

CHRISTCHURCH PRESBYTERIAN GOOD NEWS

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Gathering Through Music

By Sondra Tucker, Music Director

Our handbell choir just got back from Feb Fest, February 26-27. Handbell festivals aren't like anything else in the music world. Full choirs like ours plus a few hardy souls who love ringing so much that they come as individuals with the hope of finding an open spot to ring with one of the choirs spend a full day preparing a concert. Feb Fest has a rich history of over twenty years of inspiring and educating ringers in their art. This year was typical: almost fifty choirs and about five hundred fifty ringers in a huge ballroom at the Stafford Centre. The sound is just tremendous. The event hires a director from around the nation – it is always someone with proven experience in cajoling and cultivating a musical result from a large and diverse group.

This year's clinician was Lloyd Larson. Lloyd is from Minneapolis, and is one of the best known composers of church music in the nation. In addition to his musical work, he made a point several times during the day to remind these musicians that they make a tremendous investment in providing music for

their local church, and that musicians are always among the most faithful to their calling. It is a message that bears repeating. A friend of mine told me recently that there is a reason that there are so few musicians among the millions of us who took music lessons as a child or who sang in their high school choir or played bassoon in middle school. It takes dedication, attention to detail, patience, discernment and a true and deep and abiding love to sustain music making. The rewards are great, but so is the investment.

This church is blessed to have a large number of folks who have that commitment. They come to rehearsals faithfully at the end of a long work day, and pay attention to things like vowel placement and ringing stroke and dynamic shadings and balance. They are infinitely patient with me, their director, even on those days I don't deserve it. Their gift to this church is of incalculable worth. The next time you see one of our church musicians, I hope you'll thank them for the gifts they bring us all.



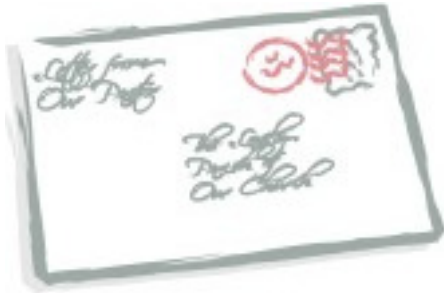
Front: Priscilla Kennedy, Sandra Gilbert, Debbie Busch, Danna Husband, Barbara Buckley
Back: Roger Tucker, Sondra Tucker, Dayna McCoy, Gretchen Sparks, Sue Cox, Nancy Henderson

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

CONTENTS	Page
Gathering Through Music	1
The Wilderness Pilgrimage John's Musings	2
Presbyterian Women of New Covenant	3
VIC	4
CCSC	4
Adult Ministry	5
To the Church Triumphant Monroe Bean	5
Christian Education	6
Lenten Verse	7
March Birthdays Drew Harrison	7
Rick and Judy Sims	8

**Newsletter Deadline
March 21**

Vision Statement:
*Trusting in God's guidance,
ChristChurch Presbyterian
invites all to join us as we
Gather joyfully,
Grow spiritually and
Give passionately
in service to Christ,
each other and our
community.*



John's Musings



Rev. John Hirling

The Wilderness Pilgrimage

After Jesus' baptism, he was led by the Spirit into the desert where he remained forty days (a Hebrew abbreviation meaning "a long time"). These forty days were a necessary part of his preparation for ministry.

During the Exodus, Moses fasted and prayed for forty days, during which time God presented him with the Ten Commandments (see Exodus 34:27-28).

Elijah, fearing for his life, escaped into the desert. In penitence he asked God to take his life. At the end of his forty days, God appeared to him and informed him what God wanted him to do.

These three occurrences preceded great revelations and/or events and have become sources for the Christian practice of Lent (Latin: spring); the forty days preceding Easter (exclusive of Sundays).

In early Christianity, Lent was the final preparation for candidates preparing for baptism and for those estranged from the church to do public penance for sin. Later, private penance replaced public penance and the focus shifted to forgiveness and reconciliation.

During the Middle Ages, Lent became highly legalistic with fasting and avoidance of festivity required of all Christians. Many Protestant denominations abandoned Lent during the time when all things practiced by the Roman Catholic Church were suspect. We made fun of Lent in the tradition in which I was reared. Every Lent, my mom customarily gave up cigars. Today, as we see the value of reclaiming many of the practices of early Christians, the season of Lent has re-emerged as an important time of preparation and reflection on the meaning of the Holy Week events, especially Easter, a time for renewing one's discipleship, and a time for developing healthy religious disciplines.

I like Lent. In many ways, Lent is my favorite time of year. Its themes tend toward the dark, the somber, and the serious and help me appreciate even more the joy of life in Christ (a mountaintop without a valley is flat land). I've also found that by taking advantage of some of the Lenten disciplines, my own life is enriched.

Here are some suggestions for observing Lent:

- 1) Plan to attend worship each Sunday.
- 2) Plan to attend the special worship services. The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and ends with the Easter Service. Between those days are Maundy Thursday (the day of the Last Supper but actual taking its name for the Gospel of John where Jesus exhorts his followers: "I give you a new commandment – that you love one another as I have loved you."), Good Friday, Holy Saturday (on which some churches will celebrate a Paschal Vigil) and Easter sunrise. We will celebrate both Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday.
- 3) Pray and meditate this month on something you would like to be rid of. The practice of giving something up for Lent need not be a joke. All of us have something which tends to separate us from God and from one another. It may be an old grudge. It may be a sharp tongue (sarcasm comes from a root that means to tear flesh). It may be an addiction to some substance. Try to find some aspect of your life of which you really want to be rid (not something you intend to pick up again on Easter) and bring it mentally to the Ash Wednesday service.
- 4) Consider fasting one meal a day or one day a week or Good Friday. But instead of just giving up the food, think how it feels to be hungry. Think about how it might feel if you weren't doing this by choice. Discuss hunger with family members. Take the money you save and donate it our food pantry partnership with St. Giles or another hunger relief project.
- 5) Renew your commitment to spiritual disciplines. The three pillars of Jewish piety were prayer, fasting and alms. But there is also study, meditation/contemplation/silence, journaling, and simplicity.

Enjoy Lent. That may sound odd, but reflection leads to growth and growth to an appreciation of God working within us. Darkness always makes the light more welcome.

Grace & peace, John

Presbyterian Women of New Covenant Spring Gathering

Join in a day of fellowship, enlightenment, and seeking ways to further God's mission for Presbyterian Women on Saturday, April 9. "Spring Clean-Up For Heart and Soul" will be the theme of Presbyterian Women's Spring Gathering at St. John's Presbyterian, Houston.

Worship Leader will be the Rev. Diane Prevary, Stated Clerk of New Covenant.

9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Registration and Continental Breakfast

9:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Welcome and Business Meeting

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Worship Service and Officer Installation

11:15 a.m. - 1:15 p.m. Workshops 1 and 2

1:15 p.m. Lunch

All women in New Covenant churches are invited to participate in the annual PW of New Covenant Spring Gathering. Registration Packets are available from Cluster Coordinators. Deadline for registration is April 1.

A stellar group of workshop leaders will share their time and talents. Here's just a brief look at what is being offered:

- Ordinary Me... Extraordinary God... Trusting He will equip when I am called... presented by Karen Anderson
- The Reason Why We Sing: A History of Gospel Music presented by Dr. Jacqueline Chambers
- Reading the Bible with Presbyterian Eyes presented by Mary Marcotte
- The Beatitudes: Living in the Already But Not Yet presented by Connie Nyquist
- Living with Conflict in the Church presented by Rev. Diane Prevary
- Something SMORE for Single Moms presented by Gail Showalter

(All workshops will be presented two times)

The Offering will benefit His Kids - The Nehemiah Center of Navasota, an after-school program for disadvantaged children; and the women's program of CEDEPCA, a charitable organization that operates educational and training programs throughout Central America. (www.cedepca.org).

When: April 9, 2011

Where: St. John's Presbyterian, 5020 West Belfort, Houston, TX 77035

Contact: Clara Boyce or Pam Stoops for registration forms



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

Presbytery of New Covenant

Volunteer Interfaith Caregivers, Southwest



Have you ever wondered about the sign on the door to ChristChurch's West Wing #7? What is VIC-SW and what is the significance of a key?

VIC-SW is the acronym of the nonprofit organization, Volunteer Interfaith Caregivers, Southwest. The key logo symbolizes the key to our elderly neighbor's independence.

VIC-SW was founded in 1994 with the idea that a coalition of churches would be more effective than individual congregations in assisting area seniors. A network of volunteers provides free, one-on-one services to senior residents of southwest Houston so that they may continue to live independently in their own homes. During 2010,

volunteers served more than 250 care receivers by donating 3,528 volunteer hours and 28,430 volunteer miles while performing such services as friendly phone calls and visits, garden and yard work, minor home repairs, and the most requested service, transportation to life sustaining destinations such as grocery stores and medical facilities.

VIC-SW is funded by grants from foundations, and tax-deductible donations from area congregations and individual donors. ChristChurch shows its support of VIC-SW by providing office space and meeting facilities.

If you know someone who can benefit from VIC-SW's services, or if you would like to volunteer to help

your neighbors, please contact the VIC-SW office at 713-772-8181 or volintersw@sbcglobal.net or visit www.vic-sw.org. Volunteering even a couple of hours a month can make the world of difference to your neighbor in need.

CCSC - Year in Review - 2010

Christian Community Service Center

In 2010, CCSC Emergency Services responded to continued demand for basic needs by providing food, clothing, financial assistance and referrals to 22,577 people in crisis. This effort included helping 855 families avoid homelessness or substandard living conditions by assisting with electricity, water, natural gas and rent payments.

More than 245,400 pounds of food was provided to hungry neighbors and 11,744 clients benefitted from gently-used clothing. The Community Garden harvested 3,201 pounds of fresh produce, aiding clients' nutritional well-being.



Back to School touched the lives of 6,160 underprivileged children. Louise J. Moran Vision Care Program provided vision-screening services to 1,642 children, with 373 of them receiving new prescription glasses.

Other CCSC programs include: Martha's Way, Jingle Bell Express and Sunshine Resale Shop.

Contact Liz Gentry, 713-664-4197, about CCSC volunteer opportunity.

Adult Ministry

Better Bunch

Come join us Thursday, March 10, for a trip to the Heights to visit the Art Car Museum. We will start with lunch at Carter & Cooley, then tour the museum. Your only cost will be lunch; there is no fee for the museum. We will leave the church at 10:45 am. Invite some friends, the more the merrier.

A sign-up sheet has been posted in the Gathering Space or call 281.498.0483 or email wtbucklely@juno.com.

Mark your calendars with these future dates: April 18 (Houston Police Mounted Patrol), May 4 (Tram tour of Galveston), and June 15 (Painted Churches). If you have somewhere you would like to go/do/see or to eat, please let Barbara Buckley know.

TGIF

TGIF was March 4 at the home of Woody and Marty Speer. Our next TGIF will be April 8.

Men's Breakfast

Calling all men of the church. Join us Saturday, April 2 in the Fellowship Hall for our Men's Breakfast. For more information contact Keith Cox.

Wednesday Night Dinner

Join us each Wednesday evening for dinner in the Fellowship Hall. Enjoy an evening meal with your church family and friends.

Ladies' Book Club

The Ladies' Book Club meets the 4th Tuesday of the month at 7pm. Join us on March 22 when we will discuss *When the Crickets Cry* by Charles Marin. Sue Cox will be hosting at her home. If you have any questions, please contact Lucy Seward at lucyseward@msn.com or Mylene Bole at mbole@swbell.net.



To the Church Triumphant

"Death is swallowed up in victory ... Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." -- 1 Cor. 15:54-57



Monroe Bean

Longtime ChristChurch Presbyterian member and City of Bellaire resident Monroe Bean passed away February 23, 2011.

Born July 27, 1928, Monroe married his beloved Ethel on April 23, 1954 at Central Presbyterian Church.

The Beans joined Bellaire Presbyterian Church in 1959, where Monroe went on to serve as an active Deacon and Elder for many years.

Monroe and Ethel were residents of Clarewood House in their later years.

2011 Session

ChristChurch Presbyterian

Class of 2011

John Becker, Amy Gremillion,
Priscilla Kennedy, Woody Speer,
Roger Tucker, Craig Wooten

Class of 2012

Homer Borgstedte, Sue Cox,
Brad Eaves, Aileen Fleming, Karen
Persely

Class of 2013

Richard Bell, Mylene Bole, Fred
Cook, Anne Reed, Gretchen Sparks
Youth Elders: Matthew Bole,
Lubna Obou

Clerk of Session

Janice Schessler

Moderator

Rev. John Hirling

CCP Good News Contributors

Barbara Buckley, Sue Cox, Aileen
Fleming, Liz Gentry, John Hirling,
Priscilla Kennedy, Dorothy Mares
and Anne Reed

Editors: Aileen Fleming and
Priscilla Kennedy

Christian Education

Pre-school to High School Sunday School

Children's Sunday School (pre-school through high school) is held every Sunday at 9am on the second floor of the education building. Senior high kids will meet in room 211 at the end of the hall, the new junior high class will meet in room 222 (the Games room, which adjoins the senior high room), and pre-K through 5th grade will meet this week in room 205 (Thou Art room).

Pre-school to 5th Grade

Where: Education Bldg. Room 205

Middle School

Where: Education Bldg. Room 222

High School

Where: Education Bldg. Room 211

Adult Sunday School

Wired Word

Utilizing an internet based curriculum that focuses on a weekly news headline with related Scriptures followed by discussion questions. Even if you are not wired, arrangements for receiving the study will be made.

Where: West Wing, Room 6

When: Every Sunday at 9am

Teacher: Fred Cook

Women's Bible Study

Join us as we discuss the Book of Romans. We read and discuss verse by verse. It doesn't matter which Bible you choose, we love to discuss all versions. On completion of the Book of Romans we will choose another book.

Where: West Wing, Room 5

When: Every Sunday at 9am

Teacher: Burnette Boyett

Mental Gymnastics

The Voice New Testament and annotated Bible

Previously most Bibles and biblical reference works were produced by professional scholars writing in academic settings. The Voice uniquely represents collaboration among scholars, pastors, writers, musicians, poets, and other artists. The goal is to help believers experience the joy and wonder of God's revelation instead of furthering the division over culture and theology. Writers include Chris Seay, Lauren Winner, Brian McLaren, Greg Garrett, David B. Capes, and others. This class currently studying the Book of Acts.

Where: West Wing, Room 1

When: Every Sunday at 9am

Teacher: Homer Borgstedte

Lenten Verse:

***Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit,
returned from the Jordan
and was led by the Spirit in
the wilderness.***

Luke 4:1



CHRISTCHURCH
Presbyterian

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All articles for submission should be sent to churchadmin@ccpres.org. Issue deadlines are the 20th of the month.

All material is subject to editing for space and content; every effort will be made to include all articles.

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Volunteer Interfaith
Caregivers SW
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www.ccpres.org

Presbytery of New Covenant

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www.pbyofnewcovenant.org

March Birthdays

Camille Spence	2	Richard Kennedy	26
Katie Materie	4	Maxi Sotolongo	26
George Persely	4	Linda Dole	28
Liz Cunningham	5	Hal Laverty	29
Betty Janicek	5		
Paul Anderson	6		
Ross Spence	7		
Aseian Lobe	11		
Lydia Eaves	13		
Sue Cox	16		
Paul Marshall	16r		
Betsy Barkley	17		
Kevin Marshall	17		
Hingis Tchikou	17		
Fred Cook	24		
Paul Bettis	25		



Drew Harrison will be leading Worship Sunday, March 13 and March 20 while John Hirling is on vacation. Don't miss Drew's inspirational sermons.



Drew Harrison

Growing Through Friendship

Meet New Members Rick and Judy Sims



Introducing Rick and Judy Sims, new members of ChristChurch Presbyterian.

Rick Sims is from Galveston, Texas (born on the island!) and went to school at St. Vincente de Paul Catholic School.

Judy Sims is from Port Neches, Texas.

The Sims are owners of Sims Cleaners (www.simscitycleaners.com) and good friends with Elder Craig and Gail Wooten.

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Join us on Sunday!
Christian Education 9:00 am
Worship 10:15 am

Address Label