



THE *Good News* LETTER

FROM THE PASTOR

One of the television shows I enjoy watching from time to time is **Super Nanny**, a show centered around a “Super Nanny” who comes in to help families having behavioral problems with their children (and sometimes with the parents!). Inevitably, the conversations and learnings center around the idea of consistency. So many parents have good ideas about bringing up their children, but are woefully inconsistent in following through on their intentions—and then they pay the price. I am a parent, too, so I understand the dilemma.

There are similar lessons to be learned in our relationship with God. Consistency is a key to the spiritual disciplines of prayer and Bible reading, or else our day-by-day walk with Jesus will become like New Year’s resolutions forgotten by the end of January. One of the telling observations the session and I have made about worship attendance and Christian Education attendance on Sunday morning is that for many of you it is inconsistent. Rather than following through on the example of the early church (Acts 2:42ff) or the clear injunction of Scripture not to “give up meeting together” (Hebrews 10:25),

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Take a Closer Look at Psalm 23

Recently, I featured Psalm 23 in my fourth and fifth grade Sunday School class. So often this Psalm becomes a major part of a funeral service, when in reality it is a Psalm for the living, not a part of a memorial to the dead.

As I prepared this lesson, I searched for a way to present this well-known Psalm from a different viewpoint. Scanning the Internet, I came across this explanation that added a defining word at the end of each line, giving a depth of meaning beyond our normal understanding of the Psalm’s message.

The thought came to mind that some of you, beyond the fourth and fifth grade, might also be interested in this presentation “The 23rd Psalm, More Than Meets the Eye.”

The Lord is my Shepherd—Relationship
I shall not want—Supply
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures—Rest
He leadeth me beside still waters—Refreshment
He restoreth my soul—Healing
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness—Guidance
For His name’s sake—Purpose

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death—Testing
I will fear no evil—Protection
For Thou art with me—Faithfulness
Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me—Discipline
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies—Hope
Thou annointest my head with oil—Consecration
My cup runneth over—Abundance
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life—Blessings

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Secretary: Ana Varela
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Rev. Martha Spear
Interim Minister of Music:
Charles Daniel
Interim Contemporary Leader:
Jeine Kamberidis
Youth Minister: Jon Wilson
Sexton: Bob Perch
Summer Combined Service
9:30 am

Sunday Schedule
8:30 am Contemporary service
9:30 am Sunday school
11 am Traditional service

Psalm 23
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And I will dwell in the house of the Lord—security
Forever—Eternity
Submitted to *Clarion Call* by
Gloria Welch

—Len Harding

PPL Prepares for GA

Presbyterians Pro Life is preparing for the 218th General Assembly in San Jose, CA, 21–28 June. There is still room to attend General Assembly. If you are interested please contact Peggy MacLeod or go to www.ppl.org.

From the Pastor
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we assume that somehow we can produce a healthy spiritual life in ourselves or our families without the consistency of discipline necessary for those who take seriously a desire to obey God.

As Super Nanny tells families, God may be saying “they have the right idea, if only they were consistent.” Our spiritual lives can be productive and life-giving to others, or else be nothing more than spiritual chaos, sowing confusion in

those around us. I suspect that the analogy is a good one for many of us. My challenge this year is that we would develop consistency—in Scripture reading, in our prayer life, in our fellowship with others, in our worship, in our service. We might discover that the chaos that too often characterizes our lives disappears just as when families learn consistency in raising children. We are, after all, spiritual children of our Heavenly Father!

Unequally Yoked

In II Corinthians 6:14–16, Paul warns believers about being unequally yoked, that is, married to an unbeliever. Undoubtedly, this will cause added stress in a family.

There are men and women at Fort Square who are in this situation, either because they became believers after marriage, or perhaps their spouse stopped growing in the faith. There are also some who are married to believers at a very different level of understanding and/or commitment to the Lord. Whatever

the reason, many couples here understand very well the difficulty of being unequally yoked.

I would like to invite all women who are unequally yoked to join the fellowship of others in a similar situation. We will be meeting throughout the summer in the conference room shortly after the combined services. You don’t need to come every week, just come when you can. We would love to have you join us.

—Kathy Ryan

Praise to the Skys 

A big Thank-You to all who helped make the Sky Family concert on March 7th such a success. As always, you came through with sandwiches and sweets enough to supply an army! Truly, it was a tremendous witness to those from outside our congregation who attended. We heard plenty of ooo’s and ahhh’s during the

program and the fellowship time that followed. To those of you who supplied a supper for the Sky family before the concert, they said it was the best meal that they had ever been served at a concert anywhere during their travels across the U.S. and Canada.

—Bless you all,
Joyce and Bob MacDonald

Uncomfortably Close to Home—The Screwtape Letters

C.S. Lewis's *The Screwtape Letters* is a book most Christians know well. It repays multiple readings, if you can stand how close to home its truths fall.

In the Preface, Lewis clarifies the idea of devils and Evil. First, he notes that "the Devil" is not the evil counterpart of God. "Satan, the leader or dictator of devils, is the opposite, not of God, but of Michael" (vii). The explanation is vintage Lewis: "[because] it agrees with the plain sense of Scripture, the tradition of Christendom, and the beliefs of most men at most times" (vii). I would love to show this passage to non-believers who contend that the Bible is untenable fantasy. As Pastor Brondyke reminds us repeatedly, the Scripture is certainly supernatural, but not unbelievable.

Lewis notes the practicality of devils, pursuing single-mindedly their twin goals of punishment and keeping men hungry. It is easy to see how devils would use the fear of punishment, but this notion of hunger and how evil ones use it on us is one of Lewis's most revealing devices. Throughout the book, Screwtape, the senior devil, constantly refers to not only how this impulse may be subverted by evil, but also how hunger leads to consumption—at worst, how hunger (physical and spiritual) becomes sin, transforming us into tasty morsels for the delectation of devils. By the end of the book, Screwtape looks forward to devouring the failed Wormwood, "as dainty a morsel as ever I grew fat on" (145). It is truly diabolical how Screwtape collapses the distinctions of love and affection into the gaping maw of his hunger.

The depredations of evil that pervade this book can not be separated from the time in which

Lewis wrote it. When Screwtape admonishes Wormwood to keep his patient focused on the needs of the present or the sweet consolations of the worldly future, the reader recalls that Lewis's audience was enduring the Blitz. Bombs were exploding over a great city, food shortages were common, and it was distinctly possible that Hitler might soon be photographed posing in front of Parliament just as he had been in front of the Eiffel Tower.

Today, we are blessedly free from these worries, but that doesn't mean that Lewis isn't still speaking directly to us. Repeatedly, we are reminded of how prey we are to earthly reality. Our reliance on the rational and the empirical leads us to question everything. During this election season, for example, we are demanding proof of who has the qualities—the greatness—to be president.

Screwtape fosters our need for proof by encouraging the concept of a historical Jesus, an idea frequently broached by believers and non-believers alike. In a rare moment of truth, Screwtape admits: "The documents say what they say and cannot be added to; each 'historical Jesus' there has to be got out of them by suppression at one point and exaggeration at another..." (106–107). In other words, we have to take the Scripture as the authority on Jesus; it provides all the evidence we need to understand Jesus's time on earth and of His greatness. By demanding more evidence than God's word provides, man becomes distracted by what He did rather than who He was. "For the real presence of the Enemy, otherwise experienced by men in prayer and sacrament,

we substitute a merely probable, remote, shadowy, and uncouth figure, one who spoke a strange language and died a long time ago" (107). Fortunately, God gives us

much more than the "merely probable."

Watching how Lewis maintains the persona of Screwtape is fascinating. In this world,

everything is upside down: the "Enemy" is the Lord, "our Father's house" is hell, and "our Father" is Satan himself. Screwtape's language sounds biblical, and we must remain constantly on our guard against first, taking Screwtape at his word and, second, being beguiled by language that sounds comfortable and familiar.

The book's final section, "Screwtape Proposes a Toast," added in 1962, received much criticism as it flew in the face of emerging ideas about education. Foremost among these was a preference for the cultivation of self-esteem at the expense of learning. To distinguish smarter children from others led to accusations of elitism, leading, says Screwtape, to cries of "I'm as good as you;" if anyone tried to be different, he was declared "undemocratic" (163). The malicious misuse of democracy is one of the devil's most powerful weapons; under its guise, sins of resentment and discontent fester. Lewis's revelation of how democracy can be just another name for envy is somewhat shocking, especially to Americans. The point is that any government—even our own—is simply another human construct. Lewis would have us remember that the fate of nations is hardly as important as that of individual souls.

—Leann Davis Alspaugh



What Is Your Spiritual Gift?

Every person who has placed his trust in the Lord Jesus and is a member of His body is given at least one spiritual gift. Only non-believers do not have such gifts. We are each given the very gift that God wants us to have, to expand His Kingdom. Using the analogy of the church as a body, the apostle Paul says in I Corinthians 12:18: "In fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as He wanted them to be." C. Peter Wagner comments: "This comes as good news to the average believer. It is wonderful to be assured that God knows me, He loves me, and He considers me special enough to give me a personal gift so that I can serve Him" (*Discover your Spiritual Gifts*).

God redeems us, welcoming us into a loving relationship with Himself, and drawing us further into fellowship with other believers and into spiritual maturity, preparing us for significant ministry in His church.

There are many opportunities for service at Fort Square and beyond. Where will you serve?

*—Thoughts from
the Ministry Committee
and Kace Wilson*

Life Groups Well Attended—Spring 2008

Through discussion, videos, and prayer, we have completed a successful series of small groups on the Sermon on the Mount. Nine life groups met weekly for seven weeks with more than 80 people attending. These times were encouraging, stretching us in our relationships; new people have become involved, and we have developed fellowship and friendship together.

This summer, let's take what we've learned and continue to apply it to our lives. Stay in touch with your group. We look forward to starting a new series in October; see you in the fall!

—Kace Wilson



Coffee Time Volunteers Needed

Coffee and Fellowship Time is a meaningful opportunity to connect with one another before Sunday school in the winter and after the combined service during the summer. Many thanks

to those recent workers—Carol and Bob Knowlton, Judy King, Joanne Yarbrough-Male, Ellen Yoerger, and Dale Noun

and Darlene Parry—who have faithfully served us coffee or tea and pastries.

Let's give these faithful folks a break this summer. If you can help with a Sunday or two this summer, we want to hear from you! We'll provide some pointers and suggestions for those who are new. Please contact Kathy Ryan at 617-696-3701 or kathy3ryan@yahoo.com

Also a huge thank-you to Dale Noun who has organized and coordinated this ministry for many years. We ALL thank You, Dale.

—Kathy Ryan

MUSICALE UPDATE

It's official—The Fort Square Musicale will be held Sunday, August 10, 7pm, with dessert and fellowship to follow. A planning committee composed of Pastor Brondyke, Charles Daniel, Jeine K, Bob and Joyce MacDonald, and Leann Davis Alspaugh (chair) will be putting together a program of music from among the many fine players and singers at Fort Square. For more information, contact Leann at leanndavisalspaugh@earthlink.net



MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

We'll have our final breakfast for this season in June. We'll be returning in September, so look for a notice in the weekly bulletin. For more info, contact Bill Slaven or Cliff Wilson.

Fellowship Committee Announces Summer Plans

The Fellowship Committee has been making plans for the summer, and we are hoping you will join us in our various adventures. We are still trying to find dates for some of these events. But to give you an idea of what is ahead, this is what we are planning:

Extended Coffee Break: During the summer, we hope to encourage people to linger over coffee and goodies after the service, so that we can talk with one another and catch up on the latest.

Church Picnic: Save the date, Saturday, July 26. Please mark your calendars so you can join in the fun. This year, we will be in a new location and we'll pass on the details when they are finalized.

Movie Night: We have a few good movies lined up in the months ahead, but we're always open to suggestions. Let us know and we'll try to get them scheduled.

Red Sox Game Night: We would like to try to do a couple of these during the summer. We hope you will join us when we get the dates set.

Duck Tour: If we have enough people to sign up, we may get our own Duck Tour to take us around Boston and into the Charles River. If you have never done one of these tours (as I haven't), it is an adventure, to be sure. Watch for further information on costs and date.

—Kathy Ryan



Whatever your cross,
whatever your pain,
there will always be
sunshine after the rain.
Perhaps you may stumble,
perhaps even fall.
But God's always ready
to answer your call.
He knows every heartache,
sees every tear,
A word from His lips
can calm every fear.
Your sorrows may linger,
throughout the night,
But suddenly vanish,
by dawn's early light.
The Savior is waiting
somewhere above
To give you His grace
and send you His love.

—Author unknown

submitted by Mary Ann Peterson



Blessed Are Those Who Mourn

[Editor's note: In the last issue of The Good News Letter, Bert Nogler wrote perceptively about studying the Beatitudes. In this issue, he continues the meditation on this scripture.]

This beatitude speaks of mourning over sin, the Godly sorrow that produces repentance leading to salvation without regret. It is a penitential mourning for our sin with an eye to Christ, whose grace is greater than all our sins.

There is also human sorrow

or unsatisfied remorse that has no redemptive value. It is nothing more than the wounded pride of getting caught in a sin or having one's lusts unfulfilled. This kind of sorrow leads only to guilt, shame, despair, depression, and self-pity. We can die from that kind of sorrow or lose every joy that life can provide.

“When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of

summer” Psalm 32:3–4.

“For they shall be comforted” Those who sow tears shall reap in joy. This joy and this comfort will surely follow the remorse of the repentant sinner and the God of all grace will wipe away all tears of those who love Him, to those who are called according to His purpose. The gates of Heaven will open wide, at the appointed time, for those that mourn.

—Bert Nogler

FORT SQUARE HAS MANY WORK DAYS

On May 10, volunteers from the 8:30 am and the 11:00 am services, along with AA, gathered to complete major projects around the church and to spruce up in general.

Trustee Doug Peck coordinated this year's work day. We were delighted to see the number of women who participated in beautifying the church, inside and outside. We also appreciated the awesome posters designed by Leann Davis Alspaugh that contributed to the turnout.

Not only do the work days give parishioners a way to give service to God, but they also assist the budget committee by helping to defray the costs we would incur if we had to hire contractors to complete these projects.

While May 10 was the designated church work day, we should recognize the "worker bees" of the church, who, on their own, organize days throughout the year to clean specific areas in the church. This past week, for example, several members of the Adult Fellowship Group spent a day cleaning the kitchen (especially the stove) and the adjacent closets.

To all the many "worker bees" in the church who serve God through volunteer positions in our church—THANK YOU!

—for the Trustees,
Marilyn Scrizzi

A letter from the Achas in Cameroon

Dear Pastor B:

Just wanted to take a minute to say hello and to see how you are doing.

We are doing OK and have finally settled in Douala, Cameroon. Despite the fact that we were originally from Cameroon, it took us some time to settle in and get comfortable with the environment and the workings of the place. Mairo was able to get a job as an I.T. auditor with Price Waterhouse Coopers and kind of likes it, though she does a lot of traveling in the sub-region.

Martha and Camille are doing extremely well, too. They were able to adjust fairly quickly to the place and especially the language. Camille was the fastest—she speaks and writes French very well. Martha, too, has picked up the language, though not as fast as Camille. You will also like to know that Martha is now in secondary school, a boarding school called Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Around here, Catholic schools are better equipped and have much higher standards. As you can imagine, Mairo's parents and my aunts and uncles are happy to spend

more time with their grand kids—and, you guessed it, they have been complaining that two kids (not counting Gordon who is only here in the summers) are just not enough.

Regarding our faith: we have been waxing strong. As you can see, we are members of the Presbyterian church in Cameroon, Bonamoussadi Parish. We have been worshipping in this parish since we got back to Douala. The church has a huge congregation with an average Sunday attendance of about 1,200 people. We continue to grow individually in our faith and in relationship with God. I still have not been able to connect with a good group as I desire to teach and work with the kids on HIV prevention; I probably should have started sooner.

Well, we just wanted to say hello and to give you all a shout out. May the good Lord continue to guide and bless you all and we hope that we will see each other soon.

*God Bless you,
Gordon and Mairo Acha*

Missions Conference Weekend Yields Results

Let me start by thanking all of you who took part in our April Missions Conference. It not only was a great time to get together, but also served as a way to show our gratitude to the many missionaries who were represented. The conference also provided us with a great opportunity to see some of the ways that God is at work beyond the walls of Fort Square. And for that we do truly praise God.

As many of you may know, in addition to the coin jars that we received, we had an offering of pledge commitments that provided an opportunity to commit to support missions in a variety of ways. Below is a summary of those pledges.

47 total pledges received (couples and individuals); two were from visitors from other churches.

“Pray for a Missionary that my church supports by name at least weekly” (42 checked)

“Offer to serve on my church’s Mission Committee” (4 checked)

“Plan to go on a short term mission trip within the next two years” (5 checked)

“This month, write or email a Missionary that my church supports thanking him/her/ them and letting them know I/we are praying for them” (22 checked)

“Increase my giving to Missions” (7 checked)

It’s not too late for you to make a commitment to one or more of these. Won’t you consider doing this now as you read *The Good News Letter*?

Missions Information Now Available on Church Web Site

We have also made some changes to the Missions page on our church Web site. In addition to listing the missions and missionaries that we support, we now provide links to these groups’ Web sites, if available. These links will enable you to see what is currently happening in their work, find email and postal addresses, check for prayer requests, and view photos. To use this new part of our Web site, go to <http://www.fortsquarepresbyterian.freeservers.com/> and click the Missions button on the left side.

You will see a list all the missions and missionaries that we support; underlined listings indicate that there is a link to their Web sites. This should be a big help for those of us that checked “Pray for a Missionary that my church supports by name at least weekly”, or “Write or email a Missionary

that my church supports thanking him/her/ them and letting them know I/we are praying for them.” If you don’t have

access to the Web and would like this information, please contact the church office, me, or any member

of the missions committee.

Also, keep checking the missions bulletin board in fellowship hall as it changes almost every week. This will help you to know the prayer needs of those we support.

Mission Giving Down

Again, as many of you already know, the budget committee has posted the first quarter giving information. It shows that our church mission giving for the 2008 year is below what we need to meet our commitments. I fear that with the summer months ahead of us, we will fall even further behind. Please do what you can to help us increase our mission giving, so that we will be able to meet our commitments.

“The harvest is plentiful but the labors are few”—financial giving is one way to be counted among the “labors.” Please don’t miss out on this opportunity.

—*Praising God,*
Elder Art Spear

MISSIONS REPORT

More Moms Come to MOPS

What a joyous privilege it is to be a part of MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers)! It is just so much fun getting to play with so many adorable babies and young children, and to meet their terrific moms! Little by little our group is expanding—one day, we had 16 kids in the nursery! Each month, it seems we welcome at least one new mom who has heard about us from a friend or from one of the organizations who have provided speakers for us.

We have been most grateful to South Shore Mental Health for sending us numerous speakers who have all been superb, each coming with great expertise, equipped with handouts and timely information, all offering their services free of charge! God has graciously blessed us with this incredibly gifted group of women who recognize the importance of conveying good information to mothers of preschoolers. Their presentations have covered helping children sleep well, providing routines that match a child's temperament and developmental stages, offering information on navigating the system, and getting children ready for school. We also had a moving meeting discussing domestic violence, one at which we talked about planning meals

a month at a time, and one meeting about ways to end the clutter in our homes. All these programs have been very helpful, some with fun ways to get a handle on the chores of motherhood, others on more serious issues, but all giving us time to reflect on the various challenges facing us as women today.



Our MOPS moms have a variety of needs. Some are single parents with all the struggles that come with being alone and raising a child. Some are far from home and miss their families. That's where we come in as surrogate families, offering support, encouragement, advice, and friendship wherever it is needed. Many of our moms face personal struggles or relationship challenges, things we offer to pray for as they share their difficulties. Our leadership team consistently prays for each of the moms, and for one another as we seek God's guidance in interceding on behalf of these women.

God has also richly blessed us with two new people on our leadership team. Cathy Maxfield is a Quincy mom and a member at Park Street, has worked with Inter-Varsity, and is now home raising three

daughters. Our own June Newman has agreed to come on as a new MOPS mentor! We are so thankful that God has led these women to become invested in this ministry. Another MOPS mom, Wendy, who attends Park Street and is a very gifted spiritual leader is considering beginning a Bible study for our moms. That would be such a blessing! Please pray for these women and their leadership. Our other steering team members are Cindy Comiso, Jane Jewell, Debby Richie, and myself. We all covet your prayers as we strive to provide direction for our MOPS ministry.

Sadly, Debby Richie has felt the need to move on to other areas of ministry and will be leaving our MOPS ministry in June. She will be sorely missed, as she has been a vital part of what we have been doing. We are so grateful for her gentle and loving spirit that has graced us these past two years. Debby, we pray that as you feel led to other areas in serving the Lord that you will find as much joy as you have given us!

Thank you all for seeing the need for this ministry and for funding what we do. God is providing a harvest of fruit, as these women begin to connect their faith to parenting issues of parenting, and all the challenges they are facing in life. Please keep on praying—God is at work!

*—In Christ,
Martha Spear*

RAINFOREST ADVENTURE

VBS 2008
June 23–27
6 pm–8:30 pm

Update on Odyssey

Odyssey will be heading out on a mission trip, July 5–12, to Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, to continue to restore lives devastated by Hurricane Katrina. We could use your prayers for strength, safety, and guidance. If you are a teen mentor/prayer partner, you might want to ask your teen how you can help. Please make a note of these trip fundraisers:

Rock for Restoration: Join us at Fort Square for a sit-down dinner, served by team members, and a rockin' worship set afterward that will include testimonies and a multimedia presentation. Tickets are \$7; donations will also be accepted for the Mississippi mission trip. Saturday, June 14, 6 pm–8:30 pm

Car Wash and Bake Sale: Get your car washed and your sweet tooth satisfied at the same time! All donations will be used for the Mississippi mission trip. Bake sale donations will also be gladly accepted. Saturday, June 21, 9 am–1 pm

All kids from preschool through fifth grade are invited to swing on in for VBS 2008—Rainforest Adventure! We will listen to great stories about Jesus, make cool crafts, sing fun songs, play zany games, and make a jungle of friends! Pray for how you can be involved and who you can invite to join us!



Update on Oasis

Oasis is preparing for a fun trip to Camp Monadnock. These middle schoolers will get a chance to hear about God through a great speaker, an amazing worship band, and all sorts of fun games and activities that are sure to leave some great memories. Our fundraisers will include a car wash and a bowl-a-thon, as well as the Annual Pancake Breakfast immediately after church on Sunday, June 22. It's always a fun time of fellowship and good food, so plan to be there to support Oasis!

SAVE THE DATE



CHURCH PICNIC
SATURDAY, JULY 26

NEW LOCATION—

DETAILS TO COME!



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