



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Ann Arbor, Michigan

January 24, 2007

Pastors' Reflections

by Paul Simpson Duke

Inside this newsletter you will find words from our moderator, Mary Davis, about an upcoming series of conversations in our church family. The process she describes is so important that I want to emphasize it here.

This process began with our Executive Council. That group consists of the chairpersons of every church Board, plus three at-large members, plus the moderator, the clerk, and the pastors. The council's charge, among other things, is to monitor the pulse of the church's ongoing work, and to give leadership toward new directions, emphases and adjustments as needed. Four months ago, the Council undertook a newly focused dimension of its leadership role. They began talking in a systematic way about how our church might grow in its character and mission.

We began with the question: What do you want our church to be in five years? Each of us offered our own personal response to that question. We discussed the strengths of this congregation, and what it might mean to deepen and expand those strengths. We discussed aspects of a church's life that may be presently insufficient among us, and how we might grow in those pursuits. We expressed ourselves candidly and listened to each other carefully. We prayed together. Some goals and ideas emerged that, to us, seemed fitting.

You will see in the enclosed announcement/invitation from our moderator some of what the Council's conversations yielded. But from the beginning we knew that this process of discernment belonged only in a preliminary way to us. It belongs mostly to the congregation at large. As part of the current designated leadership, we wanted to lead by beginning the process with ourselves. But it is not our intention to limit the thoughts and dreams of the congregation by imposing our own. Incidentally, this process is by no means limited to "official" members of this congregation. If you participate at all in the life of this church, your thoughts and ideas are wanted. You may see qualities and needs in this church that we old-timers don't. I should add that the participation of the youth of the church is very important to us, and would be highly valued.

We want you, all of you, to join in this process. You are being invited to sign up for a small group meeting - only one - to talk about your sense of this church, about what our particular calling might be, and how our pursuit of that calling might expand, grow and be transformed. There will be two components of this discernment process. The first pertains to broad goals or directions. The second pertains to specific ideas or steps that might help us toward realizing these larger directions or goals. Please understand that you do not need to have particular thoughts in place before you attend one of these meetings. Discernment on these matters often occurs first and best in the presence of others, whose assessments, thoughts, and dreams will trigger our own.

The leaders of the small groups have gone through the exercise themselves and in the process have been trained to lead the rest of us. This is bound to be a very fruitful series of conversation and vital to the future of our church. Please read what Mary has written, and take it seriously. Plan to sign up for one of these small gatherings and to be part of something wonderful. It all starts very soon. Include it, and the church, in your prayers. After these groups have all met, the congregation at large will meet to seek agreement as to where the Spirit seems to be leading us, and on what steps we might take. I'm very pleased that we're doing this, and hope that you are too.

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 (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)
3rd graders leave at 12:00 for Grace Notes
4th & 5th graders leave at 11:50 for Jr. Choir

Youth (6th - high school)

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

* **January 28:** 11:00 - 11:50 Youth Worship (grades 4 - high school) Youth Room (107)

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

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: Jan. 28 - Ruth

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 February 12 from 5:30 - 7:30. 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.

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.

Men's Book Group - Lively, rewarding discussion on books and topics of interest, along with refreshments. The next meeting will be held March 13, 7 p.m., at the Drake home. (The title of the book for March's discussion will be announced later.)



FBC NEWS & EVENTS

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

Congratulations Lauren & Duncan!

A belated but very happy congratulations to Lauren Bowen and Duncan Fisher on their marriage in October - and to Lauren's parents, David and Maryann. Their new address is: Lauren and Duncan Fisher, 218 Monmoor Ave., Mishawaka, IN 46544

2007 Annual Financial Meeting

The congregation's annual financial meeting will be held this Sunday, January 28 at 12:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We will gather together for a potluck lunch (the fun part) followed by the meeting at which we will consider and approve a budget for 2007. Please plan to attend. 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.

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 the visitors and staff to enjoy throughout the week.



You're invited to an evening of music in celebration of **Hope Clinic's 25th Anniversary** on Friday, February 9 at 8:00 p.m. The Concert is presented by Acoustic Faith Music & The Knox getREAL Coffee House at Knox Church, 2065 S. Wagner Road in Ann Arbor. We would like to invite all of our friends to come join us for a musical celebration of God's faithfulness to our ministry. In lieu of a cost for admission, there will be an offering to benefit Hope Clinic. For more information, please contact Jean Horak at (734) 485-5595 or jhorak@thehopeclinic.org.



Youth Bowling



Dear FBC family,

“What do you want our church to be in 5 years?” This is the question the Executive Council began discussing in October. For members of the EC the answer was that we as individuals and as a congregation need growth and renewal particularly in the areas of spiritual vitality and local mission. In particular, members of the EC expressed a desire to feel more comfortable expressing faith both in church and in the community, a need for a stronger emphasis on prayer and the other spiritual disciplines, and a need for the congregation to be a more visible presence in the community especially through our service to others. As a concrete example, one member had the idea of adding some informal, home-based worship services to our regular Sunday service.

How would you answer this question? Everyone in the congregation is about to have the opportunity to do so. The EC is proposing to go forward by convening a number of small group meetings (most likely in February) in which each person in the congregation can express thoughts, feelings, and ideas. The EC envisions these as groups of 6-8 people, which meet together once with a leader (or two) to facilitate the discussion. The output from these gatherings will then be brought to the congregation as a whole to consider in a larger group format where we will, as individuals and as a group, determine what we believe is a good path and what commitments we are willing to make. You will hear more about the schedule soon, at which time you will have the chance to sign up for a group. We expect sign-up sheets to be available on Jan 28.

The ideas and the decisions about what actions to undertake will have to arise from the congregation as a whole through prayer, listening to one another and being open to the leading of the Spirit. Our congregation is strong in many ways. Our call is to use these strengths (and probably our weaknesses too!) to be bold servants of Christ.

Mary Davis, Moderator



For Families

Some families find that emotions get pretty intense during the holiday time and break from school and regular routine. Here's a fun activity that your family might find enlightening as we start out a new year. It's called the Pet Peeve Chart.

Make a Pet Peeve Chart and put it up on the refrigerator. This chart should have one column for every member of your family. Talk to your kids about what pet peeves are and then during the week, as people get angry, write down some of the pet peeves revealed. After a few days look at your chart: What can you learn? Pet peeves often seem justified and become good points of conversation among family members. These discussions can stimulate a teamwork approach as your family works together to solve the problems and develop strategies that don't involve anger.

*Excerpt taken from the booklet **Using a Team Approach to Deal with Anger in Your Family** by Dr Scott Turansky and Joanne Miller.*
parent@biblicalparenting.org. (National Center for Biblical Parenting)

YOUTH VALENTINE SALE

It's time for the Youth Valentine Sale - a chance for you to show your love, friendship and appreciation to those in your church family. Only two more Sundays (Jan. 28 and Feb. 4) to buy your blank valentines from the Youth (and their parents) who will be selling them for \$1 each at tables near the Information Counter and the Fellowship Hall, before and after worship. After you fill out your cards, return them to the Youth, who will compile the cards and deliver each one to your chosen Valentines on February 11, along with a special treat. Remember - everyone will receive a treat from the Youth - what you are purchasing are the cards to express your sentiments, which will be joyfully delivered by the Youth. If you would like assistance in filling out your cards, the Youth will be glad to help. (All profits from this sale will be donated by the Youth to a charity.)

If you are unable to be in church the next few weeks, please call, email or send the following information to Sue Ellen or Brandy:

Person ordering: _____ Phone #: _____

Who would you like to send cards to (full name please) and what would you like the card to say?

1. _____
(recipient's name)

(message)

2. _____
(recipient's name)

(message)

3. _____
(recipient's name)

(message)

Please mail this list along with \$1 per card to Brandy at First Baptist Church, 512 East Huron, Ann Arbor, MI 48104, or you may call or email Sue Ellen (663-9376; sueellen@fbca2.org).



February 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6:30 Handbell Practice 7:30 Choir Practice	2	3
4 Communion Newsletter Deadline	5 7:00 Bd. of Evangelism	6 5:30 Vespers	7 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering 7:30 Executive Council	8 6:30 Handbell Practice 7:30 Choir Practice	9	10
11 5:30 Second Sunday	12 7:00 Board of Mission Action	13 7:00 Board of Worship	14 <i>Happy Valentine's Day!</i> 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering 7:00 Davis-Diels ChristCare 8:00 Joel Hasting's Piano Recital	15 11:45 MacGregor-Stitt (Sheraton) 6:30 Handbell Practice 7:30 Choir Practice	16	17
18 Newsletter & March Calendar Deadline	19	20 3:00 Beecher-Brewer (Hillside) 5:30 Vespers 7:00 Bd. of Trustees	21 <i>Ash Wednesday</i> 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering 5:30 Bd. Christian Ed. 7:00 Ash Wednesday Service	22 6:30 Handbell Practice 7:30 Choir Practice	23	24
25 12:30 Bd. of Music & Arts	26	27 9:30 ABWM Bd.	28 1:30 Bible Study			

Happy Birthday!!



Vicky Rushton	2	Grace Aaron	10	Ed Voss	22
Mary Lou Hallock	4	David Moehring	13	Beth Foster	22
Doris Fraker	4	Henry Griffin	14	Linda Halsey-Ames	24
Lauren Fisher	5	Greg Cartee	14	Ginny McKeachie	27
Renee Alton	5	Laura Barbour	16	Katharine Drake	27
Carolyn Blue	6	Ahnon Kerschbaum	19		
Conrad Juchartz	7	Emily Kiver	20		

First Baptist Church
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The Reverends Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke, Co-Pastors

Next Deadline:

Sunday, February 5, 2007

Friendship House

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



On Sunday, February 4, during our Adult Christian Education time (11:30 - 12:30), Linnea Berg, the Interim Executive Director of Friendship House will provide 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 will describe the current sources of funding, programs and number of persons served, and what struggles lie in the future for this important ministry.