



Cross and Spire

Newsletter of the First Baptist Church

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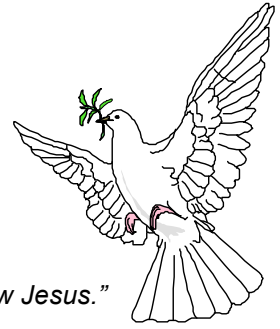
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"Not a perfect church, not a perfect people, just a simple desire to follow Jesus."



In Need of a Stimulus Package

Laurie Edwards

I'm finding that growing older brings with it a whole new list of indignities associated with the annual doctor's check-up. I've had my first colonoscopy in the past month, and am looking forward (not!) to my first bone-density scan. No offense, but these are tests that I always thought were intended for my grandmothers. Surely I can't be that old yet! I was looking through some family picture albums of when our kids were young, and I still find it hard to fathom that those two cute little kids are really 18 and 20 years old now. How did we ever get here so fast? In six or seven months, Dale and I could very well find ourselves back to where we started over 22 years ago – just the two of us rambling around in a seven-room parsonage. Well, there will be a few differences – our stuff would no longer fit in a 20-foot U-Haul, and the two guinea pigs we came with have made way for one cat, one rabbit, one snapping turtle and a goldfish. And I guess we don't look or weigh quite the same either!

Sometimes I look at myself and, although I'm certainly older, I'm not so sure that I've grown any wiser. I've been a Christian for nearly 40 years now, a pastor's wife for nearly 25, yet when brought face to face with myself, I often feel as though I'm still fighting the same spiritual battles I was dealing with in my twenties. This is honestly not where I thought I'd be at age fifty-one. As a young Christian, I think I envisioned the Christian walk as a process of gradual and steady progress in holiness. If it were mapped out on a piece of graph paper, I pictured it as a steadily if slowly rising line, an inclined plane if you will. Instead, I'm afraid my spiritual life would map out more like those

graphs of the stock market – some gradual increases, random falls, lots of plateaus, some sharp inclines followed by even sharper drops – sometimes sharp enough to cause inward panic and loss of hope. Sometimes it's easy to get discouraged. Like the economy, I think I'm in need of a stimulus package!

I'm glad that God gave us the Bible to help us along, to speak to us and show us how He works. His Story gives us pictures of people's lives whose spiritual graphs would map a lot like mine. People like David who would be described as a "man after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14), yet later on need to be asked, "Why have you despised the word of the Lord, to do what is evil in His sight?" (2 Samuel 12:9). And still be listed among the "Heroes of Faith" in Hebrews 11!

Face it, it's encouraging to find that others have struggled the same way we have. It's encouraging to read the words of Paul and his ongoing struggle with sin – "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate . . . For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it." But it's even more encouraging to read that the battle does not end there! When he comes to the point of "Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death," the answer is a resounding "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Romans 7:15-25). We are **not** as those who have no hope. Paul goes on to state emphatically, "There is therefore now **no** condemnation for those who are **in Christ Jesus!**" (Rom. 8:1).

I've read and heard from older, wiser Christians, that a growing awareness of our own sin does not necessarily mean we are more sinful than we used to be, but may be a sign that we are growing more in tune with the

Holy Spirit at work within us. That conviction should always draw us back to where we need to be – at the feet of Jesus, always confessing, always learning! Always in need of a Spiritual Stimulus Package – one that's guaranteed to work!

PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Sunday, March 8 after the worship service! To raise money for the Youth Group's Deep Freeze retreat! Freewill offering! Come for a delicious breakfast and support our kids!

LBC CHORALE IN CONCERT!

The Lancaster Bible College Chorale and Chamber Singers will be at First Baptist to bring a concert and sharing in song and testimony on Sunday, March 15 at 6:30 PM. We are excited to be having the 48-voice Chorale and 12-voice a cappella Chamber Singers here for an evening of sacred music from a variety of artists and musical styles. Anyone willing to help provide dinner for the choir on Sunday afternoon is asked to contact the church office, 448-5618.

THANK YOU!!

To everyone who attended our Cabin Fever Open House on February 7th! Thank you also to everyone who helped us out by bringing food. We're already looking forward to doing it again next February! Dale & Laurie

HIGHLIGHTS OF ANNUAL MEETING

Thank you to everyone who was able to attend the Annual Meeting on February 1st. All Reports were accepted and the 2009 Budget passed with the following changes: Budget - Pastor's salary changed to \$30,000. Nominating Report - Cathy Clark's name withdrawn from Board of Deacons.

CHRISTIAN WRITERS CONFERENCE

A Christian Writers Conference is coming to Gove Hill Retreat July 17-19. Come improve your writing skills with other Christians in the Green Mountains this summer. Workshops in poetry, creative writing and non-fiction writing are available along with general sessions on writing. Workshop leaders are Harold Fickett (www.godspy.com), Diane Glancy (www.macalester.edu/~glancy/books.html) and Matt Dickerson (<https://sequecommunity.middlebury.edu/vie>

w/html/site/dickerso/node/1087990). Cost is \$180 which includes all materials, workshops, food and lodging. \$50 discount for American Baptist church members. Call Gove Hill at 802-785-4000 or visit their website www.ghsm.org for more information and registration.

YOUNG LIFE FUNDRAISING BANQUET

Monday, April 13 @ 6:00 PM at the Dartmouth Ski-way. To raise funds in support of Young Life in the Upper Valley. Food by Maple Street Catering. Save the date!

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Seventeen teens and leaders plan to attend Deep Freeze retreat at Camp Berea March 13-15. As of this writing a good portion of our groups are gearing up to go without food for a day and a half for the 30 Hour Famine (Feb. 27-28). If you didn't get a chance to sponsor one of our kids for this event, it's not too late to write a check in their support – make your check payable to First Baptist Church and write "30-Hour Famine" in the memo line. And don't forget the breakfast after church on March 8th!

LENTEN DEVOTIONALS STILL AVAILABLE

We still have Lenten devotional booklets available for all age groups. This is a good time to jumpstart or deepen your devotional life in these weeks leading up to Easter. *Christ Our Hope* by Henri Nouwen for adults, *Lighten Up, Lent!* for teens & college-agers, and *Jesus in Jerusalem Sticker Book* for children. Help yourself!



Don't Forget!
Spring Ahead!
March 8
Move your clocks
ahead one hour!

COFFEE HOUR NEEDS YOU!!!

Do you like to bake? Do you see bargains in the bakery section/thrift shop that are too good to pass up? We could really use donations of baked goods to keep food on the table during the Coffee/Social Hour after worship service on Sunday mornings. Items

may be brought in and marked "Coffee Hour" for the church's freezer or brought to the church kitchen on Sunday mornings. A sign-up sheet will also be posted on the bulletin board outside the kitchen for those willing to help out. Thank you!

NOTE OF THANKS

To My Church Family,
Your prayers and thoughtfulness and gifts during my illnesses were very much appreciated: the maroon mum plant, the soft and lovely prayer shawl, and the poinsettia plant at Christmas. Thank you to you all.

God bless each of you,
Bunny Roy

CAMP BROCHURES ARE IN!!!

Brochures are now available for Camp Sentinel in Center Tuftonboro, NH. Sentinel offers quality Christian camping opportunities for all ages. This summer's options include boys & girls camps, special needs camp, teen adventure camp, waddah week, outpost, urban adventure, leader/staff in training, day camp, and family and adult programs. First Baptist grants camp scholarships of 1/2 the cost of a week of camp at Sentinel for young people attending from First Baptist.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP DINNER NEWS

The Women's Fellowship Potluck will be held on Tuesday, March 24 at 6:00 PM at the home of Marge Olson. Please note the date change to the fourth Tuesday this month. All women are invited to bring a dish to share and enjoy a time of fellowship with other women as well as further study in *The Purpose-Driven Life*.

IRON SHARPENS IRON CONFERENCE

Plans are underway to get a group of men together to attend the Iron Sharpens Iron National Men's Conference on April 25 near Portsmouth, NH. The conference will be held at Bethany Church in Greenland, NH. Rates vary according to date & number of registrations. Early group rate is \$39 if we have 10 or more by April 15. Standard registration is \$55. See Tom Clifford (448-4174) or Rodney Jenness (448-4864) if you are interested.

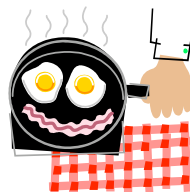
DAILY BREAD AVAILABLE

There are still copies of the spring issue of *Our*

Daily Bread devotional readings available in the literature racks near the church entryways. Help yourself!

CARENET LIAISON NEEDED

We are looking for a church member to act as a liaison with CareNet Pregnancy Center. This person would coordinate the Baby Bottle Fund Drive and help in communications between the church and CareNet. If you feel you might be interested, please contact the church office.



Men's Breakfast
Saturday, March 14
7:30 AM
All Men Welcome!

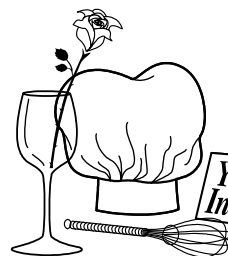
LOOKING AHEAD TO EASTER

Here are some important dates to have on your calendar:

Palm Sunday – April 5th
Maundy Thursday – April 9th
Good Friday – April 10th
Easter Sunday – April 12th



Pancake Breakfast
Sunday, March 8
After Church!
Help Send the Youth Group
to Deep Freeze!



*Women's Fellowship
Potluck Dinner &
Purpose-Driven Life
Study*
Tuesday, March 24*
6:00 PM
At Marge Olson's
30 Dorset Lane, Lebanon
Sign-up & Directions on
Sanctuary Bulletin Board

