



The Beacon

The Newsletter of First Baptist Church of Salt Lake City—March 2010 Vol 4 Issue 3

PASTORAL MUSINGS

LENT IS...

We sing the hymn *Throughout these Forty Days* during the Season of Lent. Indeed, from Ash Wednesday to Easter morn is forty days not counting Sundays. These are the days of Lent, a season that takes us to the heart of the gospel message. Pointing to and then celebrating the great events of God's love and grace, Lent should be a part of every Christian's experience annually. The rhythm of the forty days plus Sundays over a lifetime can get into your bone marrow so that you draw closer to God with each repeat of the cycle of the seasons of the church year. We did not celebrate the beginning of Lent with an Ash Wednesday service but we launched the season on its first Sunday. Now, in March, I invite you into the experience of a Holy Season of reflection, renewal and recommitment. Find some devotional reading or a Bible class, attend worship each Sunday, journal your journey, share it with a friend. Let this be more than a time of repentance but also a time of careful preparation for the celebration that breaks the world in half and opens it to God's unfathomable love.

PALM SUNDAY

Do you feel silly waving the palm branches on Palm Sunday? As I look out each year and see people limply holding their palms at waist height, I wonder to myself: can't they imagine how the ancient people felt? Why was there this spontaneous outpouring in Jerusalem when Jesus entered? The people could not contain their joy! Why can we not recreate that same enthusiasm on a Sunday morning without it feeling forced or contrived?

I have seen pictures of the liberating allied armies of World War II. Some of you older veterans may have been at a location where liberation occurred. Those people experienced the same joy as those in Jerusalem with flag-waving, spontaneous songs and acts of celebration. The captives were set free, life was beginning anew in a hopeful direction.

THE TRIDUUM: Maundy Thursday Good Friday and Easter Sunday

The great ascent to the holiest of days and the greatest Christian celebration occurs as the culmination of the Lent season. If you have paid attention to the season, you will experience a heightening sense of wonder and joy that will literally climax on Easter Sunday!

“The aim of these three great days of observance is to dramatize and to proclaim the events of our Lord's passion and death and to awaken in us a sense of God's ever-present saving power through the cross and resurrection. It is not an occasion for mere sentimental remembrance of past events. It is a way of participating in these saving events through a unified sequence of actions, Scripture, and common prayer. By faithful participation in the liturgy of Holy Week and Easter, we encounter Christ who, through his redemptive suffering and death and his triumphal rising, comes to deliver all humanity from bondage and death.” (p20 *Ashes to Fire*)

You will miss the high point if you fail to engage and participate. It is in your partaking of the season that you discover the greatest reward: a new and stronger connection with your faith and your God who is at the heart of it all. You can be an observer of a play or you can be an actor in the drama. Don't cheat yourself of the potential of Lent. Be an active partner in the communion of the saints who worship and glorify God in the drama in which we now are engaged.

PROCEEDING WITH OUR VISION

The Council of Ministries presents six initiatives to begin our application of our three emphases we adopted to direct our work and mission. Two initial tasks are identified under each of our identified emphases. These are not the only activities we can do and we are not limiting ourselves to these six. But this is our starting point. Your Council of Ministries is working to be faithful to the all-church retreat last fall where we identified those areas where we want to focus our work and attention. The three emphases and six tasks become the lens through which we will evaluate our work and distribute our limited resources. The question now becomes: How do the ministries we do or want to do move us towards accomplishing these goals? Last month I invited you to "Watch This Space" for the adopted specific tasks. Here they are:

We are a worshipping community of Christ seeking to display God's love through being a rich fellowship with mutual support of one another

TASK ► Fun fellowship events such as First Sunday dinner, hospitality, canyon dinners, newcomers dinner, talent show, Dinners for Eight

TASK ► Shore up the core: note who is coming/who is not coming—be connected to our people. Friendship pads used every week.

We are a worshipping community of Christ seeking to display God's love through being a place where each can develop & foster faith in Christ that is encouraging & safe.

TASK ► Bible studies/other studies/use a small group model

TASK ► Adventures in worship: exploring with new ways/new styles in worship or another worship experience

We are a worshipping community of Christ seeking to display God's love through being a people loving beyond our congregation to the community and the world

TASK ► Continue what we have begun in our mission work with focus and purpose. Hands-on mission: trips/local Habitat/Evergreen/ecumenical picnic

TASK ► Hands on ministry: e.g. mission trips, local Habitat building, partner with Evergreen or other groups for mission

EASTER POST CARD INVITATION

Many of my friends have looked with amazement and a hint of jealousy that we invited 47,000 of our neighbors to attend our Christmas Eve worship service. They thought it was courageous, creative and smart. Our thought from the beginning was to do this at both Christmas and Easter. Such a mass mailing is effective over time. A one-time-only mailing

does little to bring awareness into people's minds that First Baptist really does welcome our neighbors to experience the holy days of our Christian tradition with us.

We will again invite the same two zip codes with post cards. You are an important part of this invitational effort. Postcards will be available on March 15th for you to mail to your family and friends. This gets the word out to people outside the two zip codes of the mass mailing. Likewise, email, Facebook, Twitter, invitations spread the word in a geometrical progression.

We are still communicating with some of those who came on Christmas Eve and will add those who indicate an interest at Easter to the same outreach list. Help us make this a worthwhile investment of our resources: time, talent, treasure.

Information from Your Council of Ministries:

Moderator's Corner: These Council updates are a new feature to the *Beacon*. Various Ministry Leaders will highlight what's new in their teams. As for me, I want to highlight the following actions:

- Mindful of this time of year, Rev. Henry opened our meeting with a special Lenten ceremony.
- We will send out invitations to our neighbors and invite them to our Easter breakfast, church service and special Easter egg hunt after the service.
- Look for a new church telephone directory in March.
- Per the Church Bylaws, I have established a Pastor Support Team which is led by Peggy Keiffer. This group's purpose will be to review pastor needs, provide feedback and support. They will also handle any church personnel issues that may arise.
- There are available opportunities to serve on church ministry teams. If you are interested in doing some form of church service, please contact Gary Felker

The Discipleship Team has been concentrating on mission as an integral part of First Baptist Church. Ann Burnett heads this portion of the team's ministry. Currently, Ann and others have prepared meals for those in need. Also, the church has participated in gathering much needed items for Crossroads Urban Center. We are now building a tower of toilet paper to donate to Crossroads Urban Center.

Anyone interested in teaching a class for the FBC Café should contact Ray Carter at 801-918-5817. The Kaleidoscope Class, which meets in the Parlor, does Bible Study based on the Common Lectionary. They encourage participation and opinions of individuals' personal faith journeys and interpretations of how the scriptures speak to them. All are welcome.

Member Care chaired by Sandra Clegg proudly reports that our Care Team is a ministry of visitation and support for our First Baptist family and friends needing occasional visits. Those active and faithful members include: Karen Carter, Ray Carter, Lee Fry, Jane Nelson, Gordon Remington, Joyce Urry and standby Christopher Nelson. Trained and guided by David Henry, this valuable group meets once a month. If you know someone in our congregation needing a visit, contact David at 801-582-9241 or speak to any member of the team about your concern.

Happenings at First Baptist Church:

- March 3: Bible Study at church 11 am
Church Administration at 6:30
- March 6: Church Talent Show at 7 pm in Keck Hall
- March 10: Bible Study at 11 am
Bible Study at 7 pm at Burnetts
Child Care Ministry Team at 7:15 pm
- March 17: Bible Study at 11 am
Bible Study at Burnetts' 7 pm
Council of Ministries at 5:45
- March 19: Bingo at 7 pm
30 hour Famine Begins for ABY
- March 24: Bible Study at 11 am
Bible Study at Burnetts' 7 pm
- March 28: Palm Sunday Celebration
- April 1: Holy Thursday Service at 7 pm
- April 4; Easter Sunday Breakfast at 9 am
Easter Sunday Worship at 11 am
Reception following Worship with Easter Egg Hunt

Happy Birthday to:

March 2: Margie Newman, March 3: James Baier, March 6: Sandra Clegg,
March 9: Pat Schoenwolf, March 12: Don Urry, Christopher Nelson, March 14: Brittany Mitchell, Chris Ellis, March 17: Kevin Barnes, March 18: Peggy Keiffer, March 19: Matt Klassen, March 27: Bertha Reyes, March 28: Bruce Burnett, March 31 Erika Roth

Church Financial Picture:

We have been successful in keeping to our budget and watching what we spend. You have been successful in keeping your pledges and offerings up to date. We ended February in the black and were able to pay all the Church's bills and payroll for the month.

The Finance Committee and the Council of Ministries continues to keep very careful watch on the financial picture of the church, always mindful of the bare bones budget we presented.

Thank you for your faithfulness in keeping up your commitments to God and First Baptist Church.

New Wednesday morning Bible study

The Prayers of Jesus

What can we learn from the prayers Jesus prayed?

How can we apply what we learn to our own lives?

The format includes a DVD of scenes from where Jesus walked and ministered, and practical prayer lessons taught by nationally renowned seminary professors.

Join us through the rest of Lent on Wednesday mornings from 11 to noon in the conference room for this new and timely study.

No previous Bible study experience necessary.

AB Women News:

We received an emergency call to roll bandages for Haiti. We asked for help from the congregation and we were able to roll 85 bandages for Haiti in addition to the 125 quota we have for the hospital in the Congo.

A good deal of preparation goes into getting the bandages ready to roll. Pat Schoenwolf gets the sheets and Karen Carter, Joyce Urry and the ABGirls tear them into strips. Winnie Hollenbeck sews the strips together before we can roll them.

We would like to thank all the folks that helped with the bandages: Pat and Paul Ditton, Lynn Christensen, Pat Huntsman, Georgine Parmeter, Jackie Sullivan, Gloria Peterson, Joyce Urry, Marquita Halvorsen, Jackie Nielsen, Shirley Cannon, Phyllis Hollen, Karen and Ellis Keck, Wilma Nichols and Margaret Bond. We enjoyed the company and had a good time.

Thanks to all.

Jackie Nielsen.

Mother Daughter Dinner:

Sarah Circle has faded away and so the AB Women are looking for a chair for this year's Mother Daughter Dinner on May 7th. Jackie would welcome a visit from anyone interested in helping with this year's event.

Church Ladies:

Meet Monday, March 8, 7 PM, at Nia's and Kathy will lead the book discussion of The Guernsey Literary & Potato Peel Society. RSVP to Nia at nia@ofdc.org or 801-487-9380.

Reading Ahead: That Went Well to be hosted by Karen and book discussion led by Karen; Trespass - Living on The Edge of the Promised Land, book leader, Lee; and Plain Truth by Jodi Piccolt (she's also the author of My Sister's Keeper), book leader Marian.

ABGIRLS News:

Get ready for the annual A.B. G.I.R.L.S. Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction, Sunday, April 18, 2010, 12:30 p.m. Tickets on sale: April 4. \$5.00/adults; \$20.00/family; Free/Children under 5.

We are looking for donations from you for our silent auction: "Goodie Baskets," "Artwork," "Handcrafts," "Services," etc.

Proceeds will benefit AB GIRLS and help us get to the National Gathering in Columbus, Ohio in July.

Questions: Contact Karen at 801-486-8539, 801-918-5104, or rkcarter1@comcast.net

AB GIRLS donated 2 large fleece blankets to the local Project Linus chapter. Project Linus blankets are given to Primary Children's Medical Center, Shriners's Hospital, Jordan Valley Hospital, Children's Justice Center, Pioneer Hospital E.R., Candy Cane Corner, The Road Home, Family Promise, Utah Foster Care Foundation, Salt Lake County Police and Fire Depts, the children of fallen Salt Lake County Public Safety Officers, Children of personnel slain in the Iraq war, The Neighborhood House and the Salt Lake County Sheriff's Department.

AB GIRLS National Gathering 2009 by Mary Burnett

The leadership was super fun this year! I had a really great time getting to know the girls. Like every year it was an unforgettable experience! And I really mean that. But like every good thing the part I remember best was the last day. It was a bittersweet farewell, but one that I will never forget. Every person made it special.

Mission News:

Penny Project Completed!

On Sunday, February 28th our young folks and a few of our adults held a press conference on the steps of the Capitol building. They presented 110,786 pennies or \$1107.86 to the Crossroads Urban Center. Way to Go!!!!

The Yes We Can Can Barrel

The February mission effort with the barrel had 75 pounds of food and the following items that were delivered to Volunteers of America for their shelter for homeless youth: socks-61, T-shirts-5, Briefs-60, underwear-55, 2 sweaters, a t-shirt and a hat. Good Work!!!

And for this month:

Wipe Out A Need!

This month we are thinking out side the "Can." We will be building a **Toilet Paper** (unused of course) Wall of sorts. We will be collecting toilet paper to take to Crossroads Urban Center. While many say basic health care should not be a luxury; I think we can add to that list that neither should toilet paper. So bring it in, and we will start building our wall. So that Dennis won't kill us, we need to build our TP wall with your donations and get them down by the end of March. We want the Sanctuary to shine on Easter Sunday. So get going and bring in your rolls.

Watch for announcements about the Service Sunday for March

An excerpt from a real church bulletin...

To make it possible for everyone to attend church next Sunday we are going to have a special "No Excuse Sunday".

Cots will be placed in the foyer for those who say "Sunday is my only day to sleep in". We will have steel helmets for those who think the church is too cold, and fans for those who say it is too hot. We will have hearing aids for those who say "The Pastor talks too softly", and cotton for those who say he preaches too loudly. Score cards for those who wish to list hypocrites present. Some relatives will be in attendance for those who like to go visiting on Sundays. There will be TV dinners for those who can't go to Church and cook dinner also. One section will be devoted to trees and grass for those who like to see God in Nature. Finally the Sanctuary will be decorated with both Christmas poinsettias and Easter Lilies for those who have never seen the church without them.

Easter at First Baptist Church

Palm Sunday—March 28th:

Sunday School as usual at 9:30

Worship at 11 am with Palm Procession

Maundy Thursday:

Communion Service at 7 pm

Easter Sunday:

Easter Breakfast will be served from 9 to 10:30 am in Keck Hall

Worship Service at 11 am

Easter Reception and Easter Egg Hunt will follow the worship service.

Order form for Easter Lilies will be published in the bulletin the middle of March.

Invite your friends and family to join us for all the activities!