
Wesleyan Courier

Dennis Peay, Pastor

March/April, 2010

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FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK:

Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:25-27 NIV

The words of Luke make my guts get all twisty. My mind begins a reel of images that bring joy and fear. My heart begins to race.

Following Jesus is the greatest joy of life. My days following his lead provide more joy in the worst of times than anything I do on my own in the best of times. Still, I get caught here in Luke 14 wondering what else does it take?

This season of Lent that began with Ash Wednesday February 17 and extends through Easter April 4 provides us an opportunity to consider what else Jesus needs me to do as a follow him. Wesley is exploring the joy of salvation through *The Prodigal God* by Timothy Keller. We are looking at the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) and the call of our Heavenly Father to come home and experience my true joy. This Lenten journey will conclude with the intensity of Holy Week Palm Sunday, March 28, through Easter.

Holy Week's weeks intense journey will take us into the seven last words of Christ. Peter Storey, former Bishop of the Methodist Church in South Africa, writes in *Listening to Golgotha*, that we all need to have a conversation with the Cross. That "we each need to bring to Calvary the issues of sin and righteousness, both personal and systemic, that we wrestle with in our time and place. We need to do this with utmost seriousness if the Easter that follows Good Friday is to mean anything at all." We need to wrestle with our identity in the Cross that the world might not know us but the Cross that we have become.

Discipleship is becoming friends with Jesus in such a way that we are one with Him. How close is your relationship? How is Heaven's Joy brining you to a life of joy? How is taking on the Cross displacing sin in your life? Believing in Jesus can be

easy; following him is costly. Carrying the Cross leads us to unexpected places. It takes us into new relationships with those who were once strangers. It takes us into dark places to shine new light. It takes us away from comfort into places where only Jesus would lay his head. Followers of Jesus give more generously to the point they give it all. Here are five things you too can do as a way to give more to Jesus:

- Take someone new to lunch (or take 'em dinner, or grab a coffee). Turn a stranger into a new friend in Christ.
- Mentor a kid! The host of experiential wisdom at Wesley is priceless. Adopt one of our young people and share life with them once a month.
- Sacrifice a group. **We huddle up toooooo much.** Break the comfort zone! Let go of one of your group meetings and take an adventure. Help is needed at the MERCI center to pack goods for Haiti. Families need childcare that they can grow in Christ beyond Sunday morning. Homeless in Raleigh need someone to transport them to church.
- Take a computer class on social networking. Stay connected with people around the world and share the Gospel in the process.
- Let scripture be your TripTik!!! Read and listen to God's Holy Word as a way to take into the World. Make a covenant to let the Book of Acts be your road map for mission.

Walk with me this Lent as we become more meek that we seek Christ's strength to carry His Cross becoming Easter People who have died to self and been raised with Christ.

Peace,

Pastor Dennis

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March

| | |
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| March 10 | Phil Watkins |
| 14 | Dylan Barlow |
| 16 | Kathryn McCarthy |
| 19 | Wright Hardy |
| 29 | Allison McLamb |
| 31 | Zachary Dale |

April

| | |
|---------|--------------------|
| April 3 | Debbie Yousef |
| 15 | Frank Theriault |
| 20 | Elizabeth McCarthy |
| 24 | Jerry Barker |
| 29 | Ella McCarthy |

Anniversaries:

Jim and Debra Mitchell – April 20

If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please let us know.

THE CHOIR

COME ONE, COME ALL TO SHARE IN THE FUN/WORSHIP OF THE WESLEY CHOIR

Wesley's Worship Choir will be practicing each Wednesday night at 7:30 following the new series: The Prodigal God. We will be working on some music that will enhance the worship service during our Lent season, Palm Sunday service, and Easter Sunday service. What a wonderful time to join us and participate in this most Holy part of a Christian's life! Please pray about joining the choir and look with expectation to a great time of worship through music. Your participation in the Wesley Worship Choir will be a blessing to you and to our church.

SPECIAL QUOTE:

"To love someone is to know the song in their heart and to sing it to them when they have forgotten the words." Unknown

WESLEY MEN'S NEWS

We just met on Saturday, February 20 at Perkin's Restaurant. Neither snow, sleet nor freezing rain has kept the UMM from eating a country breakfast. It is one thing we are very serious about. The program was presented by Mitchell Ricks, member of Raleigh Moravian Church on Ridge Road. Mitchell discussed how he and his church participated in 3 mission trips to Costa Rica last year and helped repair the church roof / walls on their sister church there as well as removing mud slides that hit the back of the church. In addition, they taught them how to build chairs and pews. The Wesley UMM are investigating ways to develop a continuing relationship with those who use the Pastor Discretionary Funds. Lastly, the UMM are discussing another church wide project to help out in... but there will be much more to come on both of these in the near future. Our next meeting will be March 13 (place to be determined).

Joe Massey, President
UMM

FLOCKS

The Friendship Flock and the Faithful Sheep Flock are continuing to meet every other month and welcome anyone who wishes to attend their meeting of "food, fellowship and devotion." Flock leaders are Nancy & Les Hardy and Pat Brafford, and they would love to tell you about their upcoming plans.



God, give us eyes to see
the beauty of the Spring,
And to behold Your majesty
in every living thing -
And may we see in lacy leaves
and every budding flower
The Hand that rules the universe
with gentleness and power -
And may this Easter grandeur
that Spring lavishly imparts
Awaken faded flowers of faith
lying dormant in our hearts,
And give us ears to hear, dear God,
the Springtime song of birds
With messages more meaningful
than man's often empty words
Telling harried human beings
who are lost in dark despair -
'Be like us and do not worry
for God has you in His care.

—Helen Steiner Rice

GIRL SCOUT SUNDAY:

Girl Scout Sunday is scheduled for March 7, 2010,
Watch the weekly bulletin for more details.

NEWS FROM WESLEY'S KIDS

Wesley's children are getting ready
to
celebrate the joy of Easter. They
will sing during the worship service
on a Sunday near Easter. Following
the worship service children and
parents are invited to stay for lunch
and an egg hunt. Watch the bulletin
for the exact date and time.

**Nursery helpers are needed for
several Sundays until after Easter.
Kelsey will be gone for spring
break and Easter vacation so
Cherilyn needs an extra hand
during the 11:00 worship
service. Volunteers are needed to
help the church remain in
compliance with the Safe
Sanctuaries policy. Please let
Cherilyn or Kim know if you can
help.**



Poem from Helen Skinner Rice

ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY

Got Old Shoes? Need to clean them out?
An NC State student team is going to Reynosa,
Mexico, over spring break 2nd week of March.
They will be taking used shoes to give away at the
medical clinic I worked in last year. Almost any
condition shoe can be used for these donations –
women & children most useful, but men tennis
shoes are good . I'll be glad to take what you bring
the next 2 Sundays for that trip, and after that I will
collect for next years trip. – Jerry



WESLEY'S OUTREACH EFFORTS:

We have just received a statement for the year 2009
fro Mission to Haiti. During 2009, prior to our
current mission effort to aid the earthquake stricken
country, Wesley donated a total of \$4,804.00
toward Haiti Relief, through Mission to Haiti.
Wesley is to be commended for its loving, giving
efforts in this special project, which includes a well
to be dug for a village outside of Port-au-Prince.
God bless all who contributed to this effort.

MORE OUTREACH EFFORTS:

The generosity of Wesley members has again been shown in response to the earthquake in Haiti and the suffering of its citizens. In just a few weeks, members brought supplies and worked to assemble 45 health kits and collect six boxes of food. The food collection will be ongoing and all members are encouraged to contribute, whether it's one item or a big bag full. The following items are needed: New, unopened & sealed bags of dried beans, and bags of rice; new, unopened cans (any size with pop top lid) of vegetables, and cans of fruit



FROM OUR OUTREACH AND MISSIONS CHAIR:

If you asked me what I like about, am proud of or am inspired by at Wesley Methodist Church, I'd tell you about...

- ...the sights & sounds of children, often 6 or 7 at children's time in worship
- ...a pastor who asked "What do you want me to preach about?"
- ...the interesting videos and on-screen words to songs & scripture in our worship service (thanks to DP-squared, or David Parker & Dennis Peay)
- ...Joe's wonderful solos
- ...Beau, a high school junior, asking to study Revelation
- ...men's breakfast at 8:30 Saturday morning (instead of 7:30 am Sunday)
- ...that a small church did so much, so quickly, for Haitian people in distress
- ...that the Finance Committee set a goal of making a monthly gift to our connectional ministries & outreach to others
- ...the creative & inspirational Ash Wednesday worship
- ...our reaching out to residents of Mayview Nursing Home to lead worship for them in January
- ...for the agape love displayed at Ricky Parker's "walk to Emmaus"
- ...the choir director !
- ...that God is blessing us and guiding us.

- Jerry Barker



WITHOUT EASTER

Without Easter,
there would be no hope of heaven.

Without the hope of heaven,
there would be no repentance,
no personal transformation,
no attempt to follow biblical principles.

Without Easter,
the world would be in chaos
and darkness.

Jesus' death and resurrection
means we can be reborn,
to live better, to do better,
to shine light into the shadows.

Hallelujah!

Happy, Happy Easter.

By Joanna Fuchs



NOTES FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

Wesley's Administrative Council met on January 20, 2010. Below are notes from that meeting:

Trustees: Trustees have met and elected Leon Rushing as chair for 2010. They made the decision to rekey the locks on the front, side and back doors. They will also have directional signs made to indicate where the entrances are during the week and on weekends. Safety cameras will be investigated for the back, front, and side doors.

Finance: Judy Rushing reported that the Finance Committee met on Jan. 13. Rachel Watkins and Pat Brafford will work on breaking down categories of the budget and the financial report so they more accurately show expenditures. Finance will meet again on Feb. 3 to formulate a plan for communicating financial needs to the congregation and to educate the members on how apportionments are spent. (Finance Committee met on Feb. 3 and formulated a spending plan for the year 2010. We will send \$600 per month to Conference toward the Apportionment, viewing this as a monthly commitment, just as the power and heat bills.) Stewardship education will be an on-going project for the coming year.

Worship: David Parker reported that the Christmas events were most successful. The Worship Committee and Pastor Dennis are working on The Prodigal God for the Lenten Season. More information later in these minutes.

Prayer Chain: Prayer Chain is in need of reorganization. There will be an effort made to enlarge and redirect the chain.

Pastor:

The Mission Plan for 2010 includes 6 outreach efforts. Three should occur in the first half of the year.

- (1) Reach out to those folks who have received help from our Discretionary Fund.
Plan a meal for them, invite them to come and join us for dinner, serve them.
Provide transportation if needed. The UMM will take the lead in this effort.
- (2) Helen Wright Center (20+ women) has a need for people to come into the center and prepare dinner on a periodic basis for these women. Judy Rushing and Sandy Barker will investigate and get details.
- (3) Community Garden. This should begin on a small basis and tie in with perhaps other churches in the neighborhood, the Girl Scouts, our children and youth.
Ginny Parker will take the lead on this project.

Sunrise Service: We will have a Sunrise Service on Easter Sunday. Form and substance to be decided. Perhaps join with other churches, investigate another location other than the church.

Prodigal God Study: It was decided that more folks will be able and willing to participate if this is done on Wednesday evenings, beginning with Ash Wednesday service on Feb. 17. As a part of this series, we will have the small groups, worship services, communications in the newsletter and bulletin, on the website and Facebook. We will also attempt Prayer Walks, going to

different segments of our community and pass out invitations to participate. There will also be some mail outs. (Look for more information on this series in another section of this newsletter.)

The Administrative Council will meet again on April 7, 6:00 pm at the church.

FROM THE WORSHIP CHAIR

We will be celebrating Easter again this year. We do not have all the details "nailed" down yet but will provide the info in time for all to participate in Holy Week activities. Currently, we have begun the study of "The Prodigal God" for Lent. This is based on the book by Timothy Keller. I heard his talk at the Leadership Summit last year and to me it was awesome and inspiring. How exciting to hear the parable of the prodigal son and hear how much more there is to the story than I had always thought. Each week for five weeks Pastor Dennis will bring a message relating to the story with a follow-up on Wednesday evening where we will have more in depth study. Wednesday evening will begin at 6:00 with rice and beans and end about 7:30. It should be a great series, but if you cannot join us I think you will find it worthwhile to get the book and read it.

Over the years, worship has changed quite a bit. The message of Jesus Christ is rock solid. But what we do or how we respond has changed and is different even today among different denominations. Change is not always easy, but sometimes necessary. Many years ago someone might have asked, "How art thou?" Today we would be more likely to say "How are you?" Neither way is wrong, just more fitting the times. Another great book I just finished is "Change the World, Recovering the MESSAGE and MISSION of JESUS" by Mike Slaughter. Lots of good stuff in that book, but one thing I highlighted is a quote from a book by Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, "I simply do not believe that we can continue to try to think our way into a new way of acting, but rather, we need to act our way into a new way of thinking". What we do matters. Remember the Great Commission, and I will paraphrase: "Come into this building to worship and in time, all nations will come in too; and the pastor will make disciples of all." That doesn't sound exactly right, but read it in Matthew 28:18-20

NOTES FROM THE FINANCE CHAIR

The Finance Committee has met on two different occasions in 2010. During those meetings, we have gone over each item of the budget for new members of the committee, discussed stewardship and watched a video by Dave Ramsey on finances. Even though Pat and I discuss the budget every week it was encouraging to have new ideas from new members of the committee. The committee talked about our apportionment figure of \$16,779.00 and voted to pay \$600.00 toward that figure each month plus pay our district work fund of \$1500.00. The \$600.00 per month will only pay half of our apportionment but for me that was very encouraging. Each year we commit to pay our part of the apportionment and I believe if we do our share God will bless our church in a mighty way.

I know part of our apportionment goes to UMCOR administration and operations, while relief aid goes 100% to providing relief such as food, shelter, medical care and rebuilding, most recently in Haiti. I'm proud to say I go to Wesley which has helped in that relief effort. We also discussed promoting stewardship and having a stewardship campaign at a later time.

Each month we need \$ 6,300 to be able to pay salaries and operate the church. The \$600 toward our apportionment is not included in this figure. Nor does this figure include any expenditures for worship, outreach, nurturing, age level ministries or witness ministries.

I challenge each person to prayerfully consider their giving. In one of our meetings, we discussed some what ifs. What if what had 25 new members in two years, what if we had \$5,000 extra dollars at the end of this year and I had to have a meeting on what in the world to do with that money. It sounds impossible but nothing is impossible with God.

Judy Rushing, Finance Chair



THE ART OF GIVING

*We give of ourselves when
we give gifts of the heart:*

*love, kindness, joy,
understanding,
sympathy, tolerance,
forgiveness.*

*We give of ourselves when
we give gifts of the mind:*

*ideas, dreams, purposes, ideals,
principles, plans, inventions,
projects, poetry.*

*We give of ourselves when
we give gifts of the spirit:*

*prayer, vision, beauty,
aspiration,
peace, faith.*

*We give of ourselves when
we give the gift of words:*

*encouragement, inspiration,
guidance.*

Emerson said it well:

*"Rings and jewels are not gifts,
but apologies for gifts.
The only true gift is
a portion of thyself."*

FROM THE ART OF LIVING BY WILFERD A.
PETERSON