

The Beacon

February 12, 2010

11:00a.m. WORSHIP

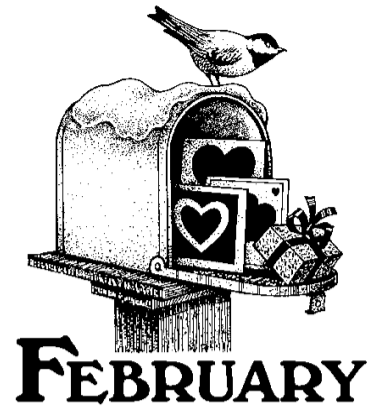
9:45a.m. SUNDAY SCHOOL

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Annual Report of the Pastor

*We must be still and still moving
Into another intensity
For a further union, a deeper communion
Through the dark cold and the empty desolation,
The wave cry, the wind cry, the vast waters
Of the petrel and the porpoise. In my end is my beginning.
—T. S. Eliot*

After a year like the previous one, Eliot's reassurance that one can discover a new intensity and movement in the midst of stillness, and that beginnings can come from endings, is especially important for our congregation. The course of the last several months have brought us so many endings that a sense of discouragement would be in order—except, as Eliot affirms, endings are often a necessary part of movement towards beginnings.

The endings we experienced this past year came in the unsettling form of a series of departures of long-tenured members, departures that seemed sudden and inexplicable. Too many such endings, and anxieties increase about the state of our church, about our ability to keep going when our numbers steadily shrink. My own decision initially to join those departures by resigning as pastor might have made sense as part of the general trend of endings, losses, decline.

Yet at that moment, the possibility of beginning surfaced in the form of the Church Board's decision to bring in a consulting team, Reverend Eric Williams and Leslie Kern, to meet with us, hear the stories of our struggles, and provide options that would no longer take the form of endings and departures but would instead offer us beginnings, new ways of being in relationship to one another, new ways of understanding how we do the work of the church. The initial sessions with Eric and Leslie have been a combination of sadness, disappointment, and healing. After an additional listening session, Eric and Leslie will present us with some proposals for hands-on work around conflict, boundaries, expectations, and change. Already what had seemed an ending is unfolding the first signs of beginnings.

Another pattern of endings that open into beginnings came near the end of the year with Board member Ken Klatt's provocative proposal to move all our church operations into a single building for much of the year to save the costs associated with heating and maintaining the main sanctuary and current offices. While discussion of this proposal is ongoing, it has also inspired a second, very different proposal about building usage, with members exploring new possibilities for making greater use of our buildings through a variety of rental options. Regardless of the conclusion of these alternative discussions, it seems clear that in the near future our present understanding of how we live in and maintain our physical church home will end, replaced by the beginnings of new ways of being at home in the buildings.

Endings and beginnings surfaced among our church programs during the previous year. We said good-bye to Sandy Ellinger as interim choir director, and for the immediate future will not be replacing her, as we experiment with forgoing an organized choir in favor of other music options for worship. We said good-bye to a Christian Education Director and welcomed Jon White in a new position, that of Christian Education Assistant. As an Episcopal seminary student, Jon brings the fresh vision and ideas of someone outside our tradition. We did not offer our usual Advent programming this past year—but we did launch a new Buddhist *sangha*, or community, during Advent, which has started well in weekly meetings in the chapel attended by a mixture of FBC and non-FBC folks.

Signs of endings and beginnings have appeared all year long in our governance, our organizational structure. Some committees have struggled to find members and purpose, to the extent that they have almost disappeared. At the same time, the Church Board in the fall commissioned a task force to study new forms of church governance and make recommendations for changes. While the task force work is ongoing, its recommendations are likely to be a mixture of endings and beginnings, to propose eliminating some groups and ways of functioning while experimenting with very different kinds of groups and ways of functioning.

While endings often elicit feelings of melancholy and a sense of loss, our church experienced one ending during the previous year which became an occasion for rejoicing: we left behind the isolation that resulted from being disfellowshipped by our local Baptist association and reveled in the beginnings that have become ours as we were welcomed into the Central Southeast Association of the United Church of Christ. Alongside the painful memories of rejection by our parent denomination we can now savor memories of the smiles and standing ovation that greeted the unanimous vote for our ingathering. Exploring this new aspect of our church identity is ongoing, as we learn what this latest beginning will mean.

The previous year has brought for me my own experience of endings that give way to beginnings, primarily in terms of my relationship with the congregation. Just as congregations tend to project all sorts of expectations, both realistic and unrealistic, onto new pastors, so did I also come to FBC with a set of expectations for a particular kind of ministry that has largely not come into being. With the ending of those expectations seemed to come the ending of my work with the congregation—yet out of the ending of my own expectations I see rising unanticipated possibilities that may yet point to a vital ministry. Expectations can be useful for moving forward, but there comes a point when expectations need to be set aside, when all parties in a relationship are called to be still in order that they may be still moving, may continue to grow. I sense that I have reached such a point in my relationship with FBC, and that our entire church has reached such a point in our overall journey on the path to which God calls us. Our challenge is not simply to cease all movement, nor to seize on just any movement as an alternative to an unnerving stillness, but in Eliot’s words, to “be still and still moving/for a further union, a deeper communion.” If we can balance on this difficult paradox, I believe we will discover that in all our endings of this past year the beginnings of new life are already emerging, ready to be tended and coaxed into the light of a deeper communion for us all.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Fuson Hurt,
Senior Pastor

YOUTH NEWS

UPCOMING YOUTH DATES:

PeaceJam trip to meet Betty Williams; Kalamazoo, Michigan - April 16-18

Baptist Youth Camp; Laurel Ridge, North Carolina - June 27-July 2

The high school class is studying the life of Nobel Peace Laureate Betty Williams who worked for peace between the Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland. To get a better understanding of Catholic thought and practices, Jean Feeney and I took 5 high school kids to Saturday mass at St. Edward's Catholic Church in Granville. Jean grew up in a Catholic family, always expecting to become a nun. Before mass, she shared some valuable insights with the youth who had terrific questions for her. After the service, their Deacon (who had grown up Baptist!) gave us a brief tour of the sanctuary, confessional room and tabernacle, patiently answering our naive questions! They all gave us a warm welcome and seemed to be genuinely glad we had come. Later we Baptists shared pizza at Creno's and talked about the many new things we learned! --- Julie Reiswig

Visiting the Catholic Church last Saturday was a GREAT experience! I was expecting something much different from our church, but in some ways it was similar. Learning about a new church can really expand your spirituality and connection with God, and I was very happy to have gone. --- Maggie Burkett

LENTEN DISCUSSION SERIES



**LOTS OF FELLOWSHIP
AND MAYBE A
LITTLE LEARNING ON
THE SIDE**

The first four Wednesday evenings in March, starting at 6:30pm., we'll gather in the West Parlor—we'll provide a couple of big pots of soup and drinks. Come, bring a salad, bread, or dessert to share and after our meal, there will be a short presentation by Jon White, Christian Education Assistant and seminary student, followed by some discussion around the theme:

**AN EXPANDING INVITATION:
THE HISTORY OF CONFRONTING
ORTHODOXY TO FIND GOD**

MARCH 4:
I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD:
THE EMERGENCE OF MONOTHEISM IN ISRAEL

MARCH 11:
WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?
JESUS AND THE CHRISTIAN MOVEMENT

MARCH 18:
WE KNOW THAT HIS WITNESS IS TRUE:
THE BIBLE, THE CREEDS AND THE
CONSTANTINIAN REVOLUTION

MARCH 25:
THERE AM I AMONG THEM:
THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

UPCOMING EVENTS:

February 11-20 Rancho Ebenezer Team in
 Nicaragua
February 16: Meditation group meets, chapel,
 7-9pm (each Tuesday)
February 17: Ash Wednesday Service, chapel, 7pm
February 28 Lunches on the Square, after worship
March 4: Lenten Series begins, 6:30pm, chapel

*Join in the PEACE VIGILS at Opera House Park
each Saturday, from 9:00AM to 10:00am
and each Tuesday from 5:00to 6:00pm*

**ASH
WEDNESDAY**

**SERVICE
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17TH
7pm**

***EQUIPPING THE SAINTS*
on March 6, 2010
A NEW DAY IS DAWNING**

The Equipping the Saints leadership event will be on Saturday, March 6 from 9:15 AM to 3:45 PM at [North Congregational United Church of Christ](#), 2040 W. Henderson Rd., Columbus. The Metropolitan Commission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the Central Southeast Ohio Association of the United Church of Christ jointly sponsor this event.

“A New Day Dawning” is the theme for this day long leadership training event for laity and clergy of the Christian Church (DOC) and United Church of Christ. David Odell-Scott will be the morning Bible study leader. He serves as Coordinator of the Religion Studies Program at Kent State University where he also chairs the Philosophy Department. His books include “Paul's Critique of Theocracy” and “A Post-Patriarchal Christology.” He is a graduate of Texas Christian University, BA. and Vanderbilt, M. Div. and PhD.

The day will be set within a pattern of worshipful work that includes morning Bible study, a choice of two workshops, lunch with time for fellowship and exchange of ideas among churches.

Registration may be made by mail or online through the Christian Church in Ohio, 355 E. Campus View Blvd., Suite 110 Columbus, OH 43235 or www.ccinoh.org.

Registration of \$15 for the full day including lunch and workshops, is due by Friday, February 26.



**ALLIANCE OF BAPTISTS
CONVOCATION**

Join progressive Christians in an experience of spiritual growth, gathering and worship at the **Alliance of Baptists 2010 Convocation - Born of Wind & Water, Moving with the Spirit.**

This year's event will be hosted at the breathtaking **Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove, California, July 29 - August 1.**

Spiritual formation leaders include singer/songwriter **Carrie Newcomer**, writer, speaker, and retreat leader **Mark Yaconelli**, Interplay co-founder **Cynthia Winton-Henry**, and Pastor Emeritus for First Chinese Baptist Church in San Francisco, CA, **James Chuck**.

[Learn more](#) and [register](#) today at <http://www.allianceofbaptists.org>.

COME AWAY AND FILL YOUR CUP

**A Retreat Day led by Sr. Janice Bachman, O.P.
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2010
at St. Peter and Paul's Retreat Center in Heath Ohio**

Suggested donation for the day is \$20. Please register by Feb 20th by calling (740) 928-4246 or e-mailing info@stspeterandpaulretreatcenter.org

Are the gray days of winter casting a shadow on your prayer life? Bring some “spring” into your pray routine by joining Sr. Janice Bachman, O.P., a Dominican Sister of Peace. Using the cup as a metaphor, this day of prayer will focus on the human experiences of emptiness, fullness, brokenness, flaws and blessings. The day will start with a continental breakfast at 9 am and will end after lunch at 2 pm. All participants will receive a complementary cup to as a reminder of their spiritual thirst.

Suggested donation for the day is \$20. Please register by Feb 20th by calling (740) 928-4246 or e-mailing info@stspeterandpaulretreatcenter.org

The Spirituality Network, Inc.
Assisting those who thirst for spiritual growth.
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www.spiritualitynetwork.org



THANK YOU LETTER

*FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF
WELCOMING AND AFFIRMING BAPTISTS*

Dear Welcoming & Affirming Baptists:

As we turn the corner on another year, I join with people from around our country and say thank you for your generosity to the Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists' this year.

Today the struggle for LGBT people to find communities of faith where they feel safe and welcome is still just that, a struggle. Many of us know this first hand, having been shunned from the fellowship of Baptist life. I myself have been shut out of my own region because I am an out lesbian in a committed relationship. I know the pain of not having a place to worship on Sunday or a faith community that feels like home.

And while the shifts in our cultural understandings of human sexuality are making it easier for LGBT people to work, find housing and be treated as full members of their communities, there are still churches where many LGBT people feel unwelcomed into the love of God in Christ Jesus.

But the Good News is that thanks to your generosity, there are now 70 AWAB member-churches throughout the United States. You have made it possible for people like me to be welcomed home and to find a family where our gifts can be celebrated regardless of our sexual orientation or gender identity. All of the leadership of AWAB joins me in thanking you and hoping that you will continue your generous support of our organization in 2010.

Sincerely,
Robin R. Lunn, Chair
AWAB

Welcome 2010 Church Officers and Committee Members:

Moderator:	Tess Caley
Vice Moderator:	Karen Overholt
Church Clerk	Joan Novak
Financial Secretary	Sandy Ellinger
Treasurer	Rita Potts
Member-at-Large	Audrey Garove
Member-at-Large	Karolyn Burkett

Christian Education Committee: Cindi Turnbull (chair), Patti Burkett, Jan Hoffman, Julie Reiswig

Finance and Endowment Committee: Beth Bryson (chair), Sandy Ellinger, Dave Martin, Joan Novak, Rita Potts, Mike Robertson

Mission & Social Action Committee: Lyn Robertson (chair), Julia Brodie, Jackie Dawson, Nancy Dobbelaer [Nicaragua], Mary Fleming, Sharon Flynn, Laura Joseph, Cheryl McFerren, Amy Mock, Linda Mossholder, Nancy Reeb [WWAS], Jack Shuler

Nominating Committee: Beth Bryson, Nancy Reeb, Lyn Robertson

Outreach and Membership Committee: Patti Burkett, Diane Jaquish, Bridgette Rine, Jean Feeney

Property Committee: Ken Klatt (chair), Gery Bauman, Dan Dobbelaer Jack Esslinger, Lou Jaquish, Jerry Mercer, Charlie VanNess, Mike Robertson Ex officio member: Louise Gemmell.

Social and Recreational Committee: Amy Canini (chair), Sarah Burkett, Jerry Mercer, Susan Richardson, Barbara Rush, Judy Spater

Staff Relations Committee: Judith Thomas (chair), Beth Bryson, Tom Burkett, Joan Novak

Stewardship Committee:

Worship Committee: Tom Burkett (chair), Faith Callison, Sandy Ellinger, Jean Feeney, Dee Fontana, Jan Hoffman, Jeff Reiswig, Steve Trumbull Ex officio member: Jackie Dawson

First Baptist Church of Granville
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Granville, Ohio 43023

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