



Calvin Presbyterian Church

where faith, compassion, and authenticity meet



THE STANDISH INKWELL

Calvin's News & Notes

April 2009

To what extent are you aware of what's taking place in the evangelical world? If you are not really sure what an evangelical is, evangelicals are Christians who are focused on the message of salvation and on making all disciples of Christ. Most of the non-denominational churches around the country would identify themselves as evangelicals. In our area, Victory Church, Northway Church, and Orchard Hill Church would all be examples of evangelical churches. Evangelical theology tends to be heavily focused on the sacrifice of Jesus on cross for our sins, the need to be "born-again," obedience to Christ, and Christ as being the only way to salvation.

Personally, I'm not an evangelical. That doesn't mean that I reject completely evangelical theology. I just tend to subscribe to a more expansive theology that has to do with trusting God for our salvation and committing our lives to a process of growing ever closer to God throughout life.

I may not be an evangelical, but there are many aspects of my ministry style that are evangelical. For example, I believe strongly in the need to reach out to those outside the church, not with judgment and superiority, but with love. I believe that we should be more focused on growing as individuals and as a church. I agree with that mission, and I believe that where we have been failing in the mainline church is in the area of embracing the Great Commission from Matthew 28: *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.* I agree with this mission, and I believe that too many of our mainline churches are tentative to embrace it. As a result, I spend a lot of time reading what evangelicals say. They are often are the trendsetters in Christianity, especially in terms of understanding how to adapt church to where people outside the church are, all with the intent of reaching others for Christ in order bring others to a relationship with God in Christ.

(Continued on page 2)

Did You Know?

"Meet the Paraclete" by Brendon Wahlberg

The Gospel of John, in chapters 14-16, contains the only formal teaching about the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. These passages are part of Jesus' farewell speech, and in them, he teaches his disciples about the Paraclete, a term for the Holy Spirit that is unique to John's writings.

The word Paraclete (Greek: *parakletos*) means "one called alongside". It has been translated variously as advocate, counselor, and comforter. The Paraclete is in fact the Holy Spirit, the presence of God who will remain with the disciples after Jesus has ascended. These passages give us a rare

insight into the nature of the third person of the Trinity. Here they are in order:

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate [Paraclete], to be with you forever.

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I believe strongly in the need to reach out to those outside the church with love

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THE STANDISH INKWELL

Our youth group has thrived and grown exponentially, by helping kids see the connection between faith church and life

Not being an evangelical, I don't necessarily embrace all that they do and believe, but I still stay aware of what they are thinking. I'm always open to integrating evangelical elements into the ministry at Calvin Church. What's fascinated me in the past year is how often I've read stuff coming from the evangelical movement that embraces stuff that we have already been doing at Calvin Church. For instance, Willow Creek Church has become very interested in how to keep those seeking the deepest spiritual growth from leaving their church, since their own self-research has shown that those most interested in being centered in God are the most frustrated with their way of doing church. I've also read numerous articles in the past year talking about how the typical evangelical approach to doing youth groups has failed. For many years the common assumption among many evangelical youth group leaders can be summed up this way: If we want to attract young people, we have to make church "fun" by loading our youth groups with games and activities. But their own research has shown that an overwhelming percentage of youth from these youth groups don't go back to church once they graduate from high school. Since the focus has been on fun, not on spiritual growth and worship, they don't see the value of church as they grow older. Interestingly, the more recent evangelical articles have talked about the need to get kids to engage with scripture and discuss how to apply it to their lives. They talk about making youth groups more relevant in helping kids see the connection between faith, church, and life. Where have I seen this approach before? Oh yeah, Bruce Smith, our youth director, has been doing this approach for over 15 years. Our youth group still has fun, but a lot of the youth group program here is simply getting the kids to connect the teachings of the Bible to everyday life. And the youth group has thrived and grown exponentially.

This brings me to the heart of what I want to say. Recently I've been reading some very interesting stuff coming out of the evangelical media suggesting that something else we are doing is on the cutting edge. They are saying that perhaps their churches need to embrace tradition, ritual, and sacraments more. One article that caught my eye recently appeared in Leadership.Net, a publication of *Christianity Today*, the leading evangelical Christian magazine. The article discussed about how many evangelical churches are returning to ritual—to what the mainline church has already been doing. You can find the article at

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/preachingworship/worship/returntoritual.html>

The article is by Eric Read, and he writes about three churches that are returning to placing ritual and sacraments at the center of worship. I think his opening paragraphs are really interesting. He says, *We keep hearing of churches 'returning to ritual.' Such churches often share common elements: weekly Communion, written prayers, creeds, corporate confession, and other things that for some stalwarts may feel awfully Catholic.*

Are liturgical elements a worship fad, like amateur drama and pop-star singers of the 1990s? Or is there lasting interest in expressions of the faith older than ourselves?

'Dimming the lights doesn't make you liturgical,' said one pastor when asked about the advantages of weekly Communion. 'We can create worship services with the candles and creeds, and people would have a great experience, but that's not a good reason to do it. We shouldn't reclaim liturgy because it 'works' in a postmodern age or because other churches are successful at it. We should do it because it reconnects us with historic Christianity and moves us from my spirituality to our spirituality, dating back 2,000 years.'

So what does this say about their movement back to liturgy and ritual? One of the reasons I follow evangelical writings is that I've discovered that the writings can predict movements that are yet-to-come but are coming nonetheless. I think that what they are saying is that the population is shifting. There's a generation coming, and some in the generations already here, that form a connection with God through ritual and liturgy. The word "liturgy" has been a bad word among evangelicals. It has too much of a Catholic, Episcopalian, Lutheran, or even Presbyterian ring to it. What we do is "liturgy." What evangelicals say that they do is praise and worship. Except that now they are talking liturgy. They are reconnecting with something that the

mainline church has never lost: the power of rituals such as communion, prayers of confession, and even creating intentional sacred spaces through use of art and lighting.

I was told once that contemporary worship is the “cutting edge” of worship. Apparently not anymore. It seems that the cutting edge may be where we are, which is the place of emphasizing liturgy, ritual, and sacraments, while also integrating some contemporary elements such as more varied music and the use of power point technology.

What does this say to us? To me it says that “the times they are a changin’.” We may be moving toward a time in which what the mainline church has to offer spiritually has power once again. It also says that Calvin Presbyterian Church may be on the cutting edge.

With God’s Blessings,

The Rev. Dr. N. Graham Standish

Calvin Presbyterian Church is a spiritual family sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ and discerning God’s purpose and will through sincere commitment to worship, prayer, fellowship, teaching and mission.

Adult Education for Spring

The Four Gospels, led by The Rev. Jim Campbell

April 19, May 3, 10, 17, & 24

What do you know about the four gospels? Most people think they say the exact same thing in four different ways, but they don’t. Each one presents Jesus in a different light. Join us as we explore the differences in the gospels.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Please think about the importance of love and safety in the lives of our vulnerable young people. The mission committee at Calvin would like you to know:

- There were no federal laws to protect our children prior to 1974
- In 2006 there were over 900,000 victims of child maltreatment
- Federal law describes child abuse as "Any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker, which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation, or an act or failure to act which presents an imminent risk of serious harm"
- One in every 4 girls and at least one in every 9 boys reports that prior to age 18 he or she has experienced some form of unwanted sexual experience by an adult
- Younger children, those under 3 years of age, are more likely to die as a result of child maltreatment
- 40-60% of men who abuse women also abuse their children
- 3 million American children are exposed to domestic violence in their homes each year and children from violent homes have greater risks for mental health, addiction, and educational problems
- Every 15 seconds, a woman is being battered

Please, if you suspect a child is being abused, call the national hotline at 1-800-932-0313. Anyone can report and they can do so anonymously. 90% of mandated reporters DO NOT reports suspicions of abuse because they do not want to disrupt the family! Disrupting the family may save the life of a child. Also, if you suspect a woman is being abused by her partner, kindly and gently pass on these hotline numbers for local shelters:

- Victim Outreach Intervention Center: **724-776-6790**
- Women’s Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh: **1-877-388-8255**

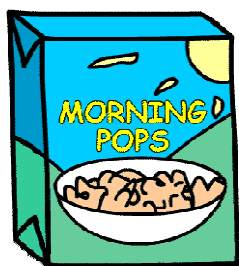


Calvin's News & Notes

Food Cupboard News



The Board of Directors at the Food Cupboard met on March 10th to interview 3 very qualified candidates for the position of Director. We hired a young woman by the name of Katie Tomo. She is a resident of Zelenople and began her volunteer experience as a youngster with her church youth group. At age 16 she volunteered with "Katie's Kitchen" through St Mark Lutheran Church in Butler. She is a graduate of Baylor University with a Masters in Social Work. She is presently on hiatus from her career to raise her children and had been praying and searching for a local mission that would fill this "gap" in her life. We feel fortunate to have her and the experience that she brings with her to the SWBCFC. You will have the opportunity to meet her in June when Calvin serves as the volunteers at the Food Cupboard. Watch the May newsletter for information on days and times that we will be needing your help!



Food Dedication - **April 12** (the second Sunday of each month)

Needs: Baked Beans, Baking mixes (muffins & cookies), Cereal

Boxed potatoes (mashed & scalloped), Canned vegetables, Canned fruit

Applesauce, Spaghetti Sauce, Soup, Tuna, Macaroni & Cheese

Egg Noodles, Pasta, Peanut Butter & Jelly, Helper meals, Ensure

Boxes, Xerox paper size, are also needed. These are best for filling and carrying. Baby food and formula are not needed, as these are supplied by the WIC (Women Infants & Children) program. Diapers and wipes, however, are needed.

***Please supply only the items on this list. Most other items are hard to dispose of.**

Your monetary contributions are most welcome.

Please make checks payable to **Calvin Church** and mark "Food Cupboard."

Arby Shenesky, 724-452-9755

Confirmation Class

The confirmation class just finished a challenge based on the Parable of the Talents. This was an optional activity where they received a small amount of money. They were given 1 month to use their spiritual gifts and talents to do something good.

Some of their efforts included doing extra chores around the house, baking cookies, visiting nursing home residents, helping others in their neighborhood, and using their charming personalities in the art of sales.

In the end, the class returned with a total of \$150. After discussion of the missions that Calvin is involved in, the class collectively decided to donate this money to the Food Bank. It will be matched for a total donation of \$300.

Good work ~ May you all continue to serve God by serving others!

Contributed by Karen Alberts

Green Fair to Celebrate Earth Day



On Sunday morning, April 26, the Green Team of Calvin Presbyterian Church will once again host a Green Fair to help you prepare for summer. The focus of the fair will be to help you become greener as the summer approaches.

We will once again have a number of tables with interesting ideas and displays. It's easy being Green at Calvin!

Mission Matters - A Message From Janet Guyer

Janet's parents, Dr. John and Betsy Guyer, were missionaries with the Presbyterian Church in Chiang Mai, Thailand from 1952-1990. Janet, our missionary in Southern Africa, quotes her mother in an article in the Medical Benevolence Foundation newsletter.

"Why is it that Christians are always the first to get involved with these diseases everyone else is afraid of?" It was 1987 and Betsy Guyer had just finished a presentation on HIV and AIDS for science instructors at McCormick School of Nursing. From early days, Presbyterian partners have been working to respond to the AIDS pandemic.

Janet then reflects on her own ministry. She lists four things that are needed in the AIDS crisis: prevention, access to the medical treatment that can keep people alive, readily available testing for the HIV virus, and care for those affected, especially orphans. She concludes with this. "In the six years that I have lived in Southern Africa I have watched the churches becoming more and more responsive to the HIV and AIDS pandemic. In visiting volunteers, I often ask what it is that compels them to take on and carry on with their work. Frequently the response is first a puzzled look as if to say, 'Why are you even asking this question?', followed by the response, 'It is because I am a Christian.'"

Contributed by Agnes Peebles, Mission Committee



Morning Circle Schedule

MORNING CIRCLE NEWS - Well ladies we start our new study book and Peg will lead us with Chapter 1. It was decided that all should read the Introduction (do you know where you put your new book?????) before meeting on **April 9th at 10 AM**. Hope to see you. Also Nellie and Peg are to show us a brooch or two. They were all very interesting last month with a story of each brooch.

Contributed by Flo Towers

Open Circle and Presbyterian Women News

April 28th meeting at Laurie Hilton's. The lesson title is "The Dead are Raised." Phone number for directions to Hilton home is 724-453-5315.

Mars Home for youth greatly appreciates the generosity of the members who helped make Christmas a memorable experience for our kids (ages 11-18) by participating in our Gift Giving Program. So many kids depend on MHY everyday for care, support, and treatment to help them cope with their trauma and underprivileged circumstances, which is a costly endeavor for MHY. Without your kindness we should not have the opportunity to give our kids the joys in life that they deserve. So, we thank each and every kind heart who extended their Christmas list to include the wishes of our kids.

Shellyn Shoenthal, Mars Home for Youth

Contributed by Kathy Efaw



Calvin Youth Groups

Calvin Youth Group (CYG), grades 9-12 Sunday evenings, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Calvin Youth Group 2 (CYG2), grades 7-8 Sunday evenings, 6:00-7:30 p.m.

Calvin Youth Group 3 (CYG3), grades 5-6 Sunday evenings, 6:00-7:15 p.m.

Ready for God (RFG), grades 3-4 Sunday evenings, 6:00-7:15 p.m.

All Youth Groups—always check the Sunday bulletins for any changes

For further information contact Bruce Smith, Youth Director, at the church at 724-452-7560 (ext 14) or brucesmith@zoominternet.net

“Meet the Paraclete” (continued)

This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.” (John 14:15-17)

“I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.” (14:25-26)

“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf.” (15:26)

“But I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you about them. I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, “Where are you going?” But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me

no longer; about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned. I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.” (16:4-15)

What can we learn about the Holy Spirit from these passages? The word Paraclete belongs to the language of law courts, and means our defender in court, our advocate. Notice that Jesus says he is sending “another” advocate. This is because both Jesus and the Holy Spirit are our advocates. The Holy Spirit is to continue in Jesus’ role on Earth while Jesus takes up the role in Heaven, as seen in John’s first letter. “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate [paraclete] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John 2:1)

What else can these passages teach us? The Paraclete is an advocate. In court, an advocate stands

opposed to an adversary. You may remember that the word for devil, “diabolos”, means the opposite of an advocate, an accuser. The accuser’s role is described in Revelation. “Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, proclaiming, ‘Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Messiah, for the accuser of our comrades has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.’” (Revelation 12:10) So, the Holy Spirit’s purpose is opposite to that of Satan. One function of our advocate is to turn the attack against Satan by accusing the accuser. The Paraclete condemns Satan, the “ruler of this world,” in judgment. The Paraclete also works to bring people to Christ, by arguing that they sin by not believing in Christ, and testifying to the world about the righteousness of those who do believe.

These passages say that the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, is the Spirit of truth. Sent by God in Jesus’ name, the Spirit teaches everything that Jesus did not teach while living among us, and reminds us of everything Jesus taught when he was among us. The Spirit also declares the future. So, the Paraclete is a teacher of all truth, past, present and future. We are further defended against Satan by learning the truth about God. Furthermore, the telling of this truth glorifies Jesus Christ. The New Testament scriptures

themselves accomplish many of these same goals in the world. Both scripture and the Paraclete teach us about what Jesus did among us, and glorify him. No wonder it is said that scripture is inspired by the Holy Spirit. Together they do the same work.

Finally, these passages reassure us that the presence of the Holy Spirit is with us and within us, forever, even if it is unseen and unknown by many in the world. Paul has further teaching about the Spirit and its gifts. “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:7-13)

Good News of Global Mission

During this first quarter of 2009 a couple of big steps were taken in the overseas mission of the Presbyterian Church. Twenty newly appointed mission workers completed their international service training in January and have begun their assignments. It was one of the largest orientation classes in recent years. The group includes doctors, nurses, pastors and others serving in eight different countries doing work in hunger needs, health ministries and leadership development.

A recent event in Haiti is one of the most hopeful, long-range solutions to devastating problems in that country. 13 young Haitian men and women are the first four-year graduates of a new program to train professional nurses. Graduation ceremonies were held in Port-au-Prince for the charter class of this new professional nursing program supported in part by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Haiti is also one of the places Pittsburgh Theological Seminary students have gone to help with installing cisterns, building fish ponds, planting trees and working in schools in the name of Christ. Thank you for your mission funding.

Blessings,

Rev. Dr. Stephen Polley, Pastor of Pastoral Care

What is Friends of the Park?

The Community Park, situated within both Zelienople and Harmony, has been the source of wonderful times and great memories for most of the residents of our community. The park was maintained by local business men and residents for years as a private organization. Several years ago, the Park Association sold the land that the park sits on to the Borough of Zelienople. The expense of updating the pool and the park has now far exceeded the money that the park brings in for its annual memberships.

Friends of the Park was then formed in order assist the Zelienople Park Board with the mission to raise funds for the renovation and revitalization of the community park.

In order to view their upcoming fundraisers and how you too can be a part of their efforts, please refer to the following website:

www.myzeliepark.org

Phone: 724-452-1219

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Contributed by Anissa Tekelenburg

“Did You Know” Announcement

All of the previous “Did You Know?” articles are now hosted on the Calvin website in the Discipleship section. Or go directly to:

<http://www.calvinchurchzelie.org/didyouknow.htm>

Announcements and News

To put announcements in the Sunday Bulletin, please call the office no later than the Thursday of the week you want the announcement to appear.

All Newsletter material must be submitted by the 20th of each month to be included in the next month’s edition. Please send newsletter items to Nancy Mead at nancy@mead.cc. Thanks in advance!

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Rev. Dr. Stephen Polley
Pastor of Pastoral Care

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Youth Director

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Mark Sebring	<i>Personnel & Finance</i>		

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We're on the web!

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