



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Ann Arbor, Michigan

February 6, 2008

Pastors' Reflections

by Stacey Simpson Duke

The New Baptist Covenant, initiated by Former President Jimmy Carter, is a new, informal alliance of more than 30 racially, geographically, and theologically diverse Baptist organizations that have come together from all over North America to form an authentic and genuine prophetic voice for Baptists. The Celebration of this Covenant, the first-ever event of its kind, held last week in Atlanta, was attended by approximately 17,500 Baptists from across the continent and around the world. I was one of those thousands, and I could not be more enthused and inspired about what I witnessed and about where it might lead.

Each day of the Celebration was bracketed by 2 ½ hour plenary sessions featuring prominent Baptist speakers and preachers, such as Jimmy Carter, Charles Adams, Tony Campolo, Marian Wright Edelman, John Grisham, Senator Charles Grassley, Former President Bill Clinton, and others. Each afternoon, smaller special interest sessions, led by panelists working in the field, were offered on issues such as poverty, racism, immigration, youth at the crossroads, peacemaking, evangelism, religious liberty, and other pressing topics. Additionally, there was a special luncheon (attended by roughly 2500 people) with Al Gore speaking on *Stewardship of the Earth* (the Baptist Center for Ethics presented him with a green Bible - literally a Bible with a green cover - with all the ecologically-related passages highlighted in green!) - it was phenomenal to hear him weave the science of environmentalism together with the Biblical ethics of creation-care. The whole event was unlike any denominational meeting I have ever attended!

One of the watchwords of the event was: "we don't want this to be a moment; we want it to be a movement." In other words, the idea was that from this Celebration, Baptists would actually move towards more concrete Christian action in the world - as individuals, as individual congregations, and in partnerships. Toward that end, the steering committee of the Covenant will be meeting next month to discuss the question *what next?*, and they will be considering the many suggestions for action that participants have already submitted. Meanwhile, many of us have already been using online forums to discuss where we go from here, and how we might turn our faith into deeds, together.

The plenary events were all videotaped, and the recordings of the major speakers and preachers are already online. It has occurred to me that at some point, some of us might want to watch them together and have some dialogue about possible concrete actions our congregation could take, alone or with others. In the meantime, some of you might want to watch the videos on your own. You can access them on the New Baptist Covenant website - www.newbaptistcelebration.org - by clicking on "videos."

First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor has had a special role in the founding of this movement. Because of the generous gifts of some families in our church, we were among 25 or 30 founding donors in funding this Celebration (which was offered free to all participants). As a donor, our church was invited to a special reception before the Opening Plenary to receive a certificate acknowledging our gift. I was imagining just a regular paper certificate, presented by one of the steering committee, to be hung on a bulletin board for a few weeks somewhere around the church. What I was given for our church was a beautifully framed certificate - *presented by Jimmy Carter himself*. He gave personal words of gratitude to each one of us who were representing our institutions. It was an honor to meet him, and I was further honored to be representing a congregation that puts its money where its mouth is when it comes to concrete Christian witness.

Thank you for your interest in this Celebration and what it might mean for the future of Baptist life. Let's see where we go from here!

Nursery care is available on the 3rd floor from 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

All children are welcome to worship with their families. After the Time as Children portion of the worship service preschoolers may go to the nursery for childcare and their church school class starting at 11:00 a.m. Children in kindergarten - 3rd grade are invited to Children's Worship.

Children and Youth Christian Education

3 and 4 year olds

10:00 - 11:10 Worship w/ family or childcare in nursery
11:00 - 12:30 Church School (room 306)

3rd - 6th grade

10:00 - 11:00 Worship
11:10 - 11:50 Jr. Choir (room 102)
11:50 - 12:30 Church School (room 304)

K - 2nd grade

10:00 - 10:30 Worship
10:30 - 11:00 Children's Worship (room 202A)
11:00 - 12:00 Church School (room 202B)
12:00 - 12:30 Grace Notes Choir (room 202B)

7th grade - high school

10:00 - 11:00 Worship
11:00 - 12:30 Church School (room 107)

Children's Music and Arts Ministry

Jr. Handbells (Feb. 3 & 10)	9:15 - 9:45	Room 306
Tiny Grace Notes (preschool)	10:45 - 11:00	Room 306
Grace Notes (K - 3 rd grade)	12:00 - 12:30	Room 202A, middle level
Jr. Choir (4 th grade and older)	11:10 - 11:50	Room 102, lower level

Adult Christian Education (11:30—12:30)

February 10 is the first Sunday in Lent. During Lent there will be two opportunities for learning:

Foundations of Faith (Lounge)

Christian life and mission are built on a foundation of personal faith. This class will focus on the spiritual foundation for belief and mission. We will explore such topics as the meaning of personal faith; our relationship with God in Christ; the use of the Bible in guiding and sustaining our faith; the place of imagination, symbols, music, and art in personal faith; the role of the Church as the Body of Christ; and such concerns as may arise from our discussions.

Leader: Rev. Ron Tipton

Lenten Small Group (Room 108)

A small group is being formed to meet on Sunday mornings during Lent. Participants will commit to consistent attendance, shared leadership, and preparation each week by reading essays, meditations and sermons (up to 50 pages per week) by writers such as Barbara Brown Taylor, Frederick Buechner, Henri Nouwen, and others. We will use our group time to share the personal meanings these writings had and to share other resources which have impact on our spiritual lives.

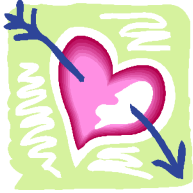
Facilitator: Sue Ellen Glover

Other Adult Learning Opportunities

Wednesday Bible Study (Memorial Lounge, 1:30—2:30 p.m.)

Rev. Paul Simpson Duke leads an in-depth study of the Gospel of John, chapters 12-21. Join us each week for fellowship, learning and great snacks!

Small Groups (ChristCare) - Centered on Bible study, fellowship, mission, prayer and worship, we currently have two groups: one which meets monthly and the other which meets every other week. See Stacey, Paul or Sue Ellen for more information about joining a group.



FBCA2 News & Happenings

Ash Wednesday Service

There will be an Ash Wednesday service this evening, February 6, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Childcare will be provided.

Men's Book Group

The next meeting of the men's book group will be hosted by Henry Griffin (1410 Harbrooke - from Huron-Dexter-Jackson intersection go 2 blocks north on N. Revena to Harbrooke, turn right - house immediately on north side of the street) at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 19. At Dee Drake's suggestion, we will discuss books by Michael Pollan on food: "The Omnivore's Dilemma" and "In Defense of Food." The first has been out about two years, and the latter - a bit shorter - is quite new. If you read either book, you will be well prepared for the discussion. Please let Henry know if you plan to attend (994-3499 or hcg@umich.edu).

FBC Ladies Book Club

The FBC Ladies Book Club will be meeting on Tuesday, February 19th, at 7:00 p.m. to discuss selected stories from "The Complete Stories" by Flannery O'Connor. We will be meeting at Tammy Canell's house. All ladies are welcome! Any questions, please contact Tammy at 572-9063 or Janice Stumpf jlstumpf@umich.edu.

Resources for Lent

Lenten Devotionals, provided by the Board of Christian Education are available at the table near the ramp and Information Counter. (Lent starts today.) There are materials for all ages – children, youth and adults and many for families.

Cooks Needed for The Gathering

Volunteers are needed to cook meals for our campus ministry program, *The Gathering*. This is a much-appreciated ministry of hospitality for students who are away from home and don't often get a home-cooked meal. Please sign up at the Information Counter where instruction sheets are provided for you to take with you.

MacGregor-Stitt Circle

The next meeting of the MacGregor-Stitt Circle is Thursday, February 21 at *11:45 a.m. at The Sheraton. The program is "Out to Lunch with Betty." (*Please note special time.)

2008 Flower Calendar is up!

The 2008 Flower Calendar is now posted on the downstairs bulletin board. Please sign up if you are interested in hosting the chancel flowers, especially if you'd like a specific Sunday in 2008. The arrangements are from Tom Thompson's Florist and costs \$30. The dedication appears in the bulletin the week you host them. You are welcome to do whatever you wish with the arrangement following the service.



The CARE AND COMMUNITY BOARD SENDS THANKS - to the following helpers at the Jan. 27 Annual Financial Meeting Potluck: Elli Barron, Mary Davis, Betty Doman, Annabel Erskine, Mary Gregg, Barb Griffin, Carolyn Hillebrand, Edie Hurst, Beverly Inbody, Ginny McKeachie, Janice Stumpf, and Clay Scott. Thanks to all of you for helping with set-up and clean-up and to EVERYONE for the fabulous food that made the lunch a wonderful chance for sampling great dishes as well as enjoying the fellowship of others in our church family. Thanks, also, to Kathryn Gregg and Sue Ellen who provided child care.

Also, please let us (Care & Community Board) know if you would like to have recipes for dishes, or if you'd like us to make a project of putting together a mini-cookbook (volunteers would be welcome for such a project, of course.)



Interfaith Round Table of Washtenaw County



The Interfaith Round Table is pleased to make available tickets for the UMS's *Urban Bush Women*, Friday, March 28th, at 8:00 p.m., at the Power Center. This unique project is setting the performance world abuzz for bringing together two African and African-American dance companies—one all-male and one all-female. Together they weave the cultural and spiritual traditions into life-affirming works that explore untold and under-told histories and stories of people committed to transformation. Tickets: \$22, \$34 and \$38. For information and purchase please call 734-424-1535, email George Lambrides at gbrides@umich.edu or visit www.irtwc.org and click on UMS.



Carey Viviano (FBC's administrative assistant) and her husband Bob are delighted to announce that they are expecting their first baby on or about June 6. Congratulations!!

OUR RENEWED PIPE ORGAN: SOLI DEO GLORIA

Our pipe organ's primary purpose is to enhance congregational worship by providing support for the singing of hymns and choral pieces and by filling the sanctuary, and our hearts and our minds, with the sounds of inspiring music composed for the church over the centuries. And it is played, not as mere performance, but rather in the words used by J.S. Bach as dedications of his compositions, "Soli Deo Gloria" - to the Glory of God Alone.

The pipe organ of First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor was built in 1965. It was designed by Robert Noehren, the University Organist and internationally known recitalist and builder, with the collaboration of Janice Beck, our long-time organist; and it was named in honor of Chester Loucks, our pastor from 1939 to 1960.

Like most mid-size organs, it has four divisions--great, swell, choir/positif, and pedal--consisting of 2641 pipes played from three manuals and a pedalboard. There are 57 different types of sounds, referred to as "stops." Splendid and varied in sound, the instrument nevertheless had one serious lack: The pedal division, the pipes of which provide the low pitches, had only 44 pipes, all the other low pitch sounds being "borrowed" from the other divisions. There simply was not the space or money for the huge 16- and 32-foot-length pipes required for the very low tones, both soft and loud, needed to undergird the instrument's middle and higher pitches.

In recent years, however, dramatic innovations in the process of creating sound have made it possible to recreate faithfully the sounds of an organ. By a process known as sampling, the sounds of real organ pipes are recorded digitally and then reproduced, altered as needed, amplified, and played through multiple speakers arrayed among the pipes in the organ chamber. With that technology available, donors have provided the significant pedal division "pipes" needed to enrich the sounds of our organ, and the installation is now complete. The enlarged pedal division has 5 new stops with the equivalent of 160 large pipes. (Had they been actual pipes, it would have been necessary nearly to double the size of the chamber.)

In the Sunday morning service on February 17, we will celebrate the new sounds and the role that the renewed organ and all our music plays in the worship life of our church. Joel Hastings and Janice Beck will be the organists, Carol Ott and John Reed will conduct the choir; and the congregation will sing great hymns of the church. We hope that you will be part of that celebration and that you will bring guests.



EVENT

MARCH 16

12:30 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.

Lunch, Easter Crafts, the Easter Story and an Egg Hunt

First Baptist Church
512 East Huron Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734-663-9376
www.fbca2.org
office@fbca2.org

The Reverends Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke, Co-Pastors



Next Newsletter
(and March Calendar)
Deadline:
Sunday, February 17, 2008

Friendship House

9540 Conant, Hamtramck, MI 48212
Phone 313-871-7443



Second Sunday returns (on the third Sunday), February 17, with a spaghetti lunch at 12:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall prepared by our friends from Friendship House. (Your donations towards the lunch will be gratefully accepted.) Afterwards, we will hear a presentation of the various areas of ministry and mission of this American Baptist sponsored home mission serving the neighborhood in Hamtramck. Childcare will be provided during the presentation.

There is a copy of the latest Friendship House newsletter on the bulletin board outside the Memorial Lounge, along with the many, many items that are accepted as donations. Diapers (adult and babies) are always needed - it would be wonderful if we could send several packages home with Linnea and the Friendship House lunch providers. Please bring in your diaper-donations on the 10th and 17th! You can leave them on the tables near the coat racks in the classroom hallway.