

February, 2006

JOHN CALVIN NEWS

PASTOR NOTES

This year Lent begins on Wednesday March 1st. Lent is a time to rededicate our lives to Christ and God. These forty days (not including Sundays) are used as an imitation of Jesus' entering the wilderness for the same period of time. It was a time that Jesus used to take stock of how he wanted his life and his ministry to reflect the will of his Father. He used it to prepare himself to handle the tests of life that would be forthcoming in his daily walk to the cross. Lent is also a time in which we can examine ourselves and prepare ourselves for the Easter event.

We can get so caught up in the daily routines of life 24/7 – 365 days that we sometimes wonder if we have accomplished much at all. Yes, we set aside time for devotions and morning prayer and then we are on to our busy day wondering if we can “get it all accomplished.” It is here in the midst of the hustle of life that we need to intentionally slow our pace and listen for the instruction God would have us understand is necessary for living in him.

Typically Lent is thought of as a time for reflecting on our shortcomings. We should look into our souls and reflect on the good things, the successes, and the blessings we have been given. But we also need to reflect on, and evaluate, that side of our lives we are unwilling to share with God. It is that aspect of ourselves that reflects our feelings that we feel are not presentable to God. It is this/these that hold us back from truly being the persons God wants us to be.

And this we can do. We can turn over and let loose of all that we have heretofore been reticent to lose. This was made possible for us when God came to us and dwelt among us as the Christ, and suffered all that humans suffer in this world. And then his death on the cross loosed the bonds that hold us bound to the hell of this world. As Christ died he gave us dignity. Scripture tells us, “He was a man acquainted with much grief and sorrow.” Jesus took a world of ugliness on to himself that we might regain our dignity. If he could relate to and heal the demoniac who lived among the grave stones and ran around naked, and who screamed at anyone who approached him, if Jesus could bring peace to this man's spirit, then what makes you think he would be put off by your restless soul, and that he could not calm your spirit, or bring wholeness to your heart?

We want to be optimistic about life. We want to believe in happiness and wholeness. We want Norman Vincent Peale's encouragement that life can be lived powerfully with positive thinking. There is no sense in our enduring grief, sadness, loneliness, and a litany of sufferings anyone could list. We can face these enemies of faith because Jesus faced them for us first. And Jesus invites us to lean on him: “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.” (Rev. 3:20)

We can take this time in Lent to honestly acknowledge those things that hold us back from living in the kingdom of God now. Use this time of Lent to pray earnestly, to confess, and lay before the cross the honest truth of how we will reorient our lives beginning now.

As the sunrise lifts slowly into the eastern sky on Easter morning let us stand and shout with all the saints, “Hallelujah, He is risen!” On that day let us shout, “We are free! Thank you, Lord for bringing us to new life!” God bless all of you.

Shalom,

Pastor Paul

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SESSION NEWS– JANUARY 20

Session received and acted on a number of committee reports and recommendations:

Caring and Fellowship– Springfest will be April 29th.

Christian Education– Our Easter Intergenerational Event will be April 16th. Vacation Bible School will be June 11-14. Michael McCutcheon will join the Christian Education Committee.

Worship and Music– Large print bulletins will be available upon request and current size bulletins will continue. The Easter season services and schedules are pending consultation with New Harvest, Highland Park, and College Park churches. A performance by the choir of Shallowford Presbyterian Church in Atlanta will be in our sanctuary on Wednesday, June 7th.

Presbyterian Women– The church will be open all day for World Day of Prayer on Friday, March 3rd.

Mother's Morning Out– Designated funds not spent will remain in their restricted account for 2006. Mother's Morning Out will advertise a Tuesday and Thursday summer program subject to a minimum participation of 12.

Finance–The committee is still reconciling 2005 accounts and a final report will be ready in a week.

The retreat for session and committee moderators was rescheduled to Saturday, March 4th (February 25th is the alternate date) to provide for more discussion with the Mission Study Group about our mission as a church. Session received the Group's summary of our congregational discussions on the Gospel in Our Culture Survey.

Steve McElveen was approved as the Moderator of Building and Grounds Committee and was elected Commissioner to Presbytery for the February 11th meeting at Surfside Beach.

Rev. Abell will teach on Relational Communications at Greater Atlanta Presbytery's Winterfest Training on Saturday, February 4th.

Our Church Record for 2005 was approved for submission to General Assembly. It shows a continuing decline in active members from 310 to 294. There are 167 inactive and 42 baptized for a total of 503 adherents.

Bible Brain Teaser

(answers will be in the March newsletter)

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu, kept people looking so hard for facts, and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books are not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others, it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of the 17, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now, for there really are the names of 17 books of the Bible in these sentences. (One preacher found 16 books in 20 minutes. It took him three weeks to find the seventeenth one.)

MISSION DINNER

Have you considered doing a short term mission trip? Can you see yourself building a house in Mexico? How about repairing hurricane damage in Mississippi? Or would you enjoy visiting an orphanage in Peru?

On February 26th, there will be a C.P.C./Missionfest dinner in the fellowship hall after the worship service. Please plan to join us as we enjoy yummy Mexican food and salad and listen to those who have been on mission trips share their experiences doing God's work.



Joy Gift Offering

The Joy Gift Offering this Christmas was \$1308. This will be divided between the Pastor's Fund and racial/ethnic colleges.

HELP NEEDED

Our webmaster is trying to update the Presbyterian Women's page on our website by adding a picture of each person who has received the honor of Lifetime Membership. Many thanks to Claire McNeill and Courtney Stukes for supplying most of the missing pictures. We lack one picture- **Lois Smith's**. If anyone has an old church directory with her picture in it or an old snapshot, please let Marsha Humphreys scan it for the web page.

SPIRITUAL RETREAT

Attention all women!

There is a spiritual retreat at Westminster Presbyterian in Alcolu on Saturday, February 4th at 9:00 a.m. (registration). "Drenched In The Spirit" is the theme for the seminar and the time will be 9:30-12:30. Refreshments will be provided. Anyone interested in car pooling please call Martha Houser at 667-8160.

Address: Westminster Presbyterian
9124 Plowden Mill Rd., Alcolu SC

THE GIDEONS INTERNATIONAL OFFERING

The Gideons International is a non-profit organization founded in 1899 that places and distributes scriptures to 179 countries in 82 languages. They focus on five primary areas for placement of these scriptures:

Hotels and Motels

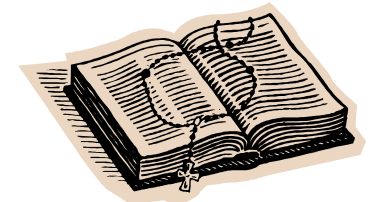
Hospitals, Nursing Homes, and Shelters

Schools, Colleges, and Universities

Military, Law Enforcement Personnel, Firefighters, EMTs

Prisons and Jails

The Gideons International serves as an extended mission of the church and are lead by a board of Christian laymen. John Calvin will be receiving an offering for this program on Sunday, February 19, 2006 during the worship service.



SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

FEBRUARY 5, 2006

The John Calvin Youth will be taking up donations for the Souper Bowl Of Caring on Sunday, February 5, 2006. Imagine if each of the 140 million Super Bowl football game viewers gave \$1.00 to help people who are hungry or hurting! It can happen but only if people like the John Calvin youth and you get involved. Youth Groups across the country will take up money for the hungry or hurting that day and give it to the organization of their choice. Last year the Souper Bowl Of Caring raised over four million for those in need. We will give our collected donations to the Manna House of Florence this year. On Sunday, February 5th you will see the youth collecting money in soup pots for the Souper Bowl of Caring. Please help us with this worthwhile cause for the Manna House.

Thank You,
John Calvin Youth Group



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

March 3, 2006

The Presbyterian Women of John Calvin Church are organizing a way for the whole church to observe *World Day of Prayer* on Friday, March 3, 2006. We will put up a prayer tree in the Narthex three Sundays before March 3rd with prayer concerns that everyone can take. The prayer concerns on the tree will be for our church, community, country, and world. Then on March 3rd the church will be open for prayer. Everyone is invited to come by and pray. If you cannot come to the church, then you will have your prayer concern that you can pray for especially on that day. What a wonderful way for Christians to come together and observe a common day of prayer each year.

Lunch with God

There once was a little boy who wanted to meet God. He knew it was a long trip to where God lived, so he packed his suitcase with Twinkies and a six-pack of root beer, and he started his journey.

When he had gone about three blocks, he met an old woman. She was sitting in the park just staring at some pigeons. The boy sat down next to her and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his root beer when he noticed that the old lady looked hungry so he offered her a Twinkie. She gratefully accepted it and smiled at him. Her smile was so pretty that the boy wanted to see it again, so he offered her a root beer. Once again, she smiled at him. The boy was delighted! They sat there all afternoon eating and smiling, but they never said a word.

As it grew dark, the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave but before he had gone more than a few steps, he turned around, ran back to the old woman, and gave her a hug. She gave him her biggest smile ever. When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond, he added, "You know what? She's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile, the old woman, also radiant with joy, returned to her home. Her son was stunned by the look of peace on her face and he asked, "Mother, what did you do today that made you so happy?" She replied, "I ate Twinkies in the park with God." But before her son responded, she added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected."

Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around. People come into our lives for a reason, a season, or a lifetime. Embrace all equally!

Submitted by Kathy Pinto

Dear John Calvin Family,

I want to express my deep appreciation for your love and concern during my recent hospitalization. My knee replacement on December 6th went well and I came down on December 9th with 101 fever. Then on December 10th, I developed a "magnificent" case of cellulitis and reacted fiercely to every antibiotic. December 19th I was finally released to come home. I pulled a muscle in my right side, followed by fever and urinary tract infection. I kept telling myself "This too shall pass." I am much weaker, but a whole lot wiser! Thank you for the prayers, cards, visits, phone calls, food, and flowers. You are a wonderful church family.

Joyce Hyman

With sincere thanks to everyone for your expressions of sympathy, food, cards, phone calls, visitations, and especially your prayers. The family of Eva Mae Nalley thanks you very much.

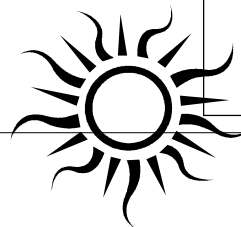
Ford Nalley and family

Anniversary Drop-In

The family of Cecil and Bernice Rasey invite friends and members of the John Calvin family to a 50th anniversary drop-in on February 18th from 2-4:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall.

No gifts are requested, only your presence.

"What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity. These are but trifles, to be sure; but scattered along life's pathway, the good they do is inconceivable." - Joseph Addison



MEMORIALS

Allen Burley by Jackie Brumbles

Art Carpenter by Connie Carpenter

Marsha Humphrey's uncle by Susan and Jerry Burley

Warren Hague, Judy Feimster's father by

Susan and Jerry Burley

Alice Baker

Presbyterian Women

Her husband, Norman Stay and her parents by Elva Stay

Willie R. "Bill" James, Steve McElveen's father-in-law by

Presbyterian Women

Eva Mae Nalley by

Courtney and Joe Stukes

Thelma and Harlan Hawkins

Sandra and Gerald Griffin

In honor of

Our children by

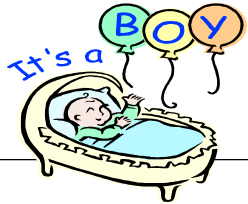
Virginia and Maxie McMillan



CHILDREN'S WORKERS FOR FEBRUARY and MARCH



If you are unable to meet your commitment, please contact the next person on the list. Parents, label your baby items. Thanks for your help.



Amber and John Turner are the proud parents of a baby boy born December 27, 2005. John IV (Jack) Turner weighed 10 lbs. 3 oz. and was 21 1/4 inches long.

Many thanks to our January newsletter folders:

- Claire McNeill Betsy Johnson
- Courtney Stukes Mary Holmes
- Leona Tomlinson Dan McNeill
- Virginia Jordan

INFANTS

- February 5 Judy Feimster
- February 12 Mary Gooden
- February 19 Marilyn Chapman
- February 26 Virginia Jordan
- March 5 Liz Gatchell
- March 12 Bernice Rasey
- March 19 Dot Collins
- March 26 Marilyn Flick

2 and 3 Year Olds

- February 5 Virginia McMillan
- February 12 Romona Smith
- February 19 Alice Baker
- February 26 Heather Gerrald
- March 5 Betsey Moore
- March 12 Pam Bishop
- March 19 Mary Howell
- March 26 Diane Smith

Children's Church

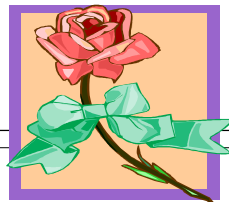
- February 5 Martha and Ronnie Houser'
- February 12 Mike Hawkins/Lee Carroll
- February 19 Robin and Roger Harris
- February 26 James and Ginger Odom
- March 5 Carol Broyhill/Lisa Ard
- March 12 Phyllis Thomas
- March 19 Laurie and Kent Carpenter
- March 26 Jane and Tenny Moss

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- February 1 Marla and Bret Greer
- February 2 Bobbie and Charles Carnell
- February 2 Mae and Frank Taylor
- February 9 Callie and Will Williamson
- February 12 Carol and Ernie Davis
- February 14 Jean and Sam Broughton
- February 14 Margaret and Ron Rogers
- February 15 Julie and Tommy O'Neal
- February 16 Jerie and H.A. Barrow
- February 19 Holly and Rick Reed
- February 20 Cherry and Burnie Gerrald
- February 21 Sherrelle and Henry Revell
- February 24 Bernice and Cecil Rasey

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- February 3 Bernice Rasey
- February 4 Peggy Andrews
- February 5 Jer Smith
- Susan Smith
- February 6 Steve Caulkins
- February 8 Mike Robb
- February 10 Leah Hawkins
- February 12 Garnet Ham
- Albert Miller
- Maynie Voss
- February 13 Julie O'Neal
- February 14 Judy Feimster
- Michael Morgan
- Bill Speas
- Doris Stubbs
- February 15 Heather Gerrald
- February 17 George Beck
- February 18 Virginia McMillan
- Lenair Thrower
- February 20 Anna Enzor
- February 21 Maegan Clark
- Dee Smith
- Len Smith
- February 23 Kaitlyn Cochran
- February 25 Debbie Filyaw
- Alex Greer
- February 27 Kim Hawkins
- February 28 Karen Pattillo



February 5– Scripture Reading
Mark 1: 29-39

February 19– Scripture Reading
Mark 2: 1-12

February 12– Scripture Reading
Mark 1: 40-45

February 26– Transfiguration Sunday
Scripture Reading
Mark 9: 2-9
