



FIRST BAPTIST

CHURCH OF ANN ARBOR

Pastor's Reflections by Stacey Simpson Duke

March 9, 2011

Lent is late this year, and yet its arrival still feels sudden to me. I find myself not feeling altogether prepared for one of the holiest seasons of the Christian year. Yet I realize this is all right - we don't have to be prepared for Lent, Lent is the season for preparing. It's a time for preparing ourselves to celebrate in new and deep ways the mystery that lies at the heart of the Christian gospel - the suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are preparing for Easter, when we affirm with joy and hope the good news of salvation.

Lent has traditionally been a time for new Christians and young Christians to prepare for baptism or confirmation. Consistent with that ancient purpose, some of our youth will be going through discipleship classes this month as they consider whether to seek baptism. But this kind of preparation is not only appropriate for those new to Christian faith. Lent is also meant to be a time for all Christians to give themselves to ongoing conversion. It is a chance to grow and be renewed through various spiritual practices. Traditionally, those practices have included repentance, prayer, reflection, fellowship, fasting, and almsgiving.

In order to embrace the discipline of the season, some people give something up for Lent - chocolate, coffee, television. Other people take something on for Lent, such as volunteering for charity or reading more devotional material. The point is not what is given up or taken on. The point is to make an intentional and serious commitment to giving oneself more completely to God. What might that look like for you?

If you don't already have an idea of how you want to use this season for spiritual growth, why not - if you aren't doing so already - commit to spending a little time each day praying and reading Scripture? Perhaps you could challenge yourself to read through the Psalms during Lent. Or take a look at the upcoming Scriptures for each worship service (each Sunday we include in the bulletin the Scriptures for the following Sunday's worship service). Spend a little time each day reading them and praying. Or you could pick one of the gospels, and read it all the way through - what a great way to spend Lent, reading through the stories of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

All of our Church School classes are working through different parts of the Bible right now. Lent is a great time for you and your family to make a commitment to the sort of spiritual formation and fellowship that occurs in these classes. Our Lounge class is working through the basic "primal narrative" of Scripture, exploring eight core themes and stories. Our young adult class has been working through the Sermon on the Mount, a wonderful, in-depth exploration of Jesus' own words. Our youth are doing a Bible overview right now, looking at the whole picture of Scripture and studying how it fits together. Our younger children are learning the stories of Jesus' life.

If you want to observe Lent by volunteering or giving more, there is almost always a need for more help with Vespers - either by giving your time on Tuesdays to prepare and serve meals to the homeless and hungry, or by giving your money to help support this ministry. You can also sign up to spend the night helping with the Rotating Shelter, which our church will be hosting March 28th through April 3rd. This shelter serves as an "overflow" shelter - providing a warm place to sleep for people who would otherwise be turned away from local shelters because of lack of space. What better way to practice and extend the hospitality of Jesus, than to welcome those who have no place to lay their head?

These are just a few simple ideas for how to observe a holy Lent. The "basics" are always good - pray, read Scripture, study and have fellowship with other Christians, give yourself to service and generosity. However you choose to mark these forty days, I pray that God will renew your spirit and renew our church with the transforming love and grace of Jesus Christ.

Children and Youth Christian Education

NURSERY care is available on the 3rd floor from 9:30 - 12:40

All children are welcome to worship with their families. After the Time as Children portion of the worship service, preschoolers may go to church school or the nursery and children in Kindergarten - 3rd grade are invited to Children's Worship until 11:15.

Preschool (2 ½ years - age 4):

10:30 - 11:20 Church School (Rm. 305)

11:20 - 12:30 Childcare in the nursery

K - 2nd grade:

10:30 - 11:10 Children's Worship (Rm. 202A)

11:10 - 11:15 Snack

11:15 - 11:45 Grace Notes Music Program
(Rm. 306)

11:45 - 12:30 Church School (Rm. 202B)

3rd - 6th Grade:

(10:30 - 11:00 3rd graders may come to Children's
Worship)

11:00 - 11:15 Snack

11:15 - 11:45 Grace Notes Music Program (Rm. 306)

11:45 - 12:30 Church School (Room 202B)

Youth (7th - High School)

10:00 - 11:00 Worship

11:15 - 12:00 Church School (Rm. 107)

12:00 - 12:30 Youth Music Program (Rm. 306)

Children's Music and Arts Ministry

11:15 - 11:45 Grace Notes Music Program (Rm. 306)

12:00 - 12:30 Youth Music Program (Rm. 306)

Adult Christian Education 11:30 - 12:30

God's Journey with Us (Bill Foster, leader)

Lounge

The core affirmation of biblical faith - whether Judaism or Christianity - is that God journeys with us. How we experience that companionship varies widely. For some, the journey with God seems an unbroken line from earliest memories of faith community to the present. For others, the journey with God resembles a landscape of hills and valleys - times of sensing God's closeness and other times of wondering where God might be. There is no one set of universal experiences, but there is this promise: we do not journey alone. The Bible testifies to that promise. It is filled with powerful stories of God's presence in the lives of individuals and communities. We will examine eight core themes and stories. This "primal narrative" tells the basic story of how God has been active in times past. Through these stories, we are more able to recognize God's presence and call in our lives today.

March 13 - Jesus' Life

March 20 - The Cross

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

Bible Study, led by the Rev. Paul Simpson Duke, continues their 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, fellowship and snacks.

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.

American Baptist Home Mission Societies (ABHMS) seeks volunteers for "Here Until the Work is Done V," an ecumenical work week slated for July 31-Aug. 6, 2011, in New Orleans, La. Nearly six years after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast, residents continue to need help in rebuilding their homes, churches and communities. Volunteers are invited to worship, witness and work with others as the hands and feet of Christ and bring God's healing and helping love to the rebuilding effort in New Orleans.



Ecumenical Work Week activities typically include home repair, painting, laying sheet rock and cutting grass. Construction skills are not required. Volunteers will also be needed to run errands and coordinate activities.

Youth groups are welcome to participate but must provide a ratio of one adult to every four youth of each gender.

Additional information is available at www.abhms.org > Volunteer Opportunities via a downloadable [flier](#) and [frequently asked questions sheet](#). Pastors and ministry leaders are asked to download the flier to be photocopied and posted on church and other ministry bulletin boards. Also available at www.abhms.org > Volunteer Opportunities are a downloadable [registration form](#) and [work release form](#). Registration fee is \$25; children under 12 are free. Registration form and fee must be received by ABHMS by Friday, July 1.

For more information, contact Victoria Goff, ABHMS national coordinator of Volunteer Ministries, at 800-ABC-3USA, x2449, or vgoff@abhms.org.

American Baptist Churches is one of the most diverse Christian denominations today, with 5,500 local congregations comprised of 1.3 million members, across the United States and Puerto Rico, all engaged in God's mission around the world.

ABC-MI Haiti Mission Trip, July 7-14 Restoring Buildings/Establishing Relationships

The date is set for our Region-sponsored Haiti mission work trip. With a maximum of 12 participants from several of our Region churches, the week-long project will involve repair work to the chapel at Labadee. Rev. Voltaire, pastor of the Cap-Haitien Baptist Church, is excited that our coming may result in completing work on the chapel which was seriously damaged in the Haitian earthquake.

Lynne Punnett, project coordinator, is working with a team to raise money for construction costs (\$2,500.00) and to recruit members from our Region churches to go to Haiti. The cost for participants is not yet fixed, but will be around \$1,000.

Consider this announcement as an invitation for you or someone from your church to participate in the project, either by contributing to the cost or by going to Haiti with the team. We would like to have one or two participants from several of our Region churches. This would be a great opportunity for a small church that might not be able to send a full team, but could sponsor one or two church members.

We can only take 12 people on the team, so let Lynne Punnett know as soon as possible of your interest. Contact Lynne at lynnepunnett@yahoo.com, or contact Ron Cary at 1-800-636-2671. Watch the next editions of E-Link for more detailed information about the project.

2 0 1 1 W A T E R M A N L E C T U R E

PAUL *and* the Corinthians

AN EPISTOLARY NOVEL WITH A LONG HISTORY



Margaret M. Mitchell

Dean and Professor of New Testament at the University of Chicago Divinity School

Recipient of the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation Award

elchela

✱ **March 13, 2011 3:00pm** ✱

AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF ANN ARBOR

ABOUT PROFESSOR MITCHELL...

Margaret M. Mitchell's research and teaching span a range of topics in New Testament and early Christian writings up through the end of the fourth century. She is interested in how the earliest Christians literally wrote their way into history, developing a literary and religious culture that was deeply embedded in Hellenistic Judaism and the wider Greco-Roman world, while also proclaiming its distinctiveness from each. Special interests include the Pauline letters, the poetics and politics of ancient biblical interpretation, and the intersection of text, image and artifact in the fashioning of early Christian culture.

She is the author of four books: *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*

(1991); *The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation* (2000); *The "Belly-Myther" of Endor: Interpretations of 1 Kingdoms 28 in the Early Church* (with Rowan A. Greer, 2007), and *Paul, the Corinthians and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics* (2010). She is also the co-editor, with Frances M. Young, of *The Cambridge History of Christianity, Volume 1: Origins to Constantine* (2006).

Prof. Mitchell's current projects include a volume of translations of occasional sermons by John Chrysostom on Pauline passages and a commentary on II Corinthians.

This Memorial Lecture is in honor of Dr. Leroy Waterman (1875-1972). Dr. Waterman was professor of Oriental Languages and Literature at the University of Michigan, an archaeologist of the Middle East, an Old Testament Scholar and a translator of the Revised Standard Version Bible.

Professor Mitchell will also be preaching the sermon at First Baptist Church on March 13th.

"Living By the List"

Texts: Gal 5:13-25; Mark 10:17-22

The Worship Service begins at 10.00am.





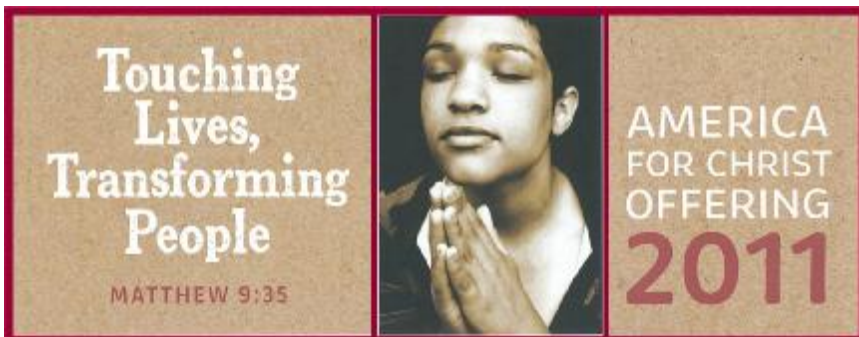
**FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH OF ANN ARBOR**

BE JUSTICE. LOVE KINDNESS. WALK HUMILY WITH GOD.

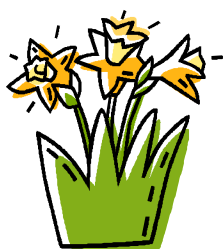
517 E. Washington St, Ann Arbor
663-9376 www.fbca2.org

MARCH 2011

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			9 Ash Wednesday 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 Gathering 7:00 Ash Wednesday Service	10 7:30 Choir	11	12
13 10:00 Worship 11:30 Second Hour 3:00 Waterman Lecture 5:00 Youth Group	14 5:30 Board of Outreach 7:30 Mission Action Board	15 2:00 Beecher-Brewer Cir. 5:30 Vespers 7:00 Trustees	16 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 Gathering 7:30 Executive Council	17 1:00 MacGregor-Stitt Circle 7:30 Choir	18	19 8:00 Church Mission Trip
20 10:00 Worship 11:30 Second Hour 5:00 Youth Group	21	22 5:30 Vespers	23 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering 7:30 Davis-Diels ChristCare	24 7:30 Choir	25	26
27 10:00 Worship 11:30 Second Hour 12:45 AB Campus Fdn. Board 5:00 Youth Group	28	29 5:30 Vespers	30 1:30 Bible Study 5:30 The Gathering	31 7:30 Choir	April 1	2
						
3	4					
						



Together, we touch and transform lives every day. Since 1824, American Baptist Home Mission Societies has been faithful as the hands and feet of Jesus Christ, preaching the gospel and reaching out to those in need. The month of March is our annual time to promote this special ABC offering, but we will receive your donations at any time during the year. Your gifts to the AFC Offering 2011 support this important work of mission at our doorsteps.



Next
newsletter
deadline:
*Sunday,
March 20th*

The children of First Baptist Ann Arbor have joined together with thousands of other American Baptist children and youth across the United States and Puerto Rico in

- Raising awareness
- Raising change for Change
- And raising 14 million pennies to represent the number of children living in poverty in the US and Puerto Rico.

The American Baptist Home Mission Society (formerly known as National Ministries) sponsors the Penny Project to raise awareness of the extent of child poverty throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, and to support programs and ministries responding to the needs of children in poverty. The Penny Project was inspired by the example of the youth of First Baptist Church in New London, N.H.—who raised 60,000 pennies to represent the number of children living in poverty in their state.

Please help our children help other children - if you have a child or youth at home, figure out ways they can collect or earn change around the house. If you don't have a child at home, bring your change into church and one of the children will be happy to add it to our penny jar.

As of February 7, 2011, 4,682,050 pennies have been raised nationwide. FBCA2 is just getting started. There are over 146,000 children living in poverty in Michigan. Thank you for helping.