



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Ann Arbor, Michigan

October 21, 2009

Pastor's Reflections

by Stacey Simpson Duke

I have a recurring dream about being back inside my grandmother's house. Though the content of the dreams varies, the feelings are always the same. I feel the deepest, strongest sense of joy and relief at being back in her home, mixed with grief at her not being there (she died nearly nine years ago).

As an army family, my family moved a lot when I was a child; but my grandmother's house always stayed the same. I could count on the same sights, smells, and tastes every summer and every Christmas. I could count on her love. When I was in her house, I felt like I had come home. All these years later, my most powerful dream is of stepping back inside her house. Do you have a place that has that kind of hold on you? What has made it that way?

It isn't hard for me to figure out why my grandmother's home made such an impact on me. Granna was one of the most consistent presences in my life (second only to my parents), and her presence only meant love and more love. Two of the ways she expressed that love were through food and through music. In her kitchen, I was introduced to the delights of gravy and biscuits, banana pudding, fried cornbread, and homemade milkshakes. She always had a cold Coca-Cola (or "Co-Cola," as she said) waiting for me in the Frigidaire (which was always called "the Frigidaire," never "the refrigerator"). In Granna's kitchen, I learned the value of homemade, the power of gathering around a table, and the importance of listening to each other's stories.

In her living room, I learned about music. She and I would sit for hours at her old piano while I banged out hymns and she and I sang through the Baptist hymnal. (The first time she met Paul, she led us into the living room, where the three of us sang several hymns together; as soon as she heard Paul's tenor, she approved of him. In addition to hymns, she played her favorite albums for me - The Statler Brothers, The Oak Ridge Boys, and Kenny Rogers and Dolly Parton, singing "Islands in the Stream."

My feelings about my grandmother's house make me wonder how to shape my own spaces in such a way as to offer hospitality, comfort, nurture, and solace to those who enter. I am pondering the importance of gathering with family and friends around a simple home-cooked meal. I'm thinking, too, of the value of turning off the television and turning on the stereo - or picking up the guitars and raising our own voices in song. It strikes me that my grandmother's house felt sacred not because of the house itself but because of the person she was. I want to be the kind of person who welcomes others in.

All of this makes me think of more than just my home. Our church, too, is meant to be a place of hospitality and nurture. We, too, gather around a table. We, too, lift our voices in shared song. We, too, listen to each other's stories, and to our shared story of faith. What else might we do, that the people who come through our doors might feel welcomed, embraced, and loved? It is more than just how our space looks and feels - it has to do with who we are, and how we open ourselves to those around us. Let's try to be intentional together each Sunday, and every time we gather, in offering ourselves to each other and to everyone who comes through our doors. It's my hope and prayer that everything we do, together and separately, would be towards hospitality and welcoming grace. May those who find themselves among us feel like they have come home.

NURSERY care is available on the 3rd floor from 9:30am - 12:30pm.

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 and children in Kindergarten - 3rd grade are invited to Children's Worship.

Children and Youth Christian Education

K - 2nd grade

10:30 - 11:10 Children's Worship
11:10 - 11:30 Children's Choirs (202A and 102)
11:30 - 12:30 Church School (Room 202B)

Youth (7th - High School)

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

3rd - 6th grades

10:00 - 11:00 Worship
11:10 - 11:50 Children's Choirs (202A & 102)
11:50 - 12:30 Church School (Room 201B)

Children's Music and Arts Ministry

Jr. Handbells..... 9:15 - 9:45 (Room 306)
Children's Choirs (all ages)..... 11:10 - 11:30 (Room 202A)
Older Choir will continue until 11:50 (Room 102)

Adult Christian Education 11:30 - 12:30

The Social Gospel: Origins and Implications for today

Lounge

An exploration of the Social Gospel as interpreted by Walter Rauschenbusch, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King, Jr., Clarence Jordan, Jitsuo Morikawa and others.

October 25 - Paul Simpson Duke will lead sessions on Clarence Jordan, Baptist pastor, founder of Koinonia Farm, and the author of the Cotton Patch translations of the New Testament. With a radical commitment to embodying the teachings of Jesus, the Koinonia partners bound themselves to the equality of all persons, rejection of violence, ecological stewardship, and common ownership of possessions.

Young Adult Class

Room 108

Led by Paul and Stacey Simpson Duke, this class consists of conversational Bible study and will devote its first months to discussing Paul's letter to the Philippians and its application to our living. "Young adult" is defined as mid-twenties to 40(ish!).

Other Adult Education Opportunities:

Wednesday Bible Study (1:30—2:30 pm; Memorial Lounge)

First Corinthians will be the study material for the Wednesday Bible Study class meeting this Fall with the leadership of Ron Tipton. Because Paul often discusses the same topic in different sections of the letter we will study the letter by topics rather than a verse-by-verse study. In recent weeks the theme has been The Holy Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit, and the supremacy of love. On October 21, the discussion will be based on I Corinthians 14 which deals with the proper use of spiritual gifts, BUILDING UP THE CHURCH. On October 28 we will examine GENDER ISSUES.

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.

November 2009

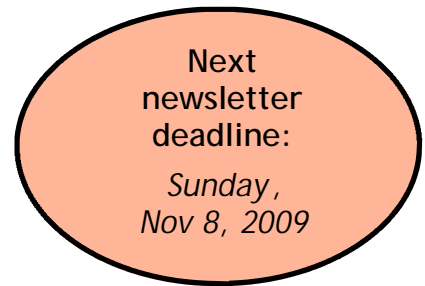
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:45-10:00 a.m. Nandasmo Youth Trip Breakfast	2	3 5:30 Vespers	4 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering 7:30 Executive Council	5 6:30 Handbells 7:30 Choir	6	7
8	9 7:30 Mission Action Bd.	10 5:30 Vespers	11 <i>*Newsletter*</i> 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering 7:30 Davis-Diels ChristCare	12 6:30 Handbells 7:30 Choir	13 6:30 Youth Group Lock-In (until 8:30 Saturday Morning)	14
15	16	17 5:30 Vespers 7:30 Trustees	18 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering	19 1:00 ABWM Joint Meeting 6:30 Handbells 7:30 Choir	20	21
22	23	24 5:30 Vespers	25 <i>*Newsletter*</i>	26 <i>Thanksgiving</i> <i>Church Building & Office Closed</i>	27 <i>Church Building & Office Closed</i>	28
29 <i>1st Advent</i>	30					



Mary Davis	1	Nancy Paul	17
Betty Gerstler	2	Malcolm Fleming	19
Mildred MacGregor	2	George Lambrides	19
Dave Kerschbaum	3	Marcia Blunt	20
David Lee	9	Betty Doman	24
David Robbins	12	Suzanne Knight	27
Gad Lim	14	Betty Ehrlinger	30
Sarah Heidt	15	Geoff Halliday	30

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The Reverends Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke, Co-Pastors



TN2 Pancake Breakfast
November 1
Serving begins at 8:45 A.M.
(and ends at 10:00 a.m.)
\$10 per person or \$25 per family
\$5 for children (10 years and under)
children under 5 are free

What a great way to enjoy the extra hour from the end of Daylight Savings!!! In December a trio of FBC Youth and two adults will travel to our Sister Church in Nandasmó, Nicaragua. "Team Nandasmó 2.0" is hosting a pancake breakfast to raise funds for their expenses during the trip. Come and enjoy internationally famous Chef Jim Stearns' pancakes and sausage along with lots of other delicious samplings!