



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Ann Arbor, Michigan

June 23, 2010

Pastor's Reflections

by Stacey Simpson Duke

A few weeks ago, I wrote in this column about the foundational importance of hospitality as a Christian practice. It is through hospitality that we imitate God's welcome of all people. To neglect the practice of hospitality is to ignore a central part of our calling as Christians.

With the arrival of summer, it may seem that our opportunities for extending hospitality have diminished. So many in our congregation and in our community are traveling; fewer people come for worship during these weeks. This does not mean that we no longer have the chance to express hospitality, though. Those of us who are around simply need to be more mindful about welcoming the visitors who do come.

And visitors *do* come, even in the summer months. Some people relocate here for summer studies, and will be with us only for a few weeks. Others may be passing through on their travels and may worship with us just one time. Still others may have moved here in anticipation of starting school or a new job in the fall, and they may already be searching for a new church home. Regardless of circumstance, every person walking through our doors needs to be greeted with the love of God and the welcome of Christ.

It is easy to assume that someone else will greet newcomers. If all of us make that assumption, then they will leave here without anyone having spoken to them. Do not leave it to someone else! You may be uncomfortable approaching a stranger, but chances are they are even more uncomfortable being here and not knowing anyone. Move outside of your comfort zone and say hello. Make an effort to notice newcomers - during worship, after worship, during fellowship time, during Second Hour - and then don't just notice them, go talk to them. If you feel shy, take a friend.

There are, of course, multiple opportunities beyond Sunday morning to reach out with the welcoming embrace of Christ. Just flip through this newsletter and you will find many. Come to Vespers any Tuesday night - you don't have to cook, just come and be a friend. Come to the church picnic on July 11th, and make a point of talking to people you don't know. We almost always have newcomers at our picnics - don't give in to the temptation to spend time only with the people who are already your friends.

We have been offered a special opportunity to extend hospitality in a unique way at the end of next month. The Korea American Student Conference (KASC) Homestay Program is looking for people willing to host pairs of students (one Korean, one American) July 31st-August 1st, and they are asking local churches for help. What a wonderful way to express Christian love - by welcoming strangers into your home. Please let me know if you would like more information about this opportunity.

A highlight of our summer here at First Baptist Church will be our Vacation Bible School in August, a chance to help schoolchildren experience the welcoming embrace of God. We need a lot of volunteers to offer this ministry - don't you want to join in this meaningful experience? This year VBS will run on the nights of August 25-27; find more details elsewhere in this newsletter, and see Sue Ellen if you have questions about participating. VBS has the potential to transform lives - not just the lives of the children who come, but our lives too. You don't want to miss that, do you?

Things slow down in Ann Arbor when summer hits, but that doesn't mean we take a vacation from being God's people. In every way, we are called by Christ to move beyond self-focus, beyond focus on friends and comfort, and towards a vigorous and open-hearted care for others. May we practice this together this Sunday and the next and the next - and every day in between.

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

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

JUNE 27:

K - 2nd grade:

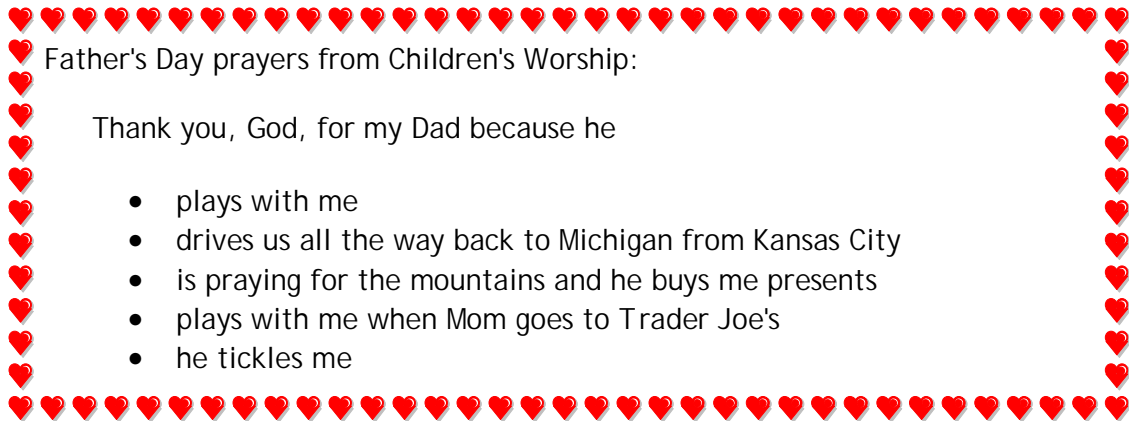
10:30 - 11:30 Children's Worship and snack (Rm. 202A)
11:30 - 12:30 Church School (Rm. 202B)

3rd - 6th grades

10:00 - 11:00 Worship
11:00 - 12:30 Church School
combined with K-2nd

NO Youth Church School

In July there will be no second hour classes for children, youth or adults. Nursery care will be open until 11:30. Classes resume in August.



Adult Christian Education 11:30 - 12:30

Acts of the Apostles/Acts of the Holy Spirit
Sue Ellen Glover and Ron Tipton, Leaders

Lounge

We are exploring how the Holy Spirit is empowering believers to carry the good news of Jesus Christ beyond Jerusalem and empowering them to live so that their lives are witnesses to this good news.

Young Adult Class
Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke, Leaders

Room 108

This class consists of conversational Bible study, discussing the 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

Bible Study will resume in the Fall.

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.

VBS 2010

Growing and Showing



August 25, 26, 27

5:30 – 8:00 pm

We are lining up our volunteers! We're using a farm theme and continuing the emphasis on Fruit of the Spirit.

The children will be divided into age groupings with each group of 6 children led by two or three "farmers". These farmers will need to commit to being in service all three evenings (all evening) as well as a training session.

In addition there are many, many other volunteers needed and some commitments do not require your presence at the VBS evenings.

In 2009 we used 28 volunteers each evening! Since we plan on as many – or more – children this year, your help is needed (and appreciated!!)

Please leave this form in the basket or you may return this form to the office. Thank you in advance for your generous response to this summer's ministry!

Please circle day(s) and/or time(s):

_____ I will be a "farmer" and am able to be at each of the three evenings

_____ I will help with dinner and snack (4:30 – 7:30) W Th Fr

_____ I will assist with crafts and activities (5:15 – 7:30) W Th Fr

_____ I will provide food or shop for food (we will contact you in August)

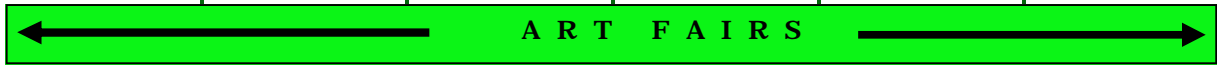
_____ I can help with set-up
 mornings 10:00 – noon W Th Fr
 afternoons 4:30 – 5:30 W Th Fr

_____ I can help with clean up (7:30 - 8:30 pm) W Th Fr

NAME _____

Email _____

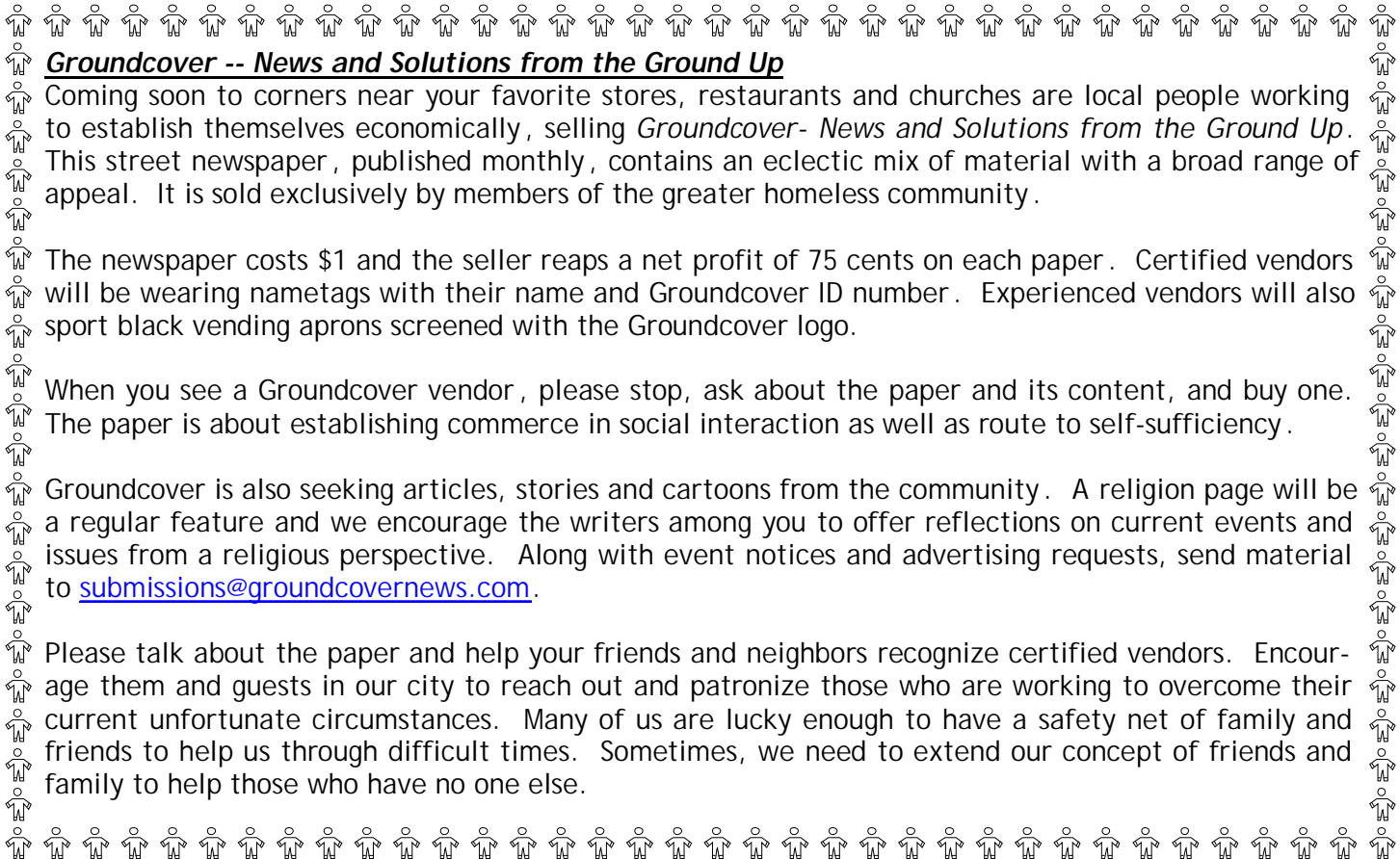
JULY 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4 10:00 Worship	5	6 5:30 Vespers	7	8	9	10
11 10:00 Worship 12:00 Church Picnic	12	13 5:30 Vespers	14	15	16	17
						
18 10:00 Worship	19	20 5:30 Vespers	21	22	23	24
25 10:00 Worship	26	27 5:30 Vespers	28	29 7:00 Executive Council	30	31

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The Reverends Paul & Stacey Simpson Duke, Co-Pastors

Next
newsletter
deadline:
Sunday, July 11th



Groundcover -- News and Solutions from the Ground Up

Coming soon to corners near your favorite stores, restaurants and churches are local people working to establish themselves economically, selling *Groundcover- News and Solutions from the Ground Up*. This street newspaper, published monthly, contains an eclectic mix of material with a broad range of appeal. It is sold exclusively by members of the greater homeless community.

The newspaper costs \$1 and the seller reaps a net profit of 75 cents on each paper. Certified vendors will be wearing nametags with their name and Groundcover ID number. Experienced vendors will also sport black vending aprons screened with the Groundcover logo.

When you see a Groundcover vendor, please stop, ask about the paper and its content, and buy one. The paper is about establishing commerce in social interaction as well as route to self-sufficiency.

Groundcover is also seeking articles, stories and cartoons from the community. A religion page will be a regular feature and we encourage the writers among you to offer reflections on current events and issues from a religious perspective. Along with event notices and advertising requests, send material to submissions@groundcovernews.com.

Please talk about the paper and help your friends and neighbors recognize certified vendors. Encourage them and guests in our city to reach out and patronize those who are working to overcome their current unfortunate circumstances. Many of us are lucky enough to have a safety net of family and friends to help us through difficult times. Sometimes, we need to extend our concept of friends and family to help those who have no one else.