



Talking About Baptism

In his book, *A Baptism Worth Talking About*, Jim McGuiggan reminds us that you cannot separate ordinances or rituals from the stories they tell. According to McGuiggan, “*Yom Kippur, Passover, circumcision, and especially the Sabbath are major public observances of the Jewish people, reminding them of who they are and what is required of them. By these and other ordinances and festivals their history is retold, their identity is preserved and their purposes are focused.*” He goes on to suggest that to despise the ordinances themselves is to despise the truths of the story they proclaim.

The same can be said of baptism. You cannot separate baptism from the stories, or better yet, THE STORY it tells. Baptism proclaims the powerful story of Jesus Christ. McGuiggan writes, “*Those who saw baptism as something important and to be obeyed saw it that way because they saw something in Him that filled the ordinance with deep significance and sacredness... They had no praise or reverence for baptism in and of itself because they never thought of baptism in and of itself. They thought of it only in relation to Him.*”

Regarding the Passover, we read in Exodus 12:26: “*And when your children ask you, ‘What does this ceremony mean to you?’ then tell them...*” The ordinance was not commanded of God simply to give them something to do, and then to see if they would do it. It told stories about God and His power. It was a link to the past. It was not a lifeless and joyless observance commanded by God. The same is true of baptism.

Baptism is not some lifeless and joyless ordinance that we can flippantly dismiss. If we dismiss baptism, we dismiss the story that baptism tells. If we dismiss baptism, we dismiss the one in whose name we are baptized. If we dismiss baptism, we dismiss (and deny?) the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:21).

According to McGuiggan, a baptism worth talking about is a baptism that tells the story of Jesus Christ and proclaims him as Lord. Maybe one reason many people seem to dismiss baptism today is because we have disconnected the ordinance from the truth it proclaims - from the story it tells. We have simply made it a command to be obeyed, but it is way more than that. Baptism says, “*This is my story...*”

-Gilbert

The Lenten Tradition

By the time you receive this newsletter, there will be less than a week until the start of the season of Lent. Lent is a Christian tradition and an important part of the church year. Lent occupies the 40 days leading up to Easter (not counting Sundays- more on that later).

For much of Christian history Lent was celebrated universally by all who claimed Christ. There is no clear date when the tradition began, but during the Reformation some protestant denominations stopped the practice.

Lent is traditionally a time of fasting and focus immediately preceding Easter Sunday. Where Advent is a season of anticipation of the birth of Christ, Lent is a season of grief before the great celebration of Christ's victory over death.

The six Sundays which fall within the season of Lent are not considered days of Lent. This is because every Sunday is a sort of “mini-Easter.” In other words, since every Sunday is a celebration of Christ's victory over death, it follows then that Sundays are not days of grief, and thus, are outside of the Lenten season.

I have only recently started observing Lent. It is not typically part of the Church of Christ tradition, but I believe that it has great value by preparing those who observe Lent for the celebration of Easter.

I encourage you to consider observing Lent this season, which begins next Wednesday. Try sacrificing something you enjoy doing, and replacing the time you would spend on that activity with God.

-Phil



A baby shower for **Alison & Will Wade (daughter and son-in-law of Joe & Gail Ruhl)**, will be hosted by Seth Mullen at his home, 4418 Lakevilla Drive, West Lafayette, on **Sunday, March 27, from 2 o'clock until 4 o'clock** in the afternoon. Donations for a group gift will be accepted by Seth and hostesses, Carol Bell and Amy Hodges. Alison and Will are registered at Target and Babies 'R' Us.

Snow Servants

Ed Tilley & family are on call for light snow removal this week, February 27-March 5. You can reach them at 474-5161 if you need assistance.



Thank you

Elmwood Church:
Your thank you cards for our snow removal work were much appreciated and thoughtful.

Sincerely,
Bob Cummings & crew

February 27, 2011
Class: 167 Worship: 284
Contribution: \$8,011.25

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Patty Vice is in St. Elizabeth East, room 3N40. She developed an infection after a chemo treatment and will be there for a couple of days....**Kaden Koebecke** will receive a kidney from his father, **Travis**, next Wednesday, March 9, at Riley Hospital/IU Medical. This is a much anticipated surgery for Kaden as he has been receiving daily kidney dialysis for some time now....**Emily Eberhart**, 5-year old daughter of Susan & Marc, will receive a new pacemaker on March 9 at Riley Hospital. This will be her third....**Marie DeWoody** will begin a new, special diet in coming weeks. They hope it will help reduce the number of seizures she experiences almost daily....**Calvin Batts**, who is confined at home with Alzheimer's, is undergoing more medical tests this week....**Ethel Cable** had a bad fall last week....Continue praying for **Jan Lucas, Max Raines, Lori Miller, Jan Swensen, Betty Lucas, Joshua Nelson, Michelle Mullen, Annie Crowder, Mike Kinsinger, and Marceena Miller.**



In the military: **Tim Beghtol** is in Afghanistan. **Josh Martin** is in Iraq. **Matthew Kauffman** is in Germany. **Joe Newman** is in Chicago.

Continue to remember the following people who are home-bound or in a nursing care facility: **Dovie Hurst, Irene Sims, Dorothy Walters Hattie Coffel, Argie Verett, Valley Stockton, Henrietta Frampton, Mary Walker, Bill Gibson, Phyllis Gray, Carolyn Rigdon, Linda Bilyeu, Vickie Sanders, Janet Achor, Clifford Farner, Eugene Zinn, Charles & Carolyn Moore, Delores Hill, and Wanita White.** We have word that **Annie Crowder** is home from the hospital and now at her son's home in Texas. We are so glad to hear that good news!



Zedia Spenard, 89, mother of Terry Spenard, died on Saturday. Friends may call at the Hippensteel Funeral Home on Wednesday, March 2, from 1:00 until 2:00, with the funeral at 2 o'clock. Our sincere sympathies to Terry and his sister, Rita Mitchell, and their families.

Gene Dilling's mother died on Monday after a lengthy illness. No arrangements were known on Tuesday. Our sympathies to Gene and Jeannie and their family.



Elmwood Children & their leaders:

The Valentine bag was just wonderful. We appreciate receiving this "Bag of Love" from each of your hearts. May God bless each of you.
—Dick & Janice Waterstraat

We very much appreciated the Valentine bag from the Elmwood children. That was so kind of you.
—Willie & Calvin Batts

To Christi and the girls who brought me Valentines on Saturday, they were very much appreciated.
—Betty Luces

2011 Spiritual Adventure

We need volunteers to write the (back page) Spiritual Adventure articles. We still have a number of open slots throughout the year. Please sign up using the yellow attendance on Sunday morning, email us at office@elmwood-church.org or call the church office at 765-447-2874. You will be notified of your scripture assignment well in advance. Thank you.

—Carol Bell

Authors
Needed



God Is in the Room

This past Sunday our LIFE group got to participate in preparing the food for LUM, a drop in center for homeless and needy folks in the area. It was an amazing time for me. There was little formality, just everyone pitching in to slice this, dice that, stir a pot, peel this carrot, etc. There was a hum in the air of conversation as we talked about the things of God and the ordinary at the same time. There was community. There was service. There was worship. God was in Josh and Gina's kitchen, and one way or another, we all were aware of it.

The Hebrews had this amazing word called "Shekinah". It was their description of God's presence, and the idea behind it was "the glory, the radiance" of God, but also "the weight" of His presence, like it was something tangible; something real and thick that you could press up against or sink into. There are times in the Old Testament where God's "Shekinah" is so powerful people literally couldn't get any farther than the door of the temple or tabernacle because it was so real, so full. When Moses got done interacting with God face to face, he carried the "Shekinah" of God with him. The book of Numbers says his face would literally carry the radiance of God for days, like a human glow-stick.

This radiance was pretty unnerving for folks, and they began asking for Moses to wear a veil to "dim the radiance" until he got back to normal. If that sounds kind of wimpy to you, Paul agreed, and he said that not only should we as followers of Jesus be ready to experience the "Shekinah" of God, we should be adamant about displaying the results of His Spirit coming in contact with our spirit to the world. He said in 2 Corinthians 3:17-18, "The Lord is Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. All of us should live with unveiled faces, reflecting the Lord's glory, as we are being transformed into his image more and more with the glory of His Spirit." See, Paul was convinced that the "Shekinah" was available to us anywhere because now God's Spirit was with us always. Any place could be a place where His presence could invade, both to transform us and for us to transform the place we are in.

My point is this: We talked last week about God owning every second, and every moment being available for worship. But God's both *everywhen* AND *everywhere*. Wherever you are right now, God is in the room. Whatever situation you're in, whatever mindset you're stuck in, whatever your circumstances are, God is in the room. His "Shekinah" is ready to break in and invade your space and turn it into a place of worship, where your spirit touches His Spirit and transforms you and the space you're in into something holy. That may excite you or that may scare you (I think it should do a little of both), but either way there is a great opportunity at your doorstep every moment. So I encourage you today, and every day, to stop and take a look around. Because God is in the Room.

*In His Grip,
Travis*

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 12, 7-10 PM	Common Grounds @ Casteels
March 18-20	ILLUMINATE @ Rochester, MI
March 25-26	REVOLVE @ Columbus, OH [girls only!]
April 18	Cubs game sponsored by Harding
April 20	Area-wide event with David Bowden
April 22-24	Midwest LTC Conference

Discovering the Shape of Family Ministry

Our class for families about "Discovering the Shape of Family Ministry" begins this quarter in Room 14, and we are very excited to have Dudley Chancey with us this Sunday to kick off our time together. Dudley has been involved in ministry to families and youth for over 30 years, and is currently the Associate Professor of Youth and Family Ministry at Oklahoma Christian University. He is also on the guiding boards for the National Conference on Youth Ministries and Winterfest. Dudley will be teaching during our regular class time and will be available for a question and answer forum during lunch following second service in A-2 from 12:30-1:30. We will bring in some Subway platters or feel free to bring your own lunch as well. We look forward to seeing you there!

Pictures Being Taken



Pictures are being taken this week! They'll be taken again next week—March 10-12. If you haven't scheduled getting your picture taken, please contact Bill Hodges (449-1255) about a time. All times on March 12 are now full. If you need a date that is full or need to change your time, contact Bill and he'll attempt to get a time trade made. We also need a few more evening volunteers to greet people as they arrive to get their pictures taken. Thanks for all your help.



March 2, 7 PM...Bible classes for all

February 28-March 3; March 10-12...Picture taking schedule with Olan Mills at the church building

March 27, 2:00-4:00 PM...Baby shower for Alison & Will Wade at the Mullens' home, 4418 Lakevilla Dr., WL

April 3...Ryan Richardson (former Elmwood campus minister) will be talking to the combined adult classes during the Bible class time about an upcoming mission he and Beth will be involved with.

Read:
Numbers 1-15; Acts 9:1-13:23

2011 Spiritual Adventures

Week 10: March 6-12

Barnabas: A Good Man

Acts mentions a fellow named Joseph (the Levite). The apostles gave this man from the island of Cyprus the nickname, Barnabas, which in Aramaic means “son of encouragement” (Acts 4:36). Joseph’s nickname was well deserved because he had a solid reputation of encouraging people in the things of the Lord.

If Barnabas had not gone around encouraging people and seeing potential in them, perhaps we may not have had Paul, John Mark, or others of the early New Testament church. Barnabas looked past track records of failure and saw the potential in people. Luke describes Barnabas as a “good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith” (Acts 11:24).

Barnabas saw a need in the church in Antioch. He sought out Paul to help the new Gentile Christians to be taught in the word of the Lord. He knew he could not do this himself, so he got Paul involved (Acts 9:15). Do we seek help when we know we cannot do the job ourselves?

As we study the life of Barnabas, we discover that he was a “good man,” filled with the Holy Spirit, and a man of faith. He trusted the Lord for his daily needs. He had a biblical view of financial giving, and building up the Body of Christ. He could discipline others tactfully as well as being adept at conflict management. Plus he had a teachable attitude when he was wrong. He overcame his faults, and emphasized being a kind and generous person with eagerness to think the best of others.

Ask God to help you to see the spiritual potential in people. Ask Him to send help from others when you need it to do His work. Be a person of faith trusting in the Lord in your daily walk. Ask God to touch your heart to enable you to encourage others, and to sympathize with the friendless and needy.

–David and Lorraine Weckerly

Weekly Schedule	Elders	World Missions
Sunday Worship 8:00 a.m. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Life Groups 6:00 p.m.	Bill Bell 463-1139 Joe Mathews 474-8369 Joe Ruhl 463-7012 Rick Swensen 463-6822 Don Vice 471-8653	Kevin Chambers World Christian Broadcasting Anchor Point, Alaska 99536
Wednesday Bible Study 7:00 p.m.	Staff	Loren and Penny Hollingsworth Phuket, Thailand 83000 E-mail: lholly54@yahoo.com
Our Vision: Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known.	Ministers Gilbert Kerrigan 418-3652 Phil Travis 743-0954 Travis Hutchinson 447-2874 Office Sherry Marks, Manager 447-2874 Carol Bell, Secretary 447-2874	Bren and Cheryl White P.O. Box 245 New Market, MD 21774



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