



Greensboro Gleanings

March 2011

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK ...

Dear Friends,

As March is almost upon us we will soon be entering the season of Lent. This is traditionally a time in the Christian year when we are encouraged to focus on our spiritual lives and be proactive in adding and subtracting things from our lives that help or hinder our spiritual growth.

In keeping with this theme, I want to bring to your attention our plans for this year's Lenten study group. Following the format we tried last year, which proved popular, we will be meeting on 8 consecutive Friday evenings, beginning March 4, and concluding April 22 (Good Friday). The main focus of the group will be *Christian Meditation: the Gethsemani Papers*, a book penned by the Roman Catholic priest and monk John Main.

Father Main was one of the principle leaders in the last 50 years in the field of developing Christian spirituality, and finding commonalities between the core principles of spiritual life found in all the world's faiths. This is a rich book that is also brief [and inexpensive.] Copies are available at the Galaxy Bookstore. Each participant is encouraged to purchase a copy of the book (though that is not required for attendance.)

Our group will be co-led by myself and Sonia Dunbar, the Church's Director of Christian Education. The gatherings (with one exception) will begin at 6 PM with a pot-luck supper in Fellowship Hall, followed by the study group sessions at 7 PM (continuing till approximately 8:30). The one exception is that for our third session (on March 18) the group will be taking a field trip to Burlington to attend a talk by Jon Kabat-Zinn, who is a pioneer in the study of the role meditation plays in maintaining both physical and mental wellness. We will present more details about that trip at our initial two meetings.

In addition to our reading and discussion of the John Main book, our group meetings here in Greensboro will also feature brief times of stillness, worship and music. My hope and expectation is that this group will be an informative and strengthening offering for the deepening of our spiritual lives during this year's Lenten season. I hope many of you will make the choice to join us, beginning of March 4.

God bless.

Tony Acheson

GOD'S TEMPLE

"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?"

1 Corinthians 3:16



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CHURCH GROWTH—YOUR IDEAS

Tony and the Deacons asked some important questions of the congregation over the past weeks. Below are your answers, encapsulated:

What is special about the church?

- The church tries to answer problems unselfishly
- “If the church will not do it, who will?”
- The church is made up of (imperfect) human beings (2)
- Music (16)
- Relaxed Atmosphere
- Love the people/congregation/sense of family (17)
- Love the building (3)
- Love that it’s close to home
- Sermons /Tony’s ministry (9)
- “The minister for his excellence, caring, intellect and humor, characteristics that operate for the common good on so many different levels.”
- Nancy
- Diversity of spiritual & political beliefs (7)
- Wide range of activities by congregation & community
- Beautiful Location
- Pleasants Fund
- Financially Well-managed
- Support in crisis and happy events/sense of community (12)
- Exchange of ideas about Christ’s teachings
- Sense of history (personal and community)(3)
- Willingness to give time, energy, money, etc. (2)
- The church is a place where we can learn God’s word to us, for us/”learn new things about the spiritual life” (3)
- Continuing study/study groups (2)
- “this is a place where I can freely worship”
- The sanctuary
- Love
- Joy
- Home
- Feel protected
- It is the “focal point of a unique, thoughtful, distinguished, and caring community.”
- “One of the things that makes this church special to me personally is it's manageable small size”
- “As a place to practice the precepts of God/Jesus that we are here to forgive and love one another.”
- “The “routine” or “pattern” that is part of each service – during hard times or times of wavering faith – the routines and patterns of the service can ground me – they are a reassuring presence.”
- “The Church is a container for our community of faith. “

Continued from Page Three:

Congregants' answer to 'What is the Church's Core Purpose?':

- Serve needs of our neighbors ("to show God's love in the world")(17)
- Welcome all with open hearts
- Grow in our knowledge of God & Christ/proclaim our faith (6)
- Strengthen the spiritual lives of ourselves and others (18)
- "reflect acceptance of all others who are not (or not yet) members" (2)
- Associate Members
- To keep us connected to God (5)
- To help each other's paths in joys and sorrows/grow in community (9)
- Teach children "and provide a wise and kind environment for them" (2)
- Bring us the guidance of Jesus/preach and live the good news (2)
- Educate (2)
- To "provide a location, occasion, atmosphere for celebrating our spiritual nature together."(2)
- "To share yourself freely and be accepted for the person that you are at that moment!"
- "Every town should have a church just because"
- "This is the place where all may come seeking community. Love, and support."
- "I have learned a lot about Greensboro's strengths and challenges through the lens of the church."
- "building inner and outer self"
- "To make community spirit a more real, abiding, and lasting experience for those on the margins; to expand the web of joy and interconnectedness and meaning within the culture of the community."
- "I think the church is a community of folks who care about each other and that its purpose is to extend that caring to each other, the wider local area, and the world beyond us.
- "... from the book "Baptism by Fire" by Heather Choate Davis: "Church, as I have been blessed to discover, is not boot camp. It's a place to practice being a human being."
- "I think our Church might grow if we became more of a spiritual community and less attached to the way things have always been done.



MILESTONES & MISCELLANY

Happy March Birthday to:

Aurora Brush, Annegret Pollard, Jeff Bretschneider,
Keyla Myers, Martha Niemi, Tim Nisbet, Marion
Mackenzie Stegner, Sharon Steimle, Nicholas Russotto,
Cilla Bonney-Smith, Winnie Thomas, Madelyn Emers,
Ellen Emers, Elizabeth Gilmartin, and Diane Fixx!

Is your birthday listed this month when it shouldn't be? Have we missed you in our celebrations? Contact the church office and let us know if your birthday is listed incorrectly or has been missed.

Our gratitude is due to Andy Dales for the gift of several hours of his time and skills fixing two pews that had become unsafe. Thanks, Andy!.....Let's be keeping Jenneke Barton in our prayers after a nasty fall; as well as her sister, Joan, as she adjusts to a new living facility.....Prayers and other support also are needed for community friend Peter Roudebush, who is recovering from a stroke.....And we continue to pray with the Eisner family, and Alice Rivers, on their loss of Bill Eisner, Sr. His memorial service will be in our church on Sat., June 18 at 11 AM.

The 2011 Cabin Fever Follies was a fitting tribute to Bill Eisner, to whom the event was dedicated. Trish Alley read this poem, a beautiful and concise encapsulation of much of what made Bill special.

Who Will Kiss Me?

Who will kiss me in Willey's Store,
A wet one, smack on the lips
And then in his biggest stage voice
Announce to the entire town,
"Don't tell your husband!"?

Who will call and invite himself for a drink,
Ask for a donation
For the Library, the Club, the Church, Wonder & Wisdom
And get the gift?
A strategy in no manual I know.

Who will Alice finally marry?
"She won't let me touch her assets," he said.
"She'd be so much better off if I did."
Some marriages need no sanction.
They proclaim themselves.
We knew their hearts were one.

Who will see the best
In all sides of a conversation,
Be the voice of heart-full reason,
The wisdom of life well lived?
Who will bake and bring the bread to break together?

Who will match his example of generosity?
Who will wear the grin of coyote,
Who instigates all manner of playful mischief?
Who will play pianos all around town?
Who will conduct the Kazoo Band?
Who will lead our sing-alongs?
Who will speak to us with affection
No matter WHO we are?
We will miss you, Bill.

March 2011



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	4—Living Strong, FH	1	2 10—Living Strong, FH 4:30 .—Mission Board, Lib	3 7- Diaconate Meeting, Lib	4 6-Potluck 7- Study Group	5
6	7 4—Living Strong, FH	8	9 10—Living Strong, FH	10	11 6- Potluck 7- Study Group	12
13 Youth Group	14 4—Living Strong, FH	15	16 10—Living Strong, FH	17 4:30—Christian Ed Meeting	18 Study Group Field Trip	19
20	21 4—Living Strong, FH	22	23 10—Living Strong, FH	24 7—Trustees Meeting, Lib	25 6- Potluck 7- Study Group	26 
27	28 4—Living Strong, FH Tony & Nancy Vacation Begins	29	30 10—Living Strong, FH	31 <i>Thank You March Coffee Hour Hosts!</i> Mar 6—Jan Travers Mar 12—Cilla Bonney-Smith Mar 20—Mike & Susan Mar 27—Penny Bretschneider		

NEWS FROM
THE GREENSBORO UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Upcoming Lectionary Readings:

Mar 6 ~Exodus 24:12-18~Psalm 2 or Psalm 99 ~2
Peter 1:16-21~Matthew 17:1-9

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Mar 13 ~Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7~Psalm 32~Romans
5:12-19~Matthew 4:1-11

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Mar 20 ~Genesis 12:1-4~Psalm 121~Romans 4:1-
17~John 3:1-17 or Matthew 17:1-9

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Mar 27 ~Exodus 17:1-7~Psalm 95~Romans 5:1-
11~John 4:5-42

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CHURCH SCHOOL & YOUTH GROUP NEWS

In February, our church school students exercised their artistic talents for several projects, including illustrating questions posed by the Deacons and Tony to the congregation. To see what your children like about our church, please check out the wall next to the TV in Fellowship Hall. This coming month, we'll be involved with the Lenten Garden and activities that will connect the children to various lectionary readings as well as to the Lenten studies group.

The Greensboro Youth have decided to work on fundraising to provide second tier, on-going assistance to the Haitian people. As their efforts and events come to your attention, please help them in whatever way is available to you. Our joint Youth Group is seeking youth involvement in structuring activities, developing service projects and growing the spiritual element to our gatherings. Please remember that we need YOU to let us know what will make this group be a gathering of support, fun, friendship and meaning.

Sonia Dunbar, Church School and Youth Coordinator