

Dovetales, a newsletter of
Gladwyne Presbyterian Church,
1321 Beaumont Drive 19035 610-649-2235 www.gladwynepres.org
P. Todd Stavrakos, Pastor
May, 2009 edition



MAY

- | | | |
|-------|-----------|---|
| 2 | | Nurse Family Partnership Family FunDay & Picnic* |
| 5 | 11 a.m. | Bible Study (Every Tuesday) |
| | 7 p.m. | Deacons' meeting |
| 10 | 4 p.m. | Mother's Day Concert featuring Annie Sciolla
and Rick Hall to benefit Peter's Place* |
| 13 | 7:30 p.m. | Session |
| 14 | 7:00 p.m. | Women's Book Group* |
| 17 | | Youth Coffee House and Silent Auction |
| 19 | 7:00 pm. | Knit or Knot* |
| 21 | 7:30 p.m. | Men's Group |
| 25 | | Gladwyne Memorial Day celebration* |
| 29-31 | | Church wide retreat* |



Special Events in May



On May 10th at 4 pm: **Mothers' Day Concert** benefiting **Peter's Place**. Annie Sciolla and Rick Hall will once again share their music with us as we gather for an afternoon of joy and fellowship and raise funds for our mission partner, Peter's Place. Peter's Place was founded in the memory of 10 year old Peter Morsbach. It was founded with the mission to provide a supportive and nurturing environment for every child, teen and adult to grieve and mourn.



On Memorial Day, May 25th, GPC will be participating in the Gladwyne Memorial Day parade. Please join us for the celebration.



Church Retreat: Building Community

On May 29-31 at Kenbrook Camp, GPC will hold its annual retreat. The guest speaker is Ruth Workman a Certified Spiritual Director, Retreat Leader, and Certified Supervisor of Spiritual Directors. Ruth holds a Master of Education at Rutgers University and a Master of Arts in Holistic Spirituality and Spiritual Direction from Chestnut Hill College. She has been offering Spiritual Direction since 1995. She offers contemplative retreats at The Sanctuary, her home in Stone Harbor, NJ, and facilitates spiritual direction groups at Princeton Theological Seminary. (www.kenbrook.org) The focus of the retreat will be building community. All ages are invited, and there will be child care available on Saturday, May 30th. Please register for the retreat by May 10th, after that date, participation cannot be guaranteed. Costs are \$169 for a single, for two people in a room \$148 and triple or quad occupancy is \$117. These rates apply for those over the age of 13. Children less than a year old are free. Other children up to 12 cost \$9 for each year old the child is, for instance a 5 year old would be \$45.

When exactly does Easter end?

I am used to being stumped when my children ask me a question. Usually it is about something that I had never considered, so a quick "I don't know" suffices, but every once in a while I am asked a question that makes me think. This week I was asked one of those questions, "Is Easter over?" My first response was to say yes, but then I had to think about it, does Easter end? Is it over? As I struggled with trying to get an answer for Sam, I quickly went through my stored up theological knowledge hoping an answer would be found that not only satisfied Sam but satisfied me. When is Easter over?

Well, as only a good theologian does, I hedged my bets. "It lasts for a little while longer," I said, knowing that a biblical "while" can be anywhere between now and forever. The answer seemed to satisfy Sam, who I imagine began thinking of the potential of another basket full of eggs and candy. The answer, however, did not satisfy me. The church calendar lists the seven Sundays following Easter until Pentecost as an "Easter" Sunday, so it would seem to last longer than just a day or two. But even that time period doesn't feel right. I can understand Christmas coming to an end, picturing it as a birthday celebration, but Easter is more than that, Easter is the point of Christ's birth, and it is the means to God's goal.

For the Apostle Paul, it was all about Easter, without the resurrection there is no point to even believing. The Jews had a process for having sins lifted and atoned for, that is what Yom Kippur is for, a period during which one takes account for one's actions against God and others and then prays for forgiveness. So Easter is more than just about forgiveness. Other faiths have the understanding of new birth and new life. Buddhist believe that a new consciousness can grow in person and give a new birth to that person. So it is more than new life. But for Paul, it is the resurrection that is the important thing, for nowhere else does a god bring new life into reality like God does through the cross and empty tomb.

The resurrection for Paul is a sign of God's power and righteousness, to deny the resurrection is to deny the power of God, to deny the resurrection is to deny the potential of God's plan, to deny the resurrection is to allow evil to be victorious. The resurrection is the power of God to not just redeem and renew us, but it is a statement about the future, a future that is secured. The resurrection is hope realized in that we too have been assured of the resurrection and that God has defeated the power of death in our lives.

So to the question, when does Easter end? The answer can only be never. Easter is a daily celebration; it is a statement of purpose for us to live in the hope of the resurrection. It is a clarion that tells us that God has the power to defeat all other powers. Yes, we have been redeemed from our sins, yes we have a new life, but Easter gives us the *purpose* of that new life, to live in the reality of God who has the power to achieve all things. We live in hope, confidence and expectation, knowing that tomorrow brings us one step closer to the Kingdom.

Why only celebrate Easter for a day or seven weeks, when it can be a joyous celebration every day? Let us live into Easter, let our lives be guided by Easter.



Christianity 101: The New Testament



A couple of months ago, in this space, I laid out the process by which the Old Testament took shape and became Holy Scripture to Israel. In a very similar way, the New Testament took shape, the early church did not wake up one morning and have a “bible”, it took over three hundred years to settle on what would be deemed as necessary for salvation.

At the birth of the church there was no great need or desire of a “New Testament” since the prevailing belief was that Jesus would return soon to usher in the Kingdom of God. For the first generation of believers, they made do with the oral tradition that came from eye witness accounts of the disciples and apostles. However, when it became apparent that Jesus was not returning, at least not in the near future, there became a need to write down the faith.

If you are like me, you might have assumed that the Gospels were the first books of the New Testament written, however, the letters of Paul are the first documents of the New Testament, and they are some of the earliest writings of the church period. It is believed that most of Paul major works were completed between 49 and 62 CE (Common Era), while the first gospel, believed to be Mark, was written around 65-70 CE. So the first writings come from the first generation of believers. Matthew and Luke appear between 80 -90 CE and John appears closer to 100 CE. While it is possible that a first generation witness wrote these gospels, it is probably more likely that they are second generation, in other words, they were written by someone who heard the story from a witness.

The rest of the New Testament took shape after these major works. The Book of Acts, the sequel to Luke, was also written between 80-90 CE. The Letter to the Hebrews is hard to pinpoint and could have been written as early as 60 CE or as late as 95 CE. The Letter to James was probably written after 70 CE. The Letters of Peter date to the rich period between 70 and 90 CE while the letters of John would have been written after 100 CE. The Book of Revelation most likely was written after 70 CE, perhaps around 90 CE.

Now there are other texts out there that never found their way into the New Testament such as the Gospel of Mary, of Judas and of Thomas, mostly because they were written much later and therefore the information was not considered reliable. Other texts came from the Gnostic part of the church that denied the good of Creation which would seem to go against the essence of the Gospel message itself.

However, it was challenges such as the Gnostic Christians that pushed the early church to select and set a fixed canon. This however was not a quick or easy process. Each region of the church had their own documents and letters that they considered holy. It probably took the influence of the Roman Emperor Constantine to bring all the parties to the table and by 367 CE it would seem that a single canon was in place.

So it would seem that the canon was set with the Jewish scriptures comprising the Old Testament and the New Testament set out as we know it. This did not end the debate however, as even as late as Luther, certain books or letters were questioned. Even today we question the books and which ones were selected and which ones were not. However, the scriptures as we know them have stood the test of time and truly provide the necessary information for salvation, which has always been the standard for the church.

Mission Mosaic

Hello everyone.

I am super excited to share with you that our mission trip is a go for this summer. In previous Dovetales, I mentioned our trip to Clearlake Presbyterian Church in Clearlake Texas. This is a small city right outside of Houston. This area is still devastated by Hurricane Ike, which came through the Gulf in 2008. I have attached an article from "Mission Mosaic" a publication of the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, who helped GPC find this awesome opportunity of service. This article gives you a small understanding of what is going on down the Gulf region with the Hurricane Ike clean up. Below are some dates that are coming up for fundraising opportunities for the 2009 Mission Team. Please come and bring lots of friends.

I have also attached a letter from Philabundance thanking the youth, and the church for their help on Souper Bowl Sunday. I hope you read the letter and realize how much that one afternoon of soups helped so many people around Philadelphia. Thank you for your wonderful support.

Laura Cozzens

Upcoming Dates

May 10th 1pm Mission meeting (Team members and Parents of team members)

May 17th - Youth Coffee House and Silent Auction

June 7th - Mission meeting (team members and parents of team members)

June 21st - Mission meeting (team members and parents of team members)

July 1st - Mission meeting (team members and parents of team members)



It was wonderful to have so many folks sing on Easter morning. The energy and joy expressed by the choir was evident to all who attended. Thank you to everyone who participated. In the coming months, I am hoping to involve more of the congregation in the musical life of GPC. The men's group has expressed interest in singing an occasional song during worship; I look forward to this and am planning Sunday practices following worship. In addition, this summer I am hoping that anyone who would like to share a particular talent during worship- be it singing, playing an instrument, or dancing - will let me know; your gifts will serve to praise God and touch the hearts of your friends at GPC.

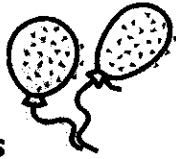
Brian Gibson, Director of Music

P.S. There are two new videos on our webpage from Easter. Go to: www.gladwynepres.org and click on recent videos.



Knit or Knot

What are they doing? Who knows?? Come and find out on May 19th at Jana Mossey's home, 7 - 8:30 p.m.



May Birthdays

- 3 Carole Barker
- 4 Julia Gibson
Elizabeth Loux
- 10 Noreen MacCullough
- 12 Ted Frazer
- 15 Jessica Zarifiou
- 23 Betsy Friend
- 26 Wicky Dayton
Sherrie Burlingham
- 27 Bill Baker
Sam Stavrakos
Miguel Romero-Stevenson



Women's Book Group

Thanks to Barbara for leading the April meeting. I heard it was well attended and all had a good time.

Donna McGowan will lead May's discussion of *Belong to Me*, by Marisa de los Santos. We'll meet May 14, at 7 PM.

Description of *Belong to Me* from Amazon.com

Cornelia Brown surprised herself when she was gripped by the sudden, inescapable desire to move to the suburbs with her husband. Her mettle is quickly tested by her impeccably dressed, overly judgmental neighbor Piper Truitt—the embodiment of everything Cornelia feared she'd find in suburbia. With Lake, another recent arrival, Cornelia shares a love of literature and old movies—as she forms an instant bond with this warm yet elusive woman and her perceptive, brilliant young son Dev.

Acclaimed best-selling author Marisa de los Santos's literary talents shine in the complex interactions she creates between three unforgettable women, deftly entangling her characters in a web of trust, betrayal, love, and loss that challenges them in ways they never imagined.

In June we will discuss *The Soloist*, by Steve Lopez. Barbara Kanzinger will lead.



REFRESHMENTS (and teams)

Thank you to Team 4 for providing refreshments in April.

May's team is Team 5 and includes: Barbara Frazer, Linda Gerstein, the Holmes family: Hank, Jack, Karla and Barbara*, Bruce MacCullough, Joanne*, Ethan and Chase Markman and Chris and Jessica Zarifiou Please call Barbara (deacon) or Joanne (elder) so we can continue the tradition of building community through the sharing of food. The Deacons will provide the May Birthday cake on May 10 Mother's Day..



*Free Fun Day for
Nurse-Family Partnership Families
at
Elmwood Park Zoo*



Sponsored by Gladwyne Presbyterian Church

Saturday, May 2nd from 1-4

Join us for....

A Walk through the zoo,

Food, Games,

Music,

And a Memory Photo!!



Questions? Call Barbara Hand
610-278-5117 x6724
bhand@montcopa.org

Hurricane Ike Recovery continues in Texas

by Toya Richards Hill

The third largest hurricane disaster in the history of the United States, Hurricane Ike swept through the Gulf Coast in September 2008 with overwhelming force, leaving a path of destruction that will take years to overcome.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) and synod and presbytery leadership, was there in the midst of the storm assessing and responding to needs, and now months later, the effort has shifted to a more long-term strategy.

"The damage is enormous," said the Rev. Judy Fletcher, synod executive for the denomination's Synod of the Sun. But, "we are all in this for the long haul."

"Presbyterians are really good at doing long-term recovery," said the Rev. Mike Cole, general presbyter of New Covenant Presbytery. "We know how to plan, we know how to organize, we know how to collaborate. Those are our strengths."

Yet the process hasn't been easy, particularly given that very little money has come in from donors, officials say.

The limited donations that have come in have been the biggest disappointment, said Fletcher. "Getting the word out has been terribly, terribly difficult."

"I suspect we have donor fatigue," among other things, she said. Now, "we are suffering."

Hurricane Ike was one of a number of storms, including Iliana, Gustav and Fay, that blew through the area during the season.

Still, the needs of individuals, congregations and whole communities remain - and in a mighty way.

Cole, whose presbytery is based in Houston and sits in one of the hardest-hit areas, said six church buildings in his presbytery have been impacted, with the least affected suffering \$70,000 in damage and the most severe damage as high as \$4 million.

Communities such as Galveston, Bridge City and Port Arthur were shattered, and Cole said thousands of claims have been filed through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

PDA deployed response teams into the area in the first week after Ike hit, but access was difficult. "You couldn't get to many of the places for at least a couple of weeks," said Harvey H. Howell, a PDA National Response Team member and an elder at First Presbyterian Church of San Antonio.

Damage also was significant throughout the southern coast of Louisiana.

"We had a lot of parishes where there was substantial damage," said the Rev. Jean Marie Peacock, associate presbyter for congregational development and disaster recovery for the Presbytery of South Louisiana. In the Houma area, some 26,000 people were displaced by the flooding, she said.

People are returning, "but there is a lot of cleanup to occur," Peacock said. At the same time, "we are still working on putting together numbers and the assessment is still occurring."

Collaboration has been essential in the recovery work and will continue to be critical in the long term.

Among those efforts is work by PDA to establish two volunteer villages in Texas - one in Texas City and the other in Port Neches - to house those who will be the arms and legs of the recovery process.

"Those villages will then serve as base of operations ... in the two most affected areas, Galveston and the Golden Triangle," which is the area between the cities of Beaumont, Port Arthur and Orange, Cole said.

The grounds of First Presbyterian Church in Texas City and Trinity Presbyterian Church in Port Neches will be used for the villages.

Continued on page 17

Your presence lifts our spirits and brings hope, as we work together to make it possible for people to return home after experiencing so much loss.

Funds and volunteers are urgently needed for a continued response to the needs following Hurricane Ike. Visit the PDA website www.usa.org/pda to make a financial donation or to register your team.

Hurricane Ike Recovery *continued from page 76*

which are expected to open in early 2009.

An additional collaborative effort is under way to house volunteers in the Lake Charles, La., area who will help with the rebuilding, Peacock said.

PDA will provide a volunteer coordinator, the Presbytery of South Louisiana will provide a worksite coordinator, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) will do case management and First Presbyterian Church will provide the location and hospitality.

"It's a real coordinated effort," Peacock said. "We are working very much collaboratively with other faith-based groups to do the recovery work," Coile added.

Parallel to that work are "Caring for the Caregivers" workshops and "Compassion Fatigue" trainings held by PDA to help caregivers themselves, who often burn out and suffer fatigue in the midst of the ongoing crisis.

At Coile's request PDA held a "Caring for the Caregivers" session in Houston in October, and others took place in November. "Compassion Fatigue" events are planned for early 2009. "PDA (Coile) is doing really good to model self-care," Fletcher said.

Additionally, Fletcher said PDA mission networks are being set up across the synod to enhance their ability to respond quickly and collaboratively when disasters strike. "The more storms that we have the better we get at responding," she said.

Clearly, it will take a number of different efforts to achieve success, Howell said. "There are multiple things that need to be done."

Volunteers are needed — about 100 a day in Port Neches and 50 a day in Texas City — more money to help support the work must flow in and "everyone needs everyone's prayers," Howell said.

Ultimately, "it's not going to be months that the recovery is measured in," Coile said. "It's going to be years."

Toyah Richards Wilkins is a former Presbyterian News Service reporter.



PHILABUNDANCE

Driving hunger from our community

March 10, 2009

Ms. Laura Cozzens
Youth Director
Gladwyne Presbyterian Church
1321 Beaumont Drive
Gladwyne PA 19035

Dear Ms. Cozzens,

On behalf of the thousands of hungry people you are helping, thank you for Gladwyne Presbyterian Church's generous gift of \$425.10 raised as part of the 2009 Souper Bowl of Caring. It was received by Philabundance on 02/17/2009. Your support helps us collect and distribute millions of pounds of produce, dairy products, high protein foods, baked goods, and canned and other dry goods to help feed our Delaware Valley neighbors in need.

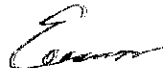
Your generous support means a lot to us, and to the people who can rely on receiving nutritious food they need. Day in and day out, together we build a better community for all of us.

As we work to expand our efforts against hunger in the Delaware Valley, we are especially grateful for the trust you place in us by providing financial support. Your organization is an important partner in our fight against hunger, so please feel free to call me at (215) 339-0900, ext. 350 with any questions or comments.

On behalf of the people who have nutritious food to eat today because of your organization's generosity, thanks again for your support.

Sincerely,

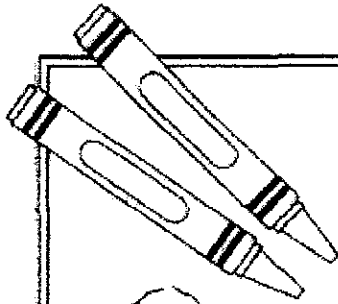

Eleanor C. Missimer
Director of Annual Giving

*Our thanks to all the people
who made this generous gift
possible.*


P.S. Please accept our apology for the delay in acknowledging your gift. It certainly does not reflect our gratitude for your generous support. Even though we do use seasonal gift processing help, our budget is limited so that we can continue to provide as much food as we can to our hungry neighbors.

We acknowledge that you received no goods or services in consideration for your donation.

3616 South Galloway Street • Philadelphia, PA 19148-5402
(215) 339-0900 • fax (215) 339-0924 • www.philabundance.org



Just for KIDS



In May we think about mothers. Use your Bible to find the names of the mothers below. Read more about them in the verses listed.



CODE:

A	B	C	E	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	R	S	T	U	V	Y	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10									

1. Solomon was my child. — — — — —
(1 Kings 2:13) 1,2 1 8 3 7,8 3 2,3 1,2 1
2. Cain and Abel were two of my children. — — —
(Genesis 4:1) 2,3 9 2,3
3. My son was John the Baptist. — — — — —
(Luke 1:57-60) 2,3 4,5 3,4 10 1 1,2 2,3 8 3
4. Samuel was my child. — — — — —
(1 Samuel 1:20) 3 1 5,6 5,6 1 3
5. My son was God's son! — — — — —
(Matthew 1:24, 25) 5 1 7 9,10
6. Joseph called me mother. — — — — —
(Genesis 30:22-24) 7 1 2 3 2,3 4,5
7. I had twins, Jacob and Esau. — — — — —
(Genesis 25:26) 7 2,3 1,2 2,3 4 1 3
8. I had a child named Obed. — — — — —
(Ruth 4:13) 7 8,9 8 3
9. My child was Isaac. — — — — —
(Genesis 21:3) 7,8 1 7 1 3
10. I had a child named Gershom. — — — — —
(Exodus 2:22) 10 3,4 6,7 6,7 6 7 1 3

For some extra fun —find the names of the fathers!

MOTHER'S DAY CONCERT



SONGS FROM THE MUSICAL THEATER

Sunday May 10, 2009
Gladwyne Presbyterian
Church
1321 Beaumont Drive
Gladwyne, PA



Free
will
offering
will be
donated
to

PETER'S
PLACE

one of
GPC's
longtime
Ministry
partners



Concert coordinators
Anne Sciolla & Rick Hall

Special Guests from the University of
The Arts School of Music



Poster
Design
Courtesy
of
Claire
Binek

Peter's Place was founded in the memory of 10 year old Peter Morsbach. It was founded with the mission to provide a supportive and nurturing environment for every child, teen and adult to grieve and mourn.