

THE FIRST EPISTLE

VOLUME 42, NUMBER 16

APRIL 24, 2009



Dr. J. Ligon Duncan III PREACHING SCHEDULE

Sunday, April 26
8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

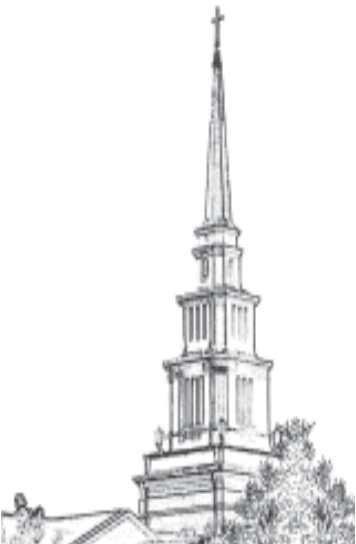
Dr. Ligon Duncan
“An Unwelcome Prophet”
Luke 4:14-30

6:00 p.m.

Dr. Ligon Duncan
Hymns of the Faith
1 - “All People That on Earth
Do Dwell”

Wednesday, April 29
6:30 p.m.

Dr. Ligon Duncan
What Is A Healthy Church
Member?
“A Healthy Church Member
Bears Witness to Christ and
Shares the Gospel”



Vacation Bible School June 1-5, 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

■ VBS Online Registration

For your convenience, Vacation Bible School registration for First Pres children and grandchildren, ages 3 through rising 6th grade, may be completed online. Go to the First Presbyterian Church website, click on Christian Education, scroll down to 2009 VBS registration, fill in the proper information and submit. Visitors are welcome—ages 5 (by September 1) and up. **Teen Helpers** — You may go online and register. When you enter your grade, also enter VBS and/or outreach on the same line. Each day when VBS is over, teen helpers will eat lunch in the Youth House and then have the opportunity to head out to Neighborhood Christian Center to help run a VBS there. Please sign up early!

■ VBS Crafts Collection

We are collecting large sized glass baby food jars with the lids on and the labels removed. The sixth grade girls are in need of shiny, solid-colored fabric scraps to help make some decorations for Bible school. Please bring items to the collection bin marked “VBS” beside the information desk.

Attention, Sixth Graders

All 6th graders will attend the youth program on Wednesday nights beginning in May. Beginning in June, all 6th graders will be enrolled in the youth department and will be attending Sunday school with the junior high.

Graduating Seniors Dinner

On Thursday, April 30, all graduating high school seniors and their parents are invited to attend a dinner to be held in their honor in Miller Hall at 6:00 p.m. Please make your reservations by contacting Heather Shaw at 601-973-9117 or heathers@fpcjackson.org

Because I Said SEW....

■ Registration for Summer Sewing Camps!

Sew and Sow will again be offering sewing camps this summer! Last summer proved to be an excellent opportunity for girls and ladies of all ages to learn to sew—the fellowship shared and the skills learned were profitable in so many ways. So back by popular demand, we will offer the beginner sewing camp the week of June 22 – June 26 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in Patterson Hall. Basic Sewing Camp Phase 2 (for those who have taken the first class) will be the week of July 27 – July 31 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Deadline for signing up is May 31 in order to get all materials ordered. Space is limited.

■ Sewing Project for Twin Lakes Summer Camp

Ladies, we need your help! We are sewing costumes for the Twin Lakes Summer Camp this year. We will be holding a workshop to make these costumes on April 24, 27 and 28. There will be a morning session from 8:30 - 12:00 and an afternoon session from 12:30 - 4:00. We can use your help even if you do not sew. There is cutting, ironing and sewing that needs to be done. Even if you could only give an hour or two of your time it would be a great help. This will be a fun worthwhile project.

■ Sew and Sow — May 1 and 8

A taste of French hand sewing will be taught by Judy Wallace of Kosciusko. Please join us for fellowship, learning and helping on Friday mornings from 9:00-11:00.

Sew and Sow sign up—If you are interested in Summer Sewing Camps, Sewing project for Twin Lakes summer Camp, or Friday Sew and Sow, please call Cindi Alexander at 601-992-5243.

SPECIAL SALE—If you would like to order the 22 volume collector's set of *Calvin's Commentaries 500 Year Anniversary Edition*, please come by The Presbyterian Bookstore and place your order/deposit by [close of business on Wednesday, April 29.](#)



Nathan Bingham, over at the Cal.vini.st blog interviewed me on the occasion of my visit to Australia. We continue a third installment of the Q & A this week. Here it is:

NB - Thank you so much for agreeing to do this interview. I have included 11 questions that I would be grateful if you could answer. Several of the questions have been submitted by Christians online, others have stemmed from discussions observed generally in the blogosphere, and others as they specifically relate to your visit to Australia.

NB - (5) This year, like every year, there are many young men completing their studies and preparing to enter the ministry. If you knew your answer to this question would be your final parting words to them, what book, other than the Bible or anything you may have published, would you recommend they read as it has personally had such a profound effect on you and your ministry?

LD - J.I. Packer's *A Quest for Godliness* is a goldmine that I've read repeatedly. It's subtitled something like "The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life." It has had a profound effect on my philosophy of ministry. Thomas Brooks' *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices* taught me more about applying the word than any homiletics text I'd ever read. It also fed my soul and helped me to feed others'. David Wells' *No Place for Truth* (and its four sequels) are the best theological sociological analysis of the evangelical church in our time. Mark Dever's *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* is an excellent guide to young pastors on how to go about revitalizing a local congregation or planting a healthy new one. Of the books I've written or edited, I would suggest *Give Praise to God* (in part because many others



Interior view of the Scots' Church in Melbourne, Australia.

participated in writing it, who have a lot more to say than I do!), but I think it's content and topic are important for ministry today.

NB - (6) 150-years of Presbyterianism in Victoria is something to be extremely thankful to God for. If you knew your answer to this question would be your final parting words to those presently in the pulpit, and to the future ministers in

the Presbyterian church; what one thing would you strongly encourage these men to affirm from the pulpit and/or in their ministry in general, and what one thing would you strongly encourage them to deny from the pulpit and/or in their ministry in general, to help ensure the next 150-years of Presbyterianism?

LD - (1) Affirm the authority of the Word, the sovereignty of God, the sinfulness of humans, the complete sufficiency of Christ's substitutionary atonement, salvation by grace alone, through faith alone in Christ alone, complementarianism and a biblical doctrine of the church. (2) Deny both legalism and antinomianism, deny all low views of Scripture, anti-confessionalism, political correctness, egalitarianism, cynicism, pragmatism, individualism and syncretism. (3) Meanwhile – Preach the Word. Love your flock. Pray with passion. Disciple your elders. Promote family religion. Live a godly life. Do not waver in your confessional doctrinal commitments.

NB - (7) It is no secret that you're on Twitter and Facebook. In fact, it was because of 'social media' that we were able to make contact and conduct this interview. What benefit do you see 'social media' bringing to

Reformed / Presbyterian ministry, and what dangers do you think need to be guarded against?

LD - Social media can be a huge waste of time, and broadcast triviality and narcissism. I ruthlessly monitor my time (and thus have to ignore a lot of requests and messages). On the other hand, social media provide a great way to connect with, keep up on and follow old and new friends (especially when they live at a distance). They can also strategically serve as strategic teaching opportunities and instruments of influence.

NB - (8) Following on from the last question: are you a fan of the TeamPyro blog, and could you provide your top-5 TeamPyro posts? [Frank Turk from TeamPyro suggested this question, so I'll add an optional part b] Or, if you were going to give advice to a busy minister who wanted to start reading blogs, please list your top 5 must reads.

LD - There are too many great TeamPyro posts to begin to list, so I check on the "Fab 3½" (Phil, Dan and Frank, plus the elusive, random and very occasional Peccadillo) every day!

Busy ministers should check Between Two Worlds (Justin Taylor), Al Mohler, ref21, Arts and Letters Daily, and 9Marks.

(To be continued)

Report from the Session

by John Crawford, Clerk

The regular Session meeting was held on Monday, April 13, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in the Music Suite, Westminster Hall.

■ GUESTS: Richard Owens, student ministry intern, reported on his activities and expressed appreciation for the time he has served with First Presbyterian Church.

■ APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

• The minutes of the Session meeting held on Monday, March 9, 2009, at 7:00 p.m., were approved.

■ COMMUNICATIONS:

• Sarah Grafton, International Students, Inc., expressed in a letter her appreciation for the Session and its Mission to North America Committee's support of this ministry.

• In a letter David and Jan Thomae, now serving in the United Kingdom, expressed their appreciation for increased financial support.

■ **DISCIPLESHIP:**

• David Felker, Assistant Men's College Coordinator, is promoted to the position of College Coordinator, effective June 1, 2009; and Sam Taaffe is assigned to be the Assistant Men's College Coordinator effective June 8, 2009.

■ **PASTORAL CARE:**

• **Pastoral Care (Senior Adults):**

First Presbyterian Church is authorized to organize and carry out a Creation Museum Trip to Cincinnati, Ohio, and return with Janet Quayle as escort during the period October 19-23, 2009.

• **Shepherding (Marriage, Fellowship):**

The document entitled "On Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage—Guidelines for First Presbyterian Church" is approved.

■ **OUTREACH:**

• **MTW:** Decreases proposed under the new funding guidelines will be delayed until June 2010. Matthew Nasekos will lead a Trujillo, Peru, outreach January 1-9, 2010, with a budget per person of \$2500. The 2009-2010 budget is approved.

• The following are approved for short-term mission trips: Peru: Pat Flowers, Veazey Tramel, Laura Cate May, Susan Geiger, and Brett Clifton. Ukraine: Homer Lee Howie, and Lloyd Turner.

• **MNA:** Samuel Husband, RUM minister at the University of Memphis, will receive monthly support. The 2009-2010 MNA budget is approved.

■ **STUDENT MINISTRY:**

• **Reformed Youth Ministries (RYM):**

A potential relationship with RYM was discussed and received with more details to follow.

■ **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:**

• By letter of March 27, 2009, Elder Owen C. Elder, Jr. requested emeritus status. Having processed this request under the most recently adopted procedures, the Management Committee recommended and the Session thereby adopted the request for emeritus status. Elder Alan Walters offered a prayer of thanksgiving for Owen's having served First Presbyterian in the office of Ruling Elder on two separate occasions;

• Ryan Biese is employed as the Senior Minister's intern on a date to be determined.

■ **DAY SCHOOL:**

• For the school year 2009-2010, the following are approved for employment: Mrs. Jennifer Higginbotham, Kindergarten; Mrs. Paige Polk, fifth grade; Mrs. Margaret Collins, sixth grade; and Patti Lewis, permanent substitute.

■ **REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DEACONS:**

• Chairman Marcus Wilson gave an overview of Diaconate activities.

Finance Report *by James L. Moore, Session Finance Committee*

Our Operating Account is \$ 36,330.65 as of 3/31/2009. Our Capital Contingency Fund Account has a balance of \$ 57,755.48. This account is for the maintenance of church property. Total indebtedness of First Presbyterian is \$ 3,807,679. For the month of March 2009, we had the following receipts and expenditures:

RECEIPTS		EXPENSES	
Freewill Offerings	\$ 91,265.65	Operating Expenses	\$ 73,508.00
Plate Offerings	2,072.73	Administration Expenses	272,196.37
March '09 Paid Tithes & Offerings	343,773.64	Debt Services	51,034.22
Interest Income	54.70	Capital Improvements	9,416.67
Miscellaneous Income	14,725.01	Twin Lakes	8,840.84
ACTUAL INCOME	\$451,891.73	Denominational Giving	7,172.52
BUDGETED INCOME	572,239.99	Worship Department	15,825.98
		Christian Education	8,772.87
		Young Adults	3,244.95
		Discipleship Ministry	(2,411.19)
		Fellowship Department	1,222.23
		Outreach Department	3,013.57
		Student Ministry	7,450.60
		Benevolence	72,730.17
		ACTUAL EXPENSES	532,017.80
		BUDGETED EXPENSES	569,626.63

March 2009 Expenses over Receipts \$80,126.07

COMPARATIVE CASH FLOW

	CASH '07	CASH '08	CASH '09
JANUARY	(113,706)	(83,015)	(106,581)
FEBRUARY	(290,750)	(212,635)	(272,683)
MARCH	(422,219)	(311,539)	(352,809)
APRIL	(447,478)	(306,663)	
MAY	(467,694)	(418,196)	
JUNE	(708,041)	(553,410)	
JULY	(746,388)	(630,063)	
AUGUST	(743,177)	(630,131)	
SEPTEMBER	(696,118)	(695,866)	
OCTOBER	(802,716)	(832,972)	
NOVEMBER	(980,084)	(822,050)	
DECEMBER	39,996	237,533	

