

~ Visions ~

GLENDALE BAPTIST CHURCH
A caring community of equality and grace.

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One Pastor's Perspective

Many Glendalers have heard me make the comment that the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America has taught me what it means to follow Jesus. I have learned a lot about being a Christian from many other people and experiences, but my involvement in BPFNA has pushed me to examine discipleship in ways that no other part of my life has done. Most of that pushing has come through the people I've met in BPFNA and the way they live their commitment to peacemaking, day after day.

Sharon directed a community center in a large U.S. city. One day in the parking lot, a young man approached her, pulled a gun and demanded her money. Even as fear swept over her with this person holding a gun on her, she refused to lose sight of his humanity. She spoke to him. "I think there's only one dollar in my wallet. You can have it." She looked at him, noticing something that she didn't expect in him — a moment when there was no bravado, when she could see a plea in him rather than a gunpoint demand for her money. She kept talking. His grip on the gun relaxed as she opened her wallet. He lowered the gun as she asked him about his family. His story began to spill out. He was in a crisis of such desperation that he had taken his father's gun, because he knew no other way to get the money he needed. He'd never done anything like this before. As she listened, she began to tell him about the resources available through the community center that might help him. Before it was over, he had made an appointment to come in and talk with her about job counseling and to use the community center job placement service.

Mike joined the army as a young man hoping to be able to go to college. During basic training, a friend challenged him to memorize the Sermon on the Mount. He describes his experience during that time: "So I spent my days learning to be a soldier and my evenings memorizing Jesus' teaching about loving enemies, turning the other cheek, making peace and not war. This led to cognitive dissonance in me, but I initially suppressed it." After finishing basic training and being sent to Germany, he began attending a Baptist church. There he became a Christian, was baptized, and found he couldn't put on his uniform again. He filed for discharge as a conscientious objector and endured the ordeal of following through with his convictions, despite threats of imprisonment and more.

This year at Peace Camp, Thomas and I sat near the back of the sanctuary during worship one evening and watched more than 30 young people commit themselves to peacemaking. Some of them grew up at Peace Camp. Some were there for the first time. Some were ready to declare themselves conscientious objectors. Some pledged to follow a path of non-violence and resistance to violence in all its forms. Some were caught up in something they don't yet understand, but they know it is important. The poignancy of the moment for me was that they were able to do this in community — among people who have walked similar paths and who will teach them and walk with them as they discover their own commitment to being peacemakers in the world.

It strikes me that we take a great risk in exposing our young people to what Jesus taught and lived — they just might believe it. It might permeate their lives. They might go out and challenge the status quo of our world. They might demand nonviolent alternatives for resolving conflicts. They might be the ones who convince us that violence is not just hitting and shooting, but it is over-consuming and overusing. It is anything that damages another part of God's creation. They just might change our world. So we'd better be careful what we teach them. They may lead us where we didn't intend to go. And, having followed them, we may discover that we are a little closer to the Reign of God.

Peace,
 April

Listed Here Are Your Church Officers for 2005-2006 (Sept-Aug):

Glendale Church Council

Chair – Thomas Conner

Division chairs:

Administration, Kreis White
Communications, Anne-Leslie Owens
Education, Linda Ray Miller
Membership, Lyndi Hewitt
Ministry, Don Ramage
Missions, Chris Ferrell
Worship, Sharon Hiatt *

Committees and Special Positions, 2005-06

Church Moderator – Stewart Clifton
Church Steward – David Gooch
Church Clerk – Sharon Hiatt
Treasurer-Joni Elrod
Asst. Treasurer – Jon Neergaard
Martha Jo Berry

Ordination Committee (5 members, 2 year terms, 3 rotate off in odd years, 2 in even)

'06 Mark Caldwell
Bill Northrup
'07 Martha Jo Berry
Nell Magee
Chalene Helmuth

Budget/Finance Committee (6 members with staggered terms from 9/1 until 12/31, 28 months later)

12/31/05 Jim Fey *
John Hill
12/31/06 Thom Elsberry
Pauletta Mademann
12/31/07 Rhonda Pearson
Dave Shepherd

Personnel Committee (6 elected members + admin chair. Hereafter, 3-year terms.)

'07 Jimmy Davis
Jim Hiatt
'06 Liz Allen Fey
Julie O'Neal
'05 Connie Brookshire
Lynn Reed

History Committee (5 members, 3 year terms, rotating off 2-2-1)

'08 Bill Junker
John Laney
'07 Mike Awalt
Joy Smith
'06 David Farmer

Stewardship Committee (5 members, 1-year term)

Molly Boyd
Raye Nell Dyer
Frenchie Fortenberry
Bill Halbert
Charles Warford

** to be voted on September 4, 2005*

From Our New Church Council Chair

This is a little weird for me – writing to you. I'm not sure whether I am supposed to thank you for electing me and my fellow council members (we ran unopposed), encourage you to say "yes" to new division chairs when you are asked to serve in some way, inspire you with some kind of "pilgrims on a journey" lesson, mystify you with some kind of paradigm shift in leadership style or warn you that we have big challenges ahead of us and we will all need to pull together.

Well, maybe some of that will come later. I've been at Glendale for almost 10 years and, if past years are a good indicator, it seems likely that we will experience a range of diverse emotions, challenges, situations, etc. from day to day, week to week, month to month. There's usually not much time for settling around here. Soon after the new council was elected, I shared this message with the members:

I returned a few days ago from Baptist Youth Camp in North Carolina where 11 of our youth and 4 adults spent a week with the youth and adult leaders of 6 other Alliance of Baptist churches – playing, laughing, dancing, crying, worshiping, praying, studying, learning and growing together. It is really hard to explain just how great BYC is to someone who has not experienced what the 140 attendees (both youth and adults) carry away with them. Beyond the typical camp environment of rustic accommodations, camp food and unpredictable weather is a "BYC spirit" that is so amazing. Our youth begin to look forward to the next year almost as soon as they return. This is NOT an exaggeration. For those of you who are familiar with Instant

Messaging (IM), this is what one of our own Glendale youth member's "away message" currently says:

"Thank you everyone who made BYC the greatest week of my life. I love you all and miss you all. I hope everyone has a great year and makes next year even better...if that's even possible."

I'm sharing this with you because, as much as I would like to live in the youthful spirit and emotional thrill of BYC every week, I've returned to the non-BYC side of life: work, household chores, daily news, church accounting, blah, blah, blah. However, as I contemplate Glendale's future and the responsibility that we will soon share as a church council, the sincerity of our young camper's message struck me and made me realize that we can introduce a little "BYC Spirit" into our work as a council. After all, BYC is about celebrating and lifting up people for who they are – beloved children of God. Amidst our gifts, talents, questions, fears, brokenness, pains and hopes, God is present in our lives and alive in our relationships. I have this vision of a God who takes an Instant Message like the one above and turns it into a song. Perhaps God even dances to the music that flows from the unadulterated sincerity and hope in those words.

My hope for us this upcoming year is that we can join together and feel the spirit of a youthful, playful, dancing God who's cheering for us, delighting in our work together (as hard as that work may be). When we feel emptiness or loneliness, or when we stumble in our selfishness, my hope is that God's arm will be around our shoulders, helping us up, wiping off our dirty, tear-stained faces and offering us comfort – the spiritual equivalent of a homemade chocolate milkshake (or whatever it is that makes you feel better)!

Our Glendale community is very dear to us. I'm trusting that we will do good things together and that we will never overlook God's love as we live out our calling as a beloved community. To borrow heavily from one of our youth, "Thank you, everyone, who has made Glendale the greatest church experience of my life. I love you all. I hope everyone has a great year and makes next year even better...if that's even possible."

Thos. (Thomas Conner)

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## Education News

It's time for the start of a new school year. That means lots of things are happening in the education division.

Children's Sunday School is bursting at the seams! We have a great problem with overcrowding in our Sunday school rooms. With the addition of new members and regular visitors, each classroom is full to capacity (leaving little room for NEW visitors!) Our preschool teachers will be deciding in the next week which class gets the larger room, since both classes are roughly the same size. The elementary classes are expanding from two to three classrooms because of the influx of new students.

Youth will continue to have a choice during the Sunday school hour. While both classes will continue to study a variety of Biblical and Christian living topics, the YS2 class will feature assigned homework, while the as-yet-unnamed Youth Class will covenant in different ways. The Youth have also formed their own Youth Council, where the Youth themselves (with input from trusted adults) will make their own decisions about programming and scheduling.

In Adult education we will continue to have the already established classes, and we are adding two new classes beginning September 11<sup>th</sup>. One class will offer traditional Baptist Bible study (of a tradition that precedes the 90s). This class will use published curriculum and will be open to adults of all ages. The other will be a Women and Spirituality class. More information can be found in this issue of Visions. We are also looking into the possibility of a series of short-term classes that would look at topics of Biblical scholarship, spiritual disciplines, Baptist history, and speaking theologically.

We would like to begin to have Sunday school greeters in the lobby from 9:00 - 9:45. These greeters can help visitors find the best Sunday school classes for them and their children. Another vital ministry that we will begin this fall will be Children and Youth Sunday school "Teacher's Helpers". These are people who care about our children and youth Sunday school but cannot commit to teaching on Sunday morning. Serving on a rotating basis, these helpers will get the list of needed supplies for each week and see that they are in the room before Sunday school begins. They may also be called upon to take attendance each week. This will help us recognize when visitors begin attending and when members are unexpectedly absent.

On Wednesday evenings, we will begin having 30 minutes of Children's Choir (6:30 - 7:00) followed by a missions-type program (7:00 - 7:30). All children's programming will end at 7:30 on Wednesday evenings.

We are exploring the possibility of having a short-term Companions in Christ group forming in Mid-October. This course will end before Advent. If we have sufficient interest, we may hold another course during Lent.

As always, all of these programs run on LOTS of volunteers. If you are interested in learning more about the opportunities, please contact Linda Ray Miller at [lindaray\\_miller@yahoo.com](mailto:lindaray_miller@yahoo.com), or call me at 258-2453.

## *Two New Options for Adult Sunday School!*

Beginning Sunday, September 11, Glendale's Education Division will offer two new Sunday School classes for adults. Carole Farmer and Suzanne Wilson will facilitate and lead a class for women dealing with topics, issues and questions about Spirituality. The first Sunday will involve getting acquainted, surveying interests and planning for the Fall. The class will meet upstairs in the newly repainted smaller youth room.

The other new class will be a traditional Bible Study group. It will be led by Betty Mears, and will begin using the Smyth and Helwys Formations literature for adults. Smyth and Helwys is a publishing house related to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. This class will meet in the Fellowship Hall.

## Thank You!

Our Summer of Holy Play was intriguing, exciting, energetic, far-reaching, and a little bit scary at times. Many, many thanks to all the Glendalers (and a few guests, too!) who pitched in and made the Summer's worship and activities entertaining and meaningful. Some preached, some danced, some taught, some cooked, some sang, some competed, some brainstormed, some paddled. Some baked, some swam, some camped, some packed backpacks, some rode a horse, some prayed, some tapped, some hoped for the best. To everyone who contributed whatever it is that you had to give, we thank you. It has been a Summer that will not soon be forgotten.

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY: SEPTEMBER

|                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Lynn Reed         | 16 Spencer Thornton |
| 3 Paul Wheeler      | Lisa Lehr           |
| 6 Danny Webb        | 17 David Carlisle   |
| 7 Hope Collins      | Marjorie Halbert    |
| 8 Jon Neergaard     | Lucy Lopez          |
| 9 John Laney        | 19 Rhonda Finerty   |
| 10 Maurine Callahan | 23 Lee Miller       |
| 12 Sarah Bailes     | 24 Mollie Vannoy    |
| John Hill           | 25 David Reeves     |
| Chris Ferrell       | 26 Sandra Hardaway  |
| Jacob Mills         | 30 Mia Webb         |

### **\*\*\*\*\* *Pans of Biscuits Brunch with Kate Campbell* \*\*\*\*\***

**Saturday, September 17, 2005 \* 10:00 am - Noon**  
(doors open at 9:30, biscuits and gravy served at 9:45)  
**Fellowship Hall, Glendale Baptist Church**  
**Brunch/Concert Tickets: \$20.00, ages 17 years and older**  
**\$5.00, ages 16 and under**

**Reservations are required for this Brunch/Concert and may be made on-line at [www.glendalebaptist.org](http://www.glendalebaptist.org).**  
**Please note: Reservations, paid in full, must be in the church office by Thursday, September 15.**

## Tales of Youth Adventure!



The youth hosted Luke 14:12 at Edgehill United Methodist Church, August 9.

A planning meeting/potluck for parents, youth, pastors and lay leaders was held Sunday, August 14, after worship. Carson Brock, Daniel Collins, Jonas Hill, Peter Sturdevant and Rachel White have volunteered to serve on the newly formed youth council. The first youth council meeting was held on Sunday, August 21.

The youth had a movie night at the home of Thomas Conner on Friday, August 19. They were done by 7:00 A.M. on Saturday!

A new youth part of the Glendale website has been formed. There are a few calendar items now, but there are plans to develop this site. Visit it at <http://www.glendalebaptist.org/youth>.

The youth honored Stephanie Wyatt at a reception on her last Sunday before she headed to Brite Divinity School to pursue her PhD.

Kreis White painted basketball goal lines and a four-square court outside the fellowship hall. The youth are getting a lot of use out of these!

## Kid's Corner



The playground was dedicated on Sunday, July 31. The children's choir sang, Evie Davis read a poem written by Rosalyn Ramage and Julie Coulter reflected on the work and play involved in creating our new play space for children and adults, alike.

On August 21, Anne-Leslie Owens led us during Faithful Friends.

We bid farewell to Claire Richardson who has co-led the children's Sunday School class for the past few years. Claire is heading to Marlboro College in Vermont. We also appreciate Claire's willingness to care for our younger children on Wednesday nights this summer as our paid childcare worker. Children, their families and others celebrated Claire at lunch on Sunday, August 21. We will miss her!

Katie Fey began her duties as the Wednesday night paid childcare worker on August 17. Thank you, Katie!

Children's Choir will resume on Wednesday, September 7.



Attention all Collegiate Glendalers! We need your college/university/graduate school address so that we can write to you during the school year. Please call or email the church office with your address as soon as you know it. And thanks!

***Needle Nuts will meet at the home of Laura Kendall on Saturday, September 24, at 10:00 a.m. Laura and Linda Ray Miller will host us that day. Laura's address is 5244 Village Trace, Nashville, 37211.***