



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Ann Arbor, Michigan

October 8, 2008

Pastor's Reflections

by Paul Simpson Duke

During our summer visit with Stacey's parents, I had a memorable moment with Charlie. I found him jumping on a bed. I reminded him that jumping on beds is not a good thing and that he was not to do it again. He looked at me penitently and said, "Dad, I promise not to jump on the bed again." A few minutes later he was jumping on the bed again. "All right," I said. "You are not allowed to come back into this room for the rest of the day." He liked that room, and thought he had been unfairly sentenced. He said, "But why?" "Because you jumped on the bed again; and you gave me your promise that you wouldn't do it again, but you broke your word." I hadn't used that kind of language with him before, but I figured it might be time to introduce the concept of words being serious business. So, age-appropriate or not, I told him he had given his word, then broken it.

Later that day, I was reclining on the bed, reading a book. Charlie walked in, and climbed up to join me. I asked him, "What are you doing here?" He replied, "I fixed my word."

Well, of course. The opposite of "to break" is "to fix"; and if you're a literalist four-year-old and "broke your word," the clear remedy must be "I fixed my word."

Naturally, I've been thinking it over. How right was Charlie's guess? Can a word, once broken, be "fixed"? My first inclination is to say: of course not. We can apologize for breaking a promise, but the promise is still broken. Likewise, an insult may be regretted but is irretrievable. Gossip is a toxic spreading fog that can't be gotten back. So the first answer is no, a broken or false word is in itself unfixable.

The lie-mongers of partisan politics are counting on it. A presidential campaign can live or die by it. The nasty deployments of falsehood in the battle for possession of the White House - by innuendo, or by reporting words or actions entirely out of context, or by outright, pernicious lies - is mind-boggling. It has always been done, of course; but with the ubiquitous exertions of talk radio, incessant cable "news," and the blitzkriegs of Internet, the land is covered in lies like plagues of locusts. Humans as a species have always been great liars. but the more sophisticated we become with media and marketing and political speech-writing and sound-biting, the more prodigious liars we become. And here is the thing: the challenging of falsehood with fact has almost no effect, because lies refuse fixing. Having been believed, they are immovable from the minds of those who believed them, no matter what. Unfixable words.

Still, I have this dream. I dream of candidates who not only fire their staffers for indiscrete or cruel speech, but who rise to counter the falsehoods spread by others who are trying to get them elected. Imagine a candidate announcing: "Friends, many of my supporters have been lying to you about my opponent, saying that he is [fill in the blank] or that he stands for [fill in the blank]. To them I say, stop slandering him! As for the rest of you, I want your vote if you believe in me and support my positions, but not because of the lies you've heard from my so-called supporters!" This won't likely happen, of course, since candidates are generally willing to benefit even from their sleazier friends; but it would come refreshingly close, wouldn't it, to fixing some broken words.

As for you and me, there's a rather urgent witness to be made in our culture for people (a) whose words are honest; (b) who do not break the word they have given; and (3) who, upon sometimes, sadly, breaking their word, do all they can toward fixing what has been broken. Abraham Heschel declared, "Words have ceased to be commitments." Returning to words as commitments might go a long way toward fixing broken speech. Charlie, you may be onto something after all.

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

Children and Youth Christian Education

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 or to Tiny Grace Notes. Children in Kindergarten - 3rd grade are invited to Children's Worship. Church School begins after worship (about 11:00).

Preschool or childcare in nursery

10:00 - 10:30 Worship
10:30 - 10:45 Tiny Grace Notes
10:50 - 11:00 Children's Worship
11:00 - 12:00 Church School (in K-2nd grade class)
12:00 - 12:30 Childcare in Room 202A & B

3rd - 6th grades

10:00 - 11:00 Worship
11:00 - 11:50/12:00 Church School (Room 304)
11:50 - 12:30 Jr. Choir (Room 102) or
12:00 - 12:30 Grace Notes (Room 306)

K - 2nd grade

10:30 - 11:00 Children's Worship (Room 202A)
11:00 - 12:00 Church School (Room 202B)
12:00 - 12:30 Grace Notes (Room 306)

Youth (7th - High School)

10:00 - 11:00 Worship
11:15 - 12:30 Church School (Room 107)

Children's Music and Arts Ministry (Sunday Mornings)

Jr. Handbells (Room 306).....9:15 - 9:45
Grace Notes Choir (room 306)..12:00 - 12:30
Tiny Grace Notes (Room 306)...10:30 - 10:45
Jr. Choir (Room 102).....11:50 - 12:30

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

CELTIC CHRISTIANITY – What does it mean for us today? – In the days of early Christianity, in 644, at the Northumbrian Abby of Whitby, northern Christianity came to a crossroad. The Celtic tradition of Iona lost out to the see of Rome. Celtic Christianity was pushed into the background, into the Northern and Western provinces of Scotland, Wales, Ireland, but the Celtic mission, inspired by the Gospel of John, survived and remains an integral and important part of our heritage. Its focus is in seeing the image of God in all of creation, including the human who represents the image of God on earth. This spirituality lends itself to listening for God at the heart of life, experiencing communion with God in nature at the deepest levels. We express this emphasis in our worship service, in our hymns, in our prayers, without being keenly aware of it. William Sloane Coffin expressed it, when he said, "When you're grateful for the undeserved beauty of a cloudless sky, you're praying." We sing it in our hymn: And God will raise you up on Eagles' wings, bear you on the breath of dawn, make you shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of His hand. Or: How beautiful are the feet of him who brings...peace...good tidings...salvation. (Isa 52:7, Rom 10:15). In this sequence, we will study how our Celtic heritage has inspired us in our awareness of God through prayer and by studying related OT and NT biblical passages.

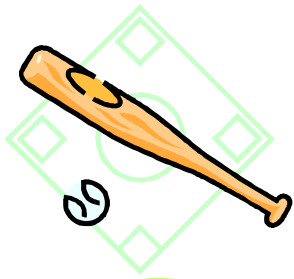
– Astrid Beck, discussion leader

Other Adult Education Opportunities:

Wednesday Bible Study (Memorial Lounge) Ron Tipton, leader

What does it mean to "meditate" on the Scriptures? The first six weeks of the Wednesday Bible Study will be a group meditation on six passages from the Gospel of Luke. We will read the passages not only for information, but also to hear what the words of Scripture are saying to us in particular. With thoughtful reflection, imagination, faith, and open hearts, we will seek personal meaning in the words of Scripture. Join us each Wednesday for fellowship and study. (Coffee and snacks are served)

Adult 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

Can you feel it?

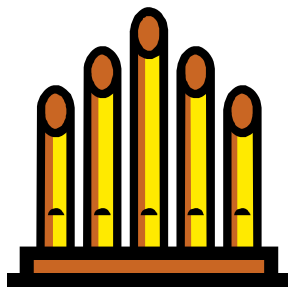
I can. I'm feeling a new energy in our congregation! It's exciting. We are expanding our ministry to youth (Welcome, Carey!). We are reaching out to those in need even more than we have in the past. We are getting the word out about our worship and ministries more effectively. We are increasing our connections to one another (Come to the Festival of Care to see how.) The Ann Arbor Co-op Nursery has opened upstairs. The Morikawa Conference will be happening in November. Worship attendance has been up the last few weeks. More visitors. Four babies in the nursery yesterday! The Executive Council has set as this year's main goal for ourselves to work on being more visible in the community. While this includes the revitalized website coming soon and better publicity in general, the more important ways to be visible in the community are through our various ministries-vespers, youth outreach, CROP walk, the alternative fair, the Co-op nursery, visiting the homebound, working on affordable housing issues, special music and learning experiences, etc. In these troubled and, for many, difficult times, I feel that people are more in need of a faith community than ever. We can be that for some. Invite your friends and neighbors, coworkers. Make sure you pass the attendance pad so we can get contact information on visitors. Talk to visitors, invite them down for cookies. This is not the job of just a few but a task for all of us.

— Mary Davis, Moderator

MacGregor-Stitt Circle meets on Thursday (Oct 16) at 1pm at Maria Pierantozzi's home.
Program: *Bible Translating* by Becky Miller

Thank you! A lovely new carpet runner has been placed in the hallway between the Bride's Room and the Youth Room. We thank Mr. Thomas Scott for his generous donation.

Downtown Ann Arbor Pipe Organ Showcase



Six downtown Ann Arbor churches will host an afternoon-long series of interactive concerts Sunday, October 19th, from 2:00 - 5:00 PM, offering visitors the opportunity to get acquainted with a fascinating instrument: the pipe organ. Members of the Ann Arbor American guild of Organists and University of Michigan organ students will be on hand to give performances, share pipe organ facts, and answer questions. Churches in the showcase are: First Baptist, First Congregational, First Presbyterian, Bethlehem United Church of Christ, St. Thomas Roman Catholic (2:00 - 3:30 pm), and St. Paul's Lutheran. The performances at First Baptist will be child-friendly. Guests are invited to visit multiple venues to hear a variety of music. Maps to the various venues and light refreshments will be available.

For more information, call 734-846-3825, or visit www.annarborago.org

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 and take an instruction sheet with you.



NEW DVD'S AVAILABLE

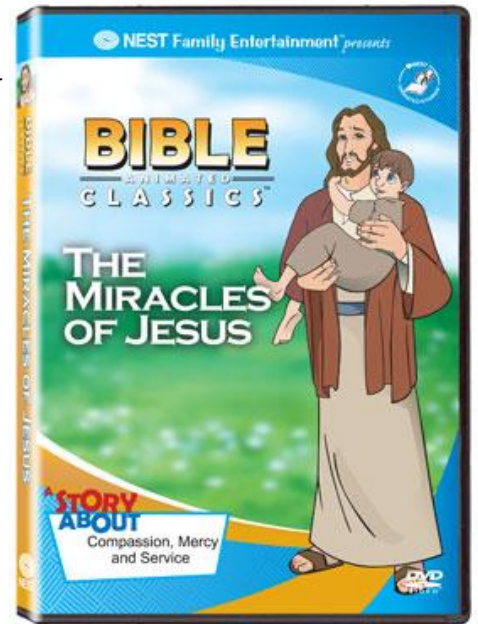
The Board of Christian Education is thrilled to announce the gift of over 50 new DVD's available for check-out at the Family Resource Center (middle level classroom hallway). These Bible story and Veggie Tales DVD's were purchased with funds provided by the generous endowment made to Christian Education by Mrs. Flossie Feiner (mother and grandmother of the Suits family).

There are many new titles, though quite a few are replacements of kid-favorite videos we have had for years, but since most families only have DVD players now, none of these videos were being borrowed from our Family Resource Center.



The new DVD's will be available starting this Sunday and most are not available in commercial video stores. Here are some of the titles parents and grandparents will enjoy watching with the children.... "The Miracles of Jesus", "Lost is Found", the stories of Samuel, Elijah, Daniel, Esther and other Bible heroes by the Nest Family Learning Company with excellent animation and music. And then there are Veggie Tales: "Rack, Shack and Benny", "A Snoodles Tale", "God Made You Special", and "Josh and the Big Wall", and many more!

Simply check out your DVD on the clipboard and bring it back within a couple of weeks. And enjoy and learn!



New mailing address for Elizabeth Lee For all cards and notes from her many well-wishers, Elizabeth Lee's new mailing address is 141 Dhu Varren Rd, Ann Arbor, MI, 48105

Handbell Library seeks file cabinet..If you have a lonely letter-sized file cabinet that needs a home, the Handbell Library would greatly welcome it!



Washtenaw/Ann Arbor CROP Hunger Walk 2008 is THIS SUNDAY, October 12


First United Methodist Church, Ann Arbor; registration from 1:15 pm

CROP is "Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty." This is organized by Church World Service and the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice, with volunteers from local congregations.

CROP walkers will join over 40 local congregations in walking 2km or 10km. Many small gifts from sponsors in your church will make a big difference. Last year we raised \$72,200, and we hope to do even better in 2008. Northfield Human Services Food Pantry will receive canned goods donated at the Walk. All the local agencies report a dire need for emergency food assistance, and they rely on the CROP Walk for help.

We need your help for our Non-Perishable Food Collection. Congregations are urged to collect a special food offering for the CROP Hunger Walk and walkers are invited to bring gifts of non-perishable food on the day of the Walk. Food offerings will be collected at the Walk site. This year's food offering will go to Northfield Human Services Food Pantry which distributes over three tons of food to individuals and families every month.

THE INTERFAITH ROUND TABLE OF WASHTENAW COUNTY will hold its fourteenth Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Celebration on Sunday evening, November 23th, at 7 p.m., at the Church of the Good Shepherd, 2145 Independence, in Ann Arbor. Join us as we give thanks with readings, music, meditations and other unique presentations from a wide variety of faith traditions. Donations accepted for non-perishable food or turkey money to help those in need in our community. For more information, call Rev. George Lambrides (424-1535) or Laurie Gailunas at 662-3654.



Annual
Celebration of
Care & Community
and
Chili Cook-Off

Sunday, October 12
12:30 p.m., Fellowship Hall



Share lunch with your friends.

Learn how we care for each other.

Hear some personal stories of care.

MENU:

Various styles of Chili submitted by the competitors

Corn Chowder

Peanut Butter & Jelly

Desserts

Coffee, Tea, and Cold Beverages

*Children and youth are encouraged
to attend and childcare is provided.*

Please sign-up at the Information Counter.



ANNUAL CELEBRATION OF CARE THIS SUNDAY

Sunday, October 12 at 12:30, is the time for our Annual Celebration of Care and Chili Cook-Off.

The Chili Cook-Off luncheon is heating up. The Stearns boys (Owen, Jack & Jim) have thrown their hat in the ring. Rob Snyder and his father, Bob, have already posed a threat to Ron Gregg's famous chili but now he has more competition. We will also have a couple vegetarian soups available. We will review the new programs that the Board of Care and Community has initiated in the last year and hear from our other groups. It's good to celebrate how our church is becoming a better caring community. New members and visitors are especially invited. Childcare will be provided. If you need child care, please call Mary Gregg at 761-3127.



On September 14, the Youth and their parents said "Thank you" to Brandy Kirchner for her six years of service as Director of Youth. (Brandy was honored by the Board of Christian Education and the congregation the previous week, September 7.) THANKS SO MUCH!!!!



IN THE
ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN
CONFLICT, HOW CAN
JEWS, CHRISTIANS, AND
MUSLIMS MAKE RELIGION
PART OF THE SOLUTION,
INSTEAD OF PART OF
THE PROBLEM?



RELIGION & PEACEMAKING IN THE MIDDLE EAST
NOVEMBER 08, 2008 - NOVEMBER 10, 2008

WWW.MORIKAWACONFERENCE.ORG

GUEST SPEAKERS

THE THREE MAIN SPEAKERS ARE INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN WORKERS FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION.



Msgr. Elias Chacour, a Christian Palestinian who lives in Israel is Archbishop of Galilee for the Melkite Church. Father Chacour is an internationally renowned ambassador for non-violence.

He is the author of two best-selling books, *Blood Brothers* and *We Belong to the Land*.



Dr. Ingrid Mattson, is the first woman elected President of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA). She is also Professor of Islamic Studies and Christian-

Muslim Relations, as well as Director of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program, at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut.



Rabbi Marc Gopin has engaged in back channel diplomacy with religious, political and military figures on both sides of the Arab/Israeli conflict.

He is Professor of World Religions and Director of the Center on Religion, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

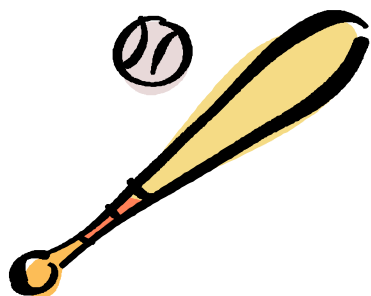
LOCAL PRESENTERS

Sayed Hassan Al-Qaswini, (Imam, Islamic Center of America); **Douglas Brouwer**, (Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Ann Arbor); **Lori Carey**, (Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church); **Rob Dobrusin**, (Rabbi, Beth Israel Congregation); **Bob Levy**, (Rabbi, Temple Beth Emeth); **Nathan Martin**, (Rabbi, Hillel Foundation); **Achmat Salie**, (Imam, Oakland University); **Joe Summers**, (Pastor, Episcopal Church of the Incarnation); **Dawud Walid**, (Chairman of Council on American-Islamic Relations, Michigan Chapter)

Brochures and registration forms can be picked up on Sunday at the information counter or at the Huron St entrance. They can also be picked up in the office during the week. The registration fee for up to ten participants is covered by the church.

First Baptist Church
517 E Washington St
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
734-663-9376
www.fbca2.org
office@fbca2.org

The Reverends Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke, Co-Pastors



Next
newsletter
deadline:

*Sunday,
October 19, 2008*



ANN ARBOR CO-OP NURSERY

Building Strong Foundations for our Children ... Together

You're invited!

The Ann Arbor Cooperative Nursery School
now located on the third floor,
would like to invite friends and members of First Baptist Church to join us
for an...

~ Open House ~

on Wednesday, October 15th, 6:30pm-8:30pm.

Light refreshments will be provided.
Bring your children and come see the new space!

Questions? **Call 769-7966**

or email Anna Dutton at dutton5@comcast.net.