

Interim Notes

I have a compliment for you. You are a wonderful congregation! Here at Waltham Presbyterian Church you have formed a thriving community of believers. You have great leaders, and willing workers. You are truly involved in worship. You obviously care deeply both for each other, and for all of God's world.

Being a suspicious city person I would wonder about the catch in such a compliment. Well I have to admit, there is a catch. You need to be thinking about what how you are going to continue to do well. When a congregation is in your position it can be very tempting to relax and coast. In these fast moving times coasting does not work. I will be writing about some things you can do to ensure you keep doing well is this, and upcoming issues of the Courier.

I believe one of the keys to your future success will be the formation of small groups. A church based small group usually consists of twelve members or less. The members gather around a passion they all hold in common. They use that passion to reach out in mission to the local community. At the same time they devote time together to prayer and study.

Small groups accomplish something more than those stated purposes. They provide a close knit community; a place where members can discuss their thoughts, dreams, and problems with the security that what they say will not be repeated beyond the bounds of the group. The sense of community they provide is quite important in this age where even in small cities and the country we do not always know our neighbors. In a congregation, like this one, who draws members from a wide area, small groups also provide a greater sense of community within the congregation as a whole.

Let me give you an example of a small group. A group of people might have a common love of working on cars. They find a place where they can meet. Remember, small groups do not have to meet in the church building. After the group finds a meeting place they purchase old cars, fix them up, and give them to people who cannot afford a car and desperately need one. Funding for the cars, and parts, might come from the members themselves, or the congregation might fund it as a local mission outreach. Besides the time spent working, the members of the group spend time sharing their lives with each other, studying some aspect of their faith, and praying together.

Sound simple? It is simple. It simply takes people's passions and turns them into the work of Christ's church. But the question is, how do you get started?



The first step in getting started is to contact me. If there are enough people interested in starting a small group we will set up a time to look at the process. Otherwise I will meet with you individually to help you plan your course.

In Christ's Peace,

Pastor Frank

MissionInsite

In this issue of the Courier you will find information on MissionInsite; a new tool made available to us by the Presbytery. On the MissionInsite web page you can find current information and future projections on the area Waltham Presbyterian serves. The data available includes trends in population, ethnicity, income, and life phases for the population in this area.

If you are thinking of doing mission in any form, this is the tool that will show you where to direct your ministry. And best of all, it's free!

For more information, contact Pastor Frank.



Interesting Pastor "Candidates "

Congregations sometimes have interesting expectations for future pastors. Here's the results of a search from another congregation that worked out a bit unusually.

"The following is a confidential report on several Bible candidates being considered for a pastorate.

Adam: Good man but problems with his wife. Also one reference told of how his wife and he enjoy walking nude in the woods.

Noah: Former pastorate of 120 years with not even one convert. Prone to unrealistic building projects.

Abraham: Though the references reported wife-swapping, the facts seem to show he never slept with another man's wife, but did offer to share his own wife with another man.

Joseph: A big thinker, but a braggart, believes in dream-interpreting, and has a prison record.

Moses: A modest and meek man, but poor communicator, even stuttering at times. Sometimes blows his stack and acts rashly. Some say he left an executive position due to a murder charge.

David: The most promising leader of all until we discovered the affair he had with his neighbor's wife.

Solomon: Great preacher but our parsonage would never hold all those wives.

Elijah: Prone to depression. Collapses under pressure.

Elisha: Reported to have lived with a single widow while at his former church.

Hosea: A tender and loving pastor but our people could never handle his wife's occupation.

Deborah: Strong leader and seems to be anointed, but she is female.

Jeremiah: Emotionally unstable, alarmist, negative, always lamenting things, doesn't have a good relationship with governmental or church leaders; he was reportedly thrown into a pit by them.

Ezekiel: Devoted, willing to go wherever the people need him to go, but strange; he is reported to have taken a long trip to bury his underwear on the bank of a foreign river.

Isaiah: On the fringe? Claims to have seen angels in church. Has trouble with his language.

Jonah: Refused God's call into ministry until he was forced to obey by getting swallowed up by a great fish. He told us the fish later spit him out on the shore near here. We hung up.

Amos: Too backward and unpolished, too interested in sycamore trees.

Melchizedek: Great credentials at current work place, but where does this guy come from? No information on his resume about former work records. Every line about parents was left blank and he refused to supply a birth date.

John: Says he is a Baptist, but definitely doesn't dress like one. Has slept in the outdoors for months on end, has a weird diet, and provokes denominational leaders.

Peter: Too blue collar. Has a bad temper- even has been known to curse. Had a big run-in with Paul in Antioch. Aggressive, but a loose cannon. Reportedly has lived with "mother-in-law" but did he ever really have a wife? Boastful, but just doesn't follow through.

Paul: Powerful CEO type leader and fascinating preacher. However, short on tact, unforgiving with younger ministers, harsh and has been known to preach all night. Questionable attitude toward women, if you know what I mean.

James & John: Package deal preacher & associate seemed good at first, but found out they have an ego problem regarding other fellow workers and seating positions. Threatened an entire town after an insult. Also known to try to discourage workers who didn't follow along with them.

Timothy: Too young!

Methuselah: Too old . . . WAY too old!

Jesus: Has had popular times, but once his church grew to 5000 he managed to offend them all, and then this church dwindled down to twelve people. Seldom stays in one place very long. And, of course, he's single.

Judas: His references are solid. A steady plodder. Conservative. Good connections. Knows how to handle money. We're inviting him to preach this Sunday. Possibilities here."

How to Contact the Pastor

Do you need to contact Pastor Frank? Here's how you reach him.

On Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings, call the church, 815-667-4611.

Cell Phone: 773-793-0312

Email: f.fisher.obl.osb@comcast.net

Manse Phone: 815-667-4402

Please note, this is the new number for the manse.

Chicago Home Phone: 773-631-6386.

Would you like to be on the Pastor's email list? Please send a request to his email.

Would you like the Pastor to visit you? Please phone or email him to request it.

Pastor Frank will be on study leave July 6-12. Please call Pastor Frank at 773-793-0312 for emergencies during this time.

Did you miss worship on Sunday?

If you did, you can still hear the sermon. Pastor Frank's sermons are posted at www.ffisher.net.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

SESSION

The session of the Waltham Presbyterian Church of Utica, IL held a regular meeting on June 11, 2009 at 8:26 in the upper lounge of the church. Members present - Moderator Pastor Frank Fisher, Dave Edgcomb, Bev Scharlau, Bruce Brown, Eileen Hagenbuch, Bonnie Walsh and Clerk Ida Brown. Absent Ralph Moshage.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Pastor Frank Fisher.

The minutes of the previous meetings were approved.

A motion was made and carried to receive the committee reports.

A motion was made and carried to hold a special congregational meeting on June 21, 2009 to elect a deacon to fulfill the unexpired term of Philip McConville.

Pastor Frank will be on study leave on 7/12/09.

July committee meetings will be on the 9th. The next session meeting will be the following week on the 16th at 7.

The session has begun a study with the book Natural Church Development by Christian A. Schwartz.

A motion was approved to adjourn at 10:07 pm. The meeting was closed with prayer by Pastor Frank Fisher

Ida Brown Clerk of Session

A special congregational meeting was held June 21, 2009. Lois Edgcomb was elected Deacon to fulfill Phil McConville's unexpired term.

DEACONS

Deacons discussed communion needs for June and July. We prepared communion for 66 people in May. Deacons are in charge of finding liturgists for July. We have done nursing home visitations with Pastor and are making plans for more visitations in the future.

TRUSTEES

Did not meet this month Dave Edgcomb

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Attendance: Karen Pillion & Sharon Reel
Teachers and workers are in place for VBS. Summer Sunday School has been cancelled. Sunday School will resume on Sept. 13. They are in need of Fall Sunday School teachers. The curriculum ordered is Seasons of the Spirit. Pastor Frank recommended Bible Quest for the High School. Eric, Andrea, & Phil recommended Seminary Assistant or Youth Worker. Waltham children have been invited to join Grace United Methodist VBS at Echo Bluff, July 28-30. **See flier for details & sign up.** There were no baptisms. Valerie Blue - - Scholarship, \$150. VBS Stamps, \$19.04

MUSIC & WORSHIP

At the June 11, 2009 committee meeting, the Music & Worship committee discussed the music for the July 5th outdoor worship service. Since the availability of power was unsure, we discussed having the congregation sing acapella that day. Mary Small also mentioned that she asked Bob

Barnett and a high school student to possibly provide us with special music for some services in the summer. Mary Small, Bruce Brown, and Katie Videgar were present.

MISSION

Members present: Relynn Olivero, Maxine Cole, Kathy Fox, Bev Scharlau

Dispersed 2009 May Funds:

Ben Ficek (Eagle Scout Project)	\$30.00
Bev Scharlau (Bunny Baskets for Vets)	148.86
Camp Fire Grief Camp	300.00
PADS	500.00
Sunset Gap	300.00
IV Food Pantry	750.00

Agreed to get checkbook balance for Mission giving monthly

Covered: liturgists, Minute for Mission for June

Approved request from Matthew Olivero for \$24.60 for Eagle Scout project

Read thank-you letters from our mission giving; to be put in Courier

Pastor Frank brought to our attention;

Our affiliation with Blackhawk Presbytery & Kenya Partnership

Missionsite info – tool to help with local mission

Will post information on World Mission Celebration, Oct 22-24(see below)

Maxine read several letters from local schools with their mission needs

Next meeting to be announced.

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE

We are trying to find a date to meet.

TREASURER'S REPORT

As of June 10, 2009

Previous balance (5/1/09)	\$2,795.77
Deposits/credits	6,883.74
Checks/debits	9,197.40
Ending Balance	\$ 482.11

Profit & Loss & Contribution reports for months of January through May 09 and 08 have been printed for your review.

Jan.-May	2008	2009
General offering	\$48,943.54	\$35,640.28
Total Expenses	\$54,242.23	\$55,290.63

Payments on bills and expenses have been paid or reimbursed slowly since income is less than expected or desired.

Keri Sundberg

BENEVOLENCE FUND

Yearly donation to Githiga	\$7550.00
Benevolence balance	\$7196.29

Linda Chalus, Treasurer

MEMORIAL FUND

Memorials have been received for Irene Kleinmaier

Joyce Anderson, Memorial Treasurer

Summer Schedule

One service at 9am, except for the Picnic on July 5th. There is no Sunday School.

PRESBYTIAN WOMEN



Waltham will be hosting Blackhawk Presbytery Tuesday, Sept. 8th. All committees have committed to support P.W. as we host this day. We will be asking all members to help prepare our facility and will be asking for casseroles, salads, and desserts for the noon meal. We will be serving at least 150 people. We will need people to help with set up, registration, morning coffee, food preparation, serving and clean up. **YOU WILL BE CONTACTED SOON!** We thank you in advance for any help you can provide. In August we plan a cleaning day to prepare the church kitchen. Watch the Sunday bulletins for date and time. Plan to join us as P.W resumes their monthly meeting schedule in September. Come help us plan our schedule for a new year of our Lord's work!!

FROM YOUR PNC

Your PNC had 1st interview phone calls with two pastors. We are setting up a 2nd phone interview with another pastor. We continue to have Pastor Information Forms submitted to us by interested Pastors.

Food Pantry

Please don't forget the food pantry this summer. Canned fruits & vegetables, tuna, box mixes are always needed. If you have extra from your garden, they will welcome that as well. Please no egg cartons.

LECTIONARY for the LORD'S DAY

July

July 5 10am 4th of July at Whipple's
2 Sam. 5: 1-5, 9-10 Ps. 48
2 Cor. 12: 2-10 Mark 6: 1-13

July 12 9am Communion Breakfast
2 Sam. 6: 1-5, 12-19 Ps. 24
Eph. 1:3-14 Mark 6: 14-29

July 19 9am 16th Sun. in Ordinary Time
2 Sam. 7: 1-14a Ps. 89: 20-37
Eph. 2: 11-22 Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56

July 26 9am 17th Sun. in Ordinary Time
2 Sam. 11:1-15 Ps. 14
Eph. 3: 14-21 John 6: 1-21

August

August 2 9am Communion
2 Sam 11: 26-12: 13 Ps. 51: 1-12
Eph. 4:1-16 John 6: 24-35

August 9 9am 19th Sun. in Ordinary Time
2 Sam. 18:5-9,15,33-33 Ps. 130
Eph. 4: 25-5: 2 John 6: 51-58

Aug. 16 9am 20th Sun. in Ordinary Time
1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14 Ps. 111
Eph. 5:15-20 John 6: 51-58

Aug. 23 9am 21st Sun. in Ordinary Time
1 Kings 8: 22-23, 41-43 Ps.84
Eph. 6: 10-20 John 6:56-69

Aug. 30 9am 22nd Sun. in Ordinary Time
Song of Sol. 2:8-13 Ps. 45: 1-2, 6-9
James 1: 17-27 Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23

PICNIC ` Sunday, July 5

Worship will be at 10am at Rita Whipple's farm. Pot Luck will be served at **noon**. Meat, drinks & ice cream will be provided. Bring your table service, a dish to pass & folding chairs. There will be games for all ages. There will be a donation cup to cover expenses. In case of rain, we will gather in the Church Fellowship Hall.

Committee members are: Ralph & Marlene Moshage, Dave & Jan Edgcomb, Steve & Karen Pillion, Malcom Whipple, Rita Whipple, John & Bonnie Kinzer, Dave & Cyndi Hagenbuch, Randy & Nancy Tuftie

Communion Breakfast will be Sunday July 12th at 9am in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring coffee cake or muffins to share.

Rev. Paul Salansky will lead us in worship.

The committee members are:

Ron & Linda Chalus, Don & Leila Croisant, Steve & Chris Finley, Ralph & Carol Freebairn, June Freebairn, Bob & Rita Van Drimmelen, Rick & Deb Hayne, Johnathan & Kati Hagenbuch, Scott & Sharon Reel, Steve Wilson, Sally Wilson

Rally Sunday ~ Sept. 13th

Paul & Ida Brown, Bob & Shelly Chapman, Dan & Jessica Edgcomb, Beth Hahne, Jason & Becky Johnson, Leonard & Lois Edgcomb, Tony & Phyllis Mertes

BIRTHDAYS & **ANNIVERSARIES**

July Birthdays

- 2 Kathie Kleckner
- 4 Robert Anderson*
- 5 Brian Barto
Clarissa Barto
- 6 Jean Jones
Neil Olivero
- 7 Brett Klein
- 8 Karli Wensel
- 9 Monty Whipple
- 10 Rev. Lawrence Athorn
- 14 Johnathan Hagenbuch
- 16 Logan Finley
- 17 Dave Deutsch
- 18 Anne Finley
- 19 Paige Anne Hahne
- 20 Kyle Videgar
Christina Whipple
- 24 Mark Whipple
- 26 Tylyn Jude Chapman
Matthew Olivero
Paul Young
- 27 Steve Kleckner
Jennifer Wilson
- 28 Harold Kinzer*
Russell Finley
- 30 Steve Wilson
Daniel Ostrowski
- 31 Alexa Finley
Kim Freeman

July Anniversaries

- 1 Mr. & Mrs. Gary Barto
- 13 Mr. & Mrs. Tom Walsh
Mr. & Mrs. Ross Wilson
- 14 Mr. & Mrs. Dean Robinson
- 16 Mr. & Mrs. David Hagenbuch
- 21 Mr. & Mrs. David Wilson

- 20 Mr. & Mrs. Dave Hendrix
- 29 Mr. & Mrs. Tony Mertes
- 31 Mr. & Mrs. Paul Brown

August Birthdays

- 3 Jim Feuerborn
Lindsey McConville
- 5 Esther Funk*
- 7 Kyle Jordan Small
- 8 Paul Hess
- 10 Joe Kinzer
Roger Laatz
- 11 Natalie Hallead
Brian Robinson
Greg Whipple
Kathy Muckey
- 16 Douglas Carder
- 20 Reilly Muckey
- 21 Albert Hagenbuch
- 22 Ruth Ann Brizgis
Dena Ficek
- 25 Don Scharlau
- 26 Marilyn Laatz
John Thomas Walsh
- 28 Gary Morrison
Tom Ostrowski
- 31 Wendy Hughes Ahern

August Anniversaries

- 1 Mr. & Mrs. Jason Depenbrock
- 2 Mr. & Mrs. Ray Jones
- 4 Mr. & Mrs. Dave Edgcomb
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Anderson*
- 7 Mr. & Mrs. J. Davis Small*
- 18 Mr. & Mrs. Russell Finley
- 24 Mr. & Mrs. Michael Dapkus
- 27 Mr. & Mrs. Scott Mertes
- 28 Mr. & Mrs. Mark Small

Scout Master Bob Upcoming Events



June 23 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
June 30 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
July 1 – Troop TLC Meeting 7:00 P.M.
July 2 – Cub Scout Meeting 6:30 P.M.
July 7 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M. Troop
Elections
July 9-23 Philmont Trek To Philmont Scout
Reservation
July 14 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
July 16 – Cub Scout Meeting 6:30 P.M.
July 21 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
July 26-31 Scout Summer Camp at Canyon
Camp near Stockton, IL
July 28 – No Troop Meeting
Aug. 4 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Aug. 5 – Troop TLC Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Aug. 6 – Cub Scout Meeting 6:30 P.M.
Aug. 11 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Aug. 18 – Troop Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Aug. 19 – Troop Committee Meeting 7:00 P.M.
Aug. 20 – Cub Scout Meeting 6:30 P.M.
Aug. 25 – Potluck/Court of Honor 6:00 P.M.

**Troop 97 meets every Tuesday night at the
Waltham Presbyterian Church.**

**Contact Ralph Moshage at 667-4511 or
Ross Wilson at 434-1469 for information about
the troop.**

THANK-YOU

Thank-you for the \$30 to help complete my
Eagle Project. I made a storage cabinet for
the LaSalle County Historical Society.

Sincerely, Ben Ficek

Thank-you to the congregation for the food,
cards, & prayers for while I was in the
hospital. It was greatly appreciated,
especially after Colin was born.

Thanks again

Sincerely, Stefanie Sebastian

The Gideons International wish to thank us
for our contribution of \$402.

Thank-you for your donation of \$30.00
toward Ben Ficek's Eagle Scout project, the
picture storage rack.

LaSalle County Historical Society

On behalf of the Illinois Valley Community
Hospital Foundation, I would like to take
this time to express our deepest appreciation
for your contribution to the Social Service
Indigent Patient Fund in the amount of
\$300.00 dated 6/8/09. The IVCH
Foundation acknowledges that no gifts or
services were received in exchange for the
above mentioned charitable contribution.
Community financial support is essential if
IVCH is to continue to provide modern
health care services to the community. Your
contribution is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely, Harry F. Erlenborn, President

Thank-you so much for your donation to
Camp Fire's Treasure of Life Camp. Your
gift helps to support the program that
provides a service to boys and girls who
have lost someone close to them through
death. The camp provides an atmosphere
where they can have fun and share their
feelings with peers and trained counselors.
It is a time of sharing, caring, and giving.
The week helps to add stability to the lives
of these children and they appreciate your
help and support.

Thanks again for your generous gift and
support

Esther Funk, executive Director

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

VBS-PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN

Whew! We had preschoolers and kindergarteners this week—18 in all: Noah, Samantha, Emma, Joey, Luke, Will, Dawson, Cole, Kara, Tyler, Tommy, Joe, Addison, Karly, Bella, Isabelle, Maverick, and Trenton. We read our Bible stories at Camp E.D.G.E. (Experience & Discover God Everywhere), complete with tents, lawn chairs and even smores. We learned E.D.G.E. pledges each day and read about the treks to:

1. the Promised Land (Pledge/God is with me. I will stay close to God.);
2. Bethlehem (Pledge/God guides me. I will follow.);
3. the Pharisee's house (Pledge/God teaches me. I will learn.);
4. the Upper Room (Pledge/God loves me. I will love God and others.); and
5. Galilee (Pledge/God sends me. I will go.).

The kids had the opportunity to bring a camping item from home to show to the group. Hopefully the kids enjoyed this week with us—they are very special to God and to us!

Many thanks to Wendy Olivero and Ida Brown for all their help (including crowd control) this week!

Karen Pillion

4TH, 5TH, & 6TH GRADE CLASS

Our class met in the downstairs lounge. The class was Tatum Daugherty, Emily Ficek, Mellisa Nickel, Kyle Small, Johnathon Stachowiak, Jackie Walsh and Dalton Wensel. We traveled to 5 different sites in the Bible, beginning with crossing the Jordan into the Promised land, following the star to Bethlehem with the Wise men, meeting with the disciples in the Upper Room and going with Mary and Mary Magdalene to the tomb

and seeing Jesus on the road to Galilee. We thank all those who made the week so much fun...Alexis and Sally and Pastor Frank with recreation, Katie and Ellen with music, Mary Ann and Dena with crafts and all those who provided the meals for us. Goldfish is always a favorite snack!!!.. Until next year...thank you to Waltham Presbyterian Church and especially Monica for providing the week of Camp E.D.G.E....Experience and Discover God Everywhere.

Carol Shaver

MUSIC REPORT

The students and I had a great time learning two fantastic songs about God's love. Our first song, "You Gotta Show It", was an up beat number about not only telling others about God's love for us, but also showing them with actions. The other song we learned, "love the Lord", tells us all the importance of loving the Lord "with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." It is a great reminder that we all need from time to time! It was certainly my pleasure working with such a wonderful group of kids, and I look forward to seeing them again next year!

Katie Videgar

FROM YOUR V.B.S. KITCHEN CREW

Many thanks to all who donated food for our suppers served to the children and staff for Vacation Bible School!! We fed nearly 50 students plus the staff. They loved the fruit and cookies each evening. Especially popular were pickles, olives, strawberries and grapes, scoops & salsa and cheese curls!! Our menu was: Mon. Hotdogs & chips, Tues. Ham or turkey sandwiches with cheese slices served on the side, Wed. Chicken fingers & chips, Thurs. Spaghetti, buttered noodles & jello jigglers and Fri. Leftovers. Peanut butter & jelly sandwiches were served every night.

Kitchen crew: Don & Bev Scharlau, Janet Small, Sally Wilson, Rita Whipple, Bob & Rita Van Drimmelen, Jeff Ficek, Lois Edgcomb, Eileen Hagenbuch, Phyllis Mertes, Mary Small, Carol Shaver and others that pitched in when and where needed!!

Any unopened leftover food was given to the food pantry.

Our thanks to all who helped in any way to make V.B.S. at Waltham successful in 2009!!

CRAFTS

Dena Ficek, Mary Ann Small & Kaitlyn Small prepared different crafts for each night at VBS, All four classes made picture frames the 1st evening. Kathie Kleckner took photos of the children at the camp site, which were added to the frames.

Wednesday, as always, is T-shirt night! The children bring in white T-shirts which are decorated with stamps & fabric paint. This year's stamps were bugs, butterflies, & snails. When you add the googly eyes and rhinestones, they looked good enough to wear at the Friday night program. Other crafts included bug jars, ceramic insects, backpacks & Frisbees

MISSION PROJECT

We collected \$168.84 for Heifer Project. If you would like to add to the Project, there is a pink bag on the table in the narthex. We will continue to collect until Sept., at which time the Sunday School children will vote on the animals they want to see purchased.

IN REMEMBRANCE

The church has received word that former member, Irene Kleinmaier passed away on

Fri., June 19. Irene and her family had been members before they moved to Waterman, IL in the 1960's. She is survived by her two children:

Ron Kleinmaier
22234 24th Ave. South G52
Des Moines, Washington 98198

Ann Kleinmaier
2429 15th St. NW
Bemidji, Minnesota 56601

DON'T FORGET OUR SERVICEMEN

PVT Brown, Joshua A
B Co 1/48th IN BN, 4th PLT OUTLAWS
495 Iowa Avenue, Unit #23
Fort Leonard Wood, MO 65473
His mom has addressed envelopes on the bulletin board.

John Calvin

“Martin Luther and Calvin are arguably the most significant architects of the Reformation. If Luther sounded the trumpet for reform, Calvin orchestrated the score by which the Reformation became a part of Western Civilization.”

– Mark A. Noll, Elwell Evangelical Dictionary

Born the 10th of July, 1509, in Noyon, France to Gerard, a cathedral notary and registrar, and Jeanne la Franc Cauvin, John was the 2nd of three boys in the family. His mother passed away when he was very young. Calvin was very bright. He was a

clerk for the local bishop by the time he was 12. An influential family made it possible for him to attend the College de la Marche in Paris. About 1525, his father sent him to study law at the University of Orleans. Calvin studied many subjects, among them Latin and Greek.

While he had been brought up Roman Catholic, sometime after 1529, he broke with the Catholic Church. He later wrote “but God, by the secret guidance of his providence, at length gave a different direction to my course. And first, since I was too obstinately devoted to the superstitions of Popery to be easily extricated from so profound an abyss of mire, God by a sudden conversion subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame, which was more hardened in such matters than might have been expected from one at my early period of life.”

When he became friends with known reformers, Calvin was forced to go into hiding. At one point he left France for Basel, Switzerland. Institutes of the Christian Religion is the book for which Calvin is most famous. He first published it in 1536. He continued to edit and update it throughout his life.

Calvin intended to move to Strasbourg, a free imperial city. War forced him to make a detour on the way; to Geneva. Calvin planned to spend one night in Geneva. French reformer, William Farel, insisted he stay. The two set about reorganizing the Church in Geneva. The city council accepted their ideas. These ideas dealt with marriage, excommunication, Holy Communion, and hymn singing as part of the liturgy.

A problem began over the use of unleavened bread during Holy Communion. Calvin and Farel refused to use unleavened bread during Easter Service. A riot broke out during church. The next day, the city council told both ministers to leave Geneva. Calvin was finally on his way to Strasbourg.

Continued next Courier