



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Ann Arbor, Michigan

March 22, 2006

Pastors' Reflections

by *Stacey Simpson Duke*

One would think that in 2006 genocide would be an atrocity no longer committed. Our world has been through this too many times before, including in recent history - Rwanda, Bosnia, and, of course, the Holocaust (which actually gave rise to the term "genocide," though the reality of genocide seems to have always been with us). We don't seem to learn from even our most tragic mistakes.

The current situation in Darfur has been referred to as "a humanitarian and human rights tragedy of the first order," and a "calculated campaign of slaughter, rape, starvation, and displacement" (as reported at www.savedarfur.org). These atrocities are happening to Sudanese civilians at the hands of their own government and the Janjaweed militias it sponsors. In the last three years, 400,000 people have died. 3.5 million currently live in hunger and 2.5 million people have been displaced from their homes and communities. Every day, over 500 innocent civilians die from violence, malnutrition, and disease. This is a horror of incomprehensible proportions.

Most of us would like to think we could prevent another Holocaust were it to be threatened. The fact is, a holocaust is taking place right now, and the world community hasn't yet stopped it. It is true that the African Union, the United Nations, and our own government are all giving increasing attention to this crisis; just last week, the House International Relations Committee passed the Darfur Peace and Accountability Act, which, if passed by the House and the Senate and signed by the President, will authorize additional U.S. aid to the African Union (AU) and will call for a special U.S. envoy to help speed up the Darfur peace process. Already Congress is poised to provide increased funding to the 7,000 AU peacekeepers already in Darfur (currently the only line of defense between millions of civilians and the militia forces who seek to brutalize them).

Why am I writing about this in a church newsletter? I don't usually talk politics in such a forum; I don't believe I'm actually talking politics now. I am talking about human life, brutality of unfathomable proportions, and the possibility of even more atrocities if something doesn't happen to change the reality of the situation. Albert Einstein once said, "The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing." As Christians, we are called both to look on and to do something. We may feel helpless, confused, horror-stricken, or even apathetic, but our faith calls us beyond that. We must love, we must do justice, we must pursue peace, we must pray, and we must keep hope alive.

The Million Voices for Darfur Campaign (www.millionvoicesfordarfur.org) is an unprecedented effort to end this genocide (their website asks: "What if instead of mourning a genocide, we could stop one?"). As a part of that effort, the group has declared April 2nd through 9th to be a Week of Prayer and Action for Darfur, and our congregation will be participating. On Thursday, April 6th, as a part of our Lenten Perspectives series on justice and peace, our Evensong Prayer Service will focus on the crisis in Darfur. Together we will reflect on the tragedy there, and on our Christian calling to respond. We will consider concrete actions we can take, and we will take at least one together - because prayer *is* something concrete. It is something we can do for the people of Darfur. It is something we *must* do for them. But it is not the only thing. At our Evensong service, we will have opportunity to write postcards to our government asking for action on behalf of the oppressed in Darfur. We will also consider other ways to make a difference together.

As Paul reminded us in his sermon on Sunday, when tragedy happens, God's heart is the first to break. I believe God is mourning the loss of so many innocent lives, including so many babies and children, in Darfur. As people of faith, we must mourn too. And then we must get up and do something. Please join me in prayer, reflection, action, and hope on Thursday, April 6th.



FBC News & Happenings



March FUN Night!

Join us on Friday, March 31 from 6 - 8:00 p.m. for food, fun, games and fellowship. Bring an international recipe dish to share. Emily and Nehal Rahim will teach us a couple of international games, and your favorite board games (as well as some new ones) will be available. A sign-up sheet is available at the Information Counter.

Budding Artists

Several local 5th graders have artwork on display at the MDen, 315 South Main Street, this month, including our own Grace Crowe. Congratulations, Grace!

Spring Rummage Sale

The AB Women's Ministries Spring Rummage Sale will be held on Friday, April 28 and Saturday, April 29, with the set up on Thursday, April 27. As you do your "spring cleaning" please save your gently used items that you no longer plan to use, and donate them to our sale. **We ask that you wait until March 28 to start bringing in items**, as the stage will be in use for the Rotating Shelter the previous week. A reminder that we cannot accept computer equipment, large furniture, but do appreciate any baby furniture.

Men's Book Club

Interested men in the church are invited to a book club meeting at the Davis Diels residence. The book being discussed is "His Excellency George Washington" by Joseph J. Ellis. The meeting will take place at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 2 at 1414 Iroquois Place, in Ann Arbor. Please come.

Scott Diels

Jason Crosby's Ordination

The members of FBCA2 are invited to the ordination of Jason Crosby at the First Baptist Church of Battle Creek on April 2, 3:00. Jason and his wife, Kate, attended our church briefly before Jason assumed the interim position at FBC Battle Creek. Jason is also on the staff of ICPJ and presented the Perspectives program on March 9.



Prayer Chain & E-Connection

A new version of the Prayer Chain will soon be sent to those who already participate, however if anyone is interested in being added, please let Dorothy Lamerson know by next Wednesday, March 29th.

Also, if anyone would like to receive E-Connection messages (e-mail updates concerning church members), please call or e-mail the church office and they'll be happy to add you.



***What does the LORD require of you but to do justice,
and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?***

Our ***Perspectives*** series continues each Thursday evening through April 6. During Lent, we are reflecting on issues of justice and peace, viewed through our Christian perspective as we continue our on-going journey with God.

A delicious meal is served between 5:45 - 6:20, followed by the program from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Reservations are requested and a sign-up sheet will be at the Information Counter each Sunday. You may also call the church office by Wednesday morning. There is a small fee for the meal (\$6) with no charge for children's meals. Childcare is provided free of charge during the speaker portion.

March 23: *A Hope for Peace*; a presentation concerning peace in the Middle East.

March 30: *Hunger in a World of Plenty*; a discussion concerning the disparity of the food economy, with information on how to take action in response to the poverty of food distribution in our world.

April 6: Evensong Prayer Service (see *Pastors' Reflections* on front page)



***Volunteers Needed:
A Ministry of Outreach and Hospitality***



Have you been looking for a way to express concrete hospitality to people who visit us on Sundays for worship? We need volunteers who would be willing to bake (or buy) cookies or bread and deliver it to newcomers within 24 hours of their first visit. We would like to have enough people sign up for this so that each person would only be responsible for one Sunday every few weeks. This is a great way to show people that we care about them and are delighted to have them visiting our church. Please consider being a part of this important outreach effort (if you are interested in baking but not delivering, or in delivering but not baking, that will work too!). Please contact Stacey (663-9376, stacey@fbca2.org) or Sarah Heidt (sarah@SarahHeidtPhotoCraft.com) if you are interested.

"End of Life Decision-making, for Self and Loved Ones"

The Interfaith Round Table of Washtenaw County invites you to attend this most important forum which will take place at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 27 at Beth Israel Congregation, 2010 Washtenaw in Ann Arbor. Four University of Michigan Hospital physicians from four different religious backgrounds will talk about their experiences and insights: Richard Swartz, MD, Hasan Shanawani, MD, Susan Urba, MD and Michael Coffey, MD. There will be ample time for discussion. For more information, contact Rev. George Lambrides at 424-1535 or email him at gbrides@umich.edu.



America for Christ gifts support the following American Baptist ministries, and many more:

- Regional youth conferences
- New church planting
- Refugee resettlement
- Evangelism training
- 20 Neighborhood Action Christian centers
- 60 Camps and Conference centers
- 700 Chaplains and pastoral counselors

Families and Lent

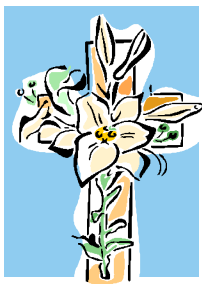
Lent can be a good time to reflect on the people who mean the most to us and the relationships we hold most dear. For those of us who live in industrialized countries, it can be jarring to realize that our time together as a family might amount to no more than a few minutes a day. Our lives are independent as we scatter in different directions each day for work, school or childcare. This season of reflection and renewal might be an appropriate time to pray about our family lives and how we can be more thoughtful and prayerful about Lent as a family.



Perhaps we could hold a family meeting over dinner or some other relaxed place. We could discuss Lent and the symbols of the season using the resources here. We might want to talk about how our faith life is not a journey we make alone, but one we are in as a community, as a family.

One Lenten family practice might include a daily act of love for our family. Can we look around and see some small thing that needs to be done to make our lives together better? Is there laundry to sort or dishes to be washed? Is there a floor that needs sweeping or a room that needs dusting? Just one effort by each of us each day can make a dramatic difference in sharing the workload in the family. The grace we are reaching for goes beyond getting the garbage taken out, for example. We know it is a grace when my experience of taking the garbage out, feels to me like an act of love, an act of solidarity as a family.

Adapted from the Creighton University website, March 7, 2006



Easter Lily Orders

It's time to place your orders for Easter Lilies. Look for the form in the next few Sunday bulletins, or you can mail in your check (attn: Carey) for \$15 per plant payable to "First Baptist Church," and enclose a note with your name and to whom (in honor or in memory) you are dedicating your flower. Paid orders must be received by April 9 to be included in the Easter bulletin.

Sara Parker Floyd

Age 45 passed away Sunday, March 12, 2006, in her home surrounded by family and friends. Sara was first diagnosed with breast cancer on Halloween, 2000. After surgery, chemotherapy and radiation, she had four disease-free years before metastatic disease was diagnosed March 10, 2005. Both times, disease was found by self-examination, in spite of regular screenings. Sara was born on a sub-zero day in Madison, Wisconsin January 27, 1961, the daughter of Susan Tuttle Darrow and John E. Parker, late Professor of Economics at the University of Michigan. Reared in Ann Arbor, she was educated in the public schools, graduating from Huron High School in 1979. At Huron, she edited the school paper, the Emory, and played violin in the orchestra. She graduated from Carleton College in Northfield, MN in 1983, where she studied English. After college, she spent several happy years in her beloved Minneapolis, living with college friends and honing her craft as a writer and editor. She copy-edited and wrote for several trade publications, and wrote free-lance for the Minneapolis Reader, a local alternative paper, on the arts, especially dance. Sara was particularly proud of her work at Corporate Report Minnesota, which won national awards for excellence. Sara moved to Chicago in 1989 to attend the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, in Evanston IL, from which she graduated the following year with a Master of Journalism. While enrolled at Northwestern, she served as Washington, D.C. correspondent for the Madison, WI Capital Times newspaper. Also while enrolled at Northwestern, she re-established a friendship with John Floyd III, her back-fence neighbor and former Summer Symphony stand partner from Ann Arbor, an Instructor of Economics then also living in Chicago. They were married at St. Andrew's Church in Ann Arbor on September 21, 1991. Sara wrote for a number of publications in the Chicago area, including the Chicago Tribune, before accepting a position at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Hospital in Chicago, as editor of their employee newspaper. She initiated and managed a complete re-design of this publication, and received much praise for its enhanced effectiveness. She simultaneously edited a ground-breaking manual for Alzheimer's care givers. Upon completion of John's accounting studies and passing of the C.P.A. examination, they returned to Ann Arbor. Sara managed the renovation of their Old West Side home before returning to her profession as a writer and editor at Ford World, the in-house publication of the Ford Motor Company. Upon the birth of her first child, Jack, she fully intended to return to her position at Ford, but discovered, upon pulling out of the driveway her first and last day back that, in her words, "This was not going to work." She never wrote another professional word, devoting herself solely to her children, her home, and the communities in which her family lived. While she served on the board of the Ann Arbor Cooperative Nursery, which both her sons attended, and was a room parent and playground volunteer at Wines Elementary School, her most important work was weaving the social fabric of her children's lives, building strong and loving communities of friends in which to raise them. The building of these communities was her life's true opus. The breadth and depth of her work has been fully revealed, in the wake of her illness and death, by the vast network of friends and family who came to her side, and to the aid of her family, during the past year's "Long Day's Journey into Night." The members of "Sara's Army" have obeyed the command to "Bear one another's burdens." They kept 24/7 vigil at her bedside for her weeks in the hospital, organized her family's domestic life during her months of incapacitation, and upheld Sara and her family with love. Her family has been humbled by this experience of Grace. Sara loved her cats Piper and Princess Misty, knitting, all drive-through fast food, South Haven, the Iroquois Hotel on Mackinac Island, Mullett Lake, latte, copper-colored roses, lilacs, decorating her home, Arts & Crafts furniture, Gratzi, a neat kitchen, shoes off at the door please, Larry King, The Weather Channel, Oprah, chocolate cake, Thanksgiving, New Orleans Loo-siana, eating on the patio, preparing fancy pasta dishes, reading People Magazine in bed, and Jazzercise. She was the undisputed Queen of Birthdays, never forgetting anyone's, and believing that hers was a season, not a date. She was renown for her pies, especially the crusts. Most of all, she loved her boys beyond measure. Her last words to her younger son, Calvin, age 5, at midnight on Saturday March 11, were "You should be in bed." Sara is survived by her husband of 15 years, John Floyd III, her sons John IV ("Jack") and Calvin, her mother Susan Tuttle Darrow of Ann Arbor, sister Elizabeth Parker Egge (Scott) of New Brighton, MN, brother John Parker Jr. (Heather) of Arlington, VA, and step brothers Peter Darrow and Duncan (Wendy) Darrow of New York, NY and several nieces and nephews. She is preceded in death by her father, John Elliott Parker Sr., step father, Peter P. Darrow, and grandparents Dr. William M. Tuttle and Geneva Tuttle, late of Detroit, and Robert A. and Florence Parker, late of Madison, WI. Viewing will be from 6:00 to 6:30 PM with visitation continuing from 6:30 to 8:00 PM at the First Baptist Church 512 East Huron, Ann Arbor, on Friday, March 17, 2006. The funeral service will be held at First Baptist Church on Saturday, March 18, 2006, 11:00 AM, with Rev. Paul Simpson Duke and Rev. Stacey Simpson Duke Officiating. Interment will follow at Forest Hill Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center, or the First Baptist Church Vespers Program. The family expresses its gratitude to Dr. Max Wicha, PA Ann Winters and Team 5 of the University of Michigan Comprehensive Cancer Center, for their art and science. Arrangements by the Robison-Bahnmilller Funeral Home of Saline.

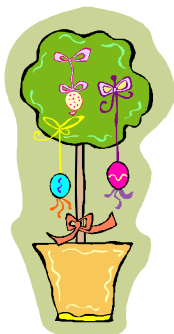


April 2006



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Communion Newsletter Deadline	3 10:00 Women's CC	4 5:30 Vespers 7:00 Bd. of Evangelism	5 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering	6 5:45 Perspectives 6:30 Handbells 7:30 Choir	7 7:00 Youth Lock-in	8
9	10 10:00 Women's CC 7:00 Bd. of Worship 8:00 Bd. of Mission Action	11	12 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering 7:30 Davis/Diels ChristCare	13 6:30 Handbells 7:30 Maundy Thursday Service	14 8:00 Good Friday Service	15
16 Happy Easter! Newsletter Deadline	17 10:00 Women's CC	18 1:00 Beecher- Brewer 5:30 Vespers 7:00 Bd. of Trustees	19 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering	20 1:00 MacGregor- Stitt 6:30 Handbells 7:30 Choir	21	22
23	24 10:00 Women's CC	25 9:30 ABWM	26 1:30 Bible Study 7:30 Davis/Diels ChristCare	27 9:00 Rummage Sale Set-up 6:30 Handbells 7:30 Choir	28 9:00 Rummage Sale	29 9:00 Rummage Sale
30 Annual Meeting Newsletter Deadline						

April Birthdays



Bonnie Jensen	4	Ethan Wright	9	Jim Suits	15
Ivy Marzano	4	Andrew Lee	9	Eva Kelly	17
Jim Hause	5	Ola Jeanne McCullough	12	Brandy Kirchner	17
Jack Stearns	6	Lev Kelly	14	Tom Barron	17
Joan Blunt	9	Carol Rees	15	Jim Stearns	18
Dee Drake	9			John Syler	25

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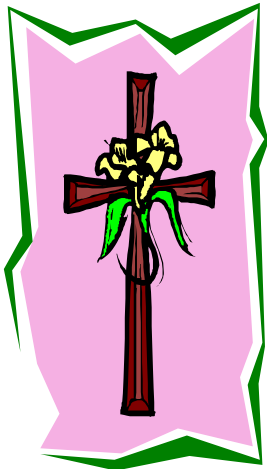
The Reverends Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke, Co-Pastors

Dated material:

Wednesday, March 22, 2006

Next Deadline:

Sunday, April 2, 2006



EASTER EVENT

April 9 • 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.

*Lunch followed by crafts, the Easter story,
and an egg hunt*

