

The Beacon



**Valley Baptist Church Newsletter
January 2007**

From the Pastor's Desk

Years ago Kathy and I had a little sign in our house that said, "A good marriage is the union of two good forgivers." How true that is. I am so glad that Kathy is such a good forgiver as I need it often!

The same is true for a church. The slogan could be reworded to say, "A good church is made up of good forgivers." In Psalm 133:1 we read, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!" We model Christ for the lost world around us by forgiving one-another. We experience the presence of God in our church when we, through His grace, forgive one-another.

As we enter 2007, pause and ask God what you can do to maintain peace and harmony in this church. We are all familiar with John F. Kennedy's famous line, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country." Shouldn't it be even more so with our church and God's kingdom? Church is not a place where we determine our level of happiness by how well the church meets our needs, but rather in how we are able to meet the needs of others. And all of this begins by forgiving those who have wronged us. We can do it, with Christ's strength.

In closing, please don't forget to pray for your church. I for one sure need it. Pray that we will have wisdom from the Lord as we seek to follow Him in this next chapter in the life of our church. Join me as we ask God which things must be done now to accomplish His will through us and which things are good but not best and can wait until later.

Kathy and I are so thankful to the Lord to be here with you. You have already been so kind to us that we have been amazed. We look forward to the years ahead as we walk together. Remember, a good church is made up of good forgivers.

In Christ's love,
Ronny

Church Happenings:



***Ponderings of a Sunday School Director** by Daniel Tanimoto

Almost twenty years ago my wise pastor told this baby Christian, “You are saved by God’s grace. You are obligated to step out and grow in Christ.” When I pondered what that meant, he pointed me to Galatians 5:22.

Do you know that our offering envelope has an accountability list under Sunday School? I encourage you to take one home and tape it next to your calendar. Every few months, ask yourself if you’re growing.

Present: also includes Worship service, Fellowship and meetings.

Giving: of time, talent, treasure (a true reflection of your relationship with God.)

Daily Bible Reading and Prayer Time: is fertilizer for healthy growth.

***Discipleship Training**

Jim Hildabrand will be starting a new Discipleship Training class on Sunday the 14th of January.

The class will meet at 9:30 Sunday morning and will repeat at 5:30 Sunday evening. It will be a six week long overview of Church History based on the classic little book “The Trail of Blood” by J. M. Carroll. Dr. Carroll was a pastor, college administrator and historian in Texas. His brother B. H. Carroll was the founder and first president of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

This study will make you appreciate as never before how blessed we are to live in the present time and place. It will also help you understand the price paid by faithful Bible believing Christians who kept the faith alive under very difficult circumstances. You will also learn why informed Baptists don’t like to be referred to as Protestants.

If you are interested in taking the class, in either the morning or evening session, **please sign up** on the sheet provided in the foyer so enough workbooks can be prepared. .

How are you doing in the Spiritual Discipline of “Living in the Word”?

The following are true in my life; Never -1 Seldom -2 Occasionally -3 Frequent -4 Always -5

1. I regularly read and study my Bible. _____
2. I believe the Bible is God's Word and provides His instructions for life. _____
3. I evaluate cultural ideas and lifestyles by biblical standards. _____
4. I can answer questions about life and faith from a biblical perspective. _____
5. I replace impure or inappropriate thoughts with God's truth. _____
6. I demonstrate honesty in my actions and conversation. _____
7. When the Bible exposes an area of my life needing change, I respond to make things right. _____
8. Generally, my public and private self are the same. _____
9. I use the Bible as the guide for the way I think and act. _____
10. I study the Bible for the purpose of discovering truth for daily living _____

Living by God's Word Total

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“If we treat people as they are, we make them worse.
If we treat people as they ought to be, we help them become what they
are capable of becoming.”



Music Notes by John Gamble

I want to share some thoughts about singing praises that have come to me through some reading I have been doing. Paul and Silas are wonderful examples of Worship and Praise. Directed by God, they went to Philippi and were engaged in a powerful ministry. They were unjustly accused of being trouble makers by some very shady characters. The following verses describe what happened.

Acts 16:20-25 “They brought them before the magistrates and said, “These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice. “The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten. After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. Upon receiving such orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.”

Here they were - in miserable circumstances and what did they do? They sang! Praise and worship comes easy in comfortable surroundings. We are accustomed to easing into worship services and slipping into a familiar seat. But even then our thoughts often may be filled with almost everything but God. We’re kind of there, but kind of not. We watch the clock, plan what to wear, think about what we have to do this afternoon or tomorrow, watching what others are doing. In other words, unfocused. None of this was taking place with Paul and Silas as they sat in prison. Their praise wasn’t linked to the quality of the music, the comfort of the surroundings, the acceptability of the worship style or the speaking abilities of the pastor.

They sang!

Our songs of praise help us to focus our worship on God, the only one worthy of our praise. The songs remind us of the truth that God is good. Our temporary world is a mess – a sin-sick, sin-cursed world. And God calls us to remember that eternity is permanent. By His grace and for His glory we’ll get through this temporary life. So we sing – not the blues, but songs of praise. And our songs remind us of this truth: God is good! All the time! Paul and Silas knew this truth. Our worship and praise can help carry us through the difficult times and the good times when we make the effort to focus all our attention on God.

Here it is, nearly the end of the year 2006. I want to say thank you to those who participated in special music and choir throughout the year. And, at the same time I would like to encourage and invite others to participate in the coming months. I believe that God likes music because He has gifted so many outstanding song writers and musicians. He has blessed Valley Baptist Church with an abundance of talent. I cannot

even imagine how we could get along without the support of our two gifted pianists Priscilla Richmond and Jeanette Sweet. These ladies have been very faithful in sharing their music gifts. Our volunteer choir has been amazing in their support during the past year. Choir practice will resume on Wednesday January 10, 2007 following prayer service. We will be improving our music skills together and learning some new music. If you love to sing, you are invited. May God bless you all and may our songs of praise reflect the heart attitude of Paul and Silas as they were in that cold dark prison. Remember, God is good! All the time! Sing Praise.



The Hostesses were very busy during the month of December. We hosted the Annual Christmas Banquet on December 10th, Welcome to the Cooksey Family Potluck on December 17th, and the New Years Eve Fellowship. All of these events were well attended. I would like to extend a thank you to the committee members (Peggy Tanimoto, Judy Lund, Suzanne Wegner, Carrol Bowerman) and to the volunteers (Pat Merilatt, Nola Stephenson, Sherri Nauman, and the Hampshire Family) who helped make these events a success. We look forward to serving all of you in the new year. Jo Ann Gamble, Hostess Chairman

*** Women's Ministries from Carrol Bowerman**

December tends to be a month of giving and the generosity at Valley Baptist overflowed. I have many "thank you's" to express. First – thank you to everyone for generously stocking the Cooksey's pantry before their arrival. Second – thank you to those who donated money to purchase gifts for residents of Life Care. Twenty stockings were stuffed to be distributed on Christmas Eve. Third – thank you to the women who purchased gifts for our VCAP family. I know your generosity blessed them Christmas morning. Fourth – thank you to the ladies who planned the Christmas tea/baby shower. I really appreciate the young ladies who helped with food preparation, serving and clean-up. Their attitude of joy as they worked was a reminder to me that all tasks, great or small, are a gift to the Lord. As they washed dishes, I heard them singing Christmas carols!

We will not meet in January, but plan to join us in early February for a special Valentines project.

***New Items in the Library from Nancy Snow**

We have some new fiction book series in the library. One series is about the great revival in America by Bill Bright. I, for one, have heard references to the great revival over the years, but do not know much about it. This should be a chance to have a pleasant read and learn about our roots at the same time. The other series is about the Amish by Wanda Brunstetter.

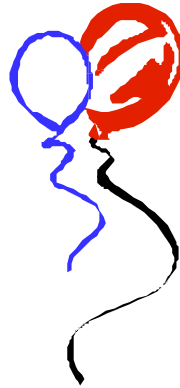
For the kids we have the DVD of the *Chronicles of Narnia* and a DVD collection of the *McGee and Me* series.

If you recall Pastor Kelly's reading that he would do on Christmas Eve---we now have the full version of that story: *The Worst Best Christmas Pageant Ever* by Barbara Robinson.

January Birthday's and Anniversaries

Have a GREAT “*Jesus Loves You*” special day!!!!

January 1 Jessica Menne
January 7 Agnes McCalmon
January 12 LaWanda DeJong
January 16 Tom Snow
Dean & Suzanne Wegner
January 20 Don Whiteley
January 23 Jim Hildabrand
January 24 Micah Richmond
January 25 Lacy Vaage
January 28 Jerry Merilatt
Patti Richmond
January 29 Evalyn Haxton



If we have omitted anyone, please let us know, so that we may recognize your birthday and/or anniversary in future newsletters. If you are a newcomer, please let Suzanne Wegner know, so that we can be sure to recognize your birthday and/or anniversary as well.



***Has your home address, phone number, or your e-mail address changed?**

PLEASE keep us posted!

HAPPENINGS IN/AND THROUGH THE ASSOCIATION:

If you have items for the newsletter, please submit them to the church office by the 20th of the month. *macvalleybc@yahoo.com*