



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Ann Arbor, Michigan

April 11, 2007

Pastors' Reflections

by Stacey Simpson Duke

If you believe that discussing the environment and, specifically, climate change, is either too political or too controversial for a church newsletter article, you might want to stop reading here. I realize that some scientists argue that our world's climate is either not changing significantly, or is changing because of natural, non-human factors. I am persuaded, however, by the majority of the scientific community that believes that human activity, especially over the last 150 years, has been the primary cause. I also realize that discussions over what to do about climate change can quickly turn political and partisan. I am persuaded, however, that Christians *must* turn their attention to this issue, and that we can have non-partisan conversations over what we must do.

Christian ethicist, environmentalist, and author Bill McKibben argues persuasively about why we Christians should care. 1) Christians care about social justice, and this is a social justice issue. Computer models suggest that climate change will soon be creating hundreds of millions of refugees, fleeing drought, flood, and famine (more refugees than created by all the wars of the last century). 2) Christians care about God's creation, which humanity is currently destroying. 3) Christians care about the future, about all the generations yet unborn. We are currently permanently degrading and impoverishing the earth for all those who follow us. 4) Christians care about the selfish individualism that has come to define too much of our culture. Christians know that the goal and meaning of human life is something more than accumulation and convenience. (His full article can be read here: <http://www.christiancentury.org/article.lasso?id=2978>.)

As Christians, we simply must be concerned about how best to care for the earth God created and the people who live on it. But what is a Christian to do? Much has been made in recent months, of the things we can all do as individuals to reduce our carbon dioxide output: using fluorescent light bulbs, turning off electronic devices, driving less, recycling more, and the like. These are small, important changes we can all be making - but they are not enough. McKibben argues that because global warming is affecting our earth's fine balance even more quickly than expected, we must act fast, and that action must be dramatic.

"The best science," McKibben writes, "tells us we have ten years to fundamentally transform our economy and lead the world in the same direction or else, in the words of NASA's Jim Hansen (the country's foremost climatologist), we will face a 'totally different planet,' one infinitely sadder and less flourishing.... By Hansen's calculation, and that of many other scientists, we need to be reducing carbon emissions more than 2 percent a year in this country to have any chance of staying on the right side of catastrophe. We need—at the very least—a federal commitment to cut carbon emissions 80 percent by 2050." The changes we make as individuals, in our own homes and businesses and churches, are not enough (which is not a reason to quit making them!). We need more than individual action. We need a movement.

A movement - non-partisan - is in the making. McKibben has launched the Step It Up campaign (<http://stepitup2007.org/>), an effort to organize a nationwide day of hundreds of rallies in every state, all with the same message: "Congress: Stop Global Warming. Cut Carbon 80% by 2050." That day is this Saturday, April 14th, and one of those gatherings will be right here, in Ann Arbor, on campus. From 12:00 p.m. till 2:00 p.m., concerned citizens will gather on the mall between Hill Auditorium and the Michigan League, near the bell tower. My family and I are going - if you would like to join us, please do; let's meet in the church parking lot at 11:45 and all walk over together.

What a world God has given us! With that gift comes responsibility - the responsibility to care, and to hope, and to pray, and to act. Please consider what action you might take - both alone and with others - to be good stewards of God's great gift. I know that I personally need to be doing so much more than I currently am, and rallying with others is part of what I must do. I hope to see some of you on Saturday - we'll Step It Up together!

Christian Education for Children and Youth

(Nursery: 9:30 -11:30 a.m., room 307)

All children are welcome to worship with their families. After the Time as Children portion of the service, preschool - 3rd grade are invited to Children's Worship in room 202A until 11:00 a.m.

Preschool - 2ND grade

10:00 - 10:30 Worship (Sanctuary)
10:30 - 11:00 Children's Worship (202A)
11:00 - 12:00 Church School (202B)
12:00 - 12:30 Grace Notes (305)

3rd - 5th grades

(3rd graders may attend Children's Worship)
11:00 Church School (304)
3rd graders leave at 12:00 for Grace Notes (305)
4th & 5th graders leave at 11:50 for Jr. Choir (102)

Youth

10:00 - 11:00 Worship (Sanctuary)
11:15 - 11:50 Church School (107)
11:50 - 12:30 Jr. Choir (102)

Children's Music and Arts Ministry

Jr. Handbells	9:15 - 9:45	room 305, upper level
Tiny Grace Notes (preschool)	11:00 - 11:15	room 305, upper level
Grace Notes (K - 3 rd grade)	12:00 - 12:30	room 305, upper level
Jr. Choir (4 th grade and older)	11:50 - 12:30	room 102, lower level

Christian Education for Adults

Sunday, April 15 in the Memorial Lounge: Our guest speaker will be Dr. Laura Parajon, International Missionary with American Baptist Churches USA. Since 2001, Laura and her husband, David, have been serving remote rural communities in Nicaragua through the training and support of village health leaders. Their ministry to serve the poor focuses on health, hope and healing. Based in Nicaragua, they serve through AMOS Health and Hope and the Council of Protestant Churches in Nicaragua (CEPAD), working in Latin America to improve the health of rural communities. They also work with hospital and clinical services, hospice care, and programs focused on prevention and treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS.

April 22, the following two classes will resume:

Addressing Contemporary Issues in the Study of Women in the Bible (Lounge) Astrid Beck, leader
Women are some of the most distinctive, unforgettable, and diverse characters in the Bible. Women, led by their faith in God, used their wits to defeat their circumstances. They were spunky, smart, and assertive. It is important for our understanding of the Bible, and for our faith, to study the women who speak so eloquently, to note their implications for the masculine and feminine paradigms, to hear their voices. We will continue with the women in the life of Jesus:

April 22 - Mary Magdalene (Matt 27:56-28:1; Mark 15:40-47, 16:1-10; Luke 8:2, 24:10; John 9:25-20:18)

April 29 - Mary, the mother of Jesus (Matt 1:16-20, 2:11, 13:55; Mark 6:3; Luke 1:1-56, John 2:1-4; Acts 1:14)

Share and Prayer Group (Room 108)

Stacey Simpson Duke, facilitator

A time for sharing, singing, silence, centering, and group prayer. Together we will engage in a ministry of prayer for our church, for other members, for specific concerns, and for local and world events, as well as having time to become more connected to one another and more personally grounded and rooted in God. This is not a class about prayer, but a time for actually engaging in prayer together (no one will be obligated to pray aloud, but anyone who wants to will be welcome to).

Second Sunday Series: Living the Questions: Join us Sunday, April 15 (note: third Sunday due to Easter) from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Following a simple potluck and time of fellowship, we gather in the Memorial Lounge for a time of engagement with some of the most challenging issues of the Christian faith. After viewing a 30-minute DVD of clips of leading theologians, biblical scholars, sociologists, and church leaders, we will have time for in-depth discussions of the issues they raise.



FBC NEWS & EVENTS

AB Women's Ministries Spring Salad Luncheon

The AB Women's Ministries annual "Spring Salad Luncheon" will be held on Thursday, May 3 at 12:00 p.m. in the Memorial Lounge. There will be a potluck salad luncheon followed by our program guest speaker, Lindsay Ambridge, who will speak to us about Egyptology. We have invited the women from Northside Community, Ypsilanti First Baptist and Ypsilanti Immanuel Baptist Churches to join us. We welcome all of our First Baptist women to also join us for this festive occasion.

FBC Ladies Book Club

The FBC Ladies Book Club will meet Tuesday, April 24th at 7:00 p.m. at Toni Stearns' house. Our April selection is "The Glass Castle" by Jeannette Walls. All ladies are welcome! Please contact Janice Stumpf (663-4871, jlstumpf@umich.edu) or Toni (668-7965) for further information.

"Jesus' Miracles": New Edition

Since some members of the congregation may not have had the opportunity to obtain a copy of "Jesus' Miracles" when they were originally made available at the church, a limited quantity of the blue cover second "edition" will be located at the Information Counter on Sunday, April 15.

- Thomas Scott

MacGregor-Stitt April Meeting

The April meeting of the MacGregor-Stitt Circle will take place on Thursday, April 19 at 1:00 p.m. at the home of Mary Munson. The program will be "Mary's Trip to Turkey."

Spring Rummage Sale

The AB Women's Ministries Spring Rummage Sale will take place Friday, April 27 and Saturday, April 28, with the set up on Thursday, April 26. Items can now be brought to the stage in the Fellowship Hall. Please place them behind the curtain, but not in front of the fuse boxes or blocking the stairway. Thank you!

Directory Proofing

The new edition of the church directory will be available at the Annual Program Meeting on April 22. If you would like to update or have your contact information added to the directory, please e-mail (office@fbca2.org) or call the office at 663-9376. Birthdays are especially needed.

1st Quarter Financial Statements

Please pick up your first quarter financial statement near the Information Counter where they will be available every Sunday throughout the month of April. Thank you!



***Congratulations to Cynthia and Craig Redinger
on the birth of Andrew Thomas on March 28th!!***

2007 Easter Event

The 18th annual Easter Event was held on Palm Sunday, April 1. Despite a rainy forecast and a wet, foggy morning, we had a beautiful afternoon for an egg hunt outside on the front lawn. Over 60 people joined us for lunch, with most staying for the crafts, the Easter story and the egg hunt. Nineteen children hunted the almost 200 eggs hidden by the Chief Easter Bunny (Cesar Alaniz) and his four Youth Assistant Easter Bunnies (Jack Stearns, Becca Terris, Sam Kidd and Nathan Kirchner). The event was listed in the Observer calendar of events (thanks to ET Crowe and the Board of Evangelism) and this notice drew four families from the community who had never been to FBC before.

Much appreciation to all who attended and helped in many ways:

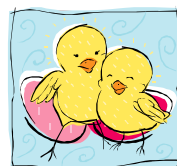
Crafts: Roberta Hause, Kathryn Fortune, Jackie Snyder, Jose Barrantes,
Jack Stearns, Marissa Alaniz, Janice Stumpf, and Beverly Inbody

Lunch Chefs: Emily and Nehal Rahim

Chief Cleaner-Upper: Toni Stearns

The Board of Christian Education and the Youth Assistants

And special thanks to the Alaniz ladies (Janice, Marissa and Christina) for a deliciously beautiful lamb cake!



Hope Clinic's 25th Anniversary Banquet and Worship Service

Hope Medical Clinic is celebrating its 25th Anniversary of serving the community. A banquet, honoring founder Dr. Daniel D. Heffernan and his wife Beverly, will be held at Travis Pointe Country Club on Friday, May 4, 2007. Dinner begins at 6:30 p.m. and the evening will feature entertainment by "Cornerstone", whose unique blend of folk, acappella, contemporary Christian, and humorous songs has been delighting audiences since 1980. Tickets and sponsorship opportunities are still available. For more information contact Becky Lewis at 734.961.0540 or rlewis@thehopeclinic.org.

A worship service to celebrate God's faithfulness to Hope Clinic is planned for May 6, 2007 at 4:00 p.m. The service will be held at John the Baptist Catholic Church located at 401 W. Cross in Ypsilanti. A buffet dinner will follow the worship service and all are welcome. For more information contact Jean Horak at 734.485.5595 or jhorak@thehopeclinic.org.



"Sacred Storytelling"

"**Sacred Storytelling**" is written, produced and directed by Jeffrey Steiger and presented by the Interfaith Round Table. This is a play created from real interfaith dialogues among faith groups of students in our community. Two performances: Sunday, May 20, 7:00 p.m. at The Neutral Zone, 310 E. Washington, Ann Arbor, and Monday, May 21, 7:00 p.m., Temple Beth Emeth/St. Clare's Episcopal Church, 2309 Packard, Ann Arbor. \$10 for adults, \$5 for high school students and younger. For more information and tickets, call 734-424-1535, email gbrides@umich.edu or go to www.irtwc.org.



Breaking the Bonds of Food Seven Week Workshop

facilitated by Tim Shannon, MAPC, LLPC
(Based on "The Hunger Within")

*My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place,
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Psalm 139:15*

Is your New Year's resolution to eat better and/or lose weight history? Do you want to manage eating without dieting? Then:

- Throw off shackles of overeating.
- Take the focus off food.
- Learn practical steps for managing eating.
- Unlock barriers to controlling weight.
- Explore triggers and core reasons for your eating habits.
- Gain support in a Christian environment.

Monday: 6:45 - 8:00 p.m., April 30, May 7 & 21, June 4, 11, 18 & 25
at First Baptist Church of Ypsilanti, room 101



VESPERS NEWS

Our Vespers meal is now being regularly attended by two dedicated and caring folks from the Project Outreach Team: Carol Ludwig, R.N. and Sean Coleman, a case worker. P.O.R.T. provides service to individuals who are homeless and at times suffering from physical, mental, or emotional problems. They stress the importance of engaging and building trust with homeless individuals. Engagement can be a long process, or a very short one. We hope that having outreach workers at the meal will make it easier for folks who come to us ready for help but have no idea where to get it. The team works closely with the CMH Acute Services House (a short-term crisis residential program), the Washtenaw County Jail, the Shelter Association, the University of Michigan, local police agencies, local landlords, and other service agencies. Sean recently said of Vespers, "This is our favorite stop!"

Other news from Vespers is that one of our regular attendees, Sharon, has moved on to a job with the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission Women's Center. She is very thankful for this opportunity and expressed great appreciation for our Vespers program for its spiritual support to her. Please pray for her future success. Sharon will miss her friends here, especially Steve Brown, a regular attendee who died tragically on March 31st. We mourn with his family and ask you to pray for them and all those in the homeless community who are grieving his loss.



Sean Coleman and Carol Ludwig



Sharon and Judy at Vespers April 2, 2007



Camps and Conferences

Green Lake Conference Center (American Baptist Assembly) offers a wide-variety of conferences as well as wonderful opportunities for rest and recreation. Green Lake's schedule includes: The Family Life Celebration Week, Holy Spirit Renewal Conference, the Conference for Church Musicians, The National Women's Conference and the World Mission Conference. Magazines explaining these conferences and others, as well as the beautiful facilities and grounds, are available at the Information Counter. Very generous scholarships are available through the Robert Johnson Memorial.

On the Christian Education bulletin board (near the information Counter) and on the CE desk near the coat racks, you can also find the schedules and descriptions of the camps at our Michigan ABC facilities at Lael and Lake Louise. There are camps for ALL ages, including very popular family camps and a camp for senior adults. Scholarships are also available for these camps. Please contact Sue Ellen (sueellen@fbca2.org; 663-9376).

Church Visioning and Renewal Process

Below are the specifics that have come from our Church Visioning and Renewal Process. They will be open for discussion at our annual program meeting on April 22. We have had much thought and conversation. Let us now move forward. I, for one, am excited by some of the items on this list and plan to participate in at least a couple. Which ones excite you? Is there something here that makes you say, "God can use me to do this"?

We want our church to be:

More Spiritually Vital

General: Consider who we are. (Perhaps each one writes a paragraph on who we believe we are as a congregation, then consider these statements together)

More Opportunities for Private and Group Prayer and Meditation

1. Revitalize before worship prayer group.
2. Have a retreat (probably one day, devoted to some sort of spiritual renewal)
3. Formalize praying for one another by rotating through the church directory, e.g. this week we particularly pray for the people on page 2.

Enhance Worship

1. Form a group to work on ways to increase lay participation in worship
2. Consider a service at another time in addition to our Sunday worship (Saturday evening, for example)

More Connected with One Another

1. Make sure everyone is in some sort of care/connection group
2. Sponsors for newcomers
3. Emphasize and model signing of attendance pad. Use to notice who is missing
4. Station people in various sections to welcome newcomers
5. More intergenerational events

More Involved in Local Mission

Hands On

1. Mission Idea Fund. A fund of \$2000-\$3000 managed by Mission Action Board to which a few people or larger group with an idea for starting a mission project could apply for seed money.
2. Vespers to meet once a week with involvement of other congregations.
3. Open up the church to more outside groups for exposure and activities.
4. Expand youth activities perhaps with Neutral Zone, college student mentors or community service.

More Inviting

Getting the word out

1. Develop strategic plan for outreach, especially to new neighbors (new condos, dorm, Google employees). Include specific plans for implementation.
2. Be more visible as to who we are and our unique characteristics.
3. Get the word out about podcasts
4. Improve signage; include website
5. Broadcast worship ~\$150/service, could also fit under Local Mission and being more connected.

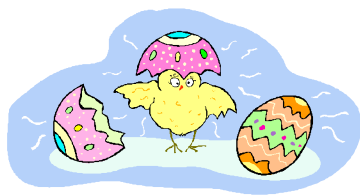
Host Special Events

1. Lectures
2. Concerts

Hand out fans at Art Fair

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 Deadline:
Sunday, April 22, 2007

2007 Annual Program Meeting

The congregation's Annual Program Meeting will be held Sunday, April 22 at 12:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We will gather together for a potluck lunch followed by the meeting, at which we will consider constitutional changes. Proposed changes are available at the Information Counter. Childcare will be provided for the meeting. The Board of Care and Community needs help with set-up and clean-up. Please let Donna Tipton know if you can help out with either or both. Carey needs (electronic) reports sent to her (office@fbca2.org) no later than this Friday, April 13th.