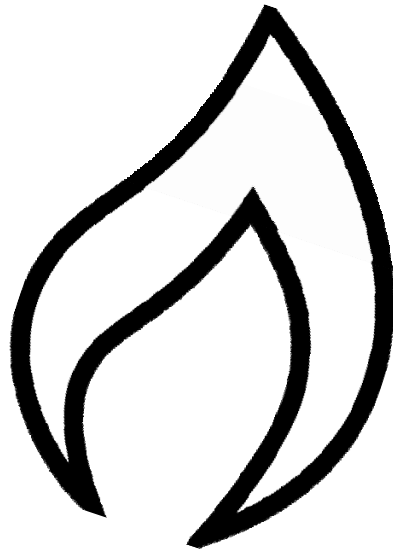


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, SARASOTA



ACADEMY

For Christian Discipleship

FALL ~ 2011

WELCOME TO -

THE ACADEMY FOR CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

The education of the adult members of our congregation has long been an important part of the mission of First Presbyterian Church. That effort has been matched by a desire “to know and to grow” as disciples of Jesus Christ which extends beyond our membership into the larger community.

To fulfill that mission and to meet the interest of our members, First Presbyterian Church has established The Academy for Christian Discipleship. The Academy is a central part of the church’s adult education program each year between October and April. Led by competent and creative faculty the Academy is becoming the premier place for adult Christian education in Sarasota. Opportunities exist for both beginning and advanced learners, enabling all participants to take fresh steps toward a more informed and satisfying Christian life.

This booklet describes the Academy offerings for the next three months, divided into two sessions: Fall - October 9 to November 20; and Advent - November 27 to December 19. You are invited to read through these course descriptions. There are offerings for every level of interest and experience. Once you have made your decision, you will find a Registration Form on the back page of this booklet that you may complete and return to the church.

Take the next step. Grow your faith - and your discipleship. Become part of The Academy for Christian Discipleship.

BELIEVING DIFFERENTLY - WORKING TOGETHER
Sundays
October 9 - November 20
Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Led by Jay Rock*

Jews, Christians and Muslims have sometimes been called “cousins in faith”. This course will explore the relationships and distinctions among these three faiths, which all trace their roots back to Abraham. Along with gaining an understanding of basic beliefs, we will explore the possibility for inter-faith partnerships within the Sarasota community.

With the help of **Rabbi Geoffrey Huntting of Temple Sinai** and **Samir Khatib of the Islamic Society of Sarasota and Bradenton**, we will talk with Jews and Muslims about how they live out their faiths and the role of belief and practice in their lives. It is hoped that these conversations will create building blocks upon which future inter-faith conversations and activities can be developed.

Within the time frame of this course we expect to enable visits to Temple Sinai and to the new mosque just completed on North Lockwood Ridge Road.

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY
Sundays
October 9 - November 20

Led by John Cairns* and Bill Morgan*

This class is designed to provide a brief overview of the Old Testament; its people, events and themes. It will help you to gain some clarity about the history of the Children of Israel from the time of Abraham to the prophets and the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

Among the subjects covered will be:

The Patriarchs
The Twelve Tribes
Moses
The Passover
The Law (Commandments)
Joshua
The Judges
King David
The Divided Kingdom
Elijah
The Exile
The Prophets and the Promise of a Messiah

This class is designed particularly for those with little or no biblical background and will not require class participation. Biblical reading assignments will be identified in support of each week's presentation.

* Faculty biographies may be found on pages 6 and 7 of this booklet.

COURSES FOR THE ADVENT SEASON

Sundays

November 27 - December 19

Who Is This Child in the Manger?

Led by Elaine Barnett*

Advent is the time to prepare for God's great gift of love to each of us, Jesus Christ. As we gather around his manger bed, we realize that Jesus will not always be an infant nor a child. The gospels move quickly from the story of his birth to the accounts of his adult life and ministry. So how are we to get a clear picture of the one we call the "Christ Child"?

This learning time will explore the scripture and discover a variety of images for Jesus. Participants will discern the meaning of Jesus as the way, the truth and the life; the light of the world; the shepherd; and the true vine by study, reflection, conversation and music.

The Music of the Nativity

Led by Guest Musicians

As the Christmas season approaches we frequently bemoan the constant presence of "Christmas music" in stores, offices and elevators. Yet we also acknowledge our anticipation of hearing again some of the special music of the season. So much of the great music of the Christian faith is focused on the story of Christ's birth, and through the years we have come to treasure its annual return.

In this class some familiar and some less-than-familiar music will be featured. Leaders will explore, explain and help us to enjoy a selection of the classics, and introduce us to works that may be new to us. There is no better way to prepare for Christ's birth and to find fresh insights into the familiar nativity story than through the medium of great music.

* Faculty biographies may be found on pages 6 and 7 of this booklet.

COMING IN 2012

Winter Term

January 8 - February 19

Family Values - Family Faith

Led by Chip Schaaff*

This course will examine how we discover and maintain our values. How can we shape our lives to reflect what we say is important to us, our families, our world? We will explore together the connection between the facts we know, the concepts these facts lead us to believe and the actions these concepts generate.

Presbyterian Basics

Led by Clay Thomas* & John Cairns*

This is the place for all of the questions you have been saving! These pastors will examine and explain what Presbyterians believe and what we still struggle with. We will begin with topics like: baptism, sexual orientation, the accuracy of scripture, and then move into whatever areas class members wish to pursue.

Spiritual & Moral Problems in American Fiction

Led by John Parks*

Good literature functions as both a mirror and a lamp - to show us ourselves with all of our strengths and flaws. Over seven weeks we will read and discuss stories by such authors as Ernest Hemingway, Philip Roth, Tobias Wolf and others, searching for ways to sharpen our own faith constructs and understandings.

Lenten Term

February 26 - April 1

The Letters of John

Led by Jean Luker*

This Bible study course will take a careful look at these three short letters which challenge us with the command to "love God".

From age-ing to sage-ing

Led Janet Olshewski

Using life-review and contemplative techniques the course will help us distill wisdom for our daily journey.

Spring Term

April 15 - May 20

Who's Going Where? Heaven, Hell and the End of the World

Led by John Cairns*

ACADEMY FACULTY

The Academy for Christian Discipleship has been fortunate to be able to assemble a talented group of teachers who bring expertise in a variety of subject areas. Their combination of deep faith and teaching skill offers a rewarding experience for all those who register for Academy classes.



ELAINE BARNETT is a Certified Christian Educator and Elder who has served congregations in North Carolina as their educator and served as Associate Executive Presbyter in two Florida presbyteries. She was honored by the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators as Educator of the Year in 2006 and is a past moderator of Peace River Presbytery. She currently serves on the presbytery's Committee for Preparation for Ministry and on First Presbyterian's Personnel Committee. Elaine and her husband Jim have two adult children and five grandchildren.



JOHN CAIRNS is a retired Presbyterian pastor, having served churches in Ohio, Indiana and Upstate New York, with a primary focus on adult Christian education. His last position before retirement was as the Dean of The Academy for Faith & Life at the 5000+ member Fourth Presbyterian Church in downtown Chicago. At First Presbyterian in Sarasota John serves as a volunteer Parish Associate working with the Adult Education Committee, and teaching several courses each year. John is a graduate of Westminster College (Pa.) and holds two masters degrees (Divinity and Christian Education) from Princeton Theological Seminary. He was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators in 2006.

JEAN LUKER is a graduate of Sarasota High School, Florida State University and the University of Virginia. She worked as a school teacher and a school division administrator in Virginia. Deeply involved in local and regional church women's organizations, she has gained a reputation throughout the area as an excellent Bible study leader and teacher. She is married to the Reverend Doctor Maurice Luker. They have three grown children. Jean is enjoying her retirement and return to Sarasota.

BILL MORGAN is an ordained Presbyterian minister who has served churches in Montana, New Mexico, Texas and Georgia. His academic background includes a graduate degree from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. For the last ten years Bill has taught at Georgia College and USF Sarasota-Manatee. His teaching is focused in the areas of Contemporary Christian Ethics, Ancient Israel, and the Hebrew Bible. In addition to his pastoral and classroom work Bill has received numerous awards for his work in international peacemaking and racial relations.



JOHN PARKS grew up in Southern California and earned degrees from the University of California at Berkeley (B.A.), Claremont School of Theology (Rel. D.) and the University of New Mexico (Ph. D.). For 35 years John was a professor of American Literature at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. He has published two books and numerous essays in scholarly journals. He also served on several Boards of Trustees in the Oxford area. Since moving to Sarasota in 2008, John has taught two classes for the Lifelong Learning Academy and several classes at First Presbyterian Church.

JAY ROCK is an ordained Presbyterian minister who served the Presbyterian Church (USA) as Coordinator of Interfaith Relations from 2003 - 2010. Prior to that time he was a mission co-worker of the PCUSA assigned to direct interfaith relations work at the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA. His Ph.D. work was in the History of Religions. He lives in Sarasota with his wife (and author) Judith Rock.



CHIP SCHAAFF is a 35 year resident of Sarasota. For 7 years he taught elementary school before making a career change. He earned his Master's Degree in mental health counseling in 1987 and has been counseling individuals and families since then. He has led a host of classes in several local Presbyterian churches on parenting, managing transitions, traits of the healthy family and values clarification. Chip believes the call to "love our neighbor as you love yourself" calls for both improved interpersonal skills and personal self-care: important work with great reward for willing participants. Chip is married to the Reverend Ruth Schaaff.



CLAY THOMAS is a graduate of Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, GA and an ordained Presbyterian pastor. He was called as Associate Pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Sarasota in the summer of 2006. Prior to seminary Clay worked in Alaska and South Carolina. Clay is a current board member for Presbyterian Peacemaking Fellowship, Sarasota Ministerial Association, and the Sarasota-Manatee Interfaith Partnership. He and his wife, the Reverend Tricia Dillon Thomas have three wonderful children.

IN ADDITION TO ACADEMY COURSES - - -

First Presbyterian Church offers a number of other opportunities for adult learning.

Among them are the following:

CHRISTIAN BUILDERS Led by Dr. Chuck Holmes

The class meets every Sunday at 9:45am in Room 225

This weekly class is engaged in continuous and concentrated Bible study, focusing on one biblical book at a time, and using the clear and straightforward commentaries of J. Vernon McGee. Newcomers are always welcome as we seek to make the whole Bible available to all who join us. We believe Bible study should be fun, informative and fundamental for every Christian's life.

PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY Led by Rev. John Ross

This class meets each week August –May at Noon on Wednesdays in Room 203,

The Bible Study will use Philip Yancey's book entitled *What's So Amazing About Grace* as a focus for study and discussion. It is one thing to talk about grace; it's another to taste it's power. Through candid video interviews, Philip Yancey integrates true-life faces and experiences that will disrupt our preconceptions. Hopefully we will discover together why grace is more amazing than we have ever dreamed.

SMALL GROUP STUDY AND DISCUSSION

First Presbyterian Church offers a variety of small groups organized for study and discussion of particular topics, and meeting at a variety of times and locations. Groups for women, groups for young couples, and heterogeneous groups are available. Check with Pastor Clay Thomas for more information.

ADULT EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Kay Ward, chair

Judy Kuebbeler

Phil Kuebbeler

Jean Luker

Janet Olshewsky

Thom Olshewsky

Linda Parks

Jim Turner

Kitty Werner

John Cairns, Advisor

Natalie Smith, Librarian

Clay Thomas, Staff

All classes meet on
Sundays at 10:00 a.m.
unless otherwise noted.

The Adult Education Committee
welcomes
your comments about
Academy for Christian Discipleship
courses, and your
suggestions
regarding future course offerings.
Contact any committee member.

First Presbyterian Church
2050 Oak Street
Sarasota, FL 34237
941 - 955 - 8119
www.firstpressarasota.org

ACADEMY FOR CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

REGISTRATION FORM

Our modest registration fees help to underwrite the Academy, but are not intended to be a deterrent to your registration. If the fee is problematic for any reason, please feel free to check the waiver line below when you register.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-Mail _____

Winter Term	Oct 9– Nov 20	Course Fee
_____	Believing Differently—Working Together	\$5 _____
_____	Old Testament Survey	\$5 _____

Advent Term	Nov 27 – Dec19	Course Fee
_____	Who Is This Child in the Manger?	\$5 _____
_____	Music of the Nativity	\$5 _____

Total Paid \$ _____

____ I wish to have my registration fee(s) waived.

Mail to: Academy for Christian Discipleship
First Presbyterian Church
2050 Oak Street
Sarasota, FL 34237

Or register in church on Sunday mornings.

First Presbyterian Church
2050 Oak Street
Sarasota, FL 34237-7038

www.FirstPresSarasota.org

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