

The Carillon

February, 2006

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BARRINGTON
A welcoming, caring, family of faith

BPW Women's Retreat, March 10 and 11, 2006

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Knowing and Growing Your Soul.
 The ladies on the BPW Women's Retreat Committee invite you to consider the gift of a Spiritual Retreat for yourself and your loved ones. This year's retreat is here at church, with the hopes that the closer location and lower cost opens up this path for spiritual growth and renewal for more of the women at the church. Woman aged 18 and older are invited. The retreat starts on Friday evening, March 10 at 7:00 p.m., and resumes on Saturday morning at 8:30 a.m. We will complete our time of having fun, building relationships with one another, and growing and renewing our spiritual selves by 4:00 p.m. And the cost? Just \$35 including breakfast and lunch. Scholarships are available. Please contact Rev. Dan Spike, 847-381-0975 for details.



Please prayerfully consider if this is the year to join us on the BPW Spiritual Retreat. Sign up after Sunday services OR clip out this form and mail it with your \$35 payment to: Angie Smith.

Yes! I'll be at the 2006 BPW Retreat.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

_____ Email: _____

Questions? Ask anyone who has been on a retreat, especially the retreat committee members: Becky Bosarge, Laura Burke, Rebecca Carlberg, Mari Franklin, Nancy Nadig, Sigrid Ross, Debbie Schaeffer, Marge Slocum, Angie Smith, Karen Tobin.

**The Presbyterian Church of
Barrington**

Vision Statement

*Created by God as a welcoming, caring
family of faith, we...*

*...worship God joyfully, guided and
challenged by Scripture and the
proclamation of Christ's gospel;*

*...serve those in need, inspiring and
equipping one another to respond to
God's call;*

*...support each individual's journey of
faith through lifelong learning,
Christian fellowship and prayer; and*

*...share this spiritual home with all,
drawing others to faith in Jesus Christ
and reflecting the everlasting love of
God.*

Thanks For Your Help: Jack and Jinny Train and Sandi Crewe for assembling the January Carillon and helping with the Sunday bulletins.

Thank You From Sally Kilham and Family.

My entire family and I wish to express our deep appreciation to all our friends for their expressions of sympathy, prayers, cards and many acts of kindness during Bud's illness and at his passing. I also appreciate the sympathies extended following the recent death of my sister. We are truly grateful for the outpouring of love from our church family that has helped sustain us during this difficult time.

Thank you from George and LaVerne Sams.

Our grateful thanks to all the members of the congregation for your loving support during George's illness. Our church family has been wonderful and we truly appreciate all you have done for us.

Dear Friends in Christ,

In our world, we are often overwhelmed by its complexity and we yearn for simplicity. Our Master got into trouble when he destroyed complexity with the simplicity of his teachings. In the Sermon on the Mount, he said: "Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn and you will not be condemned" (Luke 6:37) One of the things that we are called to do as members of the community of faith is not to judge others. Why? Because we don't know how to do it. We judge most harshly in others those things which we don't like about ourselves; those things that are our own weaknesses. Jungian analyst, James Hollis, in his book, Finding Meaning in the Second Half of Life: How to Finally REALLY Grow Up calls this projection. Jesus calls it deadly.

Our Master was easy on "sinners," the very folks whom we find it so easy to judge. Why? Because, says Barbara Brown Taylor, "their hearts are already broken, so it is not hard for him to get inside. But the righteous are like vaults. They are so full of their precious values and so defensive against those who do not share them that even the dynamite of the gospel has little effect on them."

Jesus cannot seem to make his point often enough. Self-righteousness kills not only those who are bludgeoned by it but those who wield it as well. Sometimes it kills softly with gossip and cruel humor. Sometimes it works systemically, consigning some people to live in grim buildings with broken plumbing while others stroll neighborhoods of thick green lawns. And sometimes it works violently, with people lighting torches and breaking windows in the middle of the night.

Think of what daily pain and problems would be resolved if we would all follow our Master's simple instruction to "judge not." I can't speak for you, but Jesus' words are enough for me.

Pax,
Curt Baxter

Worship

Youth Sunday, February 12

The youth of our congregation invite you to worship on Sunday, February 12. Dr. Baxter will be preaching, but the youth will bring their leadership to the service by acting as greeters, ushers, liturgists, and delivering the Moment With Young Disciples. The Wednesday Night Live singers will also participate by raising their voices in song. Come to either the 9:00 a.m. or the 11:00 a.m. service and support our young people as they demonstrate their commitment to our congregation and to their faith.

Bring a Friend to Church Day, February 19

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

Membership and Outreach Committee declares Sunday, February 19, 2006 “Bring a Friend To Church Sunday”.

Bring a friend, relative or neighbor who might be interested in experiencing one of our wonderful worship services to either service on February 19. We will all make a great effort to ensure that our guests feel welcome!

“Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday”

February 26, 2006

Tending the Flame—Women Called to Lead

On Sunday, February 26th, we join Presbyterians around the country in celebrating the 100th anniversary of the ordination of women as deacons, the 75th anniversary (2005) of the ordination of women as elders and the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women as ministers of Word and Sacrament. This “Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday” has been set aside by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to honor women who contribute their gifts and talents to the church and the community.



Our celebration will include worship led by women, recognition of the ordained women of our own congregation and acknowledgment of the Presbyterian women who paved the way, opening opportunities for all of us to use our gifts as women building up the body of Christ. Join us on Sunday, February 26th as we celebrate with great joy the contributions of the women of the church.

Liturgical Arts Committee

The Worship Committee has formed the new Liturgical Arts Committee. We are looking for committee members to design and help create art for the sanctuary and church building. No previous art experience required. The Worship Committee has charged the Arts Committee to create new banners for Lent '07. During this Lenten Season please listen to God's word calling you to join this exciting new addition to our worship service. Please speak to **Marla Florio**.

Becoming a Church Member

We invite you to become a member of our congregation. People who have not made a decision about joining, but would like to know more about the church, are invited to come to services, participate in activities and discuss membership with **Rev. Dan Spike**. He can be reached at the Church Office, **847-381-0975**.

Barrington Presbyterian Women



February 2 meeting

Come for coffee at 9:15 a.m.; the meeting starts at 9:30 a.m. We will assemble the Valentine Care Packs immediately after the business meeting. Babysitting will be

available. All women of the congregation are encouraged to attend and participate

Valentine's Day Care Packs

Each year in February, BPW sponsors a project to send Care Packages to our college students and service men and women who are away from home. The care packages consist of baked goods, snacks and Valentine fun. If you would like to help, we ask for monetary donations to defray the cost of mailing the 50 Care Packs. We also ask for donations of food and/or small gifts. These Care Packs bring a warm feeling from our congregation to our loved ones far away.

If you have a child who would like a pack this year, please get his/her current address to Bonnie Kalaway in the church office by Monday, January 30, 2006. Call **847-381-0975**, fax **847-381-6465** or email. The Care Packs will be sent out Thursday, February 2, 2006. If you have any questions, please call **Nancy Nadig**, **Donna Sculley** or **Angie Smith**.

Book Club

Book Club meets every other month on the third Thursday, starting in September, at 1:00 p.m. The next meeting will be held on March 16, 2006 at the home of **Marge Slocum**. The book will be Atonement by Ian Ewan. For more information, you may contact coordinator, **Alice Buchholz**.

G.T.I.F.

Growing Together In Faith (GTIF) has begun a new study on the book of Romans. We meet the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the home of a member. For the date and location of the next meeting, and/or if you would like to order a book and

join us for the study of Romans, please call **Becky Bosarge**.

Morning Bible Study

BPW Bible Study meets the first Wednesday of each month. On February 1, we'll study Lesson 6. Come for coffee at 9:30 a.m.; the study will begin at 10:00 a.m. The book we will be using this season is For Everything, a Season, written by Kathleen Long Bostrom. For further information, please call **Susan Raaths**.

Women With Aging Parents

This group will be meeting again on the second Friday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in the home of Marge Slocum. For more information please call **Marge**.

BPW Fellowship Luncheon with Barbara Rinella



Please invite your friends and plan to join us on Friday, February 24th, at 11:30 a.m. at The Garlands for lunch and a performance by the renowned book dramatist,

Barbara Rinella. After lunch, Barbara will present "Three Interesting Women: Margaret Thatcher, Erma Bombeck and Katharine Graham." To celebrate the 80th year of Lady Margaret Thatcher, Barbara Rinella will rely on Mrs. Thatcher's fascinating autobiography, The Downing Street Years. This is a wonderful way in which to say "Happy Birthday" to the only female Prime Minister of Great Britain, whom Ronald Regan dubbed, "The Best Man in England." Added to the celebration will be two more powerful women. Erma Bombeck will inject her legendary humor, her comments on motherhood and marriage, and share her timeless travel advice. Katharine Graham, who was often called "the most powerful woman in America" will share insights from the biography she wrote to celebrate her 80th year, Personal History. Tickets are \$30 and will go on sale in February in Fellowship Hall after services or call **Anne Garrette** or **Karen Moratz**. You won't want to miss this fun day of fellowship, so make your reservations early.

Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry..... Just the Facts!

Stephen Ministries St. Louis is a not-for-profit, trans-denominational, religious and educational organization founded in 1975. The founder, the Rev. Kenneth C. Haugk, Ph.D., a pastor and a trained psychologist, trained nine laypersons in his St. Louis congregation to be the first Stephen Ministers. They assisted him in providing distinctively Christian care to members of their congregation and their community. These trained caregivers were so enthused about their ministry, they encouraged Dr. Haugk to offer Stephen Ministry to more congregations. In 30 years, Stephen Ministry has grown tremendously. Here are some facts about the size and impact of this powerful system of training and organizing laypersons to provide care.



Stephen Ministers are not counselors. They are trained Christian caregivers. Their role is to listen and to care – not counsel or advise.

Stephen Ministry is a supervised ministry. Stephen Ministers engage in twice-monthly supervision to ensure that they are providing the best quality Christian care for their care receivers.

Stephen Ministry is a confidential ministry. What a care receiver tells a Stephen Minister remains private. Even in supervision, the names of the care receivers and specific details are never discussed.

Stephen Ministers do not make “cold calls”. They are assigned to people who have agreed to receive care from a Stephen Minister.

As of September 1, 2005 more than 9,000 congregations are enrolled in Stephen Ministry. More than 100 different Christian denominations are represented, and come from all 50 states, 9 Canadian provinces and 22 other countries. More than 50,000 people (pastors, church staff and laypersons) have been trained as Stephen Leaders. These Stephen Leaders have returned to their congregations to train more than 450,000 laypersons to be Stephen Ministers. It is estimated that since 1975 more than one million people have received the Christian care provided by a Stephen Minister in one-on-one, confidential relationship.

Our Congregation has been involved in Stephen Ministry since February of 2002 (four years ago this month) when our first Stephen Leaders were trained. Since that time, 2 more Stephen Leaders have gone to leadership training with two more preparing to go this summer. Thirty members of our congregation have been trained as Stephen Ministers. Another class is half way through their training and will be ready for Commissioning in March of 2006. Our Stephen Ministry Team has served more than 40 care receivers.

Ever wonder where the name came from? In Acts 6 we learn that St. Stephen was the first layperson commissioned by the Apostles to provide caring ministry to those in need.

If all of these facts and figures have made you ponder if Stephen Ministry could help you or someone you know, please speak to **Curt Baxter or Dan Spike, or Linda McGurer or Marge Slocum.**

Congratulations to...

Sue and Bob Kosobud, on the birth of granddaughter Taylor Ann Kosobud in Charlotte on January 4 to Katie and Kevin Kosobud.

Bill and Carol Buchta upon the birth of granddaughter Ava Lillian Foersterling, born on January 5, 2006 to Carol's son Rob and Becky Foersterling in Chicago.

Condolences to...

Sally Kilham and family upon the death of Sally's sister in early December and upon the death of Bud Kilham on December 23. Bud was a long time very active member of the church.

Bill Nelson and family upon the death of his father, Don Nelson, on January 10 in Indiana.

Deacons

Deacon's Corner, Jim Myers

As a relatively new member of the church (I started attending in 2002) I wasn't quite sure what to expect as I started my "freshman" year as a member of the Deacons. Having just completed my first year I'd like to shine some light on what goes on behind the scenes and some other general observations of this fine group of people.

It's truly amazing what a relatively small group can accomplish in a short period of time.

Each Deacon is extremely adept at utilizing their individual strengths to getting the job done.

The spirit of fellowship and camaraderie is very strong.

Your Deacons represent a cross section of the congregation with all personality styles in evidence.

We're not a stuffy group – we can play just as hard as we work.

A commitment to always "do the right thing".

What does a Deacon do? Certainly we try our best to foster a welcoming environment and provide a social forum for increasing the bonds of fellowship. I think the most important responsibility; however, is offering care and support to those who are faced with any of life's challenges. Hopefully we're receiving a passing grade from all of those we serve. It's an honor to be part of a team with such a strong sense of commitment and we look forward to a wonderful 2006.

ChristCare

Caring Hearts-Faithful Servants



What does a ChristCare group do? A ChristCare group transforms lives by providing a forum to build fellowship, to grow spiritually, and to share Christ's love in a tangible way. Meeting regularly, ChristCare group members support each other in their lives and faith journeys and reach out in the spirit of Christ's love to the congregation, community and the world.

Our first three groups began forming last month and are accepting members. Each of the groups is an open group, welcoming anyone who wants to join. Each, however, has a general focus.



Bob Florio's Group will focus on regular service to the hungry and the homeless. People who are already involved in working with the hungry and homeless and those who would like to get involved for the first time are invited to join this group.



Lukass Franklin's group will focus on living a productive Christian life despite the daily suffering caused by chronic, debilitating diseases. This group is open to both sufferers and their caregivers.



Gerry Nadig's group will focus on being a vital and productive member of the community during the transition of retirement. This group will be open to people who are several years from retirement through those who have been retired for several years.

Are you seeking ... a sense of Christian community? ... to connect at a deeper level? ... to walk with others on their spiritual journeys? ... to live your faith in daily life? ... to discover and use your God-given talents to serve others? We encourage you to consider the possibilities for this ministry in your life. If you are interested in one of these groups, please call the group leader: **Bob Florio, Lukass Franklin, or Gerry Nadig.**

Christian Education

DISCIPLE

Course offerings for fall of 2006: This fall, we begin our 4th year of DISCIPLE. Nearly 60 people in our congregation have completed the introductory course, Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study, and 16 of those have completed the second course, Into the Word, Into the World. Now is the time to begin considering this opportunity to read and study the Bible with a small, committed group and be challenged in your discipleship.

Why participate in DISCIPLE?: ** Bible study is foundational for Christians. It helps us understand who God is and who we are in relationship to Him. ** Gaining an understanding of what it means to be in covenant with God and a member of a faithful community will inform all that you do as a disciple. ** You will grow in your knowledge of what it means to be a follower of Christ and be empowered to do so.

This fall, Tuesday is DISCIPLE day!

Tuesday evening, 7:00 pm: Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study. Disciple I

This 34-week study is the prerequisite for all other courses. We will study the entire Bible, giving equal time to the Old and New Testaments.

Tuesday afternoon, 12:00 pm: Into the Word, Into the World. Disciple II

This 32-week study takes us through Genesis, Exodus, Luke, and Acts. We will examine these books more deeply, challenge ourselves through spiritual disciplines and honoring the Sabbath, and learn how to study the Bible more deeply. Themes are connecting our inner and outer lives and committing more deeply to embodying the covenant relationship with God. Prerequisite: Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study.

Tuesday evening, 7:00 pm: Remember Who You Are. Disciple III

This 32-week study focuses on the major and minor prophets and Paul's letters. Themes for this study are the call to remember, the need for renewed vision, and the place of community. Prerequisite: Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study.

Registration begins now and continues through May. We need a minimum of 8 members for a class. See the display in Fellowship Hall for further information, registration forms, and sample lessons.

Questions? **Becky Bosarge.**

Wednesday Evening Lenten Studies

“Confronting the Controversies: Biblical Perspectives on Tough Issues”

Beginning Wednesday evening, March 8th, Dr. Curt Baxter will lead a five week study on Adam Hamilton's book, Confronting the Controversies. The purpose of the study is to help us to deal with controversial issues in light of the Bible and Christian beliefs. Controversial issues are complex and multifaceted and, therefore, will result in multifaceted perspectives. Caring, compassionate and thoughtful people of faith can hold opposite positions on these issues. These sessions are not intended to be a debate but an opportunity to grow in faith together, learn more about the Bible and develop our own informed perspectives. Some of these issues will be impossible to resolve completely this side of eternity. Sign-up will begin mid-February during Coffee and Conversation or contact the **church office, 847-381-0975**.

“The Gospel According to Part Deux”



Join an intergenerational group as we continue our exploration of “The Simpsons”. This five week series begins Wednesday evening, March 8th. Facilitated by Dan Spike and Melissa Hansche, it will be led by youth of our church. Basing the lesson on one of their favorite episodes, the youth will explore the scriptural references demonstrated by Homer and his family and the other residents of Springfield. View this Pop Culture icon through the eyes of faith. No reading required – just come, kick back and enjoy Bible study in a whole new way. All ages are welcome! Call the church to sign up or contact Melissa to volunteer to lead a session.

Sunday Morning Adult Education, 10:15 a.m. in the Parlor "Salt of the Earth"

On the second and third Sundays in February and March, Adult Education will present "Salt of the Earth: Palestinian Christians in the Northern West Bank". The class will watch segments of the documentary created by PCUSA missionaries, Marthame and Elizabeth Sanders, and discuss the challenges facing our brothers and sisters in this troubled land. Suggestions for further study and prayer will be available. Karen Tobin will facilitate.

“An Understanding of the New Testament”

On the first and fourth Sundays, we will continue our DVD series “An Understanding of the New Testament” led by Linda Long. This video series was designed by Professor Bart D. Ehrman, Chair of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The course focuses on the books of Mark, Matthew, Luke and John. A facilitator will be on hand to guide you through the program. Dr. Ehrman received his Ph.D., which focused on early Christianity in its Greco-Roman environment, magna cum laude from Princeton Theological Seminary.

Senior High Sunday School for February, 10:10 a.m. in the Senior High lounge

Last month, we learned about Jesus’ calling and preparation for ministry. Now, as we journey with him, we learn about our own calling and keeping our focus for ministry.

Feb. 5th: How do we seek the strength to keep going and going and to do all that needs to be done and also to deepen the purpose of our lives?

Feb. 12th: Have you ever felt “untouchable”? How can we allow God’s healing love to touch us and to extend it to others?

Feb. 19th: Friends are so important. They can be so persistent and go out on a limb for a friend who needs help. What happens when we allow God to work through us to bring forgiveness and healing?

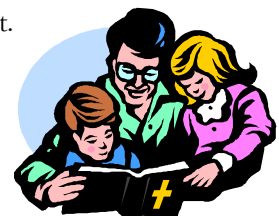
Feb. 26th: Transfiguration Sunday – the last Sunday before Lent. We are called to follow Jesus into an even more profound and mysterious revelation of God’s love.

5th/6th Grade Parent/Child Class—What Makes Us Presbyterians

February 5

1:00-3:00 p.m. class

Come and learn what Presbyterians believe about worship, scripture and church government. Through games and art project, we will explore our heritage. Prizes given to those who dress up as their favorite reformer! Call the church to sign up.



7th/8th Grade Whirlyball Lock-in

February 10-11

It's all about getting to know you better! Through games, movies and build your own ice cream sundae, you will find out what makes people tick and realize that you all might have more things in common than you think. We will also play whirlyball! What is whirlyball? Think Jai Alai, basketball and bumper cars. More fun than you can imagine. Watch the mail for flyer and permission slip.

4th Grade Parent/Child Class—Sacraments

February 12

1:00-3:00 p.m. class

Join us as we share a snack together before beginning to explore the sacraments of baptism and communion. We will read through scripture and learn the importance of water, bread and wine in our spiritual lives. Watch your mail for more information.



Our Senior High Group Has Been Busy!

If you don't get downstairs much, you may not see the many things our senior high students have been up to.

In December, along with the 7th/8th grade fellowship, they ran a Winter Vacation Bible School.

Seventeen youth provided games, cooking, art, sledding and other activities for 50 children over three days, raising a little over \$1,000 toward the Mission trip to Maine in June 2006.



On January 15, 22, and 29, they taught the Workshop Rotation, our church school for K-4th grades, all about being a disciple. They sang songs, created beautiful art projects, played following games, and

made a movie.

Not to mention continuing to study discipleship in their own Church School class and gathering for Senior High Fellowship on Sunday afternoons.

Coming soon... Youth Sunday on February 12, Whirlyball Lock-ins, Pancake Breakfast on March 5, Home of the Sparrow, Preparing for the Mission Trip!

All senior high youth of the church are welcome. If you are a little (or a lot) beyond senior high, we welcome you to come downstairs and see what we are all about and maybe even get involved.

Pancake Breakfast, March 5

Come on Sunday, March 5, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. to Fellowship Hall and enjoy pancakes, sausages, juice and coffee while you help the Youth Mission Team raise funds for the 2006 trip. The always popular "Make your own Mickey or Minnie Pancakes" feature will again be offered. Adults are \$5; children ages 3-10 are \$3.



Kitchen

Please remember that our kitchen needs constant looking after to maintain the best sanitary conditions possible. Please reseal all open food by using a baggie or plastic container with a snap tight lid. We do not want to entice any critters to come into our kitchen. Take home leftovers if possible. Don't just assume that the will be used by the staff. Anything opened, but not resealed in plastic, and stored in the refrigerator will be discarded. Please label and date all stored food. We must keep this facility safe for everyone's use. Please check in the kitchen for things you may have left. After February 15 those items will be given to the Home of the Sparrow or discarded. Thank you, Kitchen Committee.

Fellowship

Fellowship Committee Meeting

The next meeting of the Fellowship Committee will be held on Saturday, February 11, at 4:30 p.m. at the home of Lukass and Mari Franklin. We welcome anybody who would like to join us for food, fellowship and event planning as we finalize details for the annual Card Party! If you are able to attend, please R.S.V.P. to **Lukass or Mari Franklin**. We hope to see you there!

The 2006 Annual Card Party – Saturday, February 18

Don't forget to sign up for the PCB Annual Card Party to be held on Saturday, February 18 from 5:00 p.m. until around 11:00 (or when we're done having fun!). If you have any questions and/or would like to sign-up, please contact **Matt or Allison Batt**.

This year we're having it at a new location, the Wool Street Grill & Sports Bar at 128 Wool Street, Barrington, which is actually right next to the Barrington Metra station parking lot. The price will be \$30 per person and will cover the cost of dinner and prizes! In addition, there will be a cash bar available throughout the entire evening.

For those of you that haven't attended a PCB Card Party, you don't know what you're missing as it is a great social atmosphere for PCB members, friends and neighbors alike. The best part is that you don't have to know anything about cards, just be willing to play along and have some good old fashion fun!

Here is a tentative schedule of events for the evening:

5:00 – Social Hour

6:00 – Dinner

7:15 – 10:15 – Intro. To Card Game & Playing!

10:15 – Coffee & Cake – Submit Scores...

10:30 – Awards Ceremony

We're looking forward to seeing you there on February 18th!



Mission

LOAVES AND FISHES

Our Church has traditionally collected food for Christopher House and local food pantries every Thanksgiving and Easter. The response to these food drives every year has been generous. This year 160 bags of groceries were collected in our Thanksgiving food drive.

The Mission Committee is asking congregation members to share their blessings on a regular basis. Food donation baskets will be permanently placed to the side of the center door of the sanctuary. We ask that everyone attending worship bring one food or toiletry item for the "Loaves and Fishes Basket" every Sunday, all through the year. The Mission Committee will empty the basket every week and bring the contents to the food pantry. This program will have three main benefits: First, hunger exists 364 days a year. We can help the agencies that have to work year-round to meet that need. Second, by bringing something every week, we and our children will have a tangible reminder our own blessings and our obligation to share our good fortune. Third, our lives will be blessed by the act of giving.

Every month we will tell you of a special need the food pantry has. If it's convenient to bring that type of item, that's great, but any food or toiletry item will be gratefully accepted. February is "Toiletry Month". If you have an extra tube of toothpaste or box of tissue, bring it along on Sunday. If not, just grab a can of soup on your way out the door!

Parish Life

From Will, William C. White Interim Director of Music

Way back in September of 2005, during the interview for my position here at The Presbyterian Church of Barrington, somebody happened to mention that one of my responsibilities would be to direct a “handbell choir”. I had heard of the existence of such a thing before, but had a rather vague impression of exactly what it was. I knew that it was basically a group of people that played bells, though I had never actually seen one of these “handbells” in person so to speak.

Frankly, I didn’t think all that much about it at the time. In fact, I didn’t give the thought too much consideration until the morning of our first bell rehearsal. It was then that I opened up the handbell director’s guide to see just what I would need to know.

The book told me that I would first need to set up the bell tables. This was easy enough, and the task was completed in short order.

Next, I would have to prepare the bell pillows. You see, despite its hard metallic exterior, the English Handbell is actually an extremely delicate and mercurial instrument. Special pillows with tight-fitting, dust-free linen pillow cases must be prepared before you can even take the bells out of their boxes. The players themselves must wear protective gloves at all times to keep the bells out of contact with the oils from their mortal hands. Even exposure to pure oxygen is a tad much for the handbell, as it requires a thorough polishing after being out of its case for more than a few minutes.

That being said, I opened the bell closet to find the requisite bell pillows and their cases. Well, sure enough, there they were: the pillows, and not one, but three different sets of pillow cases, including one delicate white linen set, and two decorative purple corduroy sets, one of which draped entirely to the floor.

Thinking that I wanted to make the tables look as good as possible, I chose the long purple ones. I then struggled for nearly 20 minutes to get just ONE of

them on its pillow, the many large swaths of material forming a puzzling array of folds and seams. With the second one, I made a bit more sense of it, and cut my time down to about 15 minutes. The third took 10. I was starting to sweat, and meanwhile, the air was heating up from the yards and yards of corduroy material that were suddenly taking up a large portion of the room.

I took a short break and decided to regroup and come up with a better strategy.

Certainly, trying to get all 7 pillows in their cases and unload the bells before the rehearsal would be an exercise in futility. I figured that the short version purple corduroy covers would do for the evening, so I carefully took off the floor length ones. (The story of my trying to re-fold those pillow covers will be the subject of my next carillon article...)

With precious little time to spare, the setup was finally arranged. Now it came time for the rehearsal itself. This is where I began to learn about some of the musical conundra inherent to the bell choir medium. For example, usually, when a violin and piano are playing, the violin will have the melody, and the piano will have an accompaniment. With the bells, this is not the case – no single player will have the melody line. Rather, several people will play two or three bells that combine to form a single melody.

Working with the bell choir has made me think about melody in a whole new way.

Just how is a melody constructed? And how does it sound when you de-construct it into small little two note segments? This is the sort of high order musical thinking that I had not expected to encounter in the setting of a bell choir.

But sure enough I did, and sure enough, I also discovered just how much fun playing in the bell choir can be – it really is a hoot, and we all have a ball. To sign off, I’d like to encourage anybody who’s interested in exploring music to think about participating in this quirkiest of musical settings. Just be sure not to look at the bells the wrong way. They don’t like that.

Worship Schedule

- Feb. 5** Dr. Baxter Preaching 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
Waiting and Searching
Readings: Isaiah 40:21-31; Ps. 147:1-11, 20c;
1 Cor. 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39.
- Feb. 12** Dr. Baxter Preaching 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
Risking Hospitality
Readings: Genesis 18:1-15; Psalm 32; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Luke 15: 11-32.
- Feb. 19** Dr. Baxter Preaching 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
Lavish Love
Readings: Isaiah 43:18-25; Psalm 41; 2 Corinthians 1:18-22;
Mark 2:1-12.
- Feb. 26** Ms. Nancy Dolan Preaching.... 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
Glimpses of Glory
Readings: II Kings 2:1-12, Psalm 51 and Mark 9:2-9.

The Annual Congregational and Corporation Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 5, 2006 at 10:00 a.m., after the 9:00 a.m. service, in the Sanctuary. Copies of the Annual Report have been mailed to all active members. Please bring your copy to the meeting.



The Presbyterian Church of Barrington
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