



Redefining Church

Our Community Block Party was great. We had around 150 people in attendance. I met probably a dozen or more visitors. There was lots of laughter, hot dogs, face painting, live music, arts and crafts, and games. We had a big bounce castle for children to bounce around in. And we even had a clown (a real one, not Bill Adams).

One of the reasons I get so excited about events like our Community Block Party is because they redefine church for many who have had bad experiences at church. When we gather around our food pantry to pass out food, play with children at VBS, hang out with people at a block party, or wrap gifts for people during our Christmas for Everyone ministry we redefine church for people. We may even be redefining church for ourselves.

A building does not make us a church. Performing five acts of worship does not make us a church. Our suits and ties and dresses do not make us a church. Church is not what we do. Church is who we are. We are church.

If that statement is to carry any weight at all it must be backed up with qualities such as love, compassion, joy, hospitality, peace, giving, and forgiveness. If those qualities are not evident then there is no church. That is why I believe outreach efforts like Christmas for Everyone, Block Parties, VBS, and the Food Pantry are so important. They speak to who we are. And sometimes even we need this reminder. *-Gilbert*

***Our vision:
Knowing Christ,
Making Christ Known***

Luke 19:8

This past weekend I spent some time at the National Campus Minister's Seminar.

After the conference, I spent some time in downtown Atlanta. One day Katy and I walked past a church which had a small park on its grounds. The church had put some signs up on the fence surrounding their property saying "No laying down or sleeping on the benches." The sign was obviously intended to discourage the homeless of Atlanta to use the church property as a place to sleep.

I think this church was missing the point. In their desire to make what they thought was the church look nice, they did the exact opposite. I don't know this congregation's particular history in the city of Atlanta, but I do think that they had begun to make the common mistake of thinking that the building in which they met was the church. In their haste to make sure the church building looked nice, they made the actual church look like an uncaring selfish group.

Instead of caring for the homeless, this church made it their priority to maintain a building. It's possible that this group of believers has other ways of ministering to the homeless, but if they are concerned about the homeless, it seems to not travel beyond their own comfort.

Let us pray that we do not find ourselves in the same trap either in our personal lives or as the body of Christ.

~Phil



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

Beth Holt is consulting with a surgeon this week about carpal tunnel surgery....**Bailey Anderson** will have new tubes inserted in his ears on Monday, August 10....**Thelma Hoyt** will have knee replacement surgery on both knees at Home Hospital on August 13....Continue praying for **Pete Swank, Diann Doty, Bud Darby, Betty Farner, Annie Crowder, Elaine Crowder, Henry Hunt (now home), Ella McCullough, Christa Phillips, David Brutans, Charles Moore, Eloise Shank, Hattie Coffel, Mary Tavana, Ted Heitman, Dorothy Walters, Irene Fox, Edith McCoy, Eugene Zinn, Valley Stockton, Irene Sims, Marie DeWoody, Paul & Argie Verett, and Minnie Scott.**

In the military: **Josh Martin** (Phyllis Simmerman's nephew), **Brent Kaufman**, and **Matt Kaufman** (nephews of Ronda Tidrick) are serving in Iraq.



Weekly Prayer Focus

August Prayer Focus: Campus Ministry
Returning College Students

Pray that the college students who are returning to school this month can break any bad habits they may have developed in the past and build new healthy habits as they start the new school year.



Former longtime Elmwood member **Mary Nell Darby** died Friday, July 31. She and Bud had moved to Montgomery, AL, a few years ago to be near their daughter, Linda and her husband to help with Mary's care. A memorial service is planned for **August 22**, here at Elmwood. Our sincere sympathies to Bud and the whole Darby family. Bud's address is: Eastdale Estates, 5801 Eastdale Dr., Apt. 315, Montgomery, AL 36117.



The **food pantry** is always in need of personal items: **soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothpaste & toothbrushes, and especially toilet paper.** These items are not available at the Food Bank.

August 2, 2009

Class: 169 Worship: 263 Contribution: \$11,092



Bernie & Armilda Follick celebrated **59 years** of marriage on August 4! Congratulations!

Sunday Night, August 9: Youth Night

Be sure to come **this Sunday night at 6:00** to hear our youth group present reviews of their summer activities. Personal testimonies from camps that were attended along with a slide show.



Thanks for planning the "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner." My surprise guests were a blessing--I had 14 people, all ages, over 80, down to 5. The food was great, but the time shared was "greater." Thanks again,

Barbara Newberry

*Elmwood congregation:
Thank you so much for your prayers and smiles as we begin our new life together. Many of you have prayed a long time for God to work in Matt's life. As you can see, God is faithful. Thank you for your prayers!
Love, Matt & Angie Marks*



Lessons from Shel

When I was in elementary school, some of my favorite books to read were the Shel Silverstein poetry books. On days when we would go to the library, the first book I would look for would be Shel Silverstein's, *Where the Sidewalk Ends*. I just loved the silly poems and the even sillier drawings. Now that I'm older I own all three works of his. I get back to them from time to time, and I can even pull a lesson out of some of his poems. This one comes from Shel's, *Falling Up*.

Sharing

I'll share your toys, I'll share your money,
I'll share your toast, I'll share your honey,
I'll share your milk and your cookies too-
The hard part's sharing mine with you.

I think we have this mentality with the Church and with God some times. It's easy to receive His blessings all day every day, but when it comes time to share from our own, well, it becomes more difficult. We'll give Him our Sunday, but truthfully, aren't we getting something back each Sunday? Our God has blessed us with His toys, and His money, with His toast, and with His honey. He has blessed way beyond what we can imagine. Let me encourage you to start giving and sharing more, even if it is just sharing what God has done for you to somebody else today.

May God be merciful and bless us. May His face smile with favor on us.

May your ways be known throughout the earth, your saving power among people everywhere.

~Psalm 67:1,2

-Randy Kerrigan

***God is good...all the time.
All the time...God is good.***



Congratulations to the **Simmerman** family on **Andrew's** decision to obey the Lord in baptism last Wednesday night, July 29. Andrew has grown up here at Elmwood and been involved in numerous youth activities. He will be a senior at Lafayette Jefferson High School this fall where he is on the boys' soccer team. His love for music, though, is his passion. The Simmermans' address is 415 Oaklawn Dr., Lafayette 47905.

Women's Ministry News

**Final Ladies' Tea will be held on
August 29, 2009.**

Plans are in the making for a newsletter written for Elmwood women by Elmwood women. Please consider submitting your personal faith stories which can be similar to Chicken Soup for the Women's Soul stories, recipes, jokes, poetry, clip art, favorite Scriptures (and why they are your favorite), along with upcoming events, announcements, close-up interviews of Elmwood women, family news, etc. Please share your ideas and writing flair! Stories do not have to be professionally written – just share in your own voice how God has worked in your life. We plan to send out the first issue by September 1. Please give your ideas, stories, etc. to anyone on the Steering Committee – Dana Miller, Katy Travis, Terri Miller, or Doris Swensen, or e-mail your ideas or articles to snuffyplum@comcast.net This newsletter will be transmitted electronically to e-mail addresses, so if you haven't signed up already, please add your personal e-mail to the list that is posted outside the ladies' classroom. There will also be a few hard copies in the ladies' classroom for those who do not use e-mail.

-Terri Miller



- August 5, 7 PM...**Bible classes for all
- August 9, 6 PM...**Youth Night: our youth group will be presenting reviews of their summer activities
- August 16, 6 PM...**Prayer Service
- August 23, 6 PM...**CSC Night

Read:
Job 13-30
1 Corinthians 9-13

2009 Spiritual Adventure

Week 34: August 17-23

Being Haitian for a Week

I bring you greetings from our Brothers and Sisters in Haiti. The many experiences and the development of relationships while I was there was a tremendous encouragement to my faith, and I am hopeful that it was the same for them. I tried my best to speak some of their language (Creole) and follow some of their customs, for which they indicated they were much appreciative. They seem to understand how difficult it can be for visitors to adjust to the Haitian culture and environment. The same can also be said for many situations in our lives where we intentionally put ourselves “out there” to minister to others with whom we may not have much in common.

I believe this is the spirit of what Paul writes about in 1 Cor. 9:19-23 when he speaks of “being all things to all men”. I often feel like I am best serving the Kingdom when there is a certain sense of discomfort within myself. It is a reminder for me that the discomfort is the Spirit working within me to cause me to grow. I know it is the Spirit at work within me because, if left to my own interests and desires, I would maintain the most comfortable path in my life and likely not associate with individuals much different from me. In this sense, the discomfort becomes a “servant test” that informs me of the extent to which I am ministering to those much different from me.

Each person may have a different “spiritual wellness check” they use to examine their faith and works for the Kingdom. These checks can be an important time of reflection and self-evaluation, with the purpose being to inform us of how we can become stronger servants for the Kingdom of God.

All glory, honor, and praise be unto the One who is the author and perfecter of our faith!!

-Jason Cochran

Weekly Schedule

Sunday	
Worship	8:00 a.m.
Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Worship	10:45 a.m.
Life Groups	6:00 p.m.
Wednesday	
Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

 Our Vision:
 Knowing Christ,
 Making Christ Known.

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