

Dialogue

First Baptist Church of Lewisburg
51 South Third Street
Lewisburg, PA 17837
Volume XLVI, Number 3
Email 2010

free to think, bound to serve

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From the Pastor:

Inside old Bibles the hands of ancestors offer themselves. There, scribed carefully across the allotted interleaving, are marriage records and birth dates and deaths. In an era when labor was dawn-to-dusk, people had time to master penmanship, and took pains to record important things in a fit hand.

Though the writing is uniformly good--approaching the rhythm and regularity of calligraphy--the individual's touch is there. Some make bigger loops, or longer stems; some have a thick enough nib that a little of the calligrapher's shading shapes the rounded letters. Whoever kept this log of the family's voyage through God's good earth took the duty seriously, and then used the same steady hand to write out lists, and compose letters, and keep diaries.

You'd think that we'd learned to live a hundred years old--well, we have, some of us--but it hasn't taken that long for handwriting to vanish from life. Something that spanned centuries is petering out, and future biographers are going to be lucky if there is some retrievable data as reliably useful as the trunks of correspondence which have permitted us to share the lives of people long dead. Perhaps persons important enough to guess at the interest of posterity are printing out hard copies, or transferring their private writing from floppy to CD to thumb drive, as technology changes. Instead of a characteristic script, the personal touches will be reduced to typical language, or habitual errors, or idiosyncratic use of those little pictures devised with punctuation marks.

My wife and I met while she was spending weekends in my former community. We really got acquainted through the mail. I used to tell people we had a "nineteenth century courtship," a few visits in person and the majority of conversation in letters. We'd be on the phone Saturday nights, but the days between were spent writing, and reading. There's a drawerful of correspondence in the house, the sort of thing earlier generations preserved for sentimental reasons. If we wanted to revisit ourselves a quarter of a century ago, there we'd be.

The computer, and e mail, changed everything. People were already losing the habit of composing letters, but the convenience of the computer accelerated the shift. More people are more routinely in touch now than ever.

Communication has increased. Perhaps because people can't always have their phone to their ear, texting has become almost a constant behavior.

I used to think in terms of writing gaining from reading. Good literature, well-turned sentences, eloquent evocations of experience, would influence the reader when he went to write. Exposure to different authors would enrich vocabulary, and reveal varieties of style.

I don't know how writing influences reading, but it must. It is easier to get thoughts down and sent off than ever, but is the spontaneity and informality of our current communication going to make us different readers? If we aren't consciously crafting our own compositions, will we engage other people's writings as considered creations, the result of deliberate choices? Will we notice how things are said, or just mine sentences for information? Will we, after years of allowing inadequate software to do everyone's editing, recognize errors?

Instant messaging expects what gets said to be ready made, as though all persons wish to exchange is data. Whether the new media will serve to help people express themselves through what they put into words is less clear. There is a voice in writing that is missing from keyboarding, and our generation may be nearing a time when all those hints of the inner human have to find new ways to be shown and seen.

For legal purposes at some point the signature will give way to something encoded and planted subcutaneously, to be read by scanners at the bank or store. Then putting our name to paper will become simply what it once was, a way to make our mark, and signify ourselves alone, the way one closes a letter and reminds one's readers that one is not just a thinker of phrases but a creature with a recognizable way of interacting with writing implement and paper.

The apostle Paul counted on scribes when he did his correspondence with his churches. Once, though, he wanted to emphasize his presence in the letter he was sending, and underline the man behind the message. He wrote, "see with what large letters I am writing in my own hand," and so more personally accompanied his thoughts to his problem children in Galatia, among whom he was making

Peace.

Board of Deacons

The Board of Deacons met at 7 p.m. on March 10, 2010, at First Baptist Church, with Moderator Sally Nyquist presiding. Also present were Pastor Mac Scott, Financial Secretary - Judy Mickanis, Recording Secretary - Lucie Rivoire, committee representatives: Worship - Kathy Morris; Discipleship - Curt Smith; Watchcare - Jen Wagner; Property - Cathy Platusich; Christian Education - Mark Bettner; Church School - Lori Wilson.

Opening devotions included a scriptural passage from the book of First Peter, and a brief prayer. Minutes of the February 24 meeting were approved as published in the newsletter. The Financial Secretary reported that subscriptions to date total \$23,017.87, and plate offerings total \$932.82.

PASTOR: Mac reported on individuals facing hospitalization and recovery; arrangements were discussed with the Watchcare Committee for families who might benefit from their care. Mac also updated the Board on upcoming weddings to be held at First Baptist, in most cases with visiting clergy to officiate.

Concerning outside groups and the church building, Mac shared a letter of thanks from the Lewisburg Arts Council for being able to hold a Celtic dancing program at First Baptist last weekend. He also noted that Matt and Lida Lawrence have been using the church basement to work with local children on an "Odyssey of the Mind" project. The U.S. Census program will station a worker at the church in the coming weeks to assist non-English-speakers and nonreaders in responding to census questions. The Food Program will reroute foot traffic on distribution days for greater efficiency. Mac also noted that he has been approached by a member of the Noon Meeting group who wishes to lead a spiritually based self-help group on a weekly basis at the church.

Mac reported on efforts to update the mailing list. All who currently receive a weekly bulletin will be contacted to see whether they wish to continue the practice. Some may prefer to view the information by internet. Also, to ensure timely delivery to those who live outside Lewisburg, it is likely that these will be sent by First Class instead of bulk mail.

COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION: Deacons were asked to verify the roster of names of their committee members. When completed, the list will be publicized to the congregation.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: - **DISCIPLESHIP:** Curt noted that Easter postcards will be sent to new residents in the area, inviting them to worship at First Baptist during Holy Week. He explained that the Watchcare committee will mail Easter cards with a different message to shut-ins. In tracking

attendance at worship services, Curt remarked that January and February numbers trail slightly, as compared to the previous three years. The Committee is hoping to be able to provide better information and encouragement to visitors who come to church to find involvement for their children.

PROPERTY: Representing the committee, Cathy reported that Alan Barrick is designing a recycling collection area for the church. To correct ongoing problems with the portable microphone used in the sanctuary, the committee suggested that the pastor contact the sound system company for help.

MISSIONS: There is a sign-up sheet on the missions bulletin board for anyone who like to make baked goods or who would like to work the table in two-hour increments for our sale on April 24. All proceeds will be donated to the Susquehanna Valley Women in Transition.

CHURCH SCHOOL: Lori reported that the assembly of hygiene and baby kits for disaster relief in Haiti has been very successful, and that another work session will be held on March 14, followed by lunch. Vacation Bible School, offered in cooperation with Beaver Memorial Methodist, is set for June 21-24, and will conclude at the June 27 worship service. First Baptist will host the sessions this year. Lori asked that the Property Committee attempt to schedule maintenance projects around that week if possible. Curt suggested that the Discipleship Committee send VBS invitations to families who have visited recently. Responding to a Church School request, the Deacons voted to approve funding of up to four children for attendance at Camp Swatara this summer at a cost of \$246/week/person.

WORSHIP - Kathy reported that arrangements are in place for the Palm Sunday service of baptism on March 28. She and Mac commented on the first of the experimental small-group communion sessions, offered prior to worship on March 7. Mac noted that six communicants were present. One concern was the tight timing which caused one latecomer to miss the occasion. It was suggested that future special communions be held after the worship service instead of before. Offered in months which do not include communion during a worship service, the next small-group communion will take place the first Sunday in May.

Featured Committees -

WATCHCARE: Continuing their review of committee assignments as described in the church's constitution, the Deacons focused on Watchcare. Concurring with committee chair Jen Wagner, the group agreed that two of their responsibilities should stand as written:

- to assist the Pastor in ministering to bereaved families and those in need of emergency or special care
- to arrange transportation for those needing a

ride to worship service or church functions. One provision was revised, shifting responsibilities as needed to meet current practices:- The Fellowship Fund will be handled at the pastor's discretion instead of in conjunction with the Watchcare Committee. The fund is limited to a relatively small amount of money, and is invoked in emergencies needing immediate attention which would be complicated by requiring committee approval. The Pastor reports to the Deacons on disbursements. The Deacons agreed that periodic reminders to the congregation would ensure that contributions would be made as needed. While the Watchcare committee currently staffs the Nursery and recruits greeters and flower delivery helpers, the Board discussed various options for shifting those tasks to other committees. It was agreed that a broader base of volunteers is needed, so that weekly tasks do not repeatedly fall on the same shoulders.

CHURCH SCHOOL: It was agreed that the stated responsibilities listed below were appropriate but should be expanded to enumerate more specific examples of children's programs, such as Vacation Bible School.

- oversee Sunday morning educational programs and appoint Sunday School superintendent
- select curriculum and other teaching resources
- provide Junior Church services and special activities such as Children's Day, Christmas Pageant.

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE: The Deacons agreed that wording should be clarified and changed to reflect the current practice by which the Moderator appoints committee members. There was also consensus that the wording should be expanded to ensure that the congregation is aware of the committee's workings and to make the committee available as a channel for feedback between the pastor and the congregation. It was suggested that the committee meet with the Pastor and report to the Deacons next month.

AUDIT COMMITTEE: Having examined the records for 2009, the Audit Committee will report next month on suggested procedures for future audits and proposed revisions to the constitution's section on this subject. Adjourned at 8:30 p.m. Respectfully submitted,
Lucie Rivoire, Secretary



Communion and Tenebrae
April 1 at 8:00 p.m. Choir will meet at 7:00 p.m.



Community Service

The Lewisburg Ministerium and Council of Churches will hold their ecumenical Good Friday service, noon to 1 p.m., Friday, April 2, at Christ Lutheran Church.

Easter Sunday



The 31th Annual Outdoor *Easter sunrise service* will be held on the Bucknell Golf Course at 6:30 a.m. Information call Bruce Jackson at 524-0888



Worship at 10:30.

Choir Night Wednesday, April 7, at 7:15 p.m.

Discussion Group

The Discussion Group will meet Sunday, **April 11 and 25**, at 7:00 p.m. in the Library.

Board of Deacons' Meeting

Wednesday, **April 14** at 7:30 p.m. in the Library.

Quarterly Congregational Meeting

Sunday, **April 18**, following worship.



Camp Swatara Spring Open House

Camp Swatara announces a Spring Open House for campers and parents. Sunday, **April 18** from 3-6 p.m. Call by April 12 to register, 717-933-8510 or e-mail reservations to : mhouff@campswatara.org. Website at: <http://www.campswatara.org>.



Graduates Dinner

Wednesday, **April 21** at 6:30 pm will be the Graduates Dinner and Recognition.

Mission Committee Bake Sale

FBC is holding a bake sale to raise money for Susquehanna Valley Women in Transition on Saturday, **April 24**. There are two sign-up sheets on the bulletin board. One is for people who would like to contribute baked goods for the sale, the other is for people who would like to work at the table and sell the items the day of the sale. Please see Todd Stanford for more information. You can

reach him at T2b5@verizon.net.

NEWS FROM THE

CHILDREN and YOUTH

Sunday afternoon March 14 the following youth met: Lindsey and Lexi Barrick, Hobie Beauseigneur and friend William Brock, Matheu Davenport, Kara Libby, James and Sam Scott, and Ryan Wilson. Thank you to Nicola Manning, Mac Scott and Lori Wilson for their assistance. They packed 41 hygiene kits and 5 baby kits for Church World Service, ate lunch, and played games.

The following youth group enjoyed a sleepover Friday-Saturday, March 26-27: Elena Barrick, Andy & Hobie Beauseigneur, Matheu Davenport, Josiah Lawrence, James & Sam Scott, Emma & Abbey Tillman, Ryan Wilson, and friends Courtney & Gregory. A huge thank you to Evan Wilson and his friend Dana who taught the kids how to juggle, and Lori Wilson and Mac Scott.

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Friday, April 16 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Evan Hospital, Apple Conference Rooms. Call 524-0400 for your appointment.

Hospice Memorial Service Invitations

Evan Hospice Memorial Service, Sunday, April 18 at 2 pm, at St. John's United Church of Christ. *Sun Home Health & Hospice, Sunday, May 2* at 2 pm, at Zion Lutheran Church, Sunbury.

Weekly Calendar Mailing

Please remember to notify us at 524-7438 or fbclbg@lewisburgbaptist.org if you want the calendar sent to you in the mail. We can also send it by email attachment. So far 35% have responded.



May Newsletter

Please have information for the May Newsletter in the office by **April 21**.



the month of showers that bring the May Flowers. April's flowers are the Sweet Pea, which means "I think of thee" and the Daisy.

Mary Ellen

Memorial

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Frank Molinaro, who died March 13. Memorial Service, April 7 at FBC. Visitation at 10 am, service at 11 am.

America for Christ Offering

The America for Christ offering totals \$560.00.

New Address

Dave and Peg Wilder are now at 190 Ridgecrest Cir. Apt 4, Lewisburg, PA 17837.

Anna Louise McDowell

Anna's daughter-in-law Jane, wrote that Anna Louise has moved to assisted living.

For Your Prayer

At home: Ken Bollinger, Violet Dietrich, Herman Howard Jr., Irene Howard, Mike Lucas, Russ Mayberry, Anne Murcek, Betty Siler & Ben Willeford. Lillian Sones at RiverWoods. Riverview Manor: Bill Bobb & Janet VanBuskirk. RiverWoods: Beverly Fisher & Evelyn Reed. Elm Croft: Harriet Littell. Rolling Hills Manor, Gloria Miller.

Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request or are interested in being notified when prayer requests are submitted, please contact Jan Rolecki at 523-6074 or Kathryn Morris at kmorris1@dejazzd.com.



Thank You

Irene Howard wishes to thank everyone for their thoughts, prayers and food received during her recovery.

Judy and Dick Ellis are deeply thankful for all the prayers, thoughts, and kind actions from the congregation of First Baptist Church during Judy's year-long illness. I was strengthened emotionally and physically by this outpouring of love and thoughtfulness. I'm still in the process of recovery from treatment and surgery, but feeling better and getting stronger every day. The prognosis looks good at this point.

Thank you so very much. Judy and Dick Ellis