

Dialogue

First Baptist Church of Lewisburg
51 South Third Street
Lewisburg, PA 17837
Volume XLVI, Number 8
September 2010

free to think, bound to serve
Church Office: (570) 524-7438
Pastor: The Rev. MacKenzie Scott
e-mail: fbcbg@lewisburgbaptist.org
web page: www.lewisburgbaptist.org
denomination's web page: www.abc-usa.org

From the Pastor:

The Gospel of John asserts, after identifying Jesus as the Word of God made flesh, that Jesus had come to enable everyone who accepted him to become children of God, "who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." The distinction between being "born from above" and having only an earthly nature is one of the themes of the entire gospel.

The church focused on the heavenly origin of persons for centuries. Believers were taught to call God "Father." Human parentage itself was not regarded as analogous to the reproduction of animals, but special, on the idea that human beings had souls given them by God. If people were to argue about their nature, they would have to go back to their origins, and that meant that social, cultural and personal anxiety would find its outlet in controversies about God.

The heresies, councils, and crises of theology through ancient into medieval times were linked to both to church and secular politics. Despite nineteenth-and-twentieth century tendencies to see them exclusively in those terms, they also had psychological and spiritual causes. People recognize that they are at least partially blind to their own natures, and will reach for other sources of insight. Long ago the stars were trusted, and for much of Christian history theology was trusted.

Nothing is so fixed as to defy questions about it and nuances in conceiving it, so counting on being from God encouraged fighting about God's nature. The great social disagreements of the world of the church fathers, echoed throughout the Middle Ages and not entirely vanished, were about the deity. Who was God? How did the Trinity "work"? What was Jesus' true nature? How did salvation work? What was the right way to observe rituals? How must one think about baptism? about communion?

These questions, and efforts to address them, led to mob violence, governmental infighting, opportunistic power grabs, scapegoating, schisms between long-established friends, and imprisonment's, tortures, and executions. Persons naively puzzled that interest in a God of Love could generate such woes underestimate the fear persons feel of a universe in which they can't explain themselves.

There had always been doubters, but Christianity's-- indeed, religion's, because most of humanity had a theology--teachings defined the terms. With the intellectual developments of the nineteenth century, and especially Darwin's theories, there was a shift. It began to seem that sex, and not God, was the origin of a person's life. The disjunction between the breeding of animals and the heaven-conferred identity of humans began to collapse.

This led to several things. One of the first was a craze for "eugenics", the desire to apply animal husbandry principles to improve the human species. This had many champions among intellectuals before it lost credibility as part of the ethos of Naziism.

It has returned in a new guise with the improvement of genetic science. The premise that one can disrupt pregnancies based on genetic testing is one of the controversies of our time, and related to a larger phenomon--the substitution of sexual questions for theological ones in public controversy.

Communities no longer are exercised by the doctrines of the Trinity or the divinity and humanity of Christ, or the proper mode of baptism. They are rent by disagreements about abortion and homosexuality. Long-standing assumptions about anything having to do with the physiology of human birth are being questioned, in everything from what serves as decent or indecent attire, entertainment, or speech, to the right way to understand adoption.

We remain a community which accepts what we have learned about the birds and the bees but which holds that in tension with what God has shown us through things like the gospel of John. Our attaining to our true nature as children of God remains our hope. In a world of worried posturing and angry assertion about what it is to be a human being, we have our place to preach the gospel, and do our best to help establish, both in individual hearts and among persons,

Peace. Mac

BOARD OF DEACONS' MEETING -

The monthly meeting of the Board of Deacons was held at 6:30 p.m. on August 25, 2010, at First Baptist Church, with Moderator Sally Nyquist presiding. Also present were Pastor Mac Scott; 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; Discipleship - Curt Smith; Church School - Lori Wilson; Worship - Kathy Morris. The group welcomed as an invited guest David Heberlig.

Opening devotions included a scriptural passage from the book of Galatians, and a brief prayer. Having met the previous week to cover regular monthly reports, the Board focused on three matters at this meeting.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FOR A MEMBER
Having received background information from the pastor and from Mr. Heberlig, the Board discussed a member's anticipated need for help in finding employment and housing. Since these circumstances may not present themselves for another year or more, the Board authorized the pastor to draft a letter of general support on the individual's behalf. Implementation would be carried out by interested volunteers from the church and the community.

REVISION OF CHURCH HANDBOOK The Deacons agreed on the rewording of the section concerning responsibilities of the Pastoral Relations Committee, currently comprised of Lori Wilson, Curt Smith, and Mark Bettner. The committee met recently to study the existing text and to draft an updated version. One goal is to raise awareness among the congregation at large of the committee's existence and function. New provisions should facilitate communication between the congregation, the committee, and the pastor.

Concerning the overall contents of the church handbook, the Board agreed that the traditional Statement of Faith used for many years by First Baptist be retained in the booklet. It was decided that 150 copies should be printed once all editing has been completed and approved.

IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CHURCH PROPERTY Bob relayed the Property Committee's request for guidance from the Board as to the level of interest in studying cost and feasibility of air conditioning all or part of the building. Due to the construction, cooling the sanctuary and/or the classrooms and offices would require separate systems. Discussion centered on whether or not cooling the sanctuary would help to attract new members and boost attendance among existing members. The Property Committee will investigate the situation. This topic led to a brief conversation about the status of the elevator project, which would also make the church more accessible and inviting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lucie Rivoire, Secretary

The office will be closed Monday

Sept. 6th for 



Choir Night

Choir Night resumes Wednesday, **September 8th**, at 7:15 p.m., at 8:00 we will begin working on the Fauré "Requiem".

All Saints Sunday, November 7, will be observed with a special Musical Worship featuring Fauré "Requiem" to honor the memory of our special friends and members who have died in the past year as well as all those who have gone on before. Anyone who cannot sing regularly but would be available for November 7 is welcome to attend. Subsequent rehearsals for the "Requiem" will be held Wednesday, October 6, 8-9 p.m.; Wednesday, October 27, 7-9 p.m.; and Wednesday, November 3, 7-9 p.m. Lloyd Wolf is Organist and Ruth Blankenship is Director.



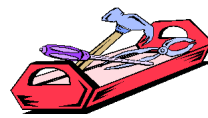
SEPT. 12th

Sunday School resumes **Rally Day, Sunday, September 12th**. Classes for preschool to adult will begin at **9:30 a.m.**

Morning worship at 10:30, followed by Coffee Hour.

Discussion Group

The Journal Article Discussion Group will start up again **Sunday, September 12th**, at 7:00 p.m. in the Library.



Property Committee

The Property Committee will meet **Monday, September 13th** at 7:00 p.m.



Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study will resume at 10:00 A.M. on Tuesday, September 14. We will begin the year reading and discussing Faith & Doubt by John Ortberg. The inside flap of the

book says "You long to live with certainty, to know without a doubt that you've bet your life on the truth and that no surprises await you on the other side of eternity. Even those known for their deep faith -- people like Billy Graham, Martin Luther, and Mother Teresa -- have wrestled with unanswerable and often painful questions. John Ortberg takes an honest look at the misgivings and uncertainties that often obscure our view of God. He candidly describes grappling with his own personal doubts as well as walking with others through the faith-shaking storms of life. Then he reveals how we can celebrate the gift of uncertainty as we allow the right kinds of doubt to actually deepen our faith and intimacy with God."

We are looking forward to some lively discussions and we hope you will join us! Please contact Gayle Pepper (523-0182) or Janice Rolecki (523-6074) if you are interested so we can make sure we have a copy of the book for you.



Board of Deacons' Meeting

The Board of Deacons will meet
Wednesday, September 15th at 7:30 p.m.



Sunday School Picnic, Everyone Welcome

You are invited to a picnic on **Sunday, September 26th** at the St. Mary Street picnic pavilion. Food and table service provided. Please join us for food, fellowship and games. If you are planning to join us, please sign up on the bulletin board near the Friendship Room. Please see Karen Roessler or Lisa Scott with questions.



September 26th

"Out in Silence"

"Out in Silence", a critically acclaimed film dealing with human rights in a small Pennsylvania town, will be shown at Beaver Memorial United Methodist Church, 42 S. 3rd St., Lewisburg, on **Sunday, September 26 at 7 pm.**

The film explores attitudes of people who struggled with the issue of gay rights in their community, and focuses on the growing relationships of people who had originally taken very hardened positions on opposite sides of the issue. Joe Wilson, one of the co-producers of the film, will be present to lead a discussion following the presentation. For more information please call Beaver Memorial at 524-0809.



Our World Mission Offering will be received

during September and October.

"in Haiti and in the World"

This year's earthquakes have left behind countless deaths, injuries, ruined homes, and disrupted lives. The devastating January 12th earthquake in Haiti profoundly impacted our nation and our churches. American Baptists have worked in Haiti continuously for the past 87 years. Four International Ministries missionaries were already serving in Haiti, and additional short-term missionaries were there when the earthquake struck. Following the quake, we quickly increased our personnel and ministries in Haiti as you and others responded by praying, by volunteering or encouraging others to go, and by giving generously to the Ohio Great Hour of Sharing. *We thank God for you and for God's work through your response in Haiti.* The 2010 World Mission Offering is paying special attention to Haiti because it mirrors the ministries IM missionaries and partners are also doing elsewhere. *The World Mission Offering is more crucial than ever to sustain those ministries "in Haiti and in the world".* God's abundant resources are sufficient for all that Jesus asks us to be and do.

"The Son of Man came to look for the lost and save them." Luke 19:10 NIRV

Dr. Reid S. Trulson, IM Executive Director



Blood Drive

Monday, September 20 from 12 noon to 5 p.m. at RiverWoods, 3201 River Road. Call 534-0400 for an appointment

Join thousands of Christians just like you
and discover **The Secret Place.**

Start the fall season with a daily devotional.
Be sure and pick one up Sunday.

Picture of First Baptist

There is a picture of First Baptist Church in 1916 on the wall to the left of the counter at Dunkin Donuts. You might want to check it out.

Memorial

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of Sue Meixell, who passed away Sunday, August 8.

Our thought and prayers are with the family and friends of Mary Jane Stevenson who passed away Thursday, August 12, her memorial service will be Wednesday, September 1 at 11 a.m. at First Baptist Church of Lewisburg.

Memorial and Thank You

My beloved sister, Mary Constance Bloom Holliman passed away peacefully yesterday, August 13, at noon. She was surrounded by her family, including myself, my daughter Lynda her son Jesse. She suffered from a weak heart but remained active in all her endeavors. A Memorial service will be held in Blacksburg, VA on September 18, so that all her family can be there.

We all appreciate your caring thoughts and prayers through these difficult days.

Thank you. Love, Ruth Leota Bloom
Blankenship



New Address

Sabrina Ash Rojo's new address is 807 Ulrich Street, Middletown, PA 17037-1639.

Pat Morris Matrey moved to 1201 Chestnut Street, Mifflinburg. Her new mailing address is P.O. Box 288, West Milton, PA, 17886

For Your Prayer

Ben Austin, Ken Bollinger, Peg Budd, Herman Howard Jr., Irene Howard, Mike Lucas, Russ Mayberry, Anne Murcek and Betty Siler are at home. Dick Budd is in Rehab.

Bill Bobb and Janet VanBuskirk are at Riverview Manor. Peg Bryan, and 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.



Crop Walk Oct 3

Sunday, October 3 will be the Lewisburg Area CROP Hunger Walk. Registration at New Hope Lutheran Brethren Church, 205 South 14th Street, starts at 1:30 and the Walk starts at 2:00 p.m. CROP Walks are the chief fundraiser for the relief and development work of Church World Service, an international cooperative Christian agency.

Join a CROP Hunger Walkers, volunteers, and sponsors in some 2,000 U.S. communities joined in some 1,648 CROP Hunger Walks and other CROP events. They raised more than \$15.4 million to feed the hungry, protect children, assist uprooted people, and empower families and communities around the world to help themselves. Of that amount, a quarter is shared with local hunger-fighting initiatives - food banks, soup kitchens, and community gardens across the U.S.



New Windsor, Maryland Work Trip Nov. 1&2

We have been invited by First English Baptist of Bloomsburg to join them for a hands-on mission work experience Nov. 1 (travel day and overnight stay) and Nov. 2 (work day and return). See Mac for information.