

# THE BEACON

VOLUME 36 NO. 51

JUNE, 2009



## FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

*The Couples retreat has been re-scheduled for Friday and Saturday, September 18 and 19. Couples, clear your calendars and book a sitter. Registration forms will be available in August.*

*Cookies— Thank you Deacons for providing cookies in April to Presbyterian Home. The Chancel Choir is asked to provide cookies on June 21.*

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This month I will celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of my ordination. As a date on the calendar, it is not, in effect, a big deal. The world will little note nor long remember it. My guess is that if it were noted in the local newspaper, most people who read it would find it about as exciting as knowing that the mileage meter on my nine year old VW Beetle just hit the 80,000 mile mark. “Oh, that's interesting!”

And sometimes, that's the way certain yearly commemorations can strike us. We might find it meaningful to reach a certain birthday, for instance, or it might pass us by as simply another modest marker of days accumulated. Like, so what? But then again, it may also be true that if we get too blasé about weighing the significance of those days that shaped our lives, it could indicate an appalling ingratitude. After all, not everyone gets to have another birthday. Some wedding anniversaries are only a painful reminder of what used to be a wonderful day. So we learn with age to take less for granted. And we reject out of hand the shallow reductionism that says, “None of it really matters” or “Christmas is just for kids” or “such and such a holiday is only an excuse to sell another jillion greeting cards”.

In point of fact, our lives are shaped and defined by a complex amalgamation of the people who raised us, the God who found us, the people we love, and the commitments we've made. Thus much of who I am is a hybrid reflection of Erwin and Jean Mitchell (who now rest side by side in peace); a brother of Jill, Doug, Bob and Bruce; a sinner of our Lord's redeeming; a man in love with Carol who captivated me from the hour I met her; a father to Lindsey and Blake (who walk around with my heart in their pockets); a grandfather to Natalie and Naomi (who couldn't begin to know how brightly their light shines in my early evening sky); and days without end a grateful servant of Jesus Christ who called me into life and service on a Montana summer morning so many years ago. If I try to understand my life apart from any one of them, the story is incomplete. It's that network of relationships, and the commitments implicit in them, that give definition and meaning to my life.

You see, this month Carol and I will also celebrate thirty-five years of life together. When I met her, it was rapidly clear to me that she was unlike anyone I had ever met and I have never met such another. She was (and is) this improbable combination of delicate beauty and unfeigned humility, great gentleness and quiet strength, a natural shyness and a comedic readiness to laugh. She had depth and a social maturity way beyond her years. There was a light inside those big, beautiful eyes that told me she had an inner world I would never find the end of.

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. There was a mysterious substance to her I had never encountered before, and I always had the feeling she could see right through me, that I would always have to tell her the truth, and that she saw and understood far more than her discretion would give her leave to say. These were not false impressions. She is, in fact, the truest person I know, and she has, without words, modeled for me what a seamless, integrated Christ-honoring life looks like. And she, I can assure you, would be the first person to deny it. Part of why I love this church, is that you seem to “get” who Carol is, and have valued her from the beginning.

When I think back to the day of my ordination, I remember that it seemed like the culmination of a journey extraordinary in length and irreversible in its impact on me. After five years of college and four years of seminary (okay, so I'm slow) I felt like a sailor gliding into home port, after so many years of circumnavigating the globe; no longer the boy who signed on so long ago; and maybe a little sad that home would never again be a place, but rather something you take with you. The only thing I had to do, apart from answering the ordination questions put to me, was to pronounce the benediction. I picked the shortest one I knew so I wouldn't goof it up. But I could not say those words without tearing up. I had to stop mid-sentence and find my voice again. Just getting to that moment had stretched me beyond self-recognition so you'll understand, if this month in particular you find me looking grateful, and not a little amazed by the journey thus far.

~ Pastor Brent ~

### **Women's Retreat**

Ladies, mark your calendar now for the November 6-7 retreat at the Chiara Center. The theme for this year's retreat is “Being Molded by the Potter.” Be sure to tell your friends about this event.

### **So You Won't Miss Out**

Pick up is available anytime a program, worship service, or potluck is “happening”. Congregational Life would like everyone to know you do not need to miss out on any activity that is sponsored by the church. Anytime you need a ride to get here call the church office. Transportation arrangements will be made. Don't consider yourself out of the loop because you don't have a way here. There is always room for one more (maybe even two).



### **April Income and Expenses**

Revenues: April 2009	\$ 81,857.99
Expenses: April 2009	\$ 95,431.08
Net Loss	\$(13,573.09)

### **Women's Fellowship**

Women's Fellowship will be meeting Tuesday, June 2, in Fellowship Hall. Carol Miller will give the devotion and Jan Suttie will lead lesson 24 from Putting On a Gentle & Quiet Spirit from Elizabeth George. Janet Kayma and Lou Jordan will provide refreshments and drinks. ALL women come and join us in wonderful fellowship, a great study lesson, prayer time, and delicious refreshments!

### **The “1” Group**

Anyone who is on their own and would like company while eating is welcome to join in us when we gather monthly at different restaurants. This month we will meet on Tuesday, the 9th, at 5:30 p.m. We'll gather at the Texas Road House (this is a new restaurant just opened on Veteran's Parkway to the Northwest of White Oaks Mall parking lot). Please RSVP if you will be attending, so we have table space reserved. If you need a ride, please give the office a call, 528-0457. Grab a friend and come on out!!

We really do have a good time and know you will too.

## CAROL'S CORNER

I stood smack dab in the center of this massive, gutted-out building with its blackened and pock-marked walls. The wind whipped around me as I gazed up towards what was once the ceiling and saw only the blue of the sky. The masterful craftsmanship of the walls (which were about 100 feet in height) were lined with extensive, arched windows that once had contained intricate panels of multi-colored glass.

The horrors of World War II had left its ugly mark on Coventry Cathedral – at one time one of the largest cathedrals in England. Pigeons and doves foraged along the pebbled ground that used to be the inner sanctum of this centuries-old church. England's ever-lush foliage was not denied access to this sacred place; even so, the greenery had the look of being well tended. Simple, wooden benches were spaced comfortably apart along the sides of the stone walls offering up the invitation to passersby to "sit a spell." The bell tower was the only part of the structure that remained intact. If a person was willing to climb the 180 circular stairs to reach the top of the tower, one was rewarded with a spectacular view of Coventry, England.

Adjacent to this marred cathedral was a new structure that was as large, if not larger, than the original. Following World War II, the congregation of this church decided not to tear down the partially-destroyed house of worship. Instead, they built a new church and turned the damaged cathedral into a memorial. There are several modest memorial plaques and statues claiming what the sole purpose is for this bombed-out shell of a building: 1) to remind all of humanity what we are capable of doing to each other, and 2) to encourage humankind to strive towards reconciliation among nations; between each other; and with ourselves. The Lord's presence was so vivid to me that I felt as if I was standing on holy ground.

During the turbulent 60's, there was a song which contained the phrase: "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me." Those words came to mind as I stood in this sacred place. I have no control over how others choose to behave, whether it be my next-door neighbor or the leaders of our country; but I do have the decision about my own conduct. There are many issues and ideas in life that are worth the effort of a confrontation and a battle of wits. However, I would venture to guess that a good portion of what we as individuals get riled-up about on a daily basis are over nothing more than petty differences and annoyances. Is that worth the conflict? Probably not. Peace really does begin with each one of us.

The definition for reconciliation is: to restore to friendship; to be consistent; to adjust to the differences. Peace is defined as: freedom from disturbance or agitation; state of reconciliation after strife or enmity; freedom from mental agitation or anxiety. The two obviously go hand-in-hand. We cannot have one without the other.

Forgiveness has to be the first step, and it is oftentimes a most difficult one to take. But like many things in life, this action can become a habit or discipline. We can learn the gracious art of granting pardon to those who have offended, whether it be a big or small transgression. It is an act which we must do for ourselves – for our own inner peace and harmony. An unwillingness to extend mercy to another person or persons causes more harm to us than to those with whom we are irritated. It is a state of heart that brings spiritual discontent and anxiety – a condition that is in direct contrast to what the Lord would have us experience. The act of forgiving is not something which can easily be done on our own. The process is better aided if we invite the Holy Spirit to help us peel away each layer of resentment, bitterness, or strife. This may very well take a bit of time and effort; but in the long run, it will be well worth the undertaking.

During the course of my life, I have experienced a few situations when I have either asked for forgiveness or have exhibited the willingness to patch up a relationship; but for whatever reason, reconciliation has not been acceptable to the other person. Bottom line, we cannot force another person's hand. However, if we can stand before the Lord and honestly say that we have done our best to bring about harmony with another – but the other party was unwilling to do the same – the gift of Christ's peace and restoration can still be ours. Through Christ and His mercy, we may experience the joy and freedom that only forgiveness towards others and ourselves can bring.

When it gets down to it, we have a small corner of the world in which we function on a daily basis. Peace has a ripple effect. If we practice mercy and grace towards others, perhaps they in turn will choose to extend the same to others. It is our choice, and ours alone.

Our actions and attitudes do make a difference.

~ Carol Hovland-Mitchell

## **Fellowship Hour**

Thank you to those who signed up to assist with Fellowship Hour. If you can help us out, and haven't signed up, please sign up in Fellowship Hall. 8 to 10 dozen are needed each week. If there is a special Sunday when you want to have a cake, you need to be prepared to serve around 100. If you or your group is willing to serve as host/hostesses that day, this would be great as well. We have volunteers willing to make the tea and coffee but can always use more. If you don't want to sign up for a specific Sunday, but would like to help, you can always bring store cookies which we can hold in reserve for those days when no-one has signed up. Thank you so much.

## **Service Opportunities**

1 Corinthians 12:4-5 says, *There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.*

There are many ways for us to serve Him, in our daily lives and in the life of the church. At Third Presbyterian, there are many opportunities that await those who are willing to share their gifts. For example ...

## **Worship Service**

Each week during the Sunday worship service some are called upon to be Worship Leader or to bring the Children's Sermon. In the body of Christ we all have different gifts to bring and that's wonderful to behold! Are you interested but perhaps have never been asked to be a part of the worship service? Or perhaps you have served, but it's been awhile and you would like to do it again. We encourage you to let us know we'll call upon you to be a Worship Leader or bring the Children's Sermon and want to make it easy for you to do that. Either let Bonnie Douglas know (528-3026) or on Sunday morning, simply leave a brief note on the Ritual of Friendship pad found on the end of the pew. Just indicate your interest by writing WL for Worship Leader of CS of Children's Sermon (or both!) if you are interested. Bonnie can then talk with you to get you signed up for a Sunday sometime soon!

## **Vacation Bible School**

Vacation Bible School (VBS) will be held this year from 5:30—7:30 PM on five consecutive Thursday evenings beginning June 18 and ending July 16. Some have volunteered to help but we will need many leaders and helpers to be a part of this important mission. We anticipate that we need at least 7 adults who are willing to lead small groups of children in brief (20 minute)

sessions of Bible stories, crafts, discovery "experiments", recreation and music. We will also need people willing to provide simple meals which will be served from 5:30 to 6:00 each week. There will be guidance, support, materials/supplies, fellowship and laughter for all the leaders, and we hope you will prayerfully consider this service opportunity in our church. **If you are interested in leading or being a helper for each or any of the five evening sessions, please contact Bonnie Douglas at 528-3026.**

## **All Youth Sock Hop**



**PLEASE NOTE  
CHANGE OF  
DATE:**

The all youth sock hop will take place on Sunday, June

7th from 2:00 p.m.– 5:00 p.m.

There will be a D.J. playing music. There is no cost to attend.

Just bring a snack and a two liter bottle of soda to share.

Be ready to dance your socks off!

## **Deacon Notes**

In June, the Community Outreach program will donate \$200 to Kumler Methodist's Food Pantry. Kumler Methodist will also receive the congregation's donations on Communion-Sunday, June 21st.

On May 7th, the third group of deacons was responsible for the Feed the Hungry mission. Sheila Garfat, Judy Goin, Flora Midge Hurst, Sharon Miller and Jan Suttie planned, prepared and served a meal to the residents at Helping Hands. We were able to provide a meal to thirty-five (35) clients and two staff that evening at 6:00 PM.

Please reserve September 12th on your calendars for the All Church Social. Our committee is continuing to plan this event. A Round-Up is the theme for this year's social. As other plans are finalized with the committee and Board, we will share the information. Remember to mark your calendar for September 12th, the Church Round-Up - - Hope to see ya'll there.



**Sympathies to the families of Florine Esslinger**

**Special Prayer For:**

Barb Bailey

Shirley Blackburn  
Becky Blankenship  
Michelle Davidson

Courtney Dodson  
Ruth Ellington  
Jacob Fickas  
Colson Fiore  
John Green  
Diane Hamblin  
Lucia Handshy  
Gerry Havenar  
Al & Marj Hood

Sharon Howe  
Doris Hurst  
Lila Keiser  
Judy Kohlrus  
Mae Marie Koster  
Elizabeth Lowe  
Pauline Maton  
Bessie McConaughay  
Carol Mitchell

Linda Overby  
Kelly Rae  
Corrine Rice  
Jake Richards  
Lena Smith  
Jim Sutherland  
Pat Walker  
Don & Lillian West  
Sandi Woodard

**Presbyterian Women**

Ladies, come join us on Tuesday morning, June 2 at 9:30 A.M. The program will be presented by a speaker from the Senior Citizens Center. Bring food for food pantries or any mission item.

**Prayer Shawl Group**

I know I talk a lot about this group, but I'm just so proud of all they accomplish each week. By the time you read this newsletter, we will have hit 90 shawls or lap blankets being completed and given out. The great ladies who do this are:

Sharen Buccari, Doris Decker, Urlis Farley, Betty Howard, Dottie King, Jean McAfee, Donna Maloney, Dorothy Rutherford, Esther St. John, Maureen Stringfield, May Wieties, and Sandi Woodard. As mentioned in previous Beacons, if you know someone who should receive a shawl, please let one of these ladies know and the name will placed on our list. You are always welcome to pick up those needles and join us, even if you think you're a "little rusty" on your skills. The knitters/crocheters, meet on Tuesday afternoon, at 1:00 in the Library. Come on and join the fun!!

**Music Notes:**

Change of plans for the Spring Youth program – it will be held Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup> during the Sunday School hour. Don't miss it!!



We are pleased that Karen Darby is stepping in as our substitute organist. She is doing a wonderful job of providing beautiful music each week. Welcome!

**Eagle's Nest (Love Packages)**

Just a short update on all the Christian materials you help send out all over the world:

Since January, 400 tons of literature has already been sent out, at a cost of \$15,000. The goal for this year is 1200 tons, which is enough literature for 60 million people to read. The testimonies from around the world are magnificent. This is such a great and much needed ministry – to reach those in other countries who want and need to hear of Jesus.

Thank you for your help by continuing to bring in Christian materials such as Guide Book, Christian Women, etc.

**Parents Night Out**

Congregational Life Committee would like to start a new program "Parents Night Out" for parents in our congregation who could use some **FREE** child care. We need your help to have a success. Childcare volunteers are needed. The night would be the third Friday of the month starting at 5:30—9:00 P.M. Drinks and snacks will be provided—ages of

children are 13 yrs. and under. We would love to begin July 17<sup>th</sup>. An informational meeting will be held in the Library following the worship service on Sunday, June 14.

**PEP Club Capers**

The first trip for the club was going to Senior Celebration in the Orr building at the fairgrounds. An estimated 20 members attended this great event. Everyone had a opportunity for medical testing, entertainment, door prizes and lots of "freebies" (pens, note pads, candy and back scratcher). It was appreciated by all the seniors. Mucho gracious to Jim Kincaid for driving the van.

The PEP Club will meet on June 15<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 in Fellowship Hall. Our theme is "Come to the Islands". A luau will be prepared for you. So get out your mumu's and Hawaiian shirts and practice your hula. Reservations are needed and will be in church bulletins shortly. Don't miss this event!!!

**Youth Disciples**

Heather Huitt has decided she will meet with the B.L.A.S.T. youth group generally every Sunday evening from 6—7:30. BLAST is 5<sup>th</sup>—12<sup>th</sup> grades but she would like to meet every third Sunday with just the High School age BLAST (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>).

THIRD PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

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Fax: 217/528-2649

E-mail: patmiller6378@sbcglobal.net

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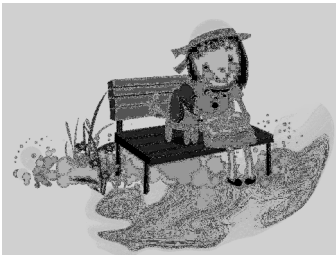
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Worship Service 9:15 A.M., Fellowship 10:30A.M., Sunday School 10:45 A.M.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR WORSHIP AND PICNIC IN THE PARK**



**“Praise Him under open skies, everything breathing praising God, In the company of all who love the King.”- David Crowder Band**

**LET’S ALL GATHER TOGETHER FOR PRAISE AND WORSHIP IN LINCOLN PARK ON SUNDAY JULY 12TH . A MEAL OF SLOPPY JOES, CHIPS, COOKIES AND DRINKS WILL BE SERVED IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE WORSHIP SERVICE.**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS A CHANGE IN THE WORSHIP SERVICE AND SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES FOR THAT DAY. SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES WILL BE HELD IN THE PARK FROM 9:15–10:00 A.M. WORSHIP SERVICE 10:15– 11:00 A.M. DRESS CASUALLY AND BRING YOUR LAWN CHAIRS.**

**IN THE EVENT OF RAIN, THE WORSHIP SERVICE AND LUNCH WILL BE HELD AT THE CHURCH. THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND WORSHIP TIMES WILL REMAIN MODIFIED AS PREVIOUSLY INDICATED.**

**PRAYERS FOR SUNSHINE AND A NICE, EASY BREEZE ARE ENCOURAGED.**