

THE BEACON

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FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

Sometimes the best new ideas are simply good old ideas finding new currency and expression. We discovered this anew at our Session retreat in January. When we had the luxury of sitting down together without a crowded docket, it gave us the chance to share our fondest hopes for this church. As our discussion moved forward we found ourselves circling around and returning to three main ideas.

Mark Your Calendars now

Ladies, the Fall Retreat has been scheduled for Friday/Saturday, October 29/30. Watch for further information.

Save this date:

Saturday, March 13 the all church potluck supper will be held in the fellowship hall at 5:30 p.m. Bring a covered dish to share. Beverages and tableware will be furnished. need a ride call the church office; 528-0457.

The first idea that kept surfacing and resurfacing was volunteerism. Many of those around our table remembered the informal crews of people who would just show up when the parking lot needed to be shoveled on a snowy Sunday morning. Or the clean-up crews who took it on themselves to “police” certain areas of the church inside and out. It gave people a sense of ownership, and even more importantly, a tangible way to express their stewardship toward our beloved church. We appreciate the specialist who comes in to do those things that are beyond our skill level, but there are so many things we can do, and invariably have a good time when we work on them together. The long and the short of it is, we need every person in this church to help us care for and do the everyday ministries of this church. Whatever you like and know how to do, we undoubtedly have a place where your skills are needed. And our goal is to give each one of you a place and a way to play your meaningful part.

The second idea that wouldn't let go was the thought of developing a wish list. The old saying is, “Blessed is he who aimeth at nothing, for he shall surely hit it!” We realize as we talked, that we have a long list of dreams and needs and potential ministries for our church. Some of them are simple, inexpensive, and could be done tomorrow. Other ideas are exactly right for us, but will take time and money to bring to fruition. And frankly, some of our ideas are wonderful, but they seem way beyond our reach – maybe impossible. But even the closest port could never be reached if the ship isn't steered in the right direction.

More to the point, we cannot know what matters most to you, if we don't put our wish list in front of you and find out what piques your interest. Maybe you will look at our list and know in an instant what you would like to buy-into. Or maybe you have some ideas or wishes that never crossed our minds and are just waiting to be surfaced. With that in mind, we have schedule an all church potluck for Saturday, March 13 at 5:30 P.M. and look forward to using that evening to show you our list and pick each other's brains. It is amazing how priorities emerge and crystallize when we begin to look forward together in the same direction.

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Thirdly, perhaps the oldest idea, and our greatest challenge is to think about what it would mean for us to be intentional about being a neighborhood church again. Granted, almost all churches have become what they call “commuter” churches. People typically drive from even great distances to attend church on Sunday morning. Churches that never needed much in the way of parking spaces are now desperate to find more. Sill, there was a time when most churches in America were thought of as neighborhood churches. The church was the place where many nearby neighbors connected on a regular basis. If you will, they shared a common lot, and a lot in common.

I don't have to tell you, times have changed; neighborhood's change. But the bottom line is, we don't like the idea that our church feels disconnected from the people around us. So we are starting to wonder how we might network with other north end churches (like Kumler, for instance) in reaching out to our neighbors in shared ministries. How about a once a month, or once a week invitation to our neighbors to break bread with us; to get to know each other by first names; in short to build bridges that are central to the Gospel idea of a church? All things are possible; not easy, but possible.

~ Pastor Brent ~

The “1” Group

The “1” Group will meet on Tuesday, March 9, 5:30 p.m. at the International Buffet on North Dirksen. No reservations required. If you are thinking about joining us, please take that first step and come on out. We really do have a good time together and would love to have you join us. If you need a ride, please call the office at 528-0457.

A Tennebrae Service will be held on Good Friday, April 2 at 4:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The Chancel Choir along with orchestra musicians, narrators and a few actors will present this moving service. Invite a friend to come along with you.

Sunday, April 11 from 6 p.m. – 7:30 all are invited to a ‘movie night’. This is open to anyone, and if you are parents or grandparents of kids of Kids Connect or B.L.A.S.T. why not enjoy a good movie while waiting for them. Popcorn and soda will be provided. Watch the Sunday bulletin for the chosen movie.



Cookies— The ACTS class will provide cookies for Presbyterian Home on Sunday, March 21 and the Elders will provide the cookies on Sunday, April 18. Thank you to those that provided cookies in January and February.

Gospel Sing

On Sunday March 14th, Kumler United Methodist Church is sponsoring a Gospel Music Concert Fundraiser from 2 to 5 p.m. Refreshments will be served prior to the concert from 1-2. The concert is free, however, a love offering will be taken. If you like gospel music, go, listen, and enjoy.

Passion Play

Saturday, March 20, 2:00 p.m. - anyone interested in going to the Passion Play in Bloomington is invited. Cost is \$20 per person and you should talk with Sandi ASAP, as tickets need to be ordered. Checks should be made payable to The American Passion Play. This is a wonderful way to spend Saturday afternoon. Transportation will be arranged once we know how many are going. We will stop on the way home for dinner.

A Note of Thanks

Just a few words to say Thank you, Thank you, Thank you to all who have given prayers and support to me since last May when I was diagnosed with cancer. That got me through everything, and meant the world to me. Then you began again when my daughter Jodi was diagnosed with breast cancer. You'll never know what it meant to her to have that support as well. I'm very happy to report we are both done with treatment and are both cancer-free. God bless you all.
Sandi & Jodi

Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship will meet Tuesday, March 2, in Fellowship Hall. Gerry Clanton and Lucy Collebrusco will have the activity, Cheryl Brockman will give the opening devotion, and Irma Speeks and Sharen Bucari will provide refreshments. In April, we will meet, Tuesday, April 6, in Fellowship Hall. Diana Boone and Elsie Ball will lead the activity/study, Janet Kayma will give the opening devotion, and Joni Garfat and Carol Miller will provide refreshments. It has been decided to study Living Above Worry and Stress, by Thelma Wells. This is a Women of Faith Bible study and the book is \$6.50. The books are on order and should arrive within 2 weeks. Since the Bible study hasn't started yet and the activities/studies have all just been finalized, and spring is just around the corner, now is a good time for ALL women to consider joining us for an activity/study, prayer, refreshments, and GREAT fellowship each month. There is a brown bag picnic at Lincoln Park and a mission trip to Washington Street Mission scheduled this year!

Christian Women's Conference

The annual conference at Lincoln Christian University will be held Wednesday, April 28. The theme this year is "Living in Unity". Speakers are well-known Thelma Wells, a long time Women of Faith speaker. She was awarded the Extraordinary Woman of the year in 2008, is the founder of "A Woman of God Ministries" and a wonderful speaker. Her most recent book "God is Not Through With Me Yet" will be featured.

Renee Bondi is another speaker. At age 29 she was in a bizarre acci-

dent which left her a quadriplegic. She will be an inspirational person to listen to.

During the lunch/noon hour time, Julie Garris will provide laughs for all. She has been a minister's wife for thirty-three years, and uses her experiences to bring us "Gladys Frump". She will bring humor to our lives and refreshment to our souls as she characterizes people that just might look a lot like 'us.'

Cost of this fun-filled day is \$30. I will need the registrations and check – made payable to Lincoln Christian University – by Wednesday, April 14 in order to meet the 21st deadline. After that it costs \$35. So gals, if your planning to go, get your registrations in quickly. To Sandi.

Thank you

As we struggle through our situation, we are blessed along the way with our Third Presbyterian Church family. We have received many cards, visits, offers of help, visits from our pastor, Brent. And many, many, many prayers. We cannot express adequately the thanks we offer to all of you. Your caring is so appreciated and we love you all for it. May God bless you all as He has us.

Lovingly,
Paul and Dorothy Muir

We want to thank our church family for their prayers and cards and Pastor Brent for his visits. May God bless everyone.

Paul and Mary Henrikson

Thank you to Glenn and Suk Cha Grigsby for their generous donation of a new printer, copier, and scanner for the office. The print quality is so nice and it takes the place of three office machines. Thanks also to Jon Malerich for installing the printer and software.

April 22, 9:30 a.m. the Women of Faith will begin a six week Bible Study entitled "Adventurous Prayer". Barbara Johnson wrote in the introduction "What's the big deal about prayer? We know we should all do it more often, take it more seriously, and give it more time—but we don't., Does this mean prayer is optional? After all, some of the other spiritual disciplines seem pretty outdated, like fasting and solitude. Who has time for that? That kind of stuff is for monks, nuns, and pastors. We've gotten along okay with out. So, does prayer fit into the non-essentials of the Christian walk? Prayer must be an "in case of emergency" last resort kind of spiritual tool. Right? No Way! Prayer isn't some kind of requirement for believers. It is a privilege! You have the ear of the Divine. Prayer is our path to the adventure of building a relationship with our Savior. God knows what's going on in your life. The Creator of everything stoops to hear the lisping of toddlers. The Sustainer of every living thing hears the groans and sighs of the aging. He is aware of every thought, every choice, every move you make—but He is waiting for you to turn to Him and tell Him about it. God listens to you – He will answer you.

If you are thinking of joining us, don't just think – DO! The coffee pot and hot water is always on! We would love to have you join us. Any questions – see Sandi.

Special Prayer For:



Betty Bambrough, Shirley Blackburn, Dante Contri, Anna Cuiffetalli, Ruth Ellington, Mark & Elaine Fay, Lois Goleash, Gerry Havenar, Virginia Hill, Lila Keiser, Elizabeth Lowe, Pauline Maton, Bessie McConaughay, Brent Mitchell Linda Overby, Eddie Pease, Sharon Riley, Lena Smith, Ray Taylor, Roy & Ruby Tilson, Sharon Windell, Those in the Military.

CAROL'S CORNER

Kris is my oldest friend. Our friendship goes way back to when she and I were six months and three months of age, respectively, and our parents “introduced” us to each other. Our history goes from the time of being together in the playpen to being the maid-of-honor in each other’s wedding ... and continues to the present day. She is a dear sister in Christ with whom I have many fond and cherished memories.

Kris has a heart for missions. Before she married, she had several opportunities to participate in various types of ministry. One such occasion was to be part of the work team on a Mercy Ship, which is a medical ship that goes to various ports to offer medical aid to hurting countries. The boats used by the Mercy Ship organization were chartered, not owned; which meant that the chartered boats provided their own crewmen staff. In talking to a crewman one day, Kris happened to ask who were the most difficult clientele to have on the ship. Without hesitation, he responded that it was most definitely Christian organizations.

I would be prone to chalk this up to his own particular bias about Christians if it had not been for my own experience during my college days. Just prior to becoming engaged, I worked for three months during the summer at Mount Herman Christian Camp, which is nestled in the lovely mountains just above Santa Cruz, California. I worked in the registration office, which put me in direct contact with the adults who were checking-in for the purpose of attending family camps and men’s or women’s retreats. Being young and idealistic about how Christians ought to treat others, I was honestly appalled by what I experienced: well over 50% of the adults I encountered were pushy, harsh, demanding, rude, impatient, and given to quick anger. What is sad to consider is that my descriptions of these adult Christians are almost exact to the ones used by the Mercy Ship crewman to specify his impressions of the Christian clientele who used their boat.

Brent has said it before, but it bears repeating: how do we treat our waitress or the person who serves us behind the checkout counter, or the person who washes our car or delivers our newspaper? We, who are Christ’s servants, need to carefully examine how we treat the “servants” of the world. We cannot be His light and salt to a hurting world unless we pay close attention to the small, and seemingly inconsequential, encounters in our lives. I wonder if we will not be held more accountable for these snippets of interactions than we will for those events that we deem more worthy and important.

To take it a step further, it would do us well to review our usual frame of mind about those significant relationships in our own lives, such as: parents, children, extended family, friendships, church family, and co-workers. Neva Coyle, in her book, “What Ever Happened to the Real Me?” points out the difference between nourishing and toxic relationships:

- Nourishing relationships allow space and differences, while toxic relationships demand constant availability and compliance.
- Nourishing relationships encourage independence, while toxic ones fester with unhealthy dependence.
- Nourishing relationships are inclusive and open, while toxic ones tend to be exclusive and closed.
- Nourishing relationships are enhanced by personal growth and change, while toxic ones are threatened by it.
- Nourishing relationships give room for alone time, while toxic ones intrude.
- Nourishing relationships respect the real you. Toxic ones require you to abandon your authenticity.

If we are truly serious about our Christian faith and servanthood, then we ought to be mindful about making a conscious effort to continually assess how we are treating any person with whom we come in contact. How would Christ respond to that waitress? What attention would He give the checkout person? How would He respond to the situations with our loved ones?

We leave an impression each and every day of our lives with whoever we meet along the way – it may be a fleeting imprint or a long-lasting one – but to be “tuned in” to that person standing before us is one of the biggest challenges in life. Sometimes, all that is required of us is just a smile – and the love of Christ in our eyes. But do we practice the discipline of being focused enough beyond ourselves to be able to give something as simple as a smile? Something worth considering, don’t you think?

~ Carol Hovland-Mitchell

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

VBS is Coming!

It's nice to think that even though it's cold and snowy outside right now, spring will be here before we know it! We're already thinking about Vacation Bible School and are happy to announce that VBS will be held on Wednesday nights from 5:30 – 7:30 beginning June 15 through July 14.

A VBS organizational meeting is planned for Tuesday March 16 at 6:00 PM for all who are interested in helping with VBS this year. We need volunteers to lead groups in Bible stories, crafts, music, and games. We will also need people to help prepare/serve a light meal each week. Other jobs will include helping children "sign in" each week, getting children from group to group, and helping the group leaders with their activities. Adult and youth volunteers please step forward and let us know you will help!

Please contact Bonnie Douglas at 528-3026 or Joni Garfat at 629-9167 to volunteer.

Wellspring Academy for Scott Basso-Benefit.

On Sunday, March 7, there will be a benefit at the Sherman Athletic Club from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. to help defray some of the expenses associated with Scott's recent decision to attend the Wellspring Academy in North Carolina where experts are helping him lose weight and deal with the mental, physical, social, and emotional issues of childhood obesity. Scott is 14 years old and has lost 32 pounds during his first month at the academy.

There will be a dinner of pulled pork or hotdog, potato salad, baked beans, and chips, dessert and drink: Adults \$7 and Children \$5 (ages 3-10). There will be a live as well as silent auction, 50/50 raffle, and drawings throughout the day. Scott's address:

Scott Basso
%Wellspring Academy
1 Lambs Creek Road
Brevard, NC 28712