



# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Ann Arbor, Michigan

February 7, 2007

## Pastors' Reflections

by Stacey Simpson Duke

I have just returned from my "ancestral homeland," Anson County, North Carolina, where the Simpsons (and the Goodwins, my grandmother's family) have lived since the early 1700s. The occasion was my uncle's funeral. Although it was loss that brought me there, for me grief was matched by gratitude. Gratitude for family, for place, for roots.

In the last 15 years, I haven't visited this place - where I spent two weeks nearly every summer growing up - or seen these people - who I used to see every Thanksgiving in addition to most summers - except for funerals (this being the third in that amount of time). Still, despite the long absences we now have from each other, whenever I go back there, I feel myself slipping seamlessly back into place - into the circle of my family. It feels right, and it feels like home.

It is a powerful thing, touching a sort of primal need, to connect again with one's roots. Haven't you had that experience, when you are with someone who has known you and loved you since you were born, who can tell you stories about yourself that you have no way of recalling on your own? Equally powerful to me is to hear the stories from before my own birth - stories of my family, my people, my place. There are stories of poverty, and farming, and picking cotton, and raising animals, and getting into trouble, and going off to war. Stories of births gone wrong, and deaths too soon, and surprise babies late in life. And the stories go back and back and back; I have an aunt who studies genealogy and has now collected three centuries of family stories. I have been told the stories of my family since before I can remember, and even though I wasn't present for any of the events the stories tell of, they feel like *my* stories; they tell me who I am.

In their classic 1985 book *Habits of the Heart*, sociologist Robert Bellah and his colleagues argue that in order to create and sustain genuine community (which they believe we desperately need in our overly individualistic society), we need to have a strong connection with the past, as transmitted by what they called "communities of memory" - communities which keep their stories going. Bellah, et al, claim that such communities of memory are essential to individual identity formation. Obviously families and neighborhoods function as communities of memory. Bellah and his colleagues believe that churches do - and must - too.

In a 1993 *Christian Century* article entitled "Church Realities and Christian Identity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," sociologist Robert Wuthnow (our Morikawa Lecturer in 2003), writes that to be a community of memory, "the church must, among other things, be backward-looking; it has a special mission to preserve the past, to carry on a tradition. The church must be a community of memory by perpetuating the narratives of the past, by telling stories that bring the past into the present. The idea of church as storyteller may seem to diminish its importance, but this function has utmost significance. The very likelihood of anyone in the future retaining the identity 'Christian' depends on it.... (T)he church must be a place where discourse about the past, present, and future is actively encouraged. Memory comes alive and is renewed only when it is discussed."

I am struck by what a lively enterprise this is. This is not the musty preservation of tradition that keeps us locked in the past. This is a vibrant remembering together of who we are, what our stories are - from the Bible, from the whole history of the Christian church, from our history as this specific church in this particular place. We tell these stories with our sermons, with our liturgy, with our teaching, in our fellowship with one another, and with how we do mission. These stories remind us of who we've been and who we are, and they help light the way as we step forward into the future. *(Cont'd on next page)*

*(Pastors' Reflections cont'd from front page)*

In the small groups that are meeting now to talk together about our future here at First Baptist, one of the things we've been doing is talking about what we love about our church. This inevitably involves the telling of old stories, the stories that make us who we are today, and might shed light on our future too. It is a good and faithful thing to listen to each other remember the stories, and to figure out together what the next chapter of our story might be.

The church at its best tells the old, old stories over and over again. And it listens, too, to the newer stories of its members - of faith and hope, of struggle and sorrow. The church is meant to be far more than an institution - it is meant to be a community of memory, it is meant to be a family. A circle we slip into seamlessly to be surrounded by people who love us, to be told the stories from before our own time. To be claimed. To find our way. To find our home.



***Claire Ewell Hodge** of Ann Arbor, MI passed away on Tuesday, January 30, 2007, at the University of Michigan Medical Center after a long illness. She was born March 21, 1921, in Ardmore, OK, the daughter of Albert Edwin and Elizabeth (Dyer) Ewell. In 1949 she married Gerald P. Hodge in Jefferson City, MO, and he survives. Other survivors include; one daughter, Melinda Deanne Hodge of Lock Haven, PA, one son John Wallace Hodge and his wife Kathy of Quincy, IL, two grandsons, John Austin Hodge III, and Wesley Parker Hodge. Other survivors include; one sister, Elizabeth Ewell Cashman, two nephews, William and Robert, and a niece, Deanne. She was preceded in death by one brother Edwin Ewell. Claire attended Texas State College for Women, Colorado State University, and was a graduate of the University of Colorado with a degree in medical technology. After graduation she worked as a medical technologist at the University of Colorado Medical Center in Denver, the Osman Clinic in Jefferson City, and the Public Health Department in New Orleans. She was a member of the First Baptist Church of Ann Arbor, Women's National Farm and Garden Club, Ann Arbor Garden Club, and Faculty Women's Club. The family wishes to give sincere thanks to the caring staff at the Glacier Hills Nursing Center, the University of Michigan Medical Center, and to the many friends who visited frequently. Cremation has taken place, and according to her wishes, there will be no service. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the First Baptist Church or to the Humane Society of Huron Valley. The family received friends at their home located at 1241 Bending Road, Ann Arbor, MI Saturday, February 3, 2007, between the hours of 1 - 4 p.m. Arrangements by the Robison-Bahnmiller Funeral Home of Saline.*



### **Friendship House**

Last Sunday, Linnea Berg, the Interim Executive Director of Friendship House provided an update on Friendship House, an ABC-MI sponsored mission which serves the impoverished in the Hamtramck community of Detroit. This ministry has had several administrative and financial challenges in the recent past. Linnea described the current sources of funding, programs and number of persons served, and what struggles lie in the future for this important ministry. If you would like to donate to Friendship House, their address is: 9540 Conant St., Hamtramck, MI 48212. Their phone # is 313-871-7443.

# FBC NEWS & EVENTS



## **Laura Barbour's Birthday Party!**

David and Janet Barbour are having an open house birthday party for Laura's 90th birthday on Saturday, February 17 from 1-4:00 p.m. at 307 Linda Vista, Ann Arbor, 48103. Their phone # is 761-4808. The cake cutting and reminiscing will begin at 1:30 p.m. They ask that there be no gifts, and that if you are unable to attend that you send them a memory to share at the address above, where Laura is now living.

## **Small Group Meetings: The Future of FBC**

As explained in both a recent e-connection message as well as the January 24th edition of the newsletter, the Executive Council is asking small groups to come together throughout the month of February to discuss the question "What do you want our church to be in 5 years?" Sign up sheets for the small group meetings will be available during fellowship time downstairs on Sunday or you may email or call the church office during the week. Childcare will be available by reservation at any of the meetings.

## **MacGregor-Stitt Circle**

The next gathering of the MacGregor-Stitt Circle will be Thursday, February 15 at 11:45 a.m. at the Sheraton (3200 Boardwalk, Ann Arbor) for "Out to Lunch with Betty."

## **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.

## **2007 Flower Calendar is up!**

If you are interested in hosting the chancel flowers a certain Sunday in 2007, the new calendar is up and ready to be filled in. The arrangements are \$30 and you may choose the type of flowers you'd like, as well as the dedication which appears in the bulletin the week you host them. You are welcome to take the flower arrangement with you or leave them for visitors and the staff to enjoy throughout the week.



The **INTERFAITH ROUND TABLE** is grateful to the University Musical Society for the opportunity to raise funds for our interfaith work through the sale of tickets to the "Canadian Brass" performance on Saturday, March 24, at 8:00 p.m., at Hill Auditorium.

The world's most famous brass quintet bound on stage in their traditional tuxedos and tennis shoes, launching into a program that encompasses everything from Bach and Wagner to Sousa and Ellington. Ticket prices: \$42, \$36, \$23. For more information, call 424-1535, email [gbrides@umich.edu](mailto:gbrides@umich.edu) or go to [www.irtc.org](http://www.irtc.org).

# 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 - 2<sup>ND</sup> grade

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

## 3rd - 5th grades

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

## Youth (6<sup>th</sup> - high school)

10:00 - 11:00 Worship  
11:15 - 11:50 Church School (room 107)  
11:50 - 12:30 Jr. Choir (room 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 <sup>rd</sup> grade)	12:00 - 12:30	room 305, upper level
Jr. Choir (4 <sup>th</sup> grade and older)	11:50 - 12:30	room 102, lower level

## Adult Christian Education

***Addressing Contemporary Issues in the Study of Women in the Bible*** (Lounge) led by Astrid Beck  
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. They comprise the foundation of the early society in the Bible. This winter we will continue with women from the Old Testament:

Women in the Days of the Kings: Feb. 11 - Michal, Saul's daughter: 1 Samuel 18:2-19:17; 25:44  
Feb. 18 - Abigail, wife of King David: 2 Samuel 25

### ***Share and Prayer Group*** (room 108)

facilitated by Stacey Simpson Duke

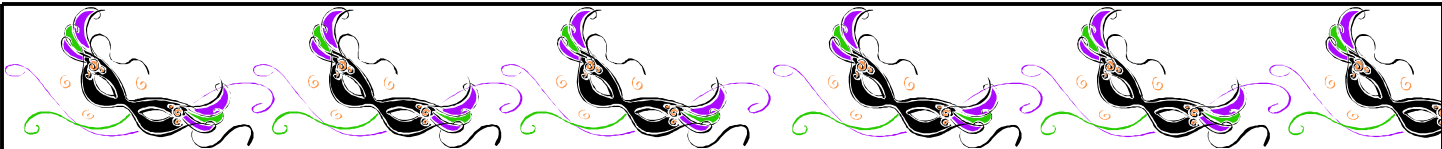
A time for sharing, singing, silence, centering, and group prayer. Together we will engage in a ministry of prayer for our church, for other members, for specific concerns, and for local and world events, as well as having time to become more connected to one another and more personally grounded and 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).

## Other Adult Learning Opportunities

***Second Sunday Series: Living the Questions*** ~ Join us this Sunday, February 11 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. Childcare is provided. Please sign up at the Information Counter and pick up the participant's guide for Lesson 6: *Intimacy with God*.

***Wednesday Bible Study*** (Memorial Lounge, 1:30 - 2:30) - Rev. Paul Simpson Duke leads a study of Philippians. 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 meets monthly and the other meets every other week. See Stacey, Paul or Sue Ellen for more information about joining a group.



# ***FUN NIGHT***

## ***Mardi Gras Style***



***Friday, February 16th***

***6:00 - 8:00 P.M.***

***Fellowship Hall***

Sign up for potluck dinner at the Information Counter  
or contact the office during the week



### **Friends of Camp Lake Louise**

The Director of Camp Lake Louise, David G. Johnson, recently sent out a letter asking folks to consider donating to a much-needed kitchen renovation project. Their kitchen ovens are at least 70 years old and beyond being able to be fixed. The floor needs to be replaced, as well as the six burner range, ovens and griddle. They'll be adding a much-needed convection oven. They are also in need of a fire suppression unit for their exhaust hood. They've been given an estimate of \$12,000. They are grateful for past support and very thankful for future assistance. If you would like to donate to Camp Lake Louise, their address is:

5575 Hasslick Road  
North Branch, MI 48461



### **Hope Clinic Becomes "Bakers for a Day"**

Join the staff and volunteers of Hope Clinic on Sunday, February 25<sup>th</sup> from 10:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. as they take over Great Harvest Bread Co., located in the Woodland Plaza at 2220 S. Main Street in Ann Arbor. Support Hope's mission as you treat yourself to a variety of baked goods. ALL proceeds from the day go directly to Hope Clinic. For more information, contact Melissa Burkhardt or Connie Hallom at 734-484-2989.



Jennifer Wells Bucholtz is climbing with her team, "Paws for Breath" from the Washtenaw Veterinary Hospital, in the American Lung Association's very first **Climb Detroit** at the Detroit Marriott Tower in the Renaissance Center on February 25<sup>th</sup> to raise money for the organization's fight against lung disease in Michigan. This tower is the tallest building in Michigan and they will be climbing all 70 flights in a race to the top! The proceeds from **Climb Detroit** will be used to support lung disease research at the University of Michigan and Wayne State University, educational programs such as Asthma 101 and Freedom From Smoking, and legislative advocacy initiatives in Lansing.

Jen has personally committed to raising \$1,000 and her team of co-workers is committed to raising \$2,500 to aid in fighting this epidemic. Please know your generosity is greatly appreciated. Additionally, Washtenaw Veterinary Hospital has generously agreed to match any donation made to our team. Donations can be made through **Climb Detroit's** secure website by clicking the following link:

<http://www.mrsnv.com/evt/e01/part.jsp?rid=584362&id=1270&acct=3213193710>

Or a check payable to the American Lung Association of Michigan can be sent to:

2729 Packard Road  
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

All donations are tax deductible as charitable contributions. You can also make donations through the website [www.asthmawalk.org](http://www.asthmawalk.org).



The **FBC Ladies Book Club** will meet Tuesday, March 6th at 7 pm at Mary Gregg's house to discuss "Bel Canto" by Ann Patchett. All church ladies are welcome! Please contact Mary (769-3127) or Janice Stumpf (663-4871 or [jlstumpf@umich.edu](mailto:jlstumpf@umich.edu)) for further information.

Lively, rewarding discussion on books and topics of interest, along with refreshments. The next meeting of the **FBC Men's Book Club** will be held March 13, 7 p.m., at the Drake home. The book that will be discussed is "The Devil in the White City" by Erik Larson.

# ACTS 2007

(Area Church Training Seminars for the Central Area Churches of ABC-MI)

## Saturday, March 10

### Aurelius Baptist Church (Mason, MI)

### 9:00 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

(registration begins at 8:30)

ACTS 2007, the Central Area American Baptist Churches training event, will take place at Aurelius Baptist Church in Mason on Saturday, March 10, from 9:00 a.m. – 12:45p.m. There are 8 workshops offered: learn about new ways of “doing church,” hear about the ministries of our American Baptist missionaries in South Africa, and explore Celtic spirituality. Free childcare is offered (by reservation). Brochures with workshop descriptions and registration forms are available at the Information Counter or from Sue Ellen. Please register by February 28, though walk-in registration is also available. Plan on attending this event - join with others for a day of learning and sharing. See Sue Ellen for more information.



### *Unite for Sight*

FBC is participating in collecting eye glasses for the University of Michigan's chapter of "Unite for Sight," which is a non-profit organization whose mission it is to help bring eye health to those in need. Along with optometrists and ophthalmologists they've traveled to over 25 countries distributing the prescription glasses they've collected. This year they're collecting both regular glasses and sunglasses. They will collect them on a monthly or as needed basis. If you've been wondering what to do with those outdated frames of yours, please consider bringing them to church with you Sunday morning or throughout the week and donating them to a worthy cause. Please place them in the "Unite for Sight" plastic bin at the Information Counter.

First Baptist Church  
512 East Huron Street  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
734-663-9376  
[www.fbca2.org](http://www.fbca2.org)  
[office@fbca2.org](mailto:office@fbca2.org)

*The Reverends Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke, Co-Pastors*

Next Deadline:  
Sunday, February 25, 2007



## ***A Piano Recital by Joel Hastings***

***On Wednesday, February 14th (Valentine's Day), at 8:00 p.m.,  
Joel Hastings will be giving a piano recital in the FBC Sanctuary.***

***This concert will feature Edvard Grieg's "Holberg Suite" and Franz Liszt's  
daunting arrangement of Richard Wagner's "Tannhäuser Overture."  
Also on the program are works of Bach, Mozart and Chopin.  
A nine foot Steinway grand piano will be brought in for the event.***

***Suggested donation: \$15/\$10 students***