

The Work of the Elder



January

2005

New Sterling Associated Reformed Presbyterian Church

The Stirling

The work of the elder serving on the Session takes on many faces.

An elder will represent the church and the presbytery at the annual meeting of Synod (a meeting of all the churches in our denomination). They also represent the church at meetings of Presbytery (meetings with all the churches of NC), which can meet many times throughout the year. The elder also meets as a member of the Session for the local church to care for the spiritual/business matters which affect the congregation.

But along with all these things the most important responsibility a member of the Session has is to provide spiritual oversight and guidance for you, the individual member. This is the most important and challenging thing an elder will ever do.

David Dickson, born in 1821, was identified as one of the most trusted and best known elders of Edinburgh, Scotland. He wrote that 'the elder labors under [a] great disadvantage. While he has a general idea of the work to which has been set apart, there is no prescribed or understood plan laid down for him in the doing of it. Each elder has thus been left to do what seemed right in his own eyes. Any fixed plan would be impossible to lay down, as every elder, every district, and every congregation differs so much from every other. We can therefore understand how elders who are timid or inexperienced feel a difficulty.'

It is challenging for an elder to do what he has been called to do but we here at New Sterling in 2005 are going to concentrate on just that. One area of concentration for us is our relationship with the people within our particular elder-shepherd groups. We want to improve the trust, the conversation and desire between both elder and member to share concerns, needs and ideas. We want to talk more with the members of our church. Recently some of you did just that spending valuable time discussing several matters that concerned you. Each member of the Session involved saw the time as very beneficial and fulfilling. We, as a

Session, want to continue the open lines of discussion.

One particular thing we are going to do in January is re-assign the elder-shepherd groups based on geography and individual needs. First, we want to ensure that an elder-shepherd group is geographically centralized to the elder. This will allow quick trips if needed to the home of the elder or the member. And also in special cases if there is a need that a particular elder can serve more readily than another then we will assign that person to the elder who can serve them best. Since we have a rotating Session this re-assignment will need to take place each year for some of the elder-shepherd groups. We think this review and re-assignment will enhance our communication and therefore help both the elder and you the member care for your spiritual well-being.

If you have any feedback or comments concerning this matter please feel free to call you elder.

Also, I would like you to do something for me. I would like to ask each of you to pray for your elder in a very particular way. Sometime in the coming year pick a 30-day period of time and pray for your elder-shepherd every day. It would probably be best to do it early so you won't forget. Pray for his spiritual health, his personal life, his family, his job, his home, his relationship with Christ and his relationship with you – among other things you know of personally. I have found that concentrated prayer for an individual or matter has great effects – both on me and the individual or matter at hand. Please help them by doing this for them.

Thank you for your prayers and your patience as we continue our journey together. We seek to serve our Lord to greatest degree and part of that is done as we seek to establish an even stronger unity among the believers here at New Sterling Church. God bless!

In His Service,
Pastor Tim

Church Directories

When I first came to New Sterling I ran across some directories from years past. These directories give a snapshot of the past and so they become a very important part of our churches historical records. A directory lets you see how much a church changes and grows over the years – the buildings change with some being added and some updated. The grounds around the church evolve as needs of the congregation grow – more parking, better playgrounds, etc...

And then there are the people. A directory from the past includes addresses, pictures of loved ones and children who have grown and now have families of their own. We can also see those who were once members but now have moved away. These directories provide a great harvest of memories.

Speaking of the pictures, the pictures of the past not only provide an avenue to those we once knew well they can also give us a chuckle. I can see that in fact some of you did have hair and also for some it has not always been gray or white. Other pictures show that some are very courageous and brave people – how else could you explain taking a picture with hair-dos like those! Also in a directory you see that, as in my case, there once was less of you than there is now – but with the respect I have for each of you and to protect myself I am not going there. But remember this – if I ever need any blackmail material I have a great source.

Well, needless to say directories can be very useful from a historical prospective, provide opportunity for the family portrait and they can be fun. It's been 5 years since the last directory for New Sterling so the Session would like to establish another. In January we will begin the process for developing the directory and we have asked the Sterling Silvers to lead the coordination efforts for this project. The schedule is as follows:

- Sign ups for family portraits – January 2, 9 & 16
- Photos taken – January 28, 29 & February 7
- Proofs back to families – March 9-12

- Directories published – mid April

I hope this opportunity provides a good time for you to have your family pictures taken and also to become a part of the history of the larger family portrait to be seen in the 2005 New Sterling Church Directory.

The Session

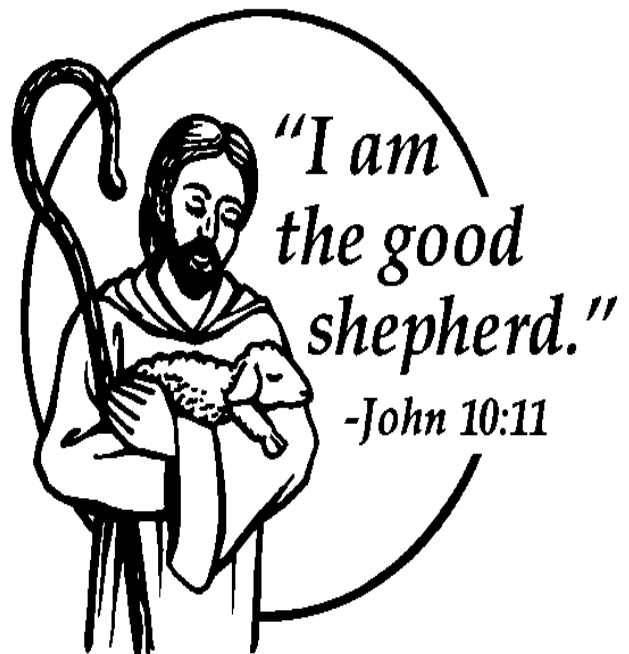
A Note From The Session

The Session has approved to support teaching the Bible in Iredell County Schools. We will send a \$1000.00 donation to this cause in January 2005. This will be included in the budget the following year.

A reminder that in the event of a tie in the Elder and Deacon elections, the run off will be the following Sunday.

Olin Mills will be providing us with a pictorial directory possibly in mid January of 2005. Everyone will be contacted.

The Session



Women of the Church

"Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his Holy Name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." ~Psalm 103: 1-2

David's praise focused on God's glorious deeds. It is easy to complain about life, but David's list gives us plenty for which to praise God - he forgives our sins, heals our diseases, redeems us from death, crowns us with love and compassion, satisfies our desires, and gives righteousness and justice. We receive all of these without deserving any of them. No matter how difficult your life's journey, you can always count your blessings - past, present and future. When you feel as though you have nothing for which to praise God, read David's list.

Susan Pugh will continue our Bible study of Phillippians with the Golden Christian Circle on Monday, January 3, 2005, at 9:30 am and the Dorothy Dagenhart Circle on Monday, January 10, 2005, at 7:00 pm. I will have the devotional for both Circles. Harriet Linderman and Kitzi Emery are the hostesses for the Golden Christian Circle. We will draw our Secret Sister names for the coming new year. We will also select our Sterling Treasure for the year.

Due to a recent price increase, the cost of our flavoring will go up to \$2.25 per bottle as of January 1, 2005. Pauline Charles and Olean Deal will continue to make this available for us. Thank you very much, ladies.

Our Christmas Joint Circle meeting was a lot of fun. I want to thank Lynn Pope and Betty Godfrey for the beautiful decorations and Lynn for the program. We were all surprised by the revealing of our Secret Sisters and the fellowship was wonderful, not to mention the food.

We have 15 New Sterling throws left if you would like to purchase one. They are \$35. Please see Marilyn Teague.

Please continue to work on items for the Bonclarken Gift Shop.
Happy New Year!

God Bless You,
Shelby Bustle,
WOC President

The Stirling, In Search of a New Editor

Julie Winters has determined it is time to pursue other things within her church and family life and therefore will step down as editor of our newsletter, The Stirling. So we will of course begin looking for someone to take on the role of caretaker for one of the more important methods of communication within our church.

Before I get to the details of the position I want to say thank you to Julie for her tremendous effort. She was always punctual, professional and desired to produce a document that would inform and represent New Sterling well to those in and outside our church body. We all wish you the best Julie and thanks again.

Communication within a church body is a very difficult thing to do so any medium used is automatically an important one. So the newsletter immediately falls into that category right behind our weekly church bulletin.

We need someone within our congregation to fill this important function. The editor needs to have good communication skills, both written and spoken, good computer experience using Microsoft Word and email. The task will require learning (if not already known) Microsoft Publisher and the different forms of graphic arts programs that are used. Also a knack for writing wouldn't hurt as the editor will review and proof submitted articles and be asked to write a short article from time to time concerning different activities within the church. The editor will also work closely with the pastor and the different ministry leaders who supply articles to the newsletter each month. The overall task takes about 8-10 hours a month.

The job is not too difficult but it will require skills of scheduling, interfacing with others, setting and keeping deadlines and a small amount of layout and design capabilities (Microsoft Publisher does most of the work). See, it doesn't sound too tough and it is the perfect place for someone to take on an important function within the church and grow it to hold and even larger role and at the same time do a little growing personally as well.

If you have questions or interest contact Pastor Tim.

The Mayonnaise Jar

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle – remember the mayonnaise jar and the coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

So the professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "yes."

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things – God, family, your children, your health, your friends, and your favorite passions – things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house, and your car. The sand is everything else – the mundane things of life that sometimes we think are important.

"If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the mundane busy things, you will never have room for the things that are important to you.

Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your

spouse out to dinner. Play another 18. Finish that book and start another. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first, the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented.

The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend."

Women...

If any member of the WOC wants to participate in the 2005 Secret Sister program, please contact Louanne Watts by January 2nd at (704)-878-2371.

Thank you,
Louanne Watts

Here and There

Clifton Mauney shot his very first deer, which was a 6 pointer. He was hunting with his dad, **Bill...Bailey Hartness** and her cheerleading squad from Tilley's Too won 1st place at Cheerfest. The event took place in Fayetteville on December 11th. The group has 2 more competitions. In April they head to Myrtle Beach for Nationals...The **Children's Christmas Play** was a great success this year! The kids did a wonderful job of learning lines and songs under the leadership of **Sandra Moose, Judy Cashion, and Cindy McNeely**. Thank you all for your hard work. It was a night of many laughs and lots of fun!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...

2 Kristi Byers
2 Shane Stewart
3 Rex Jenkins
4 Garrett Deal
4 Casey Hilderbrand
8 Lori Compton
9 Doug Gryder
10 Leroy Johnson
10 Greg Waugh
16 Bill Cashion
16 Gary McNeely



18 Cheri Caldwell
18 Harold Moose
18 Sarah Watts
19 Kayla Reavis
19 Madison Winters
24 Johnsie Jenkins
25 Lewis Jenkins
26 Clifton Mauney
28 Todd Fulbright
29 Harold Sherrill
31 Bradley Fulbright



Jan 2 **COMMUNION**
7:30 pm Deacons

Jan 3 9:30 am Golden Christian Circle

Jan 5 No Youth Shepherds
7:30 pm Adult Choir

Jan 8 9:00 am Session Meeting

Jan 10 7:00 pm Dorothy Dagenhart Circle
7:30 pm Men's Bible Study

Jan 12 6:30 pm Youth Shepherds & Adult Class
7:30 pm Adult Choir

Jan 16 Newsletter Due Date

Jan 19 6:30 pm Youth Shepherds & Adult Class
7:30 pm Adult Choir

Jan 21 7:30 pm Seekers Bible Study

Jan 22 10:00 am Natural Church Development Survey

Jan 24 7:30 pm Men's Bible Study

Jan 26 6:30 pm Youth Shepherds & Adult Class
7:30 pm Adult Choir