



# FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Ann Arbor, Michigan

September 8, 2010

## Pastor's Reflections

by Stacey Simpson Duke

Last month, Vinna Clavo, one of our undergraduate students who serves in the Navy Reserve, began a tour of duty that will take her to Afghanistan later this fall. She is in Mississippi for training now, and will be deployed in a few weeks; she will return to finish her education at the University of Michigan next fall. Vinna began coming to our student group, The Gathering, last winter at the invitation of one of her friends. She quickly became an enthusiastic and vital part of our group. Now we pray not only for her safety, but also for her perseverance in faith in circumstances that may be spiritually challenging. Though we were sad to see her go, and especially to know that she may be in harm's way, we are also so thrilled that she became connected to our group before her deployment. She has a solid connection with people here who love her and will pray for her, and she goes to her duty with a deep sense of the importance of Christian community. She has already sought out the support of her Christian chaplain, and she is actively searching for other Christians in her unit.

In ministry to college students, it seems like we are always having to say "good-bye." We get very attached to our young adults, and it is difficult to see them go, especially when we know they may be facing challenges and danger. But it is such a gift to know that the work we do really does touch the world and touch the future. Our influence goes far beyond the four walls of this church. As Vinna trains in Mississippi and then moves on to Afghanistan, we have a very real sense of how far the seeds sown here in Michigan will go to bloom. What a privilege to minister to these young people at the most formative time of their lives, and then to see them move on, in faith, to respond to God's call on their lives.

This week, we begin again our ongoing work of ministering to students. Every Wednesday night during the school year, we gather for a home-cooked meal (provided by many of you), fellowship, prayer, and study, with undergraduate and graduate students. This year, Paul will lead the group in a study of "The Ultimate Questions" - a sort of "part two" to the study he led last year. This year we'll talk about questions like: *What does it really mean to be human? Where is God in the problem of suffering and evil? How are we to think about, and practice, prayer? What is our hope for the future? What is eternal life?*

Our campus ministry offers us the opportunity to touch the lives of students at a very important time in their development. Vinna will face difficult challenges in Afghanistan, but students right here in Ann Arbor grapple with issues and difficulties that are challenging as well. We feel we have something very important to offer them - support for their faith in an institution and environment that don't always value faith, connection to peers who are also seeking God, and nurture from mentors within the church.

As this year starts up, please be mindful of our students and our ministry to them. Welcome them on Sunday mornings. Sign up to cook for them on Wednesday nights. Pray for them, pray for our ministry to them, pray for the whole campus. Pray for the students who haven't found their way to us yet but may need what we have to offer. Pray for our vigorous and loving outreach to them. And please do say special prayers for Vinna and her safe return.

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 - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are invited to Children's Worship.

## **Children and Youth Christian Education**

NURSERY care is available on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor from 9:30 - 12:30. (*On September 12 the nursery will be open until 11:30, due to the Ice Cream Social*)

*(No second hour Church School classes on September 12, due to the Ice Cream Social. The following schedule begins on September 19)*

### K - 6th grade:

10:30 - 11:10 Children's Worship for K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade (Rm. 202A)

11:30 - 12:30 Church School (Rm. 202B)

### Youth (7<sup>th</sup> - High School)

10:00 - 11:00 Worship

11:00 - 12:30 Church School (Rm. 107)

## **Children's Music and Arts Ministry**

will resume in September though the exact schedule is not yet determined.

## **Adult Christian Education 11:30 - 12:30**

"Becoming a Blessed Church (Stacey Simpson Duke, leader)

Lounge

This class will base its discussion on the book *Becoming the Blessed Church: Forming a Church of Spiritual Purpose, Presence, and Power*, by N. Graham Standish. Standish argues that a healthy church is one that is, at its core, open to God and allows the blessings of that relationships to flow through it to bless the world. We will discuss what it means - corporately and individually - to be grounded in God's purpose, alive to God's presence, and open to God's power.

Young Adult Class (Paul Simpson Duke, Leader)

Room 108

This class consists of conversational Bible study, discussing The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). "Young adult" is defined as mid-twenties to 40(ish!).

### **Other Adult Education Opportunities:**

Wednesday Bible Study

Lounge

Resuming on September 15 with the annual potluck lunch at noon to start this new fall session. On September 22, the Rev. Stacey Simpson Duke will continue a study of the Gospel of Mark. The group meets each Wednesday from 1:30 - 2:30 PM. Bring a friend and join us for learning and fellowship.

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.



# FBC News & Happenings



**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Talent Show & Lunch** The Board of Care and Community is looking for talented people to perform at our **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual All Church Talent Show**, Sunday, Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>. Last year we had 11 acts ranging from comedy to all types of musical instruments. This year we have 10 spots available so please sign up early at the information counter. Preference will be given to new talent acts. We will begin with a soup and salad lunch. If you have a favorite soup or salad you would like to share at the luncheon, please sign up at the information counter.

**Cooks Needed for The Gathering** – Are you looking for a way to reach out to students in an active, hands-on way? We are looking for volunteer cooks who are willing to make one or more meals for our campus ministry students on Wednesday nights. This is an essential and much-appreciated ministry of hospitality to students who don't otherwise get a home-cooked meal very often. In the past, volunteer cooks have typically supplied a salad, a main dish, bread, and a dessert, for 12-14 people. Sometimes two families take responsibility for one meal (for instance, one family supplies the salad and dessert, the other offers the main dish and bread). On Wednesdays when no one has signed up to cook, we have ordered pizza, subs, or burritos, or we have gone to the grocery store and prepared our own meal. If you don't like to cook but would still like to offer hospitality, we would be grateful for gift cards to local grocery stores or restaurants, to help with this effort. We are so grateful for your partnership in this vital ministry to students!



## ICE CREAM SOCIAL

September 12 11:30 – 12:30

Sponsored by the Board of Christian Education



Next  
newsletter  
deadline:  
*Sunday, Sept 19*



**CALLING ONE, CALLING ALL!  
CELEBRATION SUNDAY**

This coming Sunday, September 12, is special and important in the life of First Baptist Church. It is a “homecoming” Sunday. We seek to have every able-bodied resident member and friend present as we celebrate our faithful congregation, our church’s vitality, and the beginning of the program year. The worship service will be topped off by the **Ice Cream Social** and a time of warm fellowship as we greet friends and welcome those who have returned for the occasion.

Plan to be there yourself, and think about church friends who have been missing for awhile and call (or bring) them to join us **this Sunday, September 12.**

**CELEBRATION SUNDAY+HOMECOMING+ICE CREAM SOCIAL**

The Board of Outreach