

Dialogue

First Baptist Church of Lewisburg
51 South Third Street
Lewisburg, PA 17837
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free to think, bound to serve
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From the Pastor:

The Deacon of a little country church ran a farm stand, and one of the things sold was soda. When he was thirsty, he'd call out to the boy working for him, "Bring me some of that liquor!" He was dutifully given a Mountain Dew. He'd pop the top, slake his thirst, run the back of his wrist across his mouth and observe, "A man's got to have a little vice."

His brother, reared in the same church, was even more daring. He'd learned a novelty song which he enjoyed singing. It went "Her first name was Helen, her last name was Gone, and I was gone on her. When I first met her sweet flowers I sent, to Hel-en Gone! Once I had money, but that quickly went, to Hel-en Gone!" He'd immediately point out that he hadn't been swearing, that it just sounded like it because of the woman's name.

I suspect lots of people in strict church traditions--old-fashioned assemblies denying themselves dancing or cards, alcohol, gambling and fooling around--find an outlet for mischief in harmless humor like this. I know a couple of colleagues from anti-drinking churches who got a big kick out of going into a local establishment and quaffing a couple of nonalcoholic beers. They related the escapade with relish.

They're exhibiting a human instinct that it's risky to go too far in anything, including virtue. Calling a Mountain Dew "liquor" and saying that drinking it is a "vice" offsets one's piety, to satisfy those forces in life which urge toward equilibrium. Ecclesiastes 7: 16, 17 reveals the origin of this balancing act in the human psyche. It reads "Be not righteous overmuch, and do not make yourself overwise; why should you destroy yourself? Be not wicked overmuch, neither be a fool; why should you die before your time?"

There was a letter in the advice columns the other day from a man who'd married a wife who had been as little intimate with him as possible throughout their life, and he blamed it on her upbringing, which equated life in the body with sin. A great many of the other letters to advice columnists are from spouses whose complaint is that a husband or wife never learned to take seriously the wrong inherent in extramarital affairs. It's that way with human beings. Frugality can degenerate into stinginess, generosity can

explode into profligacy. The industrious person can become a workaholic, the easygoing person can become unproductive. It's possible to go too far about anything.

It seems like an odd thing to say in the context of Christian discipleship. Aren't Jesus' choices and actions wholehearted, and his requirements absolute? Charity toward the poor, pacifism, engagement in prayer, promoting forgiveness--is there any evidence Jesus balanced any of these things by withholding help, or skipping prayers, or refusing to forgive, just once and a while, to keep things even? Does Jesus ever appear to be finding a "middle way" like the ministers mentioned above who thrilled at the near-depravity of drinking nonalcoholic beer? His willingness to associate with outcasts looked that way to his contemporaries, but wasn't that part of the pure passion he had for God's way?

It should be true that one can't go too far in following the way of Christ. If self-sacrifice is an acceptable consequence, what could be regarded as excessive? The saints of the world are those who manage to do the will of God tirelessly, and leave the balancing out of their lives to the weight of responsibility they feel and the suffering they endure.

For those of us who are not saints, we feel that our virtues overbalance our vices. We accept that God's grace overcomes our sin. We recognize our failings as marks of the sinner we remain, despite the new life God provides us. If we expend enough energy on avoiding wrongdoing and doing good, we may feel a superstitious need to be a little naughty now and then, as a way of keeping our heads down.

The world has known exemplary instances of those identified as godly persons having their feet of clay exposed. They sometimes have made the effort to become equally exemplary instances of the power of forgiveness. But who would choose to be a disgraced televangelist or exposed politician? Few of us desire being humbled publicly and requiring spending down the world's goodwill toward us just to keep even. We'd rather keep our own evidence of holiness in check by making the dubious joke, or failing to report some income to the IRS. That makes us feel safer.

When I was a young pastor I heard certain

older clergy making cynical remarks, and I wondered why. Now I think it was part of the same pattern, their need to put aside a persona they felt restrictively good. I never have been good enough to need to do that. I have plenty of faults, including the inability to feel completely guilt-free about things I have done wrong, though God's forgiveness should have sufficed by now. I suspect that most people would be able to be a lot more like Jesus Christ before they'd have to find a means of making themselves seem merely human.

If you are one of those saints who manage to follow God's will without feeling compelled to find some mischief to make you feel more normal, pray for us. The rest of us should pray for ourselves and each other, too, that God give us the grace and gifts so to live that we find the proper way to construe creation and to live our own lives, that at the end of the day we know

Peace. Mac

BOARD OF DEACONS' MEETING

The monthly meeting of the Board of Deacons was held at 7:00 p.m. on June 9, 2010, at First Baptist Church, with Moderator Sally Nyquist presiding. Also present were Treasurer - Mike Wilson; Financial Secretary - Judy Mickanis; Recording Secretary - Lucie Rivoire, and committee representatives as follows: Watchcare - Jen Wagner; Property - Bob Murcek; Finance - Jim Elmore; Fellowship - Joyce Wilson.

Opening devotions included a scriptural passage from the book of Colossians, and a brief prayer. Minutes of the May 12 meeting were approved as published in the newsletter. The Financial Secretary reported that subscriptions to date total \$51,841.85, and plate offerings total \$2,412.52.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- **WORSHIP:** Kathy sent word that a seamstress has been contacted for the making of additional baptismal robes, with some in larger sizes.
- **FELLOWSHIP:** Joyce noted that a Father's Day coffee hour will follow worship on Sunday, June 20. Also, since July 4 falls on a Sunday this year, Independence Day will be celebrated with a church picnic after the service that day.
- **PROPERTY:** Bob reported that various projects are ready to be started shortly. Alan Barrick has designed a recycling rack to be placed in the hallway at the rear entrance. Portable smoke detectors are available, with the capability of being used as needed for special activities.
- **TREASURER:** Mike commented that donations are in keeping with past trends for this time of year.

The Board reminded Mike of a request that he prepare a report on memorial contributions for 2009 and 2010 to date, to be presented at the July congregational meeting.

- **FINANCE:** Jim noted that the committee will meet next week.

- **CHURCH SCHOOL:** Lori reminded the group of Vacation Bible School, slated for June 21 through June 24, to be held at First Baptist in conjunction with Beaver Memorial UMC. VBS will conclude on Sunday, June 27, when both congregations will worship together at First Baptist. Lisa Scott and Retta Lincicome are coordinating the program.

CHURCH CALENDAR

The Board plans to adopt a calendar for 2010-2011 at its next meeting. Mike Wilson has been proofreading a draft version which outlines standing activities and liturgical observances. The Deacons discussed briefly whether the calendar should be expanded to include special programming, some of which might require substantial lead time to organize and promote.

REVISION OF CHURCH HANDBOOK

Committee responsibilities having been examined in prior meetings of the Board, only minor changes in wording were discussed in this area. It was decided to defer a discussion of the duties of the Pastor and the Pastoral Relations Committee until a future meeting, to include input from a recent meeting of that committee. The stated purpose of the church was expanded. Other changes included additions or modifications to clarify procedures and responsibilities already in place.

Opinion was divided as to whether the constitution and church history should be published in separate documents or in a single booklet.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. To accommodate vacation schedules, it was agreed that the Board of Deacons will meet next month on the third Wednesday (July 21) at 6:30 p.m.

The quarterly business meeting of the congregation will be held following worship on Sunday, July 11.

Respectfully submitted,
Lucie Rivoire, Secretary

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

Jesus said, "Do You Love Me?"



"Feed My Sheep". John 21:15-17

Thank you to all who contributed to the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering. Our offering was \$810.00. Sharing these resources will help change lives by: building bridges of Learning for At-Risk

children in the U.S., tend God's flock in Ghana, help Katrina Victims go home. feed God's sheep in earthquake ravaged Haiti, and tend God's sheep in Cambodia to name just a few of the areas that are supported by this offering. It helps us fulfill Jesus' teaching in John 21, "Feed My Sheep".



July 4th

Join your church family for an Independence Day "picnic" in the Founders Room immediately following the service on **Sunday July 4th**. Enjoy good food. Everything will be provided.

The office will be closed Monday, July 5th



for July 4th, Independence Day

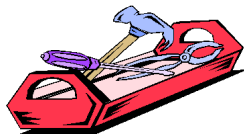
Independence Day

The Church office, Post office, Federal offices, banks and some businesses will be closed **Monday, July 5th** in observance of Independence Day



Quarterly Congregational Meeting

After Worship **Sunday July 11** the Quarterly Congregational Meeting will be held.



Property

Committee

The Property Committee will meet **Monday, July 12** at 7:00 p.m. and **Monday, August 9** at 7:00 p.m. in the Office.



Board of Deacons

The Board of Deacons will meet **Wednesday, July 21** at 6:30 p.m. in the Library. At this time there is no August meeting scheduled.



Combined Service at Beaver

Sunday, **August 1st**, at **10:30 a.m.** will be a combined Worship and Communion Service at Beaver Memorial United Methodist Church.

Worship Committee

The Worship Committee will meet **Thursday, August 26**, at 7:15 PM in the Library.

NEWS FROM THE



CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Galactic Blast VBS was enjoyed by the following children last month: Lexi Barrick, Sammy and William Barrick; Andy and Hobie Beauseigneur, Matheu Davenport; Izabella and Will Devett; Daniella George; Grace and Sidney Herbst; Timothy Hollenbach; Isaac Lawrence; Chandler, Cherakee, Cody, Kaley and Kyle Palmer, and their cousin Steve; Wyatt Rinderle; Alex and Elsie Root; James and Sam Scott; Veronica Stanford; Abbey, Charlie, Emma and Jack Tillman; Ryan Wilson, Brianna Winters; Maddison and Sierra Walter, and Adisyn, Kaden, and Mason Wuerdeman. Thank you to all the children who attended.

Thank you to all the teachers and helpers who worked so hard to make it a success. These include Lindsey Barrick, Mark Bettner, Christine and Liza Craddock, Lydia and Tasha Hall, Matt Lawrence, Diane Meixell, Cathy Platusich, Karen Roessler, the Scott family and Yost Cleaning. Thank you for your prayers.



Alderson-Broadus/ABMPAD Golf Scramble

The annual Alderson-Broadus College/American Baptist Men of Pennsylvania and Delaware Golf Scramble will be held **Friday, August 6**, at the Cumberland Golf Club in Carlisle. To arrange a tee time as a foursome or as an individual, call Judith Barnard at (304)457-6321 or e-mail at barnardjh@ab.edu by Monday, August 2. More information on back bulletin board or call the church office.



September 5th will be the last day of Summer Worship at 10:00 a.m. Starting Rally Day September 12, Sunday School will be at 9:30 a.m., and Worship at 10:30 a.m.

Labor Day is September 6



New Address

Russell Mayberry and Carolyn Patton have a new address: 1414 Faxon Pkwy, Williamsport, PA 17701-2628.
Bill Bobb's new apartment number is 57.

For Your Prayer

Irene Howard is recovering from surgery last Friday (25th). Mary Jane Stevenson is at Evan. Ben Austin is at home recovering from a fall. Peg Budd, Mike Lucas and Anne Murcek are recovering from surgery. Ken Bollinger, Herman Howard Jr., Irene Howard, Russ Mayberry, and Betty Siler are at home.

Bill Bobb and Janet VanBuskirk are at Riverview Manor. Chet and Margaret Jump are at RidgeCrest. Beverly Fisher and Evelyn Reed are at RiverWoods. Harriet Littell is at ElmCroft. Gloria Miller is at Rolling Hills Manor



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

Thank you to everyone at the Church for keeping my mother in their prayers. My Mom had her surgery Wed. The doctor said the surgery went smoothly. She is home now, and as to be expected, is in a lot of pain. Mostly the pain is felt when moving and especially getting up or sitting/lying down. She admitted to me that she is getting a little discouraged. She gets the staples out on June 28, and won't be able to drive for a month. Maybe you could say another prayer for her for a speedy and complete recovery.
Thank you again, Barbara Budd

Hymn 365

(received in the office emails.)

A minister was completing a temperance sermon. With great emphasis he said, 'If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river.'

With even greater emphasis he said, 'And if I had All the wine in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river.'

And then finally, shaking his fist in the air, he Said, 'And if I had all the whiskey in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river.'

Sermon complete, he sat down..

The song leader stood very cautiously and announced, with a smile, nearly laughing,

'For our closing song, Let us sing Hymn #365, 'Shall We Gather at the River.'

Smile, life is too short not to!



See you at the river.