

Effective church newsletters

TELLING YOUR STORY

By Rick Frennea • editor of The Edgewood Epistle • Edgewood Presbyterian Church

Telling your story

YOUR IDENTITY

Who are we?

What do we have to say (share)?

What is the life of our congregation?

Telling your story

YOUR IDENTITY

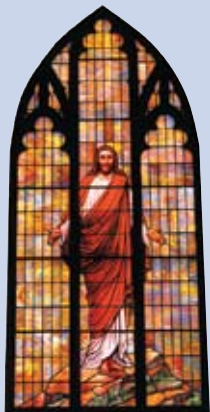
Does your newsletter reflect the focus
and personality of your congregation?

THE EDGEWOOD EPISTLE



The monthly newsletter of
Edgewood Presbyterian Church

APRIL 2011



EDGEWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

850 Oxmoor Road,
Homewood
871-4302
769-0244 (fax)
www.edgewoodpc.org
Sunday worship 9:30 a.m.
Sunday school 10:45 a.m.
Wednesday supper 5:45 p.m.

STAFF

Rev. Sid Burgess
Pastor
942-5907
sidburg@aol.com

Rev. Debbie Feagin
Supply pastor
979-3248
debbifeagin@aol.com

Amanda Klimko
Music director

Pat Fitzsimmons
Organist

Tara Hewitt
Youth director

Lavon Chaney
Office manager &
bookkeeper

More diverse, more inclusive

In a step to formalize our 'open-hearted, open-minded' welcome, Session to vote on affiliation with More Light Presbyterians.

Edgewood's new mission statement declares that "as a diverse and inclusive community of believers, we celebrate our unity in Christ." One of the ways Session has identified to more fully live this mission of being a more diverse and inclusive community is through an affiliation with More Light Presbyterians.

More Light is "a network of people seeking the full participation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people of faith in the life, ministry and witness of the Presbyterian Church (USA)." More Light affiliation can help us attract the large number of gay persons who grew up in the church but who are no longer active. We also can attract younger heterosexual couples, some with children, who have gay and lesbian friends and want a church that is welcoming and affirming. The goal is not to become a "gay" church but one where all that come in the name of Christ are welcomed.

Churches that have embraced the More Light concept have said the process impacted their work and witness on other justice issues, such as disability rights, economic justice, environmental justice, global justice, hate crimes, HIV/AIDS, health care, homelessness, hunger, immigration, labor, racial justice, universal human rights, and women's rights. Edgewood approaches More Light affiliation having already engaged most of these issues.

Join the Adult II Sunday school class in the fellowship hall after worship on April 10 for an open forum where questions and concerns about affiliating with More Light will be freely discussed.



More Light
PRESBYTERIANS

MORE LIGHT FORUM

► The Adult II
Sunday school class
will host an open
forum about what
affiliation with More
Light Presbyterians
means.

► **When:** Sunday,
April 10, 10:45 a.m.

► **Where:**
Fellowship hall

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A fundraiser for our youth

Yard sale will raise money to help fund scholarships for youth retreats and Montreat.

ON THE COVER



PLUS: Session approves affiliation with More Light. **PAGE 4**



ALSO INSIDE

- 2 Pastor's Peace
- 3 Worship
- 4 News & Notes
- 5 Church Life
- 6 Nurture notes
- 7 Mission news

INSERT

Calendar



EDGEWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

850 Oxmoor Road
Birmingham, AL 35209
Phone: (205) 871-4302

Address service requested



**"OPEN HEARTED,
OPEN MINDED"**

On the Web: www.edgewoodpc.org

Telling your story

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Be transparent • Be comprehensive • Be instructive

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Table Talk Coffee Shop

Something new on Sunday mornings for the new,
the occasional, the young – and the curious.

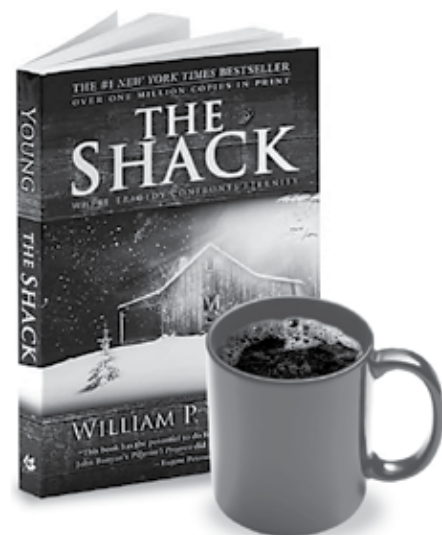
Following worship, upstairs in the fellowship hall,
Stephen Steward is leading a class for young adults
(the twenty- and thirtysomethings in our congregation). The
focus is discussion and fellowship around
books (sometimes films) and their spiritual
relevance. The class began on Jan. 25 with a
dozen people. Their first book is "The Shack."

"When I first came to EPC," Stephen says, "I
found it difficult to find a place to go after the ser-
vice. I hope that you can come on by and see if this
class is a place for you."

Just as we can study the Bible through a literary
lens, as we have been on Wednesday evenings, we
can also study literature through a Biblical/spiritual
lens, Stephen says. For those who may not feel that
they have a solid grasp of the Bible, this can be a
non-intimidating way in.

As the church became less the focus of Americans throughout the last
half of the 20th century, many in younger generations began to lose
sight of the Biblical sources which permeate much of modern thought.
In other words, it's easy to lose sight of the forest (Biblical and histori-

Continued on page 4



ABOUT THE BOOK

► "The Shack," by William P. Young. A man receives a suspicious note, apparently from God,
inviting him back to the shack where his youngest daughter may have been murdered.
Against his better judgment he arrives at the shack on a wintry afternoon and walks back
into his darkest nightmare. What he finds there will change his world forever.

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Special offerings for mission

Two offerings in May will let us support
disaster relief, refugee assistance and youth.

The PCUSA encourages churches to give generously to
support mission. Financial support is an important aspect
of the connection between churches and the work done in
mission around the world on your behalf. Edgewood will have
the opportunity this month to give in support
of two significant ministry efforts.

Since 1949, Presbyterians have joined with mil-
lions of other Christians through One Great Hour
of Sharing to share God's love with people experi-
encing need. Edgewood will take this offering on
Sunday, May 10. Our gifts support ministries of
disaster response, refugee assistance, and commu-
nity development that help people find safe refuge,
start new lives and work together to strengthen
their families and communities. The Presbyterian
Hunger Program receives 36 percent of undesig-
nated One Great Hour of Sharing gifts, while the Self-Development of
People and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance each receive 32 percent.

The Pentecost Offering is traditionally received on the day of Pente-
cost (May 31). It provides a direct way to meet the needs of children at
risk, youth and young adults. Congregations are encouraged to keep 40
percent of the offering to support ministry with children at risk in their
communities. The General Assembly's portion provides leadership de-
velopment opportunities for Presbyterian youth and young adults and
supports children-at-risk programs at the national level. The General
Assembly Council divides the remaining 60 percent among ministries
with youth and young adults (25 percent); young adult volunteers (25
percent); and child advocacy ministries (10 percent).



Kalthoma, a refugee from Darfur, is part
of a group resettled through One Great
Hour of Sharing funds.



SPECIAL OFFERINGS

► One Great
Hour of Sharing,
Sunday, May 10

► Pentecost
Offering, Sunday,
May 31



VOLUNTEER UPDATE

So far, 86 percent of volunteer positions for General Assembly have been filled of the 1,000 to 1,500 volunteers needed for the week of June 15–22.

Volunteers are needed to pray for GA, assemble packets, set up the exhibit hall, give information, greet at the airport and hotels, staff the volunteer check-in desk, show hospitality, usher at worship and open doors. You can volunteer for different days, or just a single shift.

HOW TO REGISTER

► **Online:** Go to www.presbycola.org, click on the Volunteer button and follow the instructions. Online registration ends Sunday, June 4, at 7 p.m..

► **At church:** Fill out the volunteer registration form.

► **Questions?** Ask local church contact **Rick Frennea**.

GA2006



Guide to the PCUSA 217th General Assembly

Here are selected highlights of the 217th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA, meeting June 15–22 at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex. Some 5,000 Presbyterians, in the first-ever concurrent meeting of the PCUSA and the Cumberland Presbyterian churches, will gather in Birmingham from all over the country. In addition, there will be ecumenical representation from the Vatican, Orthodox churches, and a host of other Christian communions. All of the events listed are free and open to the public, though some require a convention name tag, which is free to volunteers, but a one-time \$10 fee otherwise.

◀ Thursday, June 15 ▶

1 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

217th General Assembly convenes (Convention Center)

► Opening business meeting, commissioning service, Stated Clerk's orientation, report from the Moderator, and presentation by the host, Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. (Multi-media presentation prepared by work group which included Sid Burgess and Brian Hagan, Janine and Don's son.) Requires name badge.

7:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.

Business meeting (Convention Center)

► Election of the moderator of the 217th General Assembly. Requires name badge.

◀ Friday, June 16 ▶

6:45 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.

Evening worship (Concert Hall)

► Preacher: Rick Ufford-Chase, moderator of the 216th General Assembly. Commissioning of mission co-workers. Open meeting.

◀ Saturday, June 17 ▶

9 a.m. – noon; 1:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Assembly committee meetings (Convention Center). See GA commissioners at work on the big issues. Open admission.



MATTHEW 28 HAITI SUPPORT

Since 1990, Matthew Twenty-Eight has spread the Good News about Jesus Christ's love to the people in the Central Plateau of Haiti. Among its efforts there, the group supports the entire operation of an orphanage; provides medical services in villages without health care; and is building new houses for earthquake refugees.

Each Sunday during the worship service, Edgewood collects a special offering to support this mission in Haiti. We ask our members to consider contributing a "nickel a meal." That's \$1.05 a week.

DONATIONS

March
\$254.74

April
\$370.75

Total since start
\$1,848.48

MORE ABOUT HAITI MISSION



Learn more about the Matthew

Twenty-Eight mission in Haiti and see photos of its work at www.matthew28.org.

CHURCH LIFE

MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

PCUSA mobilizing to assist tornado recovery

The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley has begun organizing the response of local Presbyterian churches to aid the recovery from the devastating tornadoes that swept through Alabama on Wednesday, April 27. Birmingham-area pastors and churches met with representatives from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance on Friday, April 29, at Independent Presbyterian Church. Supply pastor **Debbie Feagin** and elder **Kevin Henderson** represented Edgewood at the meeting.

A PDA team is on the ground in Tuscaloosa, where at least one PCUSA church, Covenant Presbyterian, was heavily damaged. PDA is working with Covenant and the pastor, **Rick Olson**, to help that church meet immediate needs and move forward.

In our congregation, **Mary and Paul Hopkins'** home was heavily damaged in the storm. They were in temporary quarters at a great-grandson's home in Cahaba Heights but will be moving into more permanent quarters at another great-grandson's vacant home near Ross Bridge.

Dave and Kathy Silvie's son, **Lt. Joe Silvie** of the National Guard, was mobilized and has been manning a checkpoint in Cullman, another hard-hit community, and assisting first responders there. Joe reports the devastation is amazing, and much bigger than TV cameras can capture.

Stewart Wilbanks has a friend in Cullman who said it looks like a nuclear bomb was dropped there. Gas stations, banks, and grocery stores are closed. Water service has been shut off because the treatment plant was damaged. Stewart collected contributions of bottled water at church on Sunday, May 1, for delivery to the Cullman Civic Center, which is serving as an aid station. If you wish to make further contributions, contact Stewart at sswatty@gmail.com or 776-2066.

The **Rev. Dan Stephens**, associate presbytery executive for missional development, is asking congregations to establish a disaster response team. This team will be responsible for finding/publicizing/organizing opportunities to serve. Dan says this team will need to think strategically and long-term. "Every congregation needs to consider these questions: What will our congregation's particular mission be in the recovery efforts? What help can we provide that matches our congregation's gifts? How can we focus our efforts?" He also encourages congregations to develop community partners.

HOW TO HELP WITH TORNADO RECOVERY



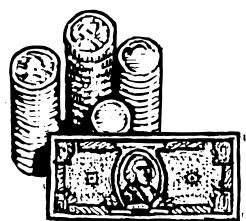
The most comprehensive list of immediate tornado relief opportunities is available online at <http://alabamapossible.org/2011/04/tornado-relief-how-you-can-help>.



Above: Water collected by Stewart Wilbanks, including contributions from Edgewood, for storm-stricken Cullman.



Left: Covenant Presbyterian in Tuscaloosa.



OPERATING FUND

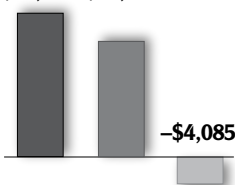
2009 ANNUAL BUDGET

\$265,000

JUNE OFFERINGS

Pledged vs. actual

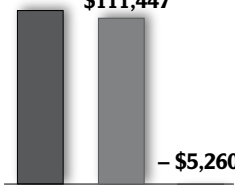
\$19,451 \$15,366



YEAR TO DATE OFFERINGS

Pledged vs. actual

\$116,707 \$111,447



BUDGET REPORT

Budget figures represent pledged vs. actual income rather than the "bottom line." The Stewardship ministry unit hopes this will emphasize the importance meeting our pledges has in the life of the church.

NEWS & NOTES

Session gets briefing on resolution of tax issues

It may take up to six months for Edgewood to learn how we will resolve some \$80,000 in past due federal employment taxes, according to **Sandy Durham**, Presbyterian elder and tax accountant from Tuscaloosa, who met with our Session on Oct. 11.

Elder **Kevin Henderson** has completed tax returns for 16 delinquent quarters, going back to 2005. Clerk of Session **Julie Metheny** signed these reports, and they have been submitted to the IRS.

Filing these returns, along with payment, was the job of our bookkeeper, who resigned Sept. 1. As with every employer, the church is required to withhold 7.5 percent of each employee's pay, and match it with 7.5 percent to pay for Social Security and Medicare premiums. Pastors are considered "self-employed" for tax purposes and pay a 15 percent self-employment tax. At Pastor **Sid Burgess'** request, a sum equal to slightly more than 15 percent of his salary has long been withheld from his pay check every pay period so that at year's end he would get a tax refund instead of owing additional tax.

Sandy is a former IRS employee who now works for a CPA firm in Tuscaloosa, where her husband, **Charlie Durham**, is pastor of First Presbyterian Church and where Sandy currently serves on Session. Her ministry to our Presbytery is to come to the aid of congregations who have tax problems, and she does this without charging any fees. "You are by no means the first church to fall victim to this circumstance," Sandy told the Session, "but from my experience you are responding in the most responsible and open manner possible."

Representatives of Session have filed police reports detailing what Session believes to be mishandling of church money and falsifying of church financial reports. Sandy hopes those police reports will allow the IRS to abate or waive most of the penalties assessed for not filing and not paying our taxes. Even if those penalties are waived, however, we will owe interest on all of the past due taxes, Sandy explained. We are in the process of filing a claim with Church Mutual, our insurance company. Our policy provides up to \$20,000 for losses due to employee dishonesty.

Men's group to explore 'living a life of significance'

The Men's Bible Study is set to begin a six-week study focused on living a life of significance. The group will watch and then discuss video clips from a DVD by author **John Ortberg**, entitled *When the Game is Over, it all goes Back in the Box*. The study compares life to a game of Monopoly, while offering insights and suggestions in how to play the game (and life) well. The group meets on Fridays from 7 to 8 a.m., beginning Nov. 6.

The group recently completed an eight-week study of the "Parable of the Prodigal Son," using **Henri Nouwen's** book, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*. All men are invited to participate. Contact **Kevin Patton** with questions or comments.

Help wanted with church library

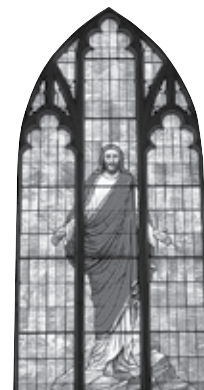
Looking for a place of service and involvement at Edgewood? Christian Nurture is praying for someone to take charge of our library—specifically the cataloging of an abundance of recently gifted books, shelving returned books, culling obsolete books, and a general monitoring of library use. Best person for this job is someone available on weekdays. Please contact **Kathy Silvie**.

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Embezzlement results in tax bill

Church faces \$128,000 bill from IRS for unpaid taxes and penalties due to financial fraud.

The IRS is seeking almost \$128,000 from Edgewood for employment taxes that were not paid but instead were diverted by the former church bookkeeper since late 2005.

According to elder and Session member **Kevin Henderson**, W2 forms and monthly Session financial reports showed the money was paid, but quarterly returns were not filed. IRS collection attempts were intercepted by the bookkeeper and not reported to Session. The Session learned about the problem as details of apparent embezzlement came to light last year.

The bill includes about \$79,000 in taxes and withholding, \$36,000 in penalties and \$13,000 in interest.

The church is seeking relief in several areas. "We filed a police report claiming embezzlement and falsification of financial reports, and because of that we hope the IRS will abate (forgive) the \$36,000 in penalties, and our insurance will pay \$20,000. There is evidence of substantial unauthorized payments to Birmingham-Southern College (presumably for tuition), and we are considering asking BSC to return the stolen funds," Henderson says.

The church also has received at least \$22,000 in unsolicited outside gifts to help offset the loss.

The former bookkeeper has signed a confession with Homewood police and has written a letter of apology to the congregation.

Meanwhile, Kevin, chair of Session's stewardship ministry unity, says member financial commitments for 2010 appear to be holding firm to '09 levels. With reduced personnel costs, Kevin says we should be able to make monthly payments to the IRS while sustaining our current ministries.



IRS



INSIDE

► Our former bookkeeper acknowledges "betrayal" and the "crime against the church" in apology to congregation, **Page 4**

Telling your story

OUTREACH

Think beyond the congregation

A tool for strengthening connections

Part of overall communication strategy

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Living into the body of Christ

Edgewood chooses the path of inclusion
for those among us with disabilities.

By Ellen Gillespie

Our city has been the site of many important events related to civil rights. One that is often overlooked took place in 2006, when the 217th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) met right here in Birmingham.

At that meeting, the General Assembly approved a sweeping document, "Living into the Body of Christ: Towards Full Inclusion of People with Disabilities." I was honored to be part of the Task Force that worked for three years to write this document. One of the most active members of the Task Force, a young woman who does not speak, but uses a communication device, wrote a poem to accompany the report. Here is a portion:

We are all members of Christ's family.

Why can't you be welcoming?

We are all in need of a church which welcomes us and accepts us for who we are.

We are made in God's image.

When you forget to include us you are forgetting to include God.

Many people with disabilities feel they will not be welcome at church. They may have been relegated to children's events or "special classes" at other churches in the past. As usual, Edgewood is choosing a new path, a path of inclusion rather than "separate but equal" as we try to be more welcoming to all.



Elder Kevin Henderson serves communion to members of Arc of Jefferson County, who have been worshipping at Edgewood since Christmas 2009.

Continued on page 4

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Restating our mission in world

Session's revision of mission statement
begins process of church's transformation.

In a rare Saturday meeting on Saturday, Oct. 2, the Session worked to revise the church's 1997 mission statement as the next step to setting the church on a new course following the financial fraud.

Session's goal was to shorten the 223 word, 15-line text into a more readily accessible statement without losing the spirit of the original. The four-hour meeting was led by elder **Tom Coan** and hosted by clerk of Session **Julie Metheny**. The new document, formally adopted at Session's Oct. 17 meeting, is four lines and only 58 words:

We joyfully proclaim the Gospel of God's love. As a diverse and inclusive community of believers, we celebrate our unity in Christ. We believe we are called to compassionate service in our congregation, in our community and in the world. We invite all who want to explore the great mystery of faith and paths of discipleship to join us.

Session is planning two follow-up meetings to work on organizational structure and goals for the coming year. Those meetings, also to be led by Tom, are set for Nov. 1 and Dec. 6.

The 1997 statement will not be discarded but saved as a more complete summary of our history as well as our mission. Here is the full text:



Edgewood ranks in the Top 10 within our presbytery for mission giving, **Page 2**

Continued on page 4

Telling your story

CONTENT & DESIGN

Building a better newsletter

Content & design

CONTENT

It's all about the stories (and the storytelling)

Content

WRITING STORIES

The 5 Ws of writing:
Who, what, when, where, why
(and how)

Content

WRITING STORIES

Details, details, details

Write in a conversational style

Don't write in exclamation points!!!

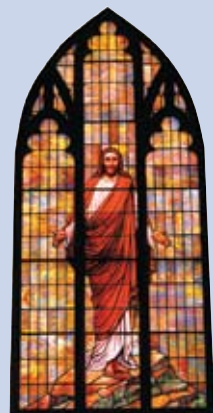
Write for the outsider

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Protecting the 'stranger'

Edgewood offers an overture calling for repeal of state's anti-immigration law.

Alabama's new anti-immigration law has been described as necessary to fighting illegal immigrants by its sponsors and as "the most mean-spirited" in the country by critics.

Edgewood's Session has approved an overture taking the new law to task for criminalizing "the Gospel imperatives to serve the stranger among us" and calling on the Presbytery to join other faith traditions in urging its repeal.

The overture, drafted by elder **Kevin Henderson**, will be presented at the Presbytery meeting at Mountain Brook Presbyterian on Thursday, Aug. 18. Similar overtures have been approved by First Presbyterian-Birmingham and Immanuel Presbyterian-Montgomery. The Presbytery of North Alabama has adopted a similar declaration.

The Edgewood overture notes that "the Beason-Hammon Alabama Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act is reminiscent of Alabama's unfortunate and embarrassing history of the treatment of minorities" and that the 219th General Assembly (2010) took a position against state laws that target members of the population for increased scrutiny, primarily people of color or Hispanic ancestry.

The Alabama bishops of the Roman Catholic, Episcopal and United Methodist churches have joined the U.S. Justice Department in challenging the law in court. Interfaith rallies against the law have been held in Birmingham and most recently in Montgomery.

If adopted, the overture calls on Presbytery to send copies to Alabama members of Congress and to Gov. Robert Bentley, who signed Alabama's anti-immigration measure into law.



Protecting the 'stranger'

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ANGEL FOOD MONTHLY MENU

For May, Angel Food Ministries will be serving up New York strip steaks, IQF split chicken breasts, gourmet mac & beef entrée, bone-in pork chops, fully cooked meatballs, maple flavored breakfast sausage links, ground turkey, ground chicken, garden peas, green beans, fresh sweet Georgia Vidalia onions, diced tomatoes, seasoned waffle fries, pasta, long grain brown rice, sweet Hawaiian dinner buns, 2% shelf-stable milk, eggs, break-n-bake cookies. The specials include a variety of steaks, burgers and chicken, fruit and vegetables, after school snacks, prepared meals and allergen-free food.

The basic order costs \$35, and specials range from \$17 to \$55 each. Senior boxes are \$28. Orders are due in the church office by Saturday, May 8. Distribution day will be Saturday, May 21.



For more info and a downloadable menu go to the church website at www.edgewoodpc.org.

FINAL DISTRIBUTION

Saturday, May 21, is the final distribution day at Edgewood.

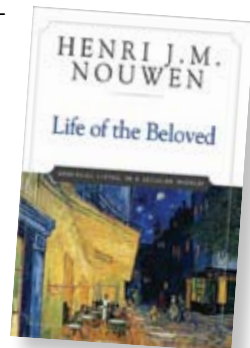
CHURCH LIFE

Men examine 'Life of the Beloved'

The men's Bible study group is reading and discussing Henri Nouwen's classic work, *Life of the Beloved*. Asked by a journalist friend to write a book explaining the spiritual life in terms that he could easily understand, Nouwen's answer has become one of the most cherished books of our era. "All I want to say to you is 'You are the Beloved.'" The group began its study on Friday, April 29.

Nouwen is considered one of the great spiritual writers of our day. He taught at Harvard, Yale and Notre Dame, and spent 10 years at the L'Arche Daybreak community serving as a chaplain to mentally challenged adults and their caretakers in Toronto.

The men's Bible study group meets on Fridays from 7 to 8 a.m. Come and feed on the good news that Nouwen shares (and on coffee and biscuits) and enjoy the good fellowship of friends in faith. Contact group leader **Kevin Patton** (568-4655) with any questions.



NURTURE NOTES

Book group to discuss new book in May

The book group will meet at 3 p.m. only on Saturday, May 21. Our book selection for this month is *Heaven Is for Real* by Todd Burpo. We will also be happy to discuss Anne Lamotte's *Grace (Eventually)* if some who have read it but have not yet been able to attend would like to, says Debbie Feagin, the group's convenor.

Fellowship supper programs for May

► **May 4 and May 18:** **Kevin Patton** will finish up his "Creation" series. On the menu: Saws BBQ, potato salad, salad and chips (May 4); spaghetti (there will be a vegetarian option), Caesar salad and bread (May 18).

► **May 11:** **Dan Stephens**, associate executive for missional development with the Presbytery of Shppards and Lapsley, will talk about presbytery's response to the April 27 tornadoes that swept through Alabama. On the menu: Muffaletta Pasta Salad (there will be a vegetarian option), bread and fruit salad.

► **May 25:** This will be our last regular Wednesday night dinner until fall and will feature our annual Talent Show. On the menu: Burgers and hot dogs (there will be a vegetarian option), chips, veggie salad and potato salad.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

► Prayer Shawl Ministry meetings in May will be at the church. The first is Thursday, May 12, at 7 p.m. The second is Sunday, May 22, at 12:30 p.m. (bring a brown bag lunch). All are welcome — the proficient, the curious, those wanting to learn to knit and/or crochet, and those who just want to be part of the fellowship.

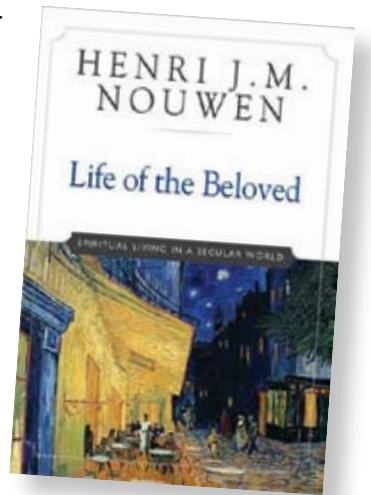
If you have questions or need further information on any of these activities, contact **Debbie Feagin** at 979-3248 or debbifeagin@aol.com.

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Content & design

DESIGN

It's all about the stories (and the storytelling)

Content & design

DESIGN

Create a simple yet visually interesting format

Tell stories with words and pictures

Use color (even in black & white)



Bold Springs Presbyterian Church Newsletter

July 2006

Bold Springs Welcomes Dr. Alina Voicu

At a called meeting on June 14, the Bold Springs session unanimously voted to engage Dr. Alina Voicu (pronounced VOY-ku) as our new Director of Music beginning July 1, 2006. She is the chair of the Arts Department of the Indian Springs School. A native of Romania, Alina holds a Bachelor of Music degree from Gheorge Dima Music Academy in Cluj, Romania, a Master of Music degree from Bowling Green University in Ohio, and earned her Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Alabama where she received the Gloria Narramore fellowship and studied with Amanda Penick. She is current president of the Birmingham Music Teachers Association and Vice-President of the Alabama Music Teachers Association. She is married to Daniel Voicu, concert master of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra. They have two children, Alex and Angela. Alina's extraordinary expertise, energy, intelligence, and her deep faith bode well for the redevelopment of Bold Springs. If you've not already done so, please welcome her aboard!



Alina Voicu

Mark your calendar now!

Sunday, July 23

Bold Springs Town Hall Meeting

5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

at the church...



bring a covered dish,
and also your dreams, visions, concerns, and hopes
for the future of Bold Springs.
Members of the presbytery and your church's
vision team want to hear you!

(read more about it inside »)

the bridge

BOLD SPRINGS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

JULY 2006

A new voice for music program

Her expertise and strong faith make Dr. Alina Voicu a timely choice as music director.

The Session took another step in the redevelopment of Bold Springs at a called meeting on June 14, when it unanimously voted to engage Dr. Alina Voicu as the new director of music beginning July 1.

Alina is the chair of the Arts Department of Indian Springs School. A native of Romania, she holds a bachelor of music from Gheorge Dima Music Academy in Cluj, Romania, a master of music from Bowling Green University in Ohio, and earned her doctor of musical arts from the University of Alabama where she received the Gloria Narramore fellowship and studied with Amanda Penick. She is currently president of the Birmingham Music Teachers Association and vice president of the Alabama Music Teachers Association.

She is married to Daniel Voicu (the name is pronounced VOY-ku), who is concertmaster of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra. They have two children, Alex and Angela.

Alina's extraordinary expertise, energy, intelligence and her deep faith bode well for the redevelopment of Bold Springs. If you've not already done so, please welcome her aboard!



Alina Voicu takes her place as music director on July 1

TAKE NOTICE

TOWN HALL MEETING

> **When:** Sunday, July 23, 5-7:30 p.m.

Bring your dreams, visions, concerns and hopes for the future of Bold Springs. Members of the Presbytery and your church's vision team want to hear you.

More details > Page 4

SESSION MEETING

> **When:** Sunday, July 9, 1:30 p.m.

> **What:** Monthly meeting of Session

LEEDS HOMETOWN CELEBRATION

> **When:** Saturday, July 8, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

> **What:** Leeds' annual community party

Bold Springs will have a booth set up, and needs people for 1- to 2-hour shifts. This is another opportunity to reach out to the community. Contact Polly Johnson at 699-2475 if you can help.

7544 Cahaba Valley Road • Birmingham, Alabama 35242

991-3040 • 862-2595 • 991-9248 (fax) • www.boldsprings.org

Vacation Bible School

July 17—20 from 9 AM – Noon
Grades K-5

Pre-register in the fellowship hall or call the church office

Your Help Is Needed!!!

Our VBS plans are well under way and we need everyone's help!

We've organized a mass mailing and other publicity to our surrounding community. If successful, this could expose our church to many families with young children. The week of VBS will be filled with games, fun snacks and crafts, music and mission. **Consider the tasks below and sign up at the Fiesta display in the fellowship hall.** Call or email Wendy with questions at 980-6459 or 907-7647 or wendy_evans66@yahoo.com. Thanks!!!!

How You Can Help?

- Send a postcard to your neighbors, friends & relatives inviting them to VBS
- Help paint and make props on Monday, July 10 at 10 AM
- Help decorate and set up for VBS on Sat., July 15 at 10 AM and Sun., July 16 following Sunday School
- Sign up to bring food to the Family Night taco dinner on Thurs., July 20 at 6 PM
- Agree to be a co-group leader during VBS. You will be in charge of 10 kids but no teaching is involved

Items Needed

- Mexican blankets, hats, etc.
- Ceramic fountain
- Terracotta pots
- Baskets
- Real and fake plants, garlands
- Small Wrought Iron table and chairs

If you have any of these items please call Wendy or bring them by the church during her office hours or Sunday mornings



Leed's Hometown Celebration

July 8, 10 AM—4 PM

Bold Springs will have a booth set up for the Leed's Hometown Celebration on July 8th. We need people to oversee the booth for 1-2 hour shifts. This is another good opportunity for our church to reach out to the community. The booth will have VBS information, newsletters and other handouts. Please contact Polly Johnson as soon as possible if you are able to help (699-2475).

Session Meeting

Sunday, July 9, 2006
at 1:30 PM

the bridge

JULY 2006

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

- > July 17-20 from 9 a.m. to noon > Grades K through 5th
- > Preregister in the fellowship hall or call church office at 980-6459

Volunteers needed for VBS

Our Vacation Bible School plans are well under way and we need everyone's help. We've organized a mass mailing and other publicity to our surrounding community. If successful, this could expose our church to many families with young children. The week of VBS will be filled with games, fun snacks and crafts, music and mission.

Volunteers are needed in several areas. If you're interested, sign up at the Fiesta display in the fellowship hall. If you've got questions, contact Wendy Evans at 980-6459, 907-7647 or wendy_evans66@yahoo.com.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

- > Send a postcard to your neighbors, friends and relatives inviting them to VBS.
- > Help paint and make props on Monday, July 10 at 10 a.m.
- > Help decorate and set up for VBS on Saturday, July 15, at 10 a.m. and Sunday, July 16, following Sunday school.
- > Sign up to bring food to the Family Night taco dinner on Thursday, July 20, at 6 p.m.
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ITEMS NEEDED

- > Mexican blankets, hats, etc.
- > Ceramic fountain
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- > Baskets
- > Real and artificial plants and garlands
- > Small wrought iron table and chairs

If you have any of these items, please call Wendy or bring them by the church during office hours or Sunday mornings.

Prayer shawls for senior outreach

The knitting group is making prayer shawls for the Ruth and Naomi Senior Outreach. "We have good size groups with women from the church as well as new faces from the community," says Judy Lee, leader of the knitting group. The prayer shawls involve a simple knitting stitch that is taught at the meeting, which is every Monday from 10 a.m. to noon. The materials and tools needed will be available for purchase. Contact Judy at 699-24448 for more information.



WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Worship

- > **Sunday, July 2** Lectionary passages: 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10; Psalm 48; 2 Corinthians 12:2-10; Mark 6:1-13.
- > **Sunday, July 9** Lectionary passages: 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10; Psalm 48; 2 Corinthians 12:2-10; Mark 6:1-13.
- > **Sunday, July 16** Lectionary passages: 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10; Psalm 48; 2 Corinthians 12:2-10; Mark 6:1-13.
- > **Sunday, July 23** Lectionary passages: 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10; Psalm 48; 2 Corinthians 12:2-10; Mark 6:1-13.
- > **Sunday, July 30** Lectionary passages: 2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10; Psalm 48; 2 Corinthians 12:2-10; Mark 6:1-13.

Faith Talk

- > **Adults:** "Talk Back," a discussion about the sermon with pastor Gerald Stephens Jr. in the sanctuary
- > **Adults:** Bible study, "The Present Word," led by elder Bob Parker in the fellowship hall

> Children & youth:

- Nursery,** birth to age 4;
- multi-age** K-6th grade;
- youth** 7th-12th grade, both in Sunday school hall



What's this business 'bout a July 23rd "Town Hall Meeting?"

In 2003, the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley in conjunction with the membership of Bold Springs agreed that our congregation would become a "redevelopment ministry" of the Presbytery. This means that both groups, our congregation and the presbytery, would gather spiritual and physical energies and resources and put them to work to transform Bold Springs from a *rural* ministry (which had served the community well for more than 150 years) into a *suburban* ministry (which will serve the community well in the future).

To this end, the presbytery found two five-year grants—\$25,000 per year from a presbytery fund and \$50,000 per year from the Independent Presbyterian Church Foundation—which began paying in 2005 to support the growth and redevelopment of Bold Springs. This funding will end in December 2009.

Meanwhile, perhaps the *most important* aspect of congregational redevelopment is discernment of GOD'S WILL. No matter how much or little money a congregation has, the real success of its ministry will depend on whether it can fathom and embrace the mission God wants it to carry out.

To help us begin this process, two groups have been working together:

The **Bold Springs Vision Team** consists of church members Wayne Farrell, Kathy Goolsby, Monty Newport, Chuck Lane, Denise Perkins, and Jeanne Parker, with Gerald and Wendy sitting in as staff advisors.

The **Presbytery's Bold Springs Task Force** consists of Rev. Susan Clayton (Independent Presbyterian), Elder Ron Dauphinee (Grace Presbyterian and lay pastor of Avondale Presbyterian), Elder Robert Emerick (Edgewood Presbyterian), Rev. Dr. Tom Evans (Executive Presbyter), Rev. Drew Henry (First Presbyterian-Birmingham), and Rev. Margaret Northen (Honorably Retired from First Presbyterian-Jacksonville, AL).

These two groups working together strongly believe that God's desire for our congregation will emerge from the collection of ideas, hopes, dreams and concerns of *every* Bold Springs church-goer.

Therefore, on the evening of Sunday, July 23, absolutely EVERY Bold Springs church-goer is STRONGLY ENCOURAGED to be present for a covered-dish meal, and for a time when we will break into five or six small groups, each of which will be facilitated by one representative from the Vision Team (church member) and one representative from the Task Force (presbytery). Each set of facilitators will use the same four or five questions to shape a discussion about the future of Bold Springs. They will take careful notes and work to compile all of the ideas, hopes, dreams and concerns.

This will be an extraordinarily important gathering for our future together. **Please make plans now to be here from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, July 23.**

Our Prayer Concerns

Donna Bailey, Justin Clinkscales, Mike Haninger, Paul & Mildred Slomp,

Pete Dorsey, Harold Ricketts, Mary Frances Slay,

Larry Standifer, Julia Godwin, Ann Hull, Camille Fuller, Lynn Sims, Roy Ledbetter,

Bob Priest, Hazel Poe, Melinda Clinkscales, Caldwell Allen, Melissa Caito, Kristi Pike, Melvina Phillips

and her grandson (Rand), Sgt. Len Cowling III, Faye DeShazo,

Maddie Grace Partain, Jeannie Proctor, Barbara Mellon (Judy Lee's sister).



the bridge

JULY 2006

Special meeting to explore the future of Bold Springs

In 2003, the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, in conjunction with the membership of Bold Springs, agreed that our congregation would become a "redevelopment ministry" of the Presbytery. This means that both groups would gather spiritual and physical energies and resources, and put them to work to transform Bold Springs from a *rural* ministry (which had served the community well for more than 150 years) into a *suburban* ministry (which will serve the community well in the future).

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These two groups working together believe that God's desire for our congregation will emerge from the collection of ideas, hopes, dreams and concerns of every Bold Springs church-goer.

On Sunday, July 23, from 5 to 7 p.m., you will have a chance to share your hopes for Bold Springs at a covered-dish meal. "This will be an extraordinarily important gathering for our future together," Gerald says. At this gathering, we will break into five or six small groups, each of which will be moderated by a representative each from the vision team and task force. Each set of facilitators will use the same four or five questions to shape a discussion about the future of Bold Springs. They will take careful notes so as to compile all of the ideas, hopes, dreams and concerns we express. These will then be used to help shape the future of Bold Springs.



PRAYER CONCERNS

- > Donna Bailey
- > Justin Clinkscales
- > Mike Haninger
- > Paul & Mildred Slomp
- > Pete Dorsey
- > Harold Ricketts
- > Mary Frances Slay
- > Larry Standifer
- > Julia Godwin
- > Ann Hull
- > Camille Fuller
- > Lynn Sims
- > Roy Ledbetter
- > Bob Priest
- > Hazel Poe
- > Melinda Clinkscales
- > Caldwell Allen
- > Melissa Caito
- > Kristi Pike
- > Melvina Phillips and grandson Rand
- > Sgt. Len Cowling III
- > Fay DeShazo
- > Maddie Grace Partain
- > Jeannie Proctor
- > Barbara Mellon (Judy Lee's sister)



7544 Cahaba Valley Road
Birmingham, AL 35242

Phones: (205)991-3040
(205)862-2595
Fax: (205)991-9248

Bold Springs Church Staff

Gerald Stephens Jr. Minister ***	Wendy Evans Church Administrator ***
Alina Voicu Music Director ***	Chase Cooper Pianist ***
Janice Philpot Bookkeeper ***	Ray Quiles Custodian ***

Rick Frennea
888 Mountain Ridge Drive
Birmingham, AL 35209

Sunday Morning Worship

9:30 a.m.

Lectionary Passages for July 9:

2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10; Psalm 48;
2 Corinthians 12:2-10; Mark 6:1-13

Faith Talk

10:50 a.m.

Adults

"Talk Back", a discussion
about the sermon with Gerald

Sanctuary

Bible Study, "The Present Word"

Led by Elder Bob Parker

Fellowship Hall

Children and Youth

Nursery - Ages 0-4

Multi-Age K-6

Youth 7-12

Nursery

Sunday School Hall

Sunday School Hall

Members of Session

Class of 2006

Randy Bailey

Kathy Goolsby

Chuck Lane

Class of 2007

Robert Parker

Jane Northcutt

Class of 2008

Wayne Farrell

Denise Perkins

John Lee

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the bridge

INSIDE JULY 2006

A new voice for music program

Her expertise and strong faith make Dr.
Alina Voicu a timely choice as music
director > **ON THE COVER**



ALSO INSIDE

Plans are under way for Vacation Bible School; find out how you can
contribute > **Page 3**

Bold Springs will gather for a special meeting aimed at helping us discern
God's will for the future > **Page 4**

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at 699-2448 for more information.

Please plan to be apart of this fun
and meaningful group!



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BOLD SPRINGS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

the bridge

5 KEYS TO GOOD NEWSLETTER

[5]

Know your limits, then
evolve and stretch them

5 KEYS TO GOOD NEWSLETTER

[4]

Cover the entirety of
your congregational life

5 KEYS TO GOOD NEWSLETTER

[3]

Create a strong visual identity

5 KEYS TO GOOD NEWSLETTER

[2]

Make it a mission

5 KEYS TO GOOD NEWSLETTER

[1]

Focus on the storytelling

Building a better newsletter

EVOLUTION OF A NEWSLETTER

The Edgewood Epistle



The Edgewood Epistle



A monthly newsletter for members and friends of Edgewood Presbyterian Church

850 Oxmoor Road Birmingham, AL 35209 Ph. 871-4302

Sid Burgess, pastor Ph. 591-4406

Mike and Kelly Wood, editors Ph. 854-1656

December

1995

Worship Highlights for December

Comes now the season of Advent, the season of expectation. A church which does not look for more than we have yet seen is no church at all. So it is that we come each year to Advent, a time to pray that God will renew our hope—hope for a “new heaven and a new earth.” To bolster our hope, we will read from the prophet Isaiah and from the Psalms. Plus, we will listen to what God has to say to us through Paul’s letter to the Romans, and through the Gospel of Matthew.

December 3rd - 1st Sunday of Advent



Lectionary texts: *Isa. 2:1-5; Ps. 122; Rom. 13:11-14; Matt. 24:36-44*

Baptism of Jack Prince, son of Lance and Julie Prince

Favorite Hymn: “Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”

December 10th - 2nd Sunday of Advent, Human Rights Day

Lectionary texts: *Isa. 11:1-10; Ps. 72:1-7, 18-19; Rom. 15:4-13; Matt. 3:1-12*

Favorite Hymn: “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

December 17th - 3rd Sunday of Advent

Lectionary texts: *Isa. 35:1-10; Ps. 146:5-10; James 5:7-10; Matt. 11:2-11*

Favorite hymn: “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

December 24th - Fourth Sunday of Advent, Christmas Eve



Lectionary texts: *Isa. 7:10-16; Ps. 80:1-7, 17-19; Rom. 1:1-7; Matt. 1:18-25*

Favorite Hymn: “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

5:00 pm Christmas Eve “Candlelight and Communion Service”

Guest musician: Ray Love (Linda’s husband)

December 31st - 1st Sunday after Christmas Day

Lectionary texts: *Isa. 63:7-9; Ps. 148; Heb. 2:10-18; Matt. 2:13-23*

Coming in January

Baptism of the Lord Sunday, January 7th, and our annual renewal of baptismal vows

Ordination and installation of elders, January 21st

THE PASTOR'S PEACE

Close, and Getting Closer



Gospel of Matthew Moves Front and Center

“Salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed...”
Romans 13:11

The season of Advent is upon us. “Come, thou long expected Jesus, / Born to set thy people free.” As Presbyterians, we believe the Risen Christ comes to us in the Story and in the Sacraments. We feel closer to Jesus at Christmas time because we know the Christmas stories from the gospels.

Everyone comes to the Christmas Eve service knowing the stories and the songs. Together we enter the darkness; together we see the great light. Together we see the manger, and then, together, we rise and come to the Table, experiencing the sacred presence of the Risen Lord. Imagine what the life of discipleship would be like if we came to every service, knowing the biblical stories to be read and proclaimed! Imagine every Service for the Lord’s Day being as sacred as the Christmas Eve service.

To that end, we follow the Christian calendar, which begins with Advent expectation and moves quickly to Christmas joy. Next, in order, come Epiphany revelation, Lenten anguish, Easter triumph, and Pentecost growth. We follow the Christian year, following Jesus and his band from Galilee to Jerusalem, story by story. Each time we celebrate the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, we retell the stories of God made known through Israel, and in Christ Jesus. Story and sacrament are no “quick fix,” but they are central to our life-long calling to faithfulness. That is why, having read and re-read the stories, we are closer now to our salvation—our connection to God—than when we first believed. Close and getting closer.

Come, Lord Jesus, come to us in the Story and in the Sacraments.

Set us free from our compulsions; set us free from our anxieties.
Save us, so that we may faithfully follow you.

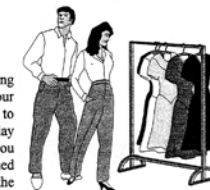
Mercy and peace,

Sid

Page 2

KID-FREE SHOPPING DAY BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND... DECEMBER 16TH, 10:00 AM UNTIL 2:00 PM

Parents, wouldn’t it be nice to have a couple of hours for holiday shopping alone, without your little angels? We’ll give you just that! Mark your calendar for Saturday, December 16th. All you need to do is bring them to Edgewood, with their own sack lunch, and we’ll do the rest! We’ll play games, sing songs, tell stories, make cookies and other fun stuff while you do some serious shopping. What’s the catch? You contribute a canned meat product (stew, chili, chicken and dumplings or the like) for the Greater Birmingham Ministries canned good drive. Sign-up sheets will be in the education building. (We’d like to know what we’re getting into, so please register!)



Sid recently received a letter via e-mail on his computer. The mail was from Thomas Fallin, who is a student at Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin, near Milwaukee. Thomas had visited our Web Page on the Internet. Carroll College was founded in 1846, and became affiliated with PC(USA). Since then, the college has become non-sectarian and ecumenical, but still values its affiliation with the Presbyterian Church. Carroll College has recently begun a “cross-cultural communication major.” A pre-requisite to graduation is that the student must spend an “internship” of one month with a family or families with different backgrounds other than what he is accustomed to. Thomas has requested that we check with our members to see if anyone would be interested in becoming a “host family.” Thomas has provided us with additional information about himself and Carroll College. If you would be interested in hosting this student, please contact Sid for more information.

Message from the Editors

As Kelly and I discussed our work we have fulfilled on the Epistle since we “took the reins” two years ago, we realized that we have not given much credit to those behind the scenes. As always, we wish to thank those ever faithful contributors who so diligently send in the articles. The ones we always seem to forget, however, are the never-tiring, dependable volunteers who see that these pages get copied, folded, taped, and addressed. For without this special group, this newsletter would be one copy... in my computer.

And as we all enter the sacred family time of Advent and Christmas, I would like to remember these volunteers from our “shipping department.” Therefore, I ask that all contributions for January’s newsletter be given to Kelly or me no later than noon, December 17th. Once all articles are in my possession, the average time to review, sort, and layout the Epistle, printing to the final form, is eight hours! Due to my schedule, I must work on the Epistle a couple of hours each day. This deadline will place the newsletter into the hands of our volunteers on December 21st. Please remember them as you put your articles together, so they won’t have to look forward to working during Christmas!

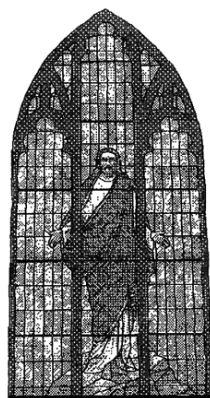
Thanks, and may God bless you during this wonderful season!
Mike Wood

Page 7

The Edgewood EPISTLE



March
1996



A monthly
newsletter of
Edgewood
Presbyterian
Church

850 Oxmoor Road
Homewood
871-4302

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Pastor
591-4406

Janice Philpot
Secretary

Kathy Silvie
Christian education
979-8820

Carter Sayle
Music director
663-1866

Editors

**Mike & Kelly
Wood**
854-1656

Celebrating the Gifts of Women



How the church is embracing the
contributions made by women.

The theme of Celebrating the Gifts of Women Sunday is twofold: To celebrate the contributions of women and to lift up issues that concern women all over the world.

The occasion offers us a chance to honor the lives of the women of EPC, who have long been the backbone of this church. It also affords us the opportunity to highlight specific issues of concern to women in our community, and to remember our commitment to the Women's Shelter, one of the missions of this church.

The day is observed on the Sunday closest to March 8, which is International Women's Day. This day was first observed in 1909. A year later in Copenhagen, Denmark, a group established a global Women's Day to honor the movement for women's rights and freedom and to assist in achieving universal suffrage for women. The March 8 annual date was set in 1917 following the historic fight for bread and peace by Russian women, which helped bring about the abdication of the Czar and the right of women to vote in that country.

Today, International Women's day is a time to remember the progress made worldwide on behalf of women, to celebrate the lives of ordinary women who make extraordinary differences in their communities, and to draw attention to areas in which change is still needed (in this country and worldwide) if women are to experience free, safe and empowered lives as God intended.

**Sunday,
March 10**

**Rev.
Margaret
Northen**

Pastor of First
Presbyterian
Church of
Jacksonville

Our good friend
Margaret will
deliver a sermon
based on the
story of the
Sumaritan
woman at the
well from the
Gospel of John.

The Session

Clerk
Nancy Cope
823-0666

Worship
JoAnne Findley
918-0711
Marilyn Jackson
945-1796

**Christian
Education**
Susan Tendian
942-8748
Eleanor Robb
988-5680

**Christian
Lifestyles**
Rick Turpen
823-7119

**Ministry to
Congregation**
Neil Barron
942-3633
Carolyn Hammill
871-0472

**Ministry to
Community**
John Philpot
322-6258
David Silvie
979-8820

Outreach
Martha Dorroh
945-0370

Administration
Nancy Cope
823-0666
Robert Emerick
290-2197



The Pastor's Peace

**'No pain,
no gain'**

"No pain, no gain" is an article of faith among athletes. It is also true for Christians: "No pain, no gain." Now comes Holy Week, a time of unspeakable pain, bracketed by two extraordinary gains.

The problem in our culture is that the "gains" – the triumphant entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, celebrated on Palm Sunday, and the Resurrection, celebrated on Easter Sunday – have almost entirely overshadowed the horrible "pain" of crucifixion. It is revealing that we often misspell the word as crucifixion, as if it were a fiction, instead of crucifixion, with the "x" as a reminder of the cross.

"No pain, no gain." The gift of our salvation – our connection to God through Christ – is greatly diminished if the suffering of Jesus is not acknowledged. That is why many churches, including ours, began several years ago to celebrate Palm Sunday as Palm/Passion Sunday. In addition, we now have three Holy Week services, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday (noon service), the Way of the Cross – and, this year, the drama, *Midnight Torches* – to help focus our attention of the depth of Christ's compassion for us.

This Holy Week, I urge you to make a modest sacrifice of time and effort – just a little bit of pain – and be prepared for a gain in faithfulness to God. Come Thursday night – the service is brief and homework can wait this one night. On Good Friday, grab a quick sandwich and come to the short, noon-time service. Or, if you can take all of Friday afternoon off, and join us for the mass procession of Christians down Oxmoor Road. By all means, come Saturday night for *Midnight Torches*. Attend these four events, then come on Easter Sunday expecting not just to sing, "He is Risen," but to experience the presence of the Risen Christ!

Shalom!

Sid

Holy Week at Edgewood

Maundy Thursday, April 4 – We will celebrate the Lord's Supper at a 6:30 p.m. service.

Good Friday, April 5 – A noon service at the church to mark the crucifixion, then the Way of the Cross beginning at All Saints Episcopal at 2 p.m.

Holy Saturday, April 6 – Lenten supper at 6 p.m., followed by the biblical drama *Midnight Torches* at 7 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 7 – We will celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord at our morning service, during which the One Great Hour of Sharing offering will be collected.



The Epistle 2 April 1996

News & notes

An Earth Weekend celebration: Dick Austin and 'Garden and Gospel II'

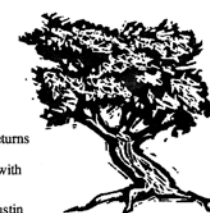
Presbyterian minister, environmental activist and farmer Dick Austin returns to Edgewood for a second round of "The Garden and the Gospel," to continue a dialogue begun last Earth Day about humanity's relationship with the rest of creation.

Building upon last year's biblical call to environmental responsibility, Austin will discuss the seeming conflicts between the Bible's creation stories and modern science's understanding of the origins of the universe. He will also address the critical link between our commission to tend and keep the Earth on God's behalf and Christ's moral imperative to work for the restoration of justice and peace.

Last year's participants were rewarded with a rich experience of insight and inspiration. "The Garden and the Gospel provided a profoundly stirring message," says Rick Turpen. "I lacked a clear understanding of the scope of environmental theology. Dick Austin was able to place it in the larger context of covenant relationships and Christ's charge to care for one another."

Betty Howell agrees. "Creation stewardship speaks to every aspect of Christian living. With its focus on learning to value and respect God's countless gifts of grace, it transforms us, moving us to place faith into action."

For more information or to volunteer your much-needed assistance with the weekend's events, contact Rick (823-7119) or Betty (681-4751).



Schedule of events

Saturday, April 20

6 p.m. – Vespers
(refreshments following).

7 p.m. – "Christ and Creation,"
an address by Dick Austin.

Sunday, April 21

9:30 a.m. – Worship, with Dick
Austin preaching.

10:45 a.m. – Forum.

12:30 p.m. – "Awakening to
Nature" at Ruffner Mountain
Nature Center. Bring a picnic
lunch; children welcome.



**Mother's Day
Service for
Wholeness
and Healing**

Sunday, May 12,
5 p.m. The Resolve
group will host an
informational
reception following
the service.

Resolve support group meeting monthly

As a response to the alternative Mother's Day service last year, Edgewood is sponsoring the organization of a local chapter of Resolve, the national support and information organization for people experiencing infertility. Since November, a changing but always expanding group of women and men have met here monthly, with Sid Burgess and social worker/counselor Susan Trimm, serving as convenors.

Our worship committee is planning to repeat the Mother's Day Service for Wholeness and Healing again this year. Eugenia Gamble will preach. Melissa Tate Burgess has again produced a brochure and flyer promoting the service, which will be distributed to medical clinics, counseling centers and elsewhere.

Last year's service was featured in the March 1996 edition of *Church Worship*, an ecumenical publication for worship leaders around the country. The April edition of *Presbyterians Today*, our national PCUSA magazine, will also highlight the service.

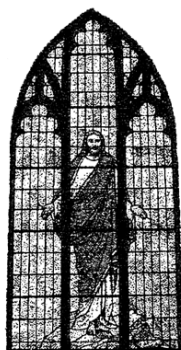
The Session voted March 11 to add Resolve to our church's list of designated ministries; that is, ministries we support with volunteers and/or money.

The Epistle 2 April 1996

The Edgewood EPISTLE



May
2000



**A monthly
newsletter of
Edgewood
Presbyterian
Church**

850 Oxmoor Road
Homewood
871-4302

Staff

Rev. Sid Burgess
Pastor
942-5907

Janice Philpot
Secretary
Christian education
322-6258

Valerie Keebler
Music director
981-9901

Editor

Rick Frennea
942-7150

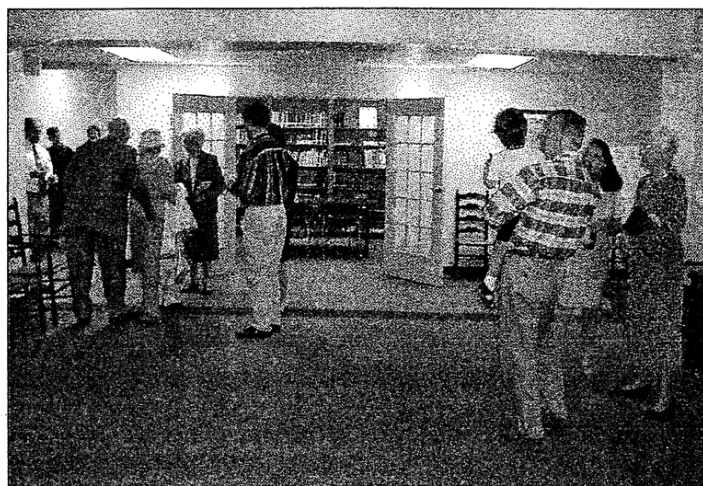
Dedication of a renovation

Edgewood will celebrate the expanded accessibility of our facilities with dedication of the remodeled education building.

Homewood resident and mother of two, **Angela Blair**, will tell her story of "Growing Up Deaf, and Hearing the Gospel" when Edgewood Church gathers on Ability Awareness Sunday, May 21, at 9:30 a.m. for the dedication of our recently renovated facilities. The touring choir of the Birmingham Children's Choir, including our own **Marissa Roque**, will sing – and sign – music as we also dedicate our new, state-of-the-art, Allen organ. An "open-house" reception will follow the service of worship.

Ms. Blair will use sign language to tell her story of growing up excluded from the community of faith due to her deafness. Husband **Danny Blair**, director of admissions at the Beeson Divinity School at Samford University, will "reverse interpret" for the hearing gifted. Ms. Blair attended the famous Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., the only university in the world for deaf students. The Rev. Mr. Blair is an ordained Southern Baptist minister.

Continued on page 9



The renovation removed part of the wall between the sanctuary and the education building for an expanded narthex. The new library is at back.

Inside: An update on the Capital Campaign to pay for the renovation, **Page 4**

The Session

Clerk of Session
Kevin Patton
871-1695

Worship
Ja'ne Fendley
957-9756
Lois North
956-5378
Melissa Tate
290-9238

Education
Don Hagan
967-7804
Irene Perdreauville
823-1513

Ministry of Discipleship
Rick Frennea
942-7150
Mike Wood
854-1656

Ministry to One Another
Amy Duckworth
802-7335

Ministry to Community
Kevin Patton
871-1695
Nancy Turpen
823-7119

Foundation of Ministry
Miles Jackson
Treasurer
945-1769

Ministry of Prayer
Marilyn Jackson
945-1769



The Pastor's Peace

A divine dwelling

In the Psalm 84, the poet of Israel can barely contain himself about the holy city of Jerusalem:

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!

I feel much the same about Edgewood Church. A little more on the modest scale, to be sure, but lovely still. Later this month we will formally dedicate the renovation of our 1948 education building, including the expanded narthex, the new elevator, the handicapped accessible restroom, plus our new Allen organ. Let me say again how much I appreciate all that you have done – in leading and in following, in giving and in doing – to bring this long-needed project to fruition.

Unlike our ancestors, we no longer think of God as restricted to a place, even a holy place. Guided by the Letter to the Ephesians, we understand that God "is above all and through all and in all" (4:6). Even so, with the psalmist, we can surely be grateful that God has given us a home:

3 Even the sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may lay her young,
at your altars, O Lord of hosts,
my King and my God.

4 Happy are those who live in your house,
ever singing your praise. Selah

I am delighted that God has called us to share this sacred space. Many folks say they can worship God at home, alone. Perhaps, but the Bible knows virtually nothing about going "solo" on the journey of faith. As the Bible sees it, we are called together to a higher joy, membership in the community of faith:

For a day in your courts (O Lord) is better
than a thousand elsewhere.

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than live in the tents of wickedness.

Come, all you fellow doorkeepers, and let us celebrate what God has done among us and for us!

Shalom!

Sid

Turn yourself in!

Join the more than 50 EPC members and friends who stay connected during the week via the Pastor's Daily Psalm. Send you e-mail address to SidBurg@aol.com.

The Epistle 2 May 2000

News & Notes

Church secretary goes from part to full time

Janice Philpot, church secretary and Christian education coordinator, is now a full-time employee of the church. At its April 5 meeting, the Session voted to add nine hours to her work week, bringing her up to 40 hours per week. She is paid on an hourly basis at \$10 per hour, for annual compensation of \$20,800, which includes one week of paid vacation. Janice has been an employee of the church since 1995.

In other personnel news, the Ministry of Worship unit is completing work on an organist job description. Interim organist **Jason Turner** has informed Session that he will be leaving at the end of May. **Kelly Wood** and **Valerie Keebler** are heading the search for a new organist. In a related matter, **Forbes Piano** has agreed to swap the old organ for a digital recorder that would enable church musicians to record music on floppy disk for playback on the new Allen organ.

Capital Campaign reports on debt, pledge status

The physical signs marking the results of Edgewood's Capital Campaign are easy to spot: a renovated education building complete with new elevator and refurbished kitchen. Here's a summary of the funding behind these improvements:

Receipts		
Pledge collections (of \$250,600 in commitments)	\$141,300	
Lakeshore Foundation grant	15,000	
PCUSA loan proceeds	157,000	
Presbyterian Women kitchen contribution	4,000	
Total receipts to date	\$317,300	
Payments		
Tithe to First Light	\$21,000	
Construction costs and architects' fees	234,000	
Kitchen equipment	6,000	
Debt service on PCUSA loan (\$1,147 per month)	3,500	
Total payments to date	\$264,500	
Balance of funds (for debt service)	\$52,800	

"Now that debt service has begun, it's crucial that all who pledged so generously keep their payments up to date," says **Rick Turpen**, who chairs the Capital Campaign Fulfillment Committee. Of the \$250,600 in commitments, the outstanding pledge balance totals \$109,300.

If you have questions about your commitment, contact the church staff (**Miles Jackson**, treasurer, and **Janice Philpot**, secretary). Friends and new members interested in making a commitment should contact **Rick** or **Sid Burgess**.

The Epistle 4 May 2000



More Session news

In other business at its April 5 meeting, the Session:

♦ Agreed to sponsor **Lauren Goodman** and **Michael Philpot** to attend the Presbyterian Youth "Peace and Justice" seminar. The total cost is \$750 per participant, with the possibility of \$150 scholarships from Presbytery. Session will provide \$350 for each from the pastor's discretionary fund in the missions budget. Each participant is responsible for the balance of the cost.

♦ Authorized the use of the sanctuary and fellowship hall for the wedding of **Lisa Wilbanks** and **Mark Mize** on June 3, beginning at 2 p.m. Lisa's uncle, the Rev. **James Wilbanks**, son of **Estelle Wilbanks**, will perform the ceremony.

The next Session meeting is at 5 p.m. Sunday, May 7.



Session news

In action at its meeting on Sunday, Dec. 10, the Session:

◆ Approved use of the fellowship hall for 11 days in February by Zeta Tau Alpha sorority at Samford University for rehearsals for the annual Step Sing, a campus musical competition.

◆ The next Session meeting is at 5 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 13.

Upcoming events

◆ **Session retreat:** Friday-Saturday, Jan. 25-26, at the 4H Center in Shelby County.

◆ **Junior high retreat:** Friday-Sunday, Jan. 25-27, at Camp McDowell.

◆ **Senior high retreat:** Friday-Sunday, Feb. 8-10, at Camp McDowell.

News & Notes

Denominations to protest against state's tax system

Leaders of Alabama Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians are planning to converge on the state Capital on Jan. 10 to protest what all four denominations agree is the state's unfair tax structure. According to Alabama Arise, the lowest-paid fifth of Alabama families pay 11.5 percent of their incomes in state and local taxes; the richest 1 percent pay 3.6 percent. Alabama Arise is a coalition of 140 religious, community and civic groups that work on poverty issues by promoting state policies to improve the lives of low-income people. The Jan. 10 is set for 2 p.m. on the steps of the state Capital in Montgomery. **Nancy Turpen** is the Session's liaison with Alabama Arise.

'Souper Bowl of Caring' set for Feb. 3

Edgewood will once again participate in the "Souper Bowl of Caring," which seeks donations for community charities across the country. This year's event is on Sunday, Feb. 3, annually the same day as the NFL's Super Bowl. The goal is for each member to donate \$1 for the needy. Last year, Edgewood delivered 90 cans of food and \$252 to the Old Firehouse Shelter in downtown Birmingham. Nationally, 12,500 congregations raised \$3.6 million. Since becoming a national effort in 1993, the event has raised a total of \$13.5 million.

Cover story: Pledges for 2002 hold firm

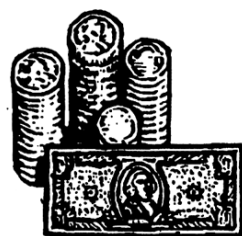
Continued from front

consistently shows annual growth in membership and attendance.

Treasurer **Miles Jackson** says he will recommend a budget comparable to last year's \$200,453, although income for the year is falling below projections. Offerings, payment of pledges, and other income for the 11 months ending Nov. 30 were just \$166,160, some 10 percent less than anticipated.

Miles says the Session will be scrambling to find money for the senior high youth to attend the Montreat Youth Conference this summer, and to provide for proper maintenance of our aging church buildings. The Session remains committed to "tithe of the tithe"; that is, 10 percent of the church's total income is designated for missions.

Pledge cards are still available through the church office, and pledges can be made or adjusted by phone or e-mail to Janice, 871-4302 or jpatchurch@aol.com.



2002 pledge drive update

2002
73 pledges
\$177,798
2001
71 pledges
\$177,553

Church Life

☛ Elder of the month: **Nancy Turpen**, 823-7119

☛ Prayer concerns: **Marilyn Jackson**, 945-1769

New membership directory in the works

Edgewood Church is going to have new pictorial directory soon. Elders **Rick Frennea** and **Mike Wood** are teaming with new member and "photo bug" **Aundrea Fuller** to once again produce an in-house directory. Photographs will be made at the church on Sunday mornings, beginning Jan. 13 and continuing through the end of the month. No appointments will be necessary. Just come a little early or be willing to stay a little later to have your picture made.

"We're not Olin Mills," says Rick, "but we can save our folks lots of money." Professional directories are produced free of charge to churches, but industry norms say the companies gross about \$75 to 80 per family from sales of photograph "packages." The directory can be done in-house for about \$5 per family.

Giving the gift of music supports choir

EPC members and friends have an opportunity to give to the music program in a special way. An anthem can be given in honor of, or in memory of a special person, loved one, or family. A gift of \$50 will purchase one of the many anthems on the choir's wish list. An attractive music label is placed on every copy. Contact music director **Jason Turner** for information. The following anthems have been given to the music library thus far:

◆ "Hallelujah Chorus," by George Frideric Handel, in memory of **Mr. and Mrs. Troy Berryhill** by **Amy B. Duckworth**.

◆ "In This Very Room," by Ron Harris, in memory of **Robert Black Jr.** by **Miles and Marilyn Jackson**.

◆ "Wonderful Peace," by Gustaf Nordqvist, in honor of **Rick Allred** and **Lynn Bailey** by **Jason C. Turner**.

◆ "The First Noel/Pachelbel's Canon," arr. Mike Clawson, in memory of **Patricia L. Weems** by **Robert W. Listerman**.

Fellowship suppers resume in January

Programs resume on Wednesday, Jan. 2, with **Glenn and Stephanie Olson** doing New Year's fun and games. On Jan. 9, pastor **Sid Burgess** will conduct a Q&A featuring questions from the 2001 confirmation. The next three Wednesdays will help focus the congregation on **Jonathan Bass'** book, *Blessed are the Peacemakers*, the story of the creation of Martin Luther King's famous "Letter from the Birmingham Jail." Jan. 16 will ask "Where were you in 1963?" and include a brief look at EPC during that tumultuous time. The Jan. 23 program is yet to be determined. **John Putnam** will do a preview of Bass' book on Jan. 30.



Mission opportunities

◆ **2 Cents a Meal.** This offering is collected the last Sunday of each month (Jan. 27) to support hunger relief efforts. The idea is to put aside 2 cents per meal for each day of the month. That comes to \$1.80 per person.

◆ **Breakfast Club.** Participants provide a hot breakfast for up to 30 women at the First Light shelter downtown one Saturday each month.

Jan. 12: **Fran Woodruff**, **Emily Murray** and **Sid Burgess**.

Feb. 9: **JoEllen Patton**, **Lori Ruble** and **Beth Arello**.

◆ **Aid to Inmate Mothers.** Participants provide snacks and drinks for about 30 children who travel monthly to visit their mothers at the Julia Tutwiler Prison for Women.

For more information about either the Breakfast Club or AIM program, contact **Diana Prutzman** at 871-1542.

The Edgewood EPISTLE



JANUARY
2006



The monthly
newsletter
of Edgewood
Presbyterian
Church

850 Oxmoor Road
Homewood
871-4302
www.edgewoodpc.org

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Justin Ward
Music director
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EDITOR

Rick Frennea
942-7150
rfrennea@yahoo.com

Searching for a new music director

Justin Ward is leaving Edgewood to serve an Anglican church in Vestavia Hills.

Justin Ward, the Samford junior who has taken our music ministry to new heights during his 16th-month tenure, is leaving Edgewood to become music director of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church on Rocky Ridge Road in Vestavia Hills.

The church is affiliated with the Anglican Mission in America, which "draws upon evangelical, anglo-catholic and charismatic influences."

Justin first came to Edgewood as organist in February 2004 and was named music director in August of that year. During his tenure, Justin led our choir in singing the Schubert Mass in November of 2004. He coordinated the choir's participation in two choral evensong events at All Saints Episcopal Church. This past summer he planned and led a two-day choir retreat on the Samford campus. This fall he planned and conducted special music for our Reformation Sunday observance. And, at his initiative, we hosted the First Presbyterian Church of Bessemer handbell choir for a service of evening prayer and concert on the second Sunday of Advent.

Justin plans to graduate in December. He is considering a number of options for continued study in the field of organ performance and church music.

With Justin's departure, **Lynn Bailey** and **Kelly Wood** will step in as volunteers to lead the choir. Lynn will serve organist and Kelly will work on music selection and plan rehearsals. **Robin Oliver** is working to draft a job description for a new music director. The choir hopes to find someone who will be able to revive our handbell choir and expand music ministry to children and youth while maintaining the excellence of our Service of the Lord's Day.



Justin Ward
Replaced Jason Turner as organist in February 2004 and later became music director, leading the choir for 16 months



Edgewood
Presbyterian
Church

850 Oxmoor Road
Homewood
871-4302
www.edgewoodpc.org

Sunday worship 9:30 a.m.
Sunday school 10:45 a.m.
Wednesday supper 5:45 p.m.

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sidburg@aol.com

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THE EDGEWOOD EPISTLE



The monthly newsletter of
Edgewood Presbyterian Church

FEBRUARY 2006

A night for (not so) newlyweds

Couples can take a light-hearted look at marriage during an evening of food and fun.

First there's the wedding, then the marriage. Is the heart of romance still beating? Can a couple still have (and enjoy) a night of food and fun? Just such a night (with answers to those questions) is in store for Valentine's Day.

Bill and Fran Woodruff will serve as host and hostess for a Valentine couples banquet on Saturday evening, Feb. 11, featuring a live performance of the "The Not So Newlywed Game" led by **Dan Sandifer-Stech**, a licensed marriage and family therapist. Dan will also offer a light-hearted look at marriage: "Be Mine ... but I don't know about the rest of your clan." Couples from the audience will compete for one-hour of free therapeutic massage.

Frances Waller, assisted by **Stephen Steward**, will be serving up prime rib, baked potatoes, salad, rolls, and a choice of homemade cheese cakes. Child care will be provide by **Rose Finkelstein** and Samford students **Claire Dorsey** and **Andrea Wendel**.

Cost of the event is \$20 per couple and, in contrast to Wednesday night fellowship supper, reservations are a must. Call the church office (871-4302) to place your reservation or e-mail **Janice Philpot** (jpatchurch@aol.com) by Wednesday, Feb. 8.



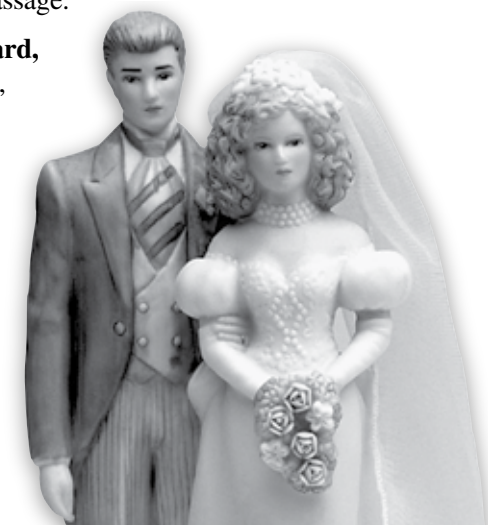
DETAILS

► **What:** Valentine couples banquet

► **When:** 6 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 11

► **Where:** EPC fellowship hall

► **Cost:** \$20 per couple



THE
SESSION

Clerk of Session

Lynn Bailey
979-9115

Worship

Frances Waller
871-3227

Nancy Cope
823-0666

Christian
Nurture

Jessica Hatch
326-2401

Ministry of
Discipleship

Beverly Badger
940-9851

Pat Wittig
422-5817

Ministry to
One Another

Amy Duckworth
802-7335

John Philpot
322-6258

Ministry to
Community

Bill Woodruff
942-3993

Roberta Emerick
290-2197

Foundation
of Ministry

Fred Halstead
425-2340

Miles Jackson
Treasurer
945-1769



THE PASTOR'S PEACE

The Rev. Sid Burgess

A good review

There are movie reviewers, music critics, and then there are church experts. **Paul Garven** is one of the latter. He visits 10 to 15 churches a year in his work with Cargill and Associates, a church consulting firm out of Dallas.

Paul is working with the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, directing our efforts to raise some \$11 million dollars to build phase one of a camp and conference center, Living River, on a bend in the Cahaba River near Montevallo. Paul was at Edgewood last month for our Christmas dinner, when Presbytery associate executive **Robert Hay** presented a video preview of plans for Living River. Here is Paul's critique of Edgewood Church:

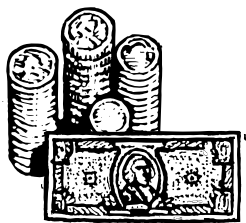
"I was greeted by eight to 10 different people, each introducing themselves, and welcoming me to Edgewood. Several invited me to sit with them. It was wonderful, being from out-of-town. Many churches I visit are not 'visitor friendly.' When people arrive for worship or a dinner, they're more eager to cluster with their own group than to greet a newcomer. At Edgewood, I experienced a true sense of fellowship. The excitement of folks was contagious. I saw it in the interaction with each other and I heard it in the announcements – the affirmation of the volunteer cooks (**Frances Waller, Nell Barron, Betsy Ashe, Roger Thomas, Mike Laughlin**), children dancing in the 'Nutcracker' (**Jessica Terry, Sarah Patton and Olivia Murray**), even the welcome of that baby girl (**Cambria Ginther**). If I was moving to Birmingham, Edgewood would be the kind of congregation I would look for."

Now that, my friends, is a good review. "You done good!" And Sunday by Sunday, Wednesday by Wednesday, more good is to be done if we are to sustain our reputation as the "open minded, open-hearted" congregation. Every Lord's Day brings one or more "critics." Experts say they are forming their assessment as they begin the walk from the parking lot to the front door. By the time a first-time visitor has taken his or her seat, he or she has usually made the decision whether to return, or to keep on looking.

Let's resolve in this new year to do everything possible to provide to others that same kind of warm welcome Paul Garven received. As you come to worship or fellowship, look around for the newcomer, as well as for your faithful friends:

Love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. (Romans 12.10-11)

Shalom!



OPERATING FUND
2005 thru November

ANNUAL BUDGET

\$218,533

Pledges

Bjt YTD	\$171,895
Actual YTD	\$155,176
Difference	\$16,719 ▼

Total income

Bjt YTD	\$200,321
Actual YTD	\$186,460*
Difference	\$13,861 ▼

Total expenses

Bjt YTD	\$200,321
Actual YTD	\$185,372
Difference	\$14,949 ▼

Income vs. expenses

Income YTD	\$186,460
Expenses YTD	\$185,372
Difference	\$1,088 ▼

* includes \$2,500 carryover from 2004



FEBRUARY
NEWSLETTER

January newsletter
Deadline for the January edition of The Epistle is Sunday, Jan. 22. You can leave material in the newsletter mailbox. Or you can contact **Rick Frennea** at 942-7150, or send items by e-mail to rfrennea@yahoo.com.

NEWS & NOTES

Session proposes 10 percent salary increases

Backed by 2006 pledges that are up by 11 percent over 2005 commitments, Session in December approved a 10 percent increase in church administrator **Janice Philpot's** salary, and will propose the same increase for pastor **Sid Burgess** at the congregational meeting to be held in February. The increases will bring Janice's pay to \$27,356. She handles secretarial and bookkeeping duties for the church, and coordinates our Christian education ministry. In August, she will celebrate her 12th anniversary as an employee of the church. If approved by the congregation, Sid's new salary would be \$50,765. He completed his 15th year as pastor at Edgewood on Nov. 1.

The salary increases were recommended to Session by **Kevin Patton**, moderator of the church's personnel committee. Kevin reported on the committee's review of data on pastors' salaries from the PCUSA Board of Pension and the local Presbytery. Median salary for all PCUSA pastors for 2006 is projected to be \$46,500. However, even with the increase, Sid's salary will continue to be in the lower 25th percentile of pastors with similar experience in congregation's of comparable size. Among sister churches in our area, only Second Presbyterian, with just 76 members, pays their pastor less.

"I think Session might have considered boosting the pastor's salary at least up into the 50th percentile had it not been for the budget shortfall in '05," Kevin says. "Session was concerned that we were unable to keep all of our mission commitments. Hopefully, '06 will be a better year for us and we can continue to make progress on the salary front."

More Session news

In other action at its Dec. 18 meeting, the Session:

- ▶ Examined the officers elect: **Tom Coan, Debra McLafferty, Clair McLafferty** and **Alice Morgan**, who'll be ordained as elders; and **Herman Hatch**, who'll take on the office of deacon. Deacon-elect **Robin Oliver** will be examined at the January meeting.
- ▶ Approved listing EPC as a venue for meetings of PCUSA "affinity groups" during next summer's General Assembly
- ▶ Authorized students from Samford to use EPC as a practice facility in advance of the university's spring "Step Sing" program.
- ▶ Selected **Frances Waller** to serve as elder commissioner to a called meeting of Presbytery on Jan. 26, and to the regular "stated" meeting on Feb. 18.

Newsletter gets a fresher, cleaner look for 2006

The new year calls for a fresh start and that's just what *The Edgewood Epistle* has gotten for 2006. Nothing radical, mind you, just a more modern (dare we say "edgier") look. *The Epistle* got its last serious redesign in 1996, shortly before **Rick Frennea** took over as editor. Over the years the design has been tweaked to keep it fresh.

The type palette remains the same, but how it's used a little differently. The biggest change is in the presentation on the cover, the Pastor's Peace and the Choir Loft, where the stories get larger type for the opening paragraph. The rails that have been part of the design for several years now are anchored on the left side of each page. As with the December issue, photographs will be used more frequently. We hope you find the changes to the newsletter reflect the liveliness of our "open-hearted, open-minded" congregation.

THE EDGEWOOD EPISTLE



The monthly newsletter of
Edgewood Presbyterian Church

JANUARY 2011



EDGEWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

850 Oxmoor Road,
Homewood
871-4302
769-0244 (fax)
www.edgewoodpc.org
Sunday worship 9:30 a.m.
Sunday school 10:45 a.m.
Wednesday supper 5:45 p.m.

STAFF

Rev. Sid Burgess

Pastor
942-5907
sidburg@aol.com

Rev. Debbie Feagin

Supply pastor
979-3248
debbiefeagin@aol.com

Amanda Klimko

Music director

Pat Fitzsimmons

Organist

Patricia Burch

Youth director

Lavon Chaney

Office manager &
bookkeeper

What's next for this church?

Session wants to hear the voices of the congregation as it sets a new course.

Over the past few months, the Session has been exploring the question “what’s next?” as the church recovers from and moves beyond the financial fraud that has consumed much of our time and energy. As we enter a new year, it’s the congregation’s turn to help answer that question.

Session members will go out two by two during January to meet with groups within the church to hear your thoughts about what our focus should be. Everyone from Sunday school classes and the choir to Presbyterian Woman and the prayer shawl ministry will have an opportunity to share their ideas.

The Session began the process of setting a new course in October by revising the 1997 mission statement into a more readily accessible “vision” statement. Since then, Session members, ably guided by elder **Tom Coan**, have held two brainstorming meetings to explore a number of topics and work toward setting goals grounded in the mission statement. The goals discussion clustered around three areas:

- ▶ Become a more diverse and inclusive community.
- ▶ Proclaim the Word more widely and broadly, touching a greater number of people outside the attendees on Sunday morning.
- ▶ Provide more opportunities for compassionate service; increase the number of people involved in service and increase the number of people touched by service initiatives.

These topics will provide a starting point for the conversation, but won’t limit it, Tom says. The Session wants a wide-ranging discussion within these small groups that generates lots of ideas. So prayerfully consider what you believe God has in store for this congregation — then share it with us.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

What's next for this church?

Session wants to hear the voices of the congregation as it sets a new course for our future together.

ON THE COVER



ALSO INSIDE

- 2 Pastor's Peace
- 3 Worship
- 4 News & Notes
- 5 Church Life
- 6 Angel Food
- 6 People news
- 7 Calendar



EDGEWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

850 Oxmoor Road
Birmingham, AL 35209
Phone: (205) 871-4302

Address service requested



“OPEN HEARTED,
OPEN MINDED”

On the Web: www.edgewoodpc.org

THE SESSION

Clerk of Session
Julie Metheny
823-5500

Worship
Pat Wittig
422-5817
Kevin Henderson
591-7430

Christian Nurture
JoAnne Fendley
957-9765
Anna Velasco
967-9895

Ministry of Discipleship
Robert Emerick
290-2197
Rick Frennea
942-7150

Ministry to Community
Kevin Patton
871-1695
Chuck Riggs
871-5133

Foundation of Ministry
Tom Coan
823-4652
Miles Jackson
945-1769

Stewardship
Kelly Wood
988-8936

Youth Ministry
Wakaba Mwangi
youth elder
916-0620

Treasurer
Rick Turpen
823-7119



THE PASTOR'S PEACE

The Rev. Sid Burgess

This was a December to remember

Three deaths in three weeks: surely, it was a “December to remember” for Edgewood Church. Three deaths brought three funerals to Edgewood, and some of you were present for all three services. How rare is that in our death-denying culture?

I went to the Internet to research that question. I did not find any hard facts but I did find what appears to me to be a good guess. “The average person knows about 50 people for whom they are close enough to want to attend their funeral, 1 percent of whom will die in any given year. At that rate, they’ll wind up attending about one funeral every two years.”

As an active church member you have a larger circle of friends, and we know one another more intimately than we might know co-workers, neighbors and other friends. What’s more, in our faith tradition the “sting of death” has been “swallowed up” in Christ’s glorious resurrection which we share by virtue of the sacred promise of life everlasting (see 1 Corinthians 15:50–58). Thus, for us, participating in a funeral service is not something to dread but an opportunity to “witness to the resurrection.”

As a person of faith I’m always taken aback when I read in an obituary notice that someone has “gone to be with the Lord.” Don’t tell me this dear soul missed God’s sacred presence in the world! God present in the beauty and wonder of creation; God present in the timeless stories and teachings of Holy Scripture; God present wherever and whenever “two or more” are gathered together in God’s Holy name; God present in ministries of mercy, great and small; God present in every “newborn baby’s cry”; and, God present in the peaceful passing of each “good and faithful servant.”

As Christians we believe that life with God, everlasting life, begins in the here and now and never ends. But you don’t have to take my word for it. Take the word of the whole Presbyterian Church (USA) in these words from our denomination’s “Declaration of Faith:”

We are convinced the life God wills for each of us is stronger than the death that destroys us. The glory of that life exceeds our imagination but we know we shall be with Christ. So we treat death as a broken power. Its ultimate defeat is certain. In the face of death we grieve. Yet in hope we celebrate life. No life ends so tragically that its meaning and value are destroyed. Nothing, not even death, can separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Shalom!



NEWSLETTER HAS ONLINE LINKS

Look for and click on these buttons for online links to audio, video and websites in The Epistle’s interactive pdf edition. This button takes you to pastor Sid Burgess’ blog.



COMMUNION AT EDGEWOOD

The Lord’s Supper is observed each Sunday and at special services upon approval of Session. We take communion by “intinction.” That is, we tear a piece of bread from a common loaf and dip it in either the cup of wine or the cup of grape juice.

LAY LEADERS

Communion servers

► **Jan. 2:** Kevin Henderson, Miles Jackson, Nancy Cope

► **Jan. 9:** Kevin Henderson, Kevin Patton, Roberta Emerick

► **Jan. 16:** Kevin Henderson, Chuck Riggs, JoAnne Fendley

► **Jan. 23:** Kevin Henderson, Ken Smith, Ellen Gillespie

► **Jan. 30:** Kevin Henderson, Jack Steward, Marilyn Jackson

► **Feb. 6:** Kevin Patton, Mike Wood, Debra McLafferty

► **Feb. 13:** Kevin Patton, Bill Woodruff, Julie Metheny

Reader

► **January:** Julie Steward

Children’s message

► **Jan. 2:** Debra McLafferty

► **Jan. 9:** Alice Morgan

► **Jan. 16:** Barbara Steward

► **Jan. 23:** Fran Woodruff

► **Jan. 30:** Fran Woodruff

WORSHIP

New deacon to be ordained during officer installation

One new church officer will be ordained on Sunday, Jan. 30. **Jane Clements** will be ordained to the office of deacon. She will replace outgoing deacon **Lynn Frennea**. Three current members of Session — **Robert Emerick**, **Rick Frennea** and **Kevin Henderson** — will be installed for second terms. Elder **Ken Smith**, who is replacing **Pat Wittig**, will join the class of 2013 on Session.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR JANUARY

◀ **January 2** ▶ **Second Sunday after Christmas, elder Robert Emerick, guest preacher**
Isaiah 63:7-9: “I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord.” *Psalms 148:* All creation and creatures, all rulers and people are called upon to praise God. *Hebrews 2:10-18:* Because Jesus was like us in every respect and was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested. *Matthew 2:13-23:* The escape to Egypt and Herod’s slaughter of young children. Joseph, Mary, and Jesus return to Nazareth.

◀ **January 9** ▶ **Baptism of the Lord, Renewal of the Baptismal Covenant**
Congregational meeting

Isaiah 42:1-9: God’s servant will bring forth justice to the nations, will open the eyes of the blind, release prisoners, and usher in a new age. *Psalms 29:* Praise God who is more powerful than all nature and rules over all the earth. *Acts 10:34-43:* Peter goes to meet Cornelius, a Gentile, after having a vision that nothing God has made is unacceptable. *Matthew 3:13-17:* The baptism of Jesus; he sees the Spirit of God descend like a dove upon him.

◀ **January 16** ▶ **Race Relations Sunday, the Rev. Christopher Burnett of Bethel AME Church preaching**

Isaiah 49:1-7: Israel is described as God’s chosen instrument/servant to bring God’s Word to the world. *Psalms 40:1-11:* A psalm of trust – God supports us and gives us a “new song” to sing. *1 Corinthians 1:1-9:* We are called and given spiritual gifts which sustain the Church. *John 1:29-42:* John the Baptist recognizes Jesus as the one with the greater, more significant mission, through whom God will reach out to many.

◀ **January 23** ▶ **Third Sunday after Epiphany**

Isaiah 9:1-4: The coming of a new light will mark the end of oppression. *Psalms 27:1,4-9:* The psalmist describes God as his “light and salvation.” *1 Corinthians 1:10-18:* Paul addresses the divisions in the Church, but points to unity in Christ. *Matthew 4:12-23:* Following John’s arrest, Jesus withdraws to Galilee, then calls Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow him.

◀ **January 30** ▶ **Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

Micah 6:1-8: What does the Lord require of us? *Psalms 15:* Who may abide in God’s tent? *1 Corinthians 1:18-31:* Where is the one who is wise? *Matthew 5:1-12:* Where is your reward?

AUDIO OF SERVICES, SERMONS, MUSIC ONLINE



Miss a service or want to listen again to one of Sid Burgess’ sermons? Go to edgewoodpc.org to listen to services, sermons and music.



NEWS & NOTES

OPERATING FUND

2010 ANNUAL BUDGET

\$258,112

BUDGET REPORT

This is a summary of cash activity for November 2010.

The cash balance is a total of IRS, restricted and operating funds outlined below.

CASH BALANCE

as of Nov. 1, 2010

\$34,542

INCOME

Contributions	\$23,319
Restricted income	\$3,484
Other	\$2,388

OUTGO

Payments	\$13,377
Payroll	\$7,801

CASH BALANCE

as of Nov. 30, 2010

\$42,555

IRS-DEDICATED FUNDS

\$22,328

RESTRICTED FUNDS

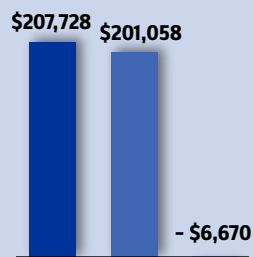
\$16,997

OPERATING FUND

\$3,230

YEAR TO DATE OFFERINGS

Pledged vs. actual



Arc guests enrich our Christmas celebrations

Guests from the Arc of Jefferson County participated in our first-ever, impromptu Christmas pageant, and returned for our Christmas Eve service.

The pageant took place on Wednesday, Dec. 15, in a fellowship hall packed with some 90 members and guests. Somehow, **Jennifer Garza** provided enough salad and spaghetti for the throng, even as many guests asked for and received second servings. **Stephen Steward** did a masterful job leading us through the Christmas story. **Robin, Wade and Woodrow Oliver** played the "Holy Family." **Amanda Klimko** led the caroling, and **Laura Patton** led the clean-up crew. The Wilbanks family — **Stewart, Ashley, Sarah Stewart, Anita and Bob** — presented each Arc guest and Arc staff member with a tin of Christmas cookies as they departed.



Stewart Wilbanks presents Arc guests and staff members with tins of Christmas cookies after the December fellowship supper and Christmas pageant.

Our talented musicians led the Christmas Eve service. **Mike Wood** recorded the event and has posted audio on our website. Two off-duty firefighters helped our guests from Arc navigate into and out of the service. Three lovely young voices — **Olivia Murray, Tabitha McCord and Clara Cagle** — sang the first verse of "Once in Royal David's City," the traditional opening carol of a "Lessons and Carols" service. **Lili Kane** and **Stacey Waites** sang a beautiful duet as we celebrated the Lord's Supper. Choir members **Rick Allred** and **Lynn Bailey** presented each Arc participant with a Christmas stocking stuffed with candy, fruit and other goodies.



See more photos of the Christmas pageant online at www.edgewoodpc.org

Newsletter gets a colorful makeover for e-edition

You are looking at a new *Edgewood Epistle*, complete with color in our e-edition. The change is part of a new outreach effort that will see updated banners, print advertising and other media. The changes began with materials used in the stewardship campaign and a makeover of the worship folder, which were designed by newsletter editor **Rick Frennea**, who by day is senior designer at *The Birmingham News*.

The biggest change is the addition of color, including photographs, in the pdf version of the newsletter, which is distributed by e-mail and available on the church website. The print edition will remain black and white. The typography is all new, from text to headlines to labels. The text type is the same as that in the worship folder. The idea, according to Rick, is to create consistency across all the church's media for a more cohesive visual identity. "I hope you find the new look fresher and more lively," says Rick. "Ultimately, it's still all about effectively telling the stories of our life as a congregation."



CHURCH LIFE



MUSIC NOTES

Amanda Klimko, music director

A new year of worship

Thank you to all EPC music-makers for your beautiful Advent and Christmas music! Thank you for your commitment of time, energy and your wonderful musicianship which created the aura of the presence of God in worship.

Thank you, **Olivia Murray, Tabitha McCord and Clara Cagle** for your lovely rendering of "Once in Royal David's City."

The choir will "relax" a little in the upcoming weeks, singing meaningful and less difficult literature and will then dig into music for Lent, Holy Week and Easter. It might be surprising to hear that we begin this music so soon following Christmas, but learning and perfecting music "rechoirs" — I mean requires — a great deal of time in practice. What do we practice? Correct notes and words, of course, but we also spend a great deal of time on singing uniform vowel sounds, working on interpretation, phrasing, and so on. Our music is our gift to God and we want our gift to be as beautiful as possible.

Have you made your New Year's resolutions? Perhaps one of them might be to become even more active in the life of our precious church. The choirs welcome you to consider joining us in our ministry of music.

The Chancel Choir hopes to welcome some new singers. I have talked to a few of you and have my fingers crossed that you will be present for rehearsal when we resume on Wednesday, Jan. 5. Please send me a message to let me know you are coming so I can have your folder ready!

Children's Choir will resume on Jan. 5. I look forward to this special music-making time with our little ones.

UPCOMING ANTHEMS

- ▶ "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen," Traditional English Carol
- ▶ "Come, Be Baptized," Smith/Schrader
- ▶ "Who At My Door Is Standing?" K. Lee Scott
- ▶ "Blessed Are the Peacemakers," Lloyd Larson

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord!

ELDER OF THE MONTH

Kevin Henderson
591-7430

DEACON OF THE MONTH

Margaret Smith
290-1973

THE BOARD OF DEACONS

Stephen Steward
moderator
516-6312

Lynn Frennea
942-7150

Mike Laughlin
942-6527

Margaret Smith
290-1973

Robin Oliver
612-0551

Fran Woodruff
942-3993

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

Deadline for the February edition of The Epistle is Sunday, Jan. 23. Contact Rick Frennea at 942-7150, or send items by e-mail to rfrennea@yahoo.com.

READ KATIE TURPEN'S BLOG



Read about the adventures of Young Adult

Volunteer Katie Turpen in New Orleans and see photos in her blog at www.katieinneworleans.blogspot.com.



ANGEL FOOD MONTHLY MENU

For January, Angel Food Ministries will be serving up choice beef netted roast, IQF split chicken breast, breaded chicken breast assorted pieces, fully cooked meatballs, fully cooked minestrone soup, ground beef, sweet Italian sausage, yellow squash & zucchini, sugar snap peas & carrots, waffle fries, beef-flavored rice & vermicelli, pasta, pasta sauce, northern dry beans, quick oatmeal, shelf-stable milk, eggs, dessert. The specials include a variety of steaks, chicken, fruit and vegetables, after school snacks and allergen-free food.

The basic order costs \$31, and specials range from \$23 to \$41 each. Senior boxes are \$28. Orders are due in the church office by Saturday, Jan. 15. Distribution day will be Saturday, Jan. 29.

For more info and a downloadable menu go to the church website at www.edgewoodpc.org.

2011 DISTRIBUTION SCHEDULE

Saturday dates for Angel Food distribution

Jan. 29 April 23
Feb. 26 May 21
March 26 June 25

CHURCH LIFE

Fellowship supper programs to focus on creation

Ever wonder where it all came from? If you have, you are in very good company. Our ancestors in faith not only considered the question, they preserved their understanding for us in holy scripture. And good folks, theologians and scientists, are still asking those questions and seeking answers.

Over five Wednesday nights from Feb. 2 to March 2, we'll look at the creation accounts from Genesis 1 to Proverbs 8 and Psalm 104, for insight into God, creation and ourselves. We'll read the texts, share news from modern science, and consider our own experience, as we further develop our own understanding of God's good creation. **Kevin Patton** will lead the discussion using material from Dr. Bill Brown's book, *The Seven Pillars of Creation*, a course on the same, and the men's Friday morning Bible study group's consideration of the creation accounts. Come hear what they said then, what they're saying now, and share your thoughts on creation, science, evolution, and our Creator God.

PEOPLE

Meet our newest members



Anita and Bob Dark



Bob and Irene Bryant

► **Irene and Bob Bryant** came to Birmingham three years ago from the upper Midwest. Bobby is a retired pharmacy school dean whose hobby is antique clock repair. Irene is a homemaker who says she is "ineligible" for retirement. The couple has a son who lives in Huntsville, and a daughter and grandchildren living near Tampa, Fla. Their home is in North Shelby County near the intersection of Valleydale and Caldwell Mill roads.



Pat McLaughlin

► **Bob and Anita Dark** are transitioning from their principal home on the Dadeville side of Lake Martin, near Horseshoe Bend National Military Park, to their town home in the Brook Highland development on U.S. 280. Bob is "trying to retire" from Prime Health Nursing Homes in Alexander City, where he manages construction projects. Anita is a retired second grade school teacher who is an avid gardener. They have five grown children and five grandchildren, including EPC members **Stewart, Ashley and Sarah Stewart Wilbanks**.

► **Pat McLaughlin** is a retired public librarian. She and her husband, the **Rev. Wayne McLaughlin**, moved to Birmingham from Ohio last summer to be near their daughter, son-in-law, and granddaughter (**Norah**, age 2½). Wayne, who has served churches in Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio, has been accepted into the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley as an honorably retired minister. The couple is originally from Kentucky.

CALENDAR EDGEWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH JANUARY 2011

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<div>2</div> <div>9:30 am - Workshop</div> <div>10:45 am - Sunday school</div> <div>1:30 pm - Primary Purpose</div>	<div>3</div> <div>8 pm - Primary Purpose</div>	<div>4</div>	<div>5</div> <div>5:45 pm - Fellowship supper</div> <div>6:15 pm - program</div> <div>7 pm - Choir rehearsal</div> <div>8 pm - Primary Pupose</div> <div>B-Brent Emerick</div>	<div>6</div> <div>7 pm - Prayer shawl ministry</div> <div>B- Millie Albright</div>	<div>7</div> <div>7 am - Men's Bible study</div> <div>8 pm - Primary Purpose</div>	<div>8</div> <div>10 am - Angel Food orders</div> <div>Noon - Primary Purpose</div> <div>1 pm - Faithbooking</div> <div>6:30 pm - Primary Purpose</div>																																																																																															
<div>9</div> <div>9:30 am - Workshop</div> <div>10:45 am - Sunday school</div> <div>1:30 pm - Primary Purpose</div> <div>4 pm - Session meeting</div> <div>B-Jessica Hatch</div>	<div>10</div> <div>10 am - Women's prayer group</div> <div>7 pm - College Bible study</div> <div>8 pm - Primary Purpose</div> <div>B-Clair McLafferty</div>	<div>11</div>	<div>12</div> <div>5:45 pm - Fellowship supper</div> <div>6:15 pm - program</div> <div>7 pm - Choir rehearsal</div> <div>8 pm - Primary Pupose</div> <div>B-Joe Silvie</div> <div>B-Jason Biggs</div>	<div>13</div>	<div>14</div> <div>7 am - Men's Bible study</div> <div>8 pm - Primary Purpose</div>	<div>15</div> <div>Noon - Primary Purpose</div> <div>6:30 pm - Primary Purpose</div> <div>B-Olivia Murray</div>																																																																																															
<div>16</div> <div>9:30 am - Workshop</div> <div>10:45 am - Sunday school</div> <div>1:30 pm - Primary Purpose</div>	<div>17</div> <div>10 am - Women's prayer group</div> <div>7 pm - College Bible study</div> <div>8 pm - Primary Purpose</div> <div>B-Sid Burgess</div>	<div>18</div> <div>B-Max Velasco</div>	<div>19</div> <div>5:45 pm - Fellowship supper</div> <div>6:15 pm - program (game night)</div> <div>7 pm - Choir rehearsal</div> <div>8 pm - Primary Pupose</div> <div>B-Janine Hagan</div>	<div>20</div> <div>10 am - Presbyterian Woman</div> <div>7 pm - Prayer shawl ministry</div>	<div>21</div> <div>7 am - Men's Bible study</div> <div>8 pm - Primary Purpose</div>	<div>22</div> <div>Noon - Primary Purpose</div> <div>6:30 pm - Primary Purpose</div> <div>B-Liz Ellaby</div>																																																																																															
<div>23</div> <div>30</div> <div>9:30 am - Workshop</div> <div>10:45 am - Sunday school</div> <div>1:30 pm - Primary Purpose</div> <div>B-Ben Patton (1/23)</div>	<div>24</div> <div>31</div> <div>10 am - Women's prayer group</div> <div>7 pm - College Bible study</div> <div>8 pm - Primary Purpose</div>	<div>25</div>	<div>26</div> <div>5:45 pm - Fellowship supper</div> <div>6:15 pm - program</div> <div>7 pm - Choir rehearsal</div> <div>8 pm - Primary Pupose</div> <div>B-Andrew Thomason</div>	<div>27</div>	<div>28</div> <div>7 am - Men's Bible study</div> <div>10 am - MOMs Group</div> <div>8 pm - Primary Purpose</div> <div>B-Anne Hays</div>	<div>29</div> <div>8 am - Angel Food distribution</div> <div>Noon - Primary Purpose</div> <div>6:30 pm - Primary Purpose</div>																																																																																															