:45-7:45 MS Youth Group  
7:45-9pm HS Mission Team Meeting

### Flamingo Fundraiser Thank You!



A BIG THANK YOU for everyone who purchased a "flamingo flocking" from our High School Mission Team Trip's Pink Flamingo Fundraiser! This is one of our funniest fundraisers! All the proceeds for our fundraiser go toward our High School Mission Trip to Costa Rica this June. We will be doing practical ministry for some people by building a house. So many people live in impermanent-permanent dwellings which are usually from any material that they can find; i.e. cardboard, tin, plastic, wood and etc. In addition, we are really excited to do a mini VBS while we are down there. The kids had a lot of fun doing it last summer at Crow Nation in Montana.

So once again, thank you for seeing the worth and value in the youth of PCJH! Please be praying for us!

### Youth Alliance



A partnership, in which we have been involved in, for over 5 years, is partnering with other church's youth pastors to create something called "Youth Alliance"! We had one at PCJH right before spring break. Kids from First Baptist, River Crossing & St. John's churches came. It has really been awesome partnering along side the youth pastors of those churches! It was an evening filled with dinner, music, worship, a message, and a great game of dodge ball.

Our message for that night was about the church body of believers and the kids really took it to heart. One of our

ministry goals for this partnership is to create and bring awareness to the Christian community that these kids can cultivate at their schools.

Please be praying for us about this ministry! God is working.

The Pinnacle  
The Presbyterian Church of Jackson Hole  
Box 7530  
1251 South Park Loop Road  
Jackson, WY 83002  
Published Monthly  
Issue #5-2015



We spent the first 2 weeks of April enjoying Spring Break and time with our families. Also, we celebrated Easter over the break. HE IS RISEN!!!! When we returned from the break we learned about Nature All Around Us. We worked in the garden and planted grass seeds in our classrooms. Also, we learned about the weather and seasons. We did some awesome Science projects and enjoyed an Art class at the Center for the Arts. This month, we look forward to celebrating our mothers. We anticipate sunshine and will also enjoy Bike Week in May.

May's bible verse is Ephesians 4:32 "Be kind and loving to each other."

Little Lambs still has some spots for next year's classes.  
Go to [pcjh.org](http://pcjh.org) to register online.

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**MOTHER'S DAY MUFFIN BRUNCH MAY 7TH AND 8TH**  
**AT 11:30 A.M. IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL**



# J.O.Y. in JH Summer Camp

Registration Continues online @ [pcjh.org](http://pcjh.org)

## Spring Brunch Fundraiser



**Where:** Fellowship  
Hall at PCJH

**When:** Sunday May 3rd

**Time:** 9:00 am &  
11:30 am

Proceeds benefit families  
in need of tuition  
assistance.

### Middle School Students

- ♦ Teton Explorers Program: 3 Weeks ONLY - July 6-23rd (entering 6-9th)
- ♦ Daily Programs also available June 15th - Aug. 26th
- ♦ "Counselor in Training" Program begins July 27 for MS & HS Students



Find details & enrollment instructions w/link on our website [pcjh.org](http://pcjh.org)  
Contact Diane McGee with any questions [dmcgee@pcjh.org](mailto:dmcgee@pcjh.org) or 739-9591

## Lessons from the Villagers

By Addie Pascal

This was my third trip to the Agros village of Tierra Nueva, though it's been two and a half years since I was last there. While I'd heard of all the progress from each team that's returned, I was blown away to see it in person! Watching a village transform from dreams and determination into homes, roads, and a school is nothing short of awe-inspiring. While the physical structures now present in this beautiful village are amazing,



it's the less tangible things that are sticking in my heart today. The Holy Spirit was weaving themes throughout our time in Tierra Nueva, encouraging me to listen and learn, both from the villagers and from my teammates. This is my attempt to capture these themes in words!

**Familia-** Ask anyone who's been to Tierra Nueva, and they will tell you the villagers embrace us as family. This time I felt I was able to reciprocate this more fully because we had several families on our team, including two families with

children! For me, bringing my daughter, Nina, to Tierra Nueva was a transformative experience. I found great joy in watching her run hand in hand along the paths with the other little girls. While they didn't speak the

same verbal language, they all knew the languages of play, love, adventure, and joyful giggling. And these were more than enough for ample communication! Occasionally I'd catch the eye of another mom, and we'd smile at one another, knowing that what binds our children together also binds us together. I pray this experience will shape Nina's sense of family to include all of God's sons and daughters, no matter race, or social status. For it is when we view people as family that we begin to have compassion for them the way Jesus tells us to.





**Satisfy-** We enjoyed sharing a meal one day in the home of a man named Vladimir. While parts of Vladimir's story are indeed filled with heartache, he said something that really struck me. He said, "It has been my dream to own my own land. And that dream has come true." His dream is not for fancy cars or designer clothes or luxury vacations. It's for something that lasts far longer- a healthy life and a hope for the future. You see, for the rural poor in Latin America, land ownership is a chance to step out of poverty. Instead of living in a mode of immediate survival, they are able to find long-term stability and lasting satisfaction. The Agros model is a parallel in many ways to the story of Jesus. Jesus tells us he is the bread of life and that whoever comes to him will never be hungry; those who believe in him will never be thirsty. I don't know about you, but this is the satisfaction I want in my life. Fulfilling immediate desires is fleeting; satisfaction that comes from trusting and knowing the Lord lasts forever.

**Engage-** I have so enjoyed watching the Monday morning women's covenant group from PCJH engage the women of Tierra Nueva through sharing the same devotional, *Jesus Calling*, in their respective languages. Donna Barrett led a time with the women, sharing a letter from the PCJH group to the Tierra Nueva group. Toward the end, many of the women shared meaningful prayer requests as well as several return letters! It's a beautiful thing to witness this special connection between these two groups of women. Of note, this is the group that spearheaded the creation of the painting of Karen Colclough. They engaged by entering into the pain of the loss of Karen, and decided to do something to show how much they care for those of us still

suffering grief and loss. In what way do each of us need to engage in life more fully?



**Power of Presence-** This is the essence of Agros' Journey With a Village program. This was PCJH's 7<sup>th</sup> trip to Tierra Nueva. Even though I understood the concept intellectually on the earlier trips, I felt like I experienced it to a fuller degree this time. This trip was less intensive in regards to work projects, and more intensive on sharing time and experiences together as a community. Many of you alumni know and love Fransisco, a delightful grandfatherly man whose eyes dance when he speaks and love and joy literally ooze out of his very being. With the excitement of a child on Christmas morning he proudly gave us a tour of

his land, pointing out coffee plants, seedlings, irrigation systems and more. His delight was not found in having our team complete work for him, but rather in showing us the work he was able to do, thanks to the support of PCJH and Agros. As Ben put it, it's kind of like when you have family or close friends come visit. You wouldn't say, "Thanks for coming. Please mend my fence, clean my house, and build me a garden shed." In the same way, we are welcomed into the village as dear ones, and our friends in Tierra Nueva want to use the precious few days to share their lives with us in fellowship. I have felt challenged to practice the power of presence in my life back at home. Putting the brakes on my focused and busy agenda to play that game with my daughter, visit that friend who's having a rough time, or allowing the course of my day to be altered by someone in need. These are the things that truly make a difference.

May we all learn to love each other as family, find lasting satisfaction through our hope in Christ, engage fully with those around us, and learn to practice the power of presence. Viva- por Cristo!

-Submitted by Addie Pascal on behalf of the April 2015 Agros Team (Ben and Nina Pascal; Scott, Donna and Vivian Barrett; Tom Montgomery and Debbie Schlinger; Abby and Elaine Powell; and Liz Sparks)



# THE GLOBAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

August 6-7, 2015 | [willowcreek.com/summit](http://willowcreek.com/summit)

**S**et aside Thursday & Friday, August 6 -7 to **GATHER** for an unprecedented opportunity at PCJH to **GROW** your leadership skills via telecast from Willow Creek Community Church in Illinois;

**U**se the password/code **GLS15HOST** to receive our special host site early bird rate of \$89 at [pcjh.org/events/global-leadership-summit/](http://pcjh.org/events/global-leadership-summit/)

**M**aximize your leadership potential by learning from world-class teachers and leaders to utilize as you **GO** into your spheres of influence at church and in the community;

**M**unch on a fine lunch with your friends and colleagues while discussing the day's inspirational and relevant Kingdom-building skills and possible next steps to embrace your grander vision;

**I**nvoke family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, and employers to this engaging experience since **everyone is a leader** and can immediately apply the acquired skills;

**T**ake time to download **The Global Leadership Summit** free app to access the speaker bios and the upcoming Summit schedule and visit [willowcreek.com/summit](http://willowcreek.com/summit) for videos, Summit outcomes, and additional resources.

**MAY**  
**Anniversaries 2015**



Reedy, Randy & Robyn May 1	33 years
Iobst, Steve & Debbie May 6	38 years
Seggerman, Merrill & Carole May 7	60 years
Jackson, Darla & Mike May 9	28 years
Nydam, Aaron & Leah May 10	7 years
Lloyd, Jared & Amy May 15	5 years
Sonderman, Craig & Debra May 15	23 years
Sparks, Dave & Liz May 17	35 years
Huhn, Larry & Barb May 19	36 years
Miller, Jack & Allison May 20	20 years
Morzov, Mark & Brie May 20	8 years
Harshman, Brooks & Rachel May 22	39 years
Nichols, Kent & Diane May 22	39 years
Forster, Pete & Betsy May 23	51 years
Miller, Ron & Laura May 23	33 years
Stockhouse, Jim & Nancy May 27	38 years
Valiante, John & Maggie May 29	39 years
Deland, Mike & Louise May 30	28 years



**FAMILY, FRIENDS,  
FELLOWSHIP, FUN, FOOD,  
and FESTIVITIES**

Come Celebrate Summer  
Sunday, May 31st  
(following the 10:15am service)  
MIKE YOKEL PARK on Kelly Street  
12 noon-3pm.

Congregational Life will supply food for the grill, paper products, and beverages. Think of something you really looked forward to eating for a summer picnic and bring that to share for (8), a few chairs for you and your family, favorite summer game and the readiness for a good time !!!

Email Cindy Dahlin (cdahlin@Hotmail.com) if you are interested in helping to organize our day of total fun.



**Email Address Privacy**

PCJH is committed to protecting everyone's email address privacy. Please do not use PCJH as a way to acquire email addresses for soliciting purposes. If you should receive emails about church business where email addresses have been inadvertently listed rather than BCC'd, we kindly request that you do not use those addresses for purposes other than church business communications.

Should you receive an unwanted solicitation email from a PCJH member or affiliate, please notify the church office at office@pcjh.org.

Thank you!

# May 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>3</b> <b>Spring Brunch Fundraiser for JOY</b> 8am—Worship Service 9:00am Adult Classes 10:15am Intergenerational Worship Service	<b>4</b> 8:45am—Women's Covenant Group	<b>5</b> 6:45am—Men's Breakfast at the Virginian 12 Noon Women's Bible Study 1:15pm Staff	<b>6</b> After School Program 6:00pm—Fellowship Dinner 6:45-7:45 —Programs for all ages	<b>7</b> 12:00 Noon Men's Group at JH Whole Grocer—Community Room	<b>1</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">P r e s b y t e r y M e e t i n g</div>	<b>2</b> 8:00am Men's Discussion Group PCJH Youth Lounge
<b>10</b> 8am Worship Service 9:00am Taste of the Summit 9:00am Adult Classes 10:15am Worship Service w/Children's Sunday School	<b>11</b> 8:45am—Women's Covenant Group	<b>12</b> 6:45am—Men's Breakfast at the Virginian 12 Noon Women's Bible Study 1:15pm Staff	<b>13</b> After School Program 6:00pm—Fellowship Dinner 6:45-7:45 —Programs for all ages 7:45-9pm—HS Mission Team	<b>14</b> 12:00 Noon Men's Group at JH Whole Grocer—Community Room	<b>15</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">M e n ' s R e t r e a t</div>	<b>16</b> 8:00am Men's Discussion Group PCJH Youth Lounge
<b>17</b> 8am Worship Service 9:00am Adult Classes 10:15am Worship Service w/Children's Sunday School 11:30—Deacon's Mtg.	<b>18</b> 8:45am—Women's Covenant Group	<b>19</b> 6:45am—Men's Breakfast at the Virginian 12 Noon Women's Bible Study 1:15pm Staff 4:00pm Finance Team 5:30pm Council Meeting	<b>20</b> After School Program 6:00pm—Fellowship Dinner 6:45-7:45 —Programs for all ages	<b>21</b> 12:00 Noon Men's Group at JH Whole Grocer—Community Room	<b>22</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">M e n ' s R e t r e a t</div>	<b>23</b> 8:00am Men's Discussion Group PCJH Youth Lounge
<b>24</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">M e n ' s R e t r e a t</div> 8am Worship Service 9:00am First Communion Class 9:00am Adult Classes 10:15am Worship Service w/Children's Sunday School 3:18am Worship Service 9:00am Adult Classes 10:15am Worship Service w/Children's Sunday School 11:30—Stephen Ministry <b>12:00pm—Summer Celebration at Mike Yokel Park</b>	<b>25</b> <b>Memorial Day Church Office Closed</b> <b>No Little Lambs</b>	<b>26</b> 6:45am—Men's Breakfast at Virginian 12 Noon Women's Bible Study 1:15pm Staff	<b>27</b> After School Program 6:00pm—Fellowship Dinner 6:45-7:45 —Programs for all ages 7:45-9pm—HS Mission Team	<b>28</b> 12:00 Noon Men's Group at JH Whole Grocer—Community Room	<b>29</b> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">M e n ' s R e t r e a t</div>	<b>30</b> <b>9:00am—Fine Furniture Sale</b> 8:00am Men's Discussion Group PCJH Youth Lounge

## A WORD FROM ASSOCIATE PASTOR STEVE WEBER

### That's Ecclesiology!

Pastors, I suppose, invest much of their consciousness in contemplation on the nature of the church. Judging by the vast volumes of books, articles, journals, blogs, conferences and conversations given over to what theologians like to call "ecclesiology" much of the Christian world is also consumed with understanding the inner workings of the Church. The word itself comes from a secular Greek term that simply defined is a public assembly – *ekklesia*. The New Testament writers picked the word up to fit what was happening with early gatherings of the followers of Jesus. The term is used both to designate the local church and the universal church such as in Ephesians: "*And He (God) has put all things under His (Christ) feet and has made Him the head over all things for the church (ecclesia), which is His body*" (1:22-23).

So we often talk about who we are as the body of Christ, the living expression of His mercy in the world today. That's us! The Church! Scholars and common believers have studied the nature of the church in hopes of understanding its unique place in the hearts and lives of believers. One author, in his search of the New Testament, found 96 images of the church. We are: the salt of the earth; a letter from Christ; branches of the vine; the bride of Christ; exiles; ambassadors; a chosen race; the holy temple; children of God; a new Creation; friends of God; and many more. We often voice our faith with the Apostles' Creed and conclude by saying we believe in the "holy, catholic church," meaning that the church is separated for service to God (holy), and we belong to the universal movement of followers of Jesus in the world (catholic). That's ecclesiology!

20<sup>th</sup> century theologian Karl Barth swamped the Christian world with his monumental work, a virtual library itself, called Church Dogmatics. Next time you are in Ben's office ask him to point out his complete set of Barth's major contribution to how we think about what it is we do and believe as the church. Barth's firm belief in an active, living, breathing community of faith is expressed well in this sentence: "*The Church is when it takes place that God lets certain people live as his servants, his friends, his children, the witnesses of the reconciliation of the world with Himself as it has taken place in Jesus Christ, the preachers of the victory which has been won in His over sin and suffering and death, the heralds of His future revelation in which the glory of the Creator will be declared to all creation as that of his love and faithfulness and mercy*" (Church Dogmatics IV.1. p. 650). Now, that's a sentence! Long, but I like it. We are- each of us – preachers of the victory. Heralds – one and all – of His future revelation. And – without exception – we are God's friends.

Everybody has an ecclesiology. Everybody has a vision of what the church is all about. Just yesterday, a couple came out of our worship service, shook my hand and said, "The love of God is so real here." That's ecclesiology. The church is an ambassador of God's pure heart for people. In the early church the one trait that stuck out was just this very attribute. "*This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other*" (John 13:35, The Message).

This month we welcome back many of our "snowbird" friends in Christ. Like family returning home, it will be great to see them all again, even if we must listen to reports of how cold it was at night in Arizona. We still love you guys! This month we also have a class going called Love Does based on a book by the same name. I'm excited to be in conversation with many of you about how God's love in us shapes our actions. Further, the men of PCJH are retreating this month over a weekend just to connect more fully with one another and have a little fun together.

Being a church has changed my life. Our ecclesiology really matters. I hope you have a high view of the church and find great support and encouragement in who we are together here at PCJH.

Pastor Steve Weber

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*MAY, 2015*

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*The Mission of The Presbyterian Church of Jackson Hole is*

*Passing on the Faith*

*as we Gather to love God;*

*GROW to know and follow Jesus; and*

*GO and make a difference.*

*All are welcome and all are needed as we advance this significant mission for the  
21st Century.*

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