



Salem Presbyterian Church
www.salempresbyterian.org

Organized August 14, 1817
July 2013 Issue

A Conversation with Kerry Lewis

Kerry was outside in his yard one early December day in 2004 when Rev. Sara Shields stopped by and invited him to attend Salem Presbyterian Church. He attended the worship service the very next Sunday. Kerry told me he knew Sara and he was ready to start going to church. Kerry had visited Salem Presbyterian Church on Christmas Eve with his close friends Jerry and Jo Barnett but had not been regularly attending any church for a number of years. He told me Jerry and Jo never pressured him to join and he really appreciated that.

Kerry described himself as a “long-time unchurched” person, partly due to the negative experiences both his parents had going to church when they were young. His mother had grown up a Catholic and attended Catholic school. The leadership at her school told the youth that they needed to convert everyone they knew because non-Catholics would go to Hell. Her grandmother was a Protestant who went to First Christian Church in Salem and so Kerry’s mother rejected what she’d been told at the Catholic school and as soon as she was able to get out on her own she wasn’t Catholic anymore. She attended occasional services with

her grandmother at First Christian Church but did not become a member. Kerry’s father grew up in Pekin and went to the Church of Christ in Salem. His father was an elder at the church and insisted that he attend church 3 times a week. Kerry’s father did not want to do so and when he became old enough to make his own decision he no longer attended church.

Kerry’s parents exposed and introduced him and his younger brother to church though. Kerry and his brother were not required to go but Kerry went to Vacation Bible School when young and attended Sunday School at First Christian Church through the 4th grade. After that he lost interest and no longer went. Later Kerry chose not to go to church regularly because of politics. He did not care for churches that urged support for certain political candidates. He believes in the separation of

continued on page 3

Inside:

Calendar

page 7

The Stained Glass Window

July 2013

Editor:

Trina Brown

trinab@blueriver.net

home: 883-5689 - cell: 812-528-2309

The Stained Glass Window newsletter is published monthly by the Communications Ministry of the Salem Presbyterian Church. The colors in the banner on the front of the newsletter are colors found in the church's own stained glass windows. The newsletter is distributed via email, postal service and personal delivery and is available in PDF format to read and/or download. It may also be found at the church Web site at www.salempresbyterian.org.

We welcome your ideas and submissions for the newsletter! Please contact Trina Brown about what you would like to see.

Pastor

Rev. Beth Walden-Fisher

bethwaldenfisher@yahoo.com - 812-292-6886

Clerk of Session

David Beck

dbeckscs@aol.com - 883-5452

Treasurer

Wendell Brown

wendellbrown1@earthlink.net - 883-5689

Elder Representative to Presbytery of Ohio Valley

Max Bedwell

mbedwell@blueriver.net - 83-4850

Session

Class of 2013

Jo Barnett

jbarnett@insightbb.com

883-4176

Max Bedwell

mbedwell@blueriver.net

883-4850

Vickie Saewert

vjsaewert@aol.com

812-967-8186

Class of 2014

Wendell Brown

wendellbrown1@earthlink.net

883-5689

David Beck

dbeckscs@aol.com

883-5452

Stephanie Scifres

slscifres@gmail.com

883-5735

Class of 2015

John Stanley

jsta88@msn.com

883-4137

Tom Fihe

tfihe@blueriver.net

883-7576

De Davis

woodswomon135@aol.com

883-0382

A Conversation with Kerry Lewis (continued)

church and state and so did not feel political campaigning belonged in the church.

Kerry graduated from IU Southeast in 1977 with a degree in Accounting. He worked for a time in general accounting at what is now GKN and then worked for about 9 years as a purchasing agent at Kimball, both in Borden and Salem. The Salem plant was built and completed in 1986, a year after Kerry had started work at the Borden plant. After that Kerry worked at Tecumseh Products for about 11 years as a purchasing agent. Currently, Kerry is an instructional assistant at Salem Middle

School. He began this tutoring position in August 2012. He assists students that need a little extra instruction to boost their grades. He finds the position challenging but enjoyable.

He became interested in taking the position because he had volunteered for the SOAR adult education program and enjoyed helping others learn. He enjoys developing a good rapport with students and pushing them to learn but not too hard. He said if you push too hard a student will actively resist learning. He had applied for a similar position working with 3rd graders at the elementary school but was interviewed for and accepted the position at the middle school. He initially favored the elementary school

position because he wasn't sure he could work as effectively with middle schoolers and the middle school curriculum was a little outside his comfort zone. He was pleased to find that his reservations were unfounded. Also nice about working at Salem Middle School is the interaction with high quality administrators, teachers, and other staff. He especially enjoys working with Lana Humphrey regarding students in common to both of them.

Kerry joined Salem Presbyterian Church at the end of 2005 or the beginning of 2006 when he had become really comfortable

“Things like the rotation of the Earth on its axis, the revolution around the Sun, the inner workings of the human body, the tides going in and out, all of that to me screams out order and order comes from creation.”

attending. He had made quick friendships with Norm Webster and Bill LaFollette. They shared an interest in sports, especially baseball. He told me he didn't realize how you went about joining. He said he'd have joined much sooner if he'd realized sooner that it was up to him to ask about joining. He was asked to serve on the Session in 2007 and his 2 consecutive 3-year terms ended in 2012. He hadn't thought about serving before being asked by Jennifer Humphrey and Paul Scifres.

The time Kerry served on the Session was enjoyable partly because he served with so many great people, including Cathy

continued on page 4

A Conversation with Kerry Lewis (continued)

Huey, Leslie Gilstrap, Tom Fihe, Bud Huey, Rosemary Webster, Richard Clark, Dee Davis, Donna LaFollette, Nancy Godfrey, John Morris, Jo Barnett, Wendell Brown, John Stanley, Bruce Grosvenor, Max Bedwell, Vickie Saewert, David Beck, and Stephanie Scifres. He thought all of them were very effective in serving the church but he singled out Jo for all the work she does for the church and Vickie for her fresh ideas like the Blessing of the Animals and ideas for church growth.

The most memorable time for Kerry since joining Salem Presbyterian was the transition time between Rev. Sara Shields and Rev. Beth Walden-Fisher. Kerry told me that some of the Session meetings toward the end of Sara's time serving as pastor were stormy. He felt the best role he could serve at that time was as a peacemaker. He told me holds no animosity for Sara that she felt it necessary to leave. He was just so sorry to see his good pastor and friend so unhappy. By the time Sara announced her resignation to the Session the tone in the meetings was more peaceful. Kerry said she'd given plenty of notice and the Session accepted her decision.

Shortly thereafter Joe Kimmel became the Session moderator. Kerry commended Joe for being such a good, considerate Session Moderator during our period without a pastor. He mentioned that Joe had said early on that it could take some time to find a new pastor but that he knew of someone who might be a good



Photo by Vickie Saewert

fit. He did not mention Beth's name until a number of meetings later. At the time Beth was still an interim pastor at Hanover Presbyterian and April 2011 was the end of her term there, after which she would become available.

Kerry volunteered to lead the pastor search committee and commends his fellow committee members John Stanley, Vickie Saewert, Maurice Godfrey, Carolyn Haag, and Debbie Catlin for the good work they did. He told me that while the time near Sara's leaving was stressful, the time spent on the pastor search committee and getting to know and nominating Beth to be our new pastor was nothing but enjoyable. He told

me that at the interview the nominating committee conducted with Beth, Vickie had commented that it was not like an interview but rather like time spent with an old friend. The connection with Beth was instant; she wanted to come to Salem Presbyterian and the nominating committee was very excited to nominate her.

Kerry feels that Beth's joining us has allowed us to do more as a church community. He mentioned that he enjoys the passing of the peace during the worship service that Beth introduced, and is pleased by the increase in youth attending services, children's Sunday School, the children's sermon in the service, and that we're such a child-friendly church. If a child cries during the service we welcome that. Kerry especially commends Vickie and Betty Stanley for teaching Sunday School.

Kerry told me about his faith journey so far in life. He said that when he was young, like most children he believed in Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny and the tooth fairy. When he ceased to believe in them he began to wonder if there really was a God or if God was just the adult equivalent of Santa. He also worried about what happens when one dies, if there would be an afterlife. He came to believe that the existence of God can be proven by the order in the universe. Kerry said, "Things like the rotation of the Earth on its axis, the revolution around the Sun, the inner workings of the human body, the tides going in and out, all of that to me screams out order and order comes from creation." These things could not have come about by chance. He went on to say "there wouldn't be life on Earth if we weren't the right distance from the sun or didn't have the

continued on page 6

Ministries

Administrative and Personnel Ministry

Chairperson: David Beck
dbeckscs@aol.com
883-5452

Building and Grounds Ministry

Chairperson: Tom Fihe
tfihe@blueriver.net
883-7576

Communications Ministry

Chairperson: Trina Brown
trinab@blueriver.net
883-5689

Connectional Church Ministry

Chairperson: Max Bedwell
mbedwell@blueriver.net
883-4850

Stewardship Ministry

Chairperson: Wendell Brown
wendellbrown1@earthlink.net
883-5689

Worship and Music Ministry

Chairperson: TBD

A Conversation with Kerry Lewis (continued)

right chemical composition, the nitrogen, the oxygen and all of that. So that has made me comfortable that there is a God.”

He wrestled for a time with the Christian doctrine that some people will go to Heaven when they die and others will go to Hell, and that those who will go to Hell will be there eternally. He rejects the practices in some Christian churches where the pastors scream this from the pulpit, that if you don't believe Jesus Christ is your lord and savior or if you're not a member of a particular denomination you will go to eternal Hell. Kerry strongly believes there is no eternal Hell and sees this doctrine as contradicting passages in the Bible such as the parable of the lost sheep in Matthew 18, that God never stops looking for his lost sheep. He wishes the Presbyterian Church at the national level would openly reject and make a Biblical case against the doctrine that Hell is eternal. This doctrine was a major factor in his distancing himself from the church in earlier years and he believes it still keeps others away today.

Kerry believes that if the Presbyterian Church were to reject this doctrine, it would attract more members, especially the younger generations in which there are increasingly more “hard core unchurched” people. He said the unchurched turn away from the church because of this doctrine as well as church politics and the example set by those people they know who are only practicing Christians on Sundays.

6 July 2013

If a way is not found to reach out and connect with the unchurched, Kerry fears that all but the most fundamental denominations will die out because the younger generations no longer find them relevant. Kerry believes that God wants us to get the Bible's teachings right and to do right. If the church proclaims there is no everlasting Hell Kerry wonders if perhaps God would inspire human ingenuity to find a way to solve global warming and other issues facing people across the globe. He believes that if the Presbyterian Church were to actively support a doctrine that it's never too late to be saved, not only would the church reach out and connect with more people but it would also foster hope for the future on a broader level with all the challenges humanity faces.

At the close of our conversation Kerry stressed that he agrees with our church's initiative of exploring technological enhancement. He said, “I understand the concerns of those who favor a more traditional approach, but I believe that the caring project leadership of Pastor Beth, you, and the Session will ensure compatibility of the past and the present.”

- Kerry Lewis was interviewed by Trina Brown. If you would like to interview a church member for the newsletter, would like to be interviewed, or have a suggestion for an interview, please contact Trina Brown at trinab@blueriver.net, or by phone at 883-5689.

Calendar

August 2013						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

August 2, 2013

Jessica Craig's Birthday

August 3, 2013

Bill LaFollette's Birthday

August 4, 2013

Worship Service - 11th Sunday after Pentecost. 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Liturgist: Chris Morris. Communion will be served.

August 6, 2013

Bible Study on the Book of Amos - 10:00 a.m. in the parlor.

August 7, 2013

Brown Bag Supper - 5:30 p.m. in the parlor.

August 9, 2013

Doug McKinley's Birthday

August 11, 2013

Worship Service - 12th Sunday after Pentecost. 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Liturgist: Maurice Godfrey.

Cindy Lawson's Birthday

August 12, 2013

Katie Morris' Birthday

August 13, 2013

Bible Study on the Book of Amos - 10:00 a.m. in the parlor.

Salem Presbyterian Women - 12:00 p.m. in the parlor.

Cameron Morris' Birthday

Leah Fihe's Birthday

Abby Tash's Birthday

August 14, 2013

Brown Bag Supper - 5:30 p.m. in the parlor.

Luke Spencer-Pierce's Birthday

August 17, 2013

Addi Bundy's Birthday

August 18, 2013

Worship Service - 13th Sunday after Pentecost. 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Liturgist: Lana Humphrey.

Josh Miller's Birthday

August 20, 2013

Bible Study on the Book of Amos - 10:00 a.m. in the parlor.

Prayer Vigil - 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

August 21, 2013

Brown Bag Supper - 5:30 p.m. in the parlor.

continued on page 8

July 2013 7

Calendar (continued)

August 23, 2013

Geneie Wozniak's Birthday

James Caum's Birthday

August 25, 2013

Worship Service - 14th Sunday after Pentecost. 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Liturgist: Julia Dyer.

August 26, 2013

Rosemary Webster's Birthday

August 27, 2013

Bible Study on the Book of Amos - 10:00 a.m. in the parlor.

Sharon Clark's Birthday

August 28 2013

Brown Bag Supper - 5:30 p.m. in the parlor.

Maurice Godfrey's Birthday

August 30, 2013

Jane Spencer-Pierce's Birthday

Salem Presbyterian Church

110 North High Street

Salem, Indiana 47167

