

# CHRISTCHURCH PRESBYTERIAN GOOD NEWS

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February 2010

## LEARNING FORGIVENESS

### *A Lenten Study About Repentance and Opening*

Christians differ widely in their interpretations of how forgiveness should be practiced. Some urge forgiveness as a Christian duty in every circumstance, while others argue that certain conditions must be met before forgiveness can be meaningful. How do we sort through such competing claims and interpretations? And how do we get past some of our emotional barriers to real forgiveness?

These are the kinds of the questions we will explore together in this study that is at the heart of our journey through the season of Lent. And this class will be "our" journey—the class will be led by members of the congregation and is designed to be interactive, thought-provoking, and practical.

Forgiveness is perhaps more central to Christianity than to any other religion. We will begin the course reflecting on forgiveness in relation to human community. Parables and stories are used to illustrate challenges faced by the need we all share—to forgive, and to be forgiven.

Session two will address our awareness, acknowledgment, and confession as the foundation for seeking and receiving forgiveness. We will learn how the process of self-examination allows us to look more objectively at our urge to judge others.

In the third session we'll learn to identify some of our external and internal enemies and begin to move toward loving them. When we begin to see ourselves standing with those who have fallen into the seduction of sin, it casts a whole new light on what it means to pray for our enemies.

The goals of session four are to identify at least one thing for which we need forgiveness and to seek both God's forgiveness and that of anyone affected by our offense. We will also consider how to reconcile divine judgment with divine love as we explore the deeper spirit of repentance, one of the key practices of Lent.

The sense in most New Testament teachings is that forgiving others is imperative—not optional. What if we can't forgive? Or we're simply not ready to forgive? Session five uses powerful stories of forgiveness to illuminate these challenging themes.

Many people believe that forgiveness is not possible without repentance, and that to offer forgiveness before repentance is harmful to our relationships. In Session six, we will talk about Jesus' willingness to forgive on the cross. Can we reverse the conventional relationship between repentance and forgiveness?

This class was developed by Marjorie Thompson. She is the author of *Soul Feast*, *Family the Forming Center*, and *The Way of Forgiveness*. She is also a teacher, pastor and retreat leader in the ministry of spiritual formation.

Where: West Wing, Room 2/3

When: 9:00-10:00 am, Sundays, February 21–March 28, 2010

Who: Amy Gremillion, Janette Hearne, & Doug Kennedy



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**Newsletter Deadline -  
the 20th**

**Vision Statement:**  
*Trusting in God's guidance,  
ChristChurch Presbyterian  
invites all to join us as we  
Gather joyfully,  
Grow spiritually and  
Give passionately  
in service to Christ,  
each other and our  
community.*

# LIVING AN AUTHENTIC LIFE

## Homiletical Theory and Studying God's Word



**Lacy Sellars**  
Co-Pastor

Hello from Austin! Although you're reading this article in February, I actually wrote it in January from inside a computer lab at Austin Presbyterian Seminary while taking a break from my doctoral studies. I've enjoyed getting away from the daily routine, exercising my mind, and renewing friendships I've developed over the last two years.

This semester I'm taking a course in "Homiletical Theory." Does that sound like fun? Well, it should! Homiletics shares the same root as the word "homily," which means "short sermon." Although I won't promise that my sermons will be any shorter upon my return, I will promise you that the practice of homiletics is becoming much more pew-friendly. Instead of pontificating from on high, preaching is more relational than in the past. Instead of viewing people in the pew as spectators who need to be filled with information, preaching is much more participatory, inviting the listener to share their journey of faith as the sermon travels. As Jesus engaged the two disciples on the

Road to Emmaus (Luke 24), the preacher walks alongside the listener, inviting them on a journey that connects our personal experiences to the story of God's redeeming love for the world. That is indeed good news.

As you can imagine, there are nearly as many theories of preaching as there are people who preach. From the classic "three-points-and-a-poem" sermon, to the story-telling sermon, to the prophetic sermon, to the verse-by-verse Bible expository sermon, to the question-and-answer sermon, there is no one correct style of preaching—no style that fits every occasion. Preaching must always take into account the context in which it is spoken, the time and place and people who seek God's word for them, and pay attention to ways in which the Holy Spirit is working beyond our expectations.

One ingredient that I find crucial to homiletical theory is authenticity—authenticity to the Biblical text, authenticity to God's Spirit working in the preacher's heart and experience, and

authenticity to live out the message that is preached. If what I say is not compatible with these priorities, then God's message is not conveyed and the listeners' lives are left hungry for faith. If my preaching does not correlate with my living, the dissonance is obvious, and my words have little impact. It would be better if I just announced the next hymn and sat down.

The same is true for your life too. Authenticity is a crucial ingredient in the Christian life. If you love God, then surely that love will be evident in your behavior. If you seek to follow God's will, you may not be perfect, but your love of God will guide you to make the right choices and serve God in all things. If God's love lives in you, then surely that same love will be expressed authentically

in your speech and actions. The person who lives authentically shines like a light in a dark place. People notice the difference and are drawn to the light. They display a wholeness of character that sets the example and draws people to follow Jesus too. Their integrity is trusted by those who know them.

How can you live an authentic life? By asking God to come into your life and praying that God's love will guide your daily choices. Living authentically happens when you seek God's word, devote yourself to God's will, and allow God's love to mold you in God's image. Authentic living means allowing your love of God to enter all your actions and relationships, and letting God to speak through you to the next person.

It's not difficult to live the authentic life. Yes, it requires discipline, but the discipline releases you to be the self that God created you to be.

Lent is the perfect season in which to cultivate the authentic life. As Jesus used his wilderness time to focus more fervently on God's will (Luke 4), so can you use the season of Lent to study God's word for you. There are many resources you can choose to guide you in this journey. Ask us more about our own journey of faith. We'll be glad to share with you.

I include everyone who reads this column in my daily prayers that Lent will be a time of discovery as together we seek to live the authentic life.

-Lacy Sellars

### au-then-tic (ô-thntk) KEY

#### ADJECTIVE:

1. Conforming to fact and therefore worthy of trust, reliance, or belief: an authentic account by an eyewitness.
2. Having a claimed and verifiable origin or authorship; not counterfeit or copied: an authentic medieval sword.
3. Law Executed with due process: an authentic deed.
4. Music
5. Of, relating to, or being a medieval mode having a range from its final tone to the octave above it.
6. Of, relating to, or being a cadence with the dominant chord immediately preceding the tonic chord.
7. Obsolete Authoritative.

# MOVING THE CHAINS

## *Life's Important Measurements*

Football!

If you have fired up your flat-screen lately, you know that the game is perhaps the most technologically advanced sport out there: You've got the radio receiver sending plays into the quarterback's helmet from the sidelines, overhead cameras, super slow-mo video replay, challenge calls by the refs, and computer-generated graphics that appear on the field to the us watching at home. From the recliner, the game doesn't look all that different from your average video game.

But when it comes to one of the game's most important aspects—placing the ball—the game hasn't changed since 1906. "To assist in measuring the progress of the ball, it is desirable to provide two light poles about six feet in length, connected at their lower ends with a stout cord or chain 10 yards in length."

This is often one of the most dramatic and breathless moments in a football game. Sometimes the drive continues by an inch; sometimes it comes up just a chain link short. Because the chains are set purely based on the eyeballs of human officials, the margin for human error is still a big factor. "There must be a better way," says longtime NFL broadcaster and former player Pat Summerall. "Games are decided, careers are decided, on those measurements."

Now, you'd think with technological advances such as GPS and lasers it would be a no-brainer to figure out just where, in a pile of large, sweaty humans, the ball ac-

tually was when the running back's knee hit the ground. Just put a computer chip in the ball or something. And if they can paint a virtual yellow line on the field to show the TV audience the yardage the offense has to gain for a first down, then surely they can figure out a way to do that on the turf itself, right?

Well, no. At least not yet. For years, inventors and tech-obsessed fans have tried to come up with alternatives, but nothing seems to work as well or as efficiently as the old analog way of marking progress from point A to point B.

Sometimes the "old school" way is the best way to measure. Jesus was asked about the criteria for measuring the progress of a person's life, "Which com-



mandment is the first of all?"

When he replied, Jesus goes old-school with the Shema—you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength".

If we're made in God's image, as the old school tells us, then we will find our true position and purpose in life only when we learn to love and worship the One we were designed to reflect. On a football field, players must focus all their attention to the snap of the ball, all their minds



**Mark Cooper**  
Co-Pastor

on running the play correctly, all their strength in blocking and tackling, and all their hearts on winning—on every play—if they're going to move the chains.

The same is true for us if we want to truly make progress in growing into the image of God—It's about putting our whole selves passionately in the game.

Jesus goes old school again about the second measuring-stick—"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." If we begin by loving God with our whole selves, then we'll also make progress, chain link by chain link, toward loving our neighbors as we love ourselves.

If we're following Christ, our success is measured not only by how our love for God transforms us but by how that love finds its way through us to someone else. Time and again, Jesus coached his disciples by

saying that their love for God would be measured by the love they showed to others, particularly people in need.

-Mark Cooper

# Music Notes

## Why I'm in the Music Ministry

I was asked in our Staff Meeting to report on what I'm reading. Mitch Albom's "Have a Little Faith" impressed the notion on me that the way we live our lives affects others. Not just in the obvious ways, of course; but if we as Christ's church are the hands and feet of Christ, our presence in worship inspires and encourages others. Our gifts, our prayers, our song inspire and encourage others to offer theirs as well.



**Sondra Tucker**  
Music Director

So, starting this month, I thought I would invite members of the music ministry to share a little about their faith journey and how that translates into their participation in the music ministry here.

I have asked Roger Tucker to begin our series. I hope you'll look forward to hearing from other music ministry members here over the next few months.

Roger's series follows.

Music has been a part of my life as far back as I can remember. From a very early age, I've sung in choirs, rung handbells, took piano lessons, played in the band, played guitar and performed in musical theater. My family is very musical, so I didn't know any differently. I thought that's what everyone did.

They say music soothes the soul. I can personally attest to that. Music has always been a big part of my spiritual life. Sometimes it's the words to a song or hymn, sometimes it's a sweet melody, sometimes it's the harmony. I began singing in "Junior Choir" while growing up in a small-town American Baptist Church. In high school I sang in the "Adult Choir" and began singing solos. Music has brought me closer to God, and participating in the Music Ministry of my church is very spiritually fulfilling for me.

I also hope that I'm helping to bring the congregation closer to God by being a leader in worship. As members of a church choir, we sometimes forget that we are all worship leaders, not just choir members. I'm thankful that God has given me the gift of music, and it's only right that I give back to the congregation what God has given me.

Gloria Deo,

Roger Tucker

## JAZZ WORSHIP FEBRUARY 14



The final Sunday before the beginning of Lent, is a traditional time at ChristChurch to celebrate! Our tradition has been to have a Jazz Worship with guest musicians, and this year is no exception. First Praise! Jazz Ensemble from First Presbyterian Church, led by trumpeter Dan Shipman, will join us on Sunday February 14 for some exciting music. The chancel choir is busy preparing an anthem for the day by Duke Ellington. Following worship, a traditional red beans and rice lunch will be served by the Connections Committee. Mark the date on your calendars and join us for a fun time!

## A Little About- Presbyterian Children's Home

Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (PCHAS) got its start in 1903 when a mother dying from tuberculosis asked her minister to help her find someone to care for her four young children.



Over the past century, this ministry has expanded to meet the needs of today's families. We serve children age birth to 17 who have suffered from neglect, abuse and abandonment, or children whose families are experiencing some type of crisis, such as the death of a parent, divorce, illness, violence, homelessness, parental drug/alcohol abuse and other issues that threaten family stability.

PCHAS operates 19 group homes in five Texas locations. These kids attend local schools and receive daily supervised study time + specialized tutoring as needed.

In January 2010, PCHAS also had a blessing when St. Marks' merged into its agency. Through the generous loose offerings of the CCP congregation, in fourth quarter of 2009, PCHAS received \$1,336.57.

## ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Confessional Banner Class

When: February 7 & 14

Where: West Wing, #2/3

Rev. Mark Cooper will be teaching about the banners that were not covered in the Confessional Banner sermon series. Please attend!

# Epiphany Lunch

Epiphany is celebrated on January 6. It is the celebration of the arrival of the Three Kings with an abundance of food and hospitality, which represent their arrival at the shelter of the manger.

The food served was pork, representing abundance and good luck throughout the coming year. The pork was rubbed with good olive oil, rosemary and garlic. Broccoli was often served, representing "bit-terness".



Oranges are representatives of sunlight and the gold brought to the Christ child by the Three Kings. Epiphany is also known as the holiday of light, when the Star of Bethlehem led the Magi to Christ.

ChrstChurch members found tables of gold and green with candles, gold beads and clementines. The dessert was orange cake. Thanks to all that made this a special Sunday.



## LECTIONARY

February 7 (5th Sunday in Ord Time)  
Isaiah 6:1-8 (9-13)  
Psalm 138  
1 Corinthians 15:1-11  
Luke 5:1-11

February 14 (Transfiguration of the Lord)  
Exodus 34:29-35  
Psalm 99  
2 Corinthians 3:12—4:2  
Luke 9:28-36 (37-43)

February 17 (Ash Wednesday)  
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12  
Psalm 51:1-17  
2 Corinthians 5:20b—6:10  
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

February 21 (1st Sunday of Lent)  
Deuteronomy 26:1-11  
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16  
Romans 10:8b-13  
Luke 4:1-13

February 28 (2nd Sunday of Lent)  
Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18  
Psalm 27  
Philippians 3:17—4:1  
Luke 13:31-35

## MISSIONS MALL RESULTS

### *\$7,261 for a World in Need*

Missions Mall once again was well received by our congregation and we gave generously to a world full of hurt and great needs. Total sales were \$7261.

Once again this event was a congregation wide effort with "many hands making light work"

Thank you to all the event planners working behind this event beginning in early fall. Thank you to all the cooks for helping to provide cookies and snacks. Thank you to all the people that helped in the "stores", helping customers and collecting money. Thank you to all the people who helped with setup and tear down each week

Now for the numbers:

Alternative Gifts Cards - \$3577

Heifer Project - \$810

10,000 Villages - \$1956 (15% for Living Waters Projects in Haiti)

Mayan Hands - \$798 (100% will be used for Living Waters Projects in Haiti)

Sudanese Food & Crafts - \$120 (for the Sudanese Development Center)

The overall giving amount was down 30% from last year. Let us not be too focused on this downturn but let us celebrate our accomplishments. Over the last four years our congregation has raised and given a total of \$28,650 to a wide variety of charities thru Missions Mall.

The Missions Committee once again thanks you for your "giving spirit" and generous support of these worthwhile charities. Thank you for reaching out to a world in need as you did your holiday shopping in preparation for the celebration of Christ's birth on Christmas.

Blessings Surround Always!,

Becki van Compennolle

## ChristChurch Presbyterian 2010 Session

### Class of 2010

Jay Bole, Judy Bucher, Liz Gentry, Karen Persely, Pam Stoops, Remi Van Campernelle

### Class of 2011

John Becker, Amy Gremillion, Priscilla Kennedy, Woody Speer, Roger Tucker, Craig Wooten

### Class of 2012

Homer Borgstedte, Sue Cox, Brad Eaves  
Aileen Fleming, Rebecca McMahan

### Clerk of Session

Sidney Holderness

### Co-Moderators

Mark Cooper & Lacy Sellars

### Visioning Transformation Team

Fred Cook, Aileen Fleming, Keith Cox,  
Anita Bettis, Betty Harrison, Robert Reed,  
Laura Shely, Priscilla Kennedy, Pam  
Stoops, Dick Akkerman, Amy Gremillion,  
Craig Wooten, Jay Bole, Dana Barkley,  
Gretchen Sparks

Facilitators - Diane Prevary & Jim Bushong

### Building & Renovation Task Force

John Becker  
Sue Cox  
Ed Janes  
Amy Gremillion  
Bill Harrison  
Dick Akkerman  
Robert Reed, Chair  
Woody Speer  
Mark Cooper & Lacy Sellars

# Adult Ministry

## Parents' Night Out

Do you need a night out? Take advantage of our Parents' Night Out. Drop the kids off at the Fellowship Hall where they'll enjoy dinner, movies, and games, while the parents get to spend the evening together. The next Parents' Night Out is February 26th from 6-10 pm. Please advise by the 24th if your child is attending. Contact Sue Cox or Barbara Buckley for more information.

## Presbyterian Women's Circle

All the women of the church are invited to the Presbyterian Women's Circle which meets the second Tuesday of the month. Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 9th at 9:45 am. We will be studying the book of Joshua.

## Day Literature Circle

The Day Literature Circle meets on the third Tuesday of the month. Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 16th at 10:30 am.

## Men's Breakfast

Men's breakfast usually meets on the first of the month and is a time for the men of the church to get together and hang out. The next Men's Breakfast is February 6th at 8:00 am in the Fellowship Hall.

## Better Bunch

Our February trip will be Thursday, February 18m and we will be going to the Museum of Printing History. Their current special exhibit is typewriters. Cost for the trip will be \$2.00 plus lunch. The bus will leave 3rd Street at 9:30. Thanks go to Mr. Radack and Precinct 3 for providing the bus.

Mark your calendars for March 11. We will be going to the Museum of Natural Science to see the movie on mummies. Details to come.

Friends and family welcome!!

## Friday Night Bridge

The church bridge group will meet on Friday, Feb. 19 in the home of Bill and Betty Harrison (7703 Braesdale) at 7:00 PM. Contact Sue for info at 713-774-6915.

## Tuesday Evening Bible Study

Tuesdays, February 2nd, 9th, and 16th at 5:30 pm in the West Wing, #5 "When God Winks, on New Beginnings" by Squire Rushnell.

Next course begins Tuesday February 23, from 5:30 pm-7pm in West Wing, #5. We're studying "Joshua: A Journey of Faith." A ten week study led by Pam Stoops, elder and 2009 Presbyterian Women's Bible and Prayer Coordinator for New Covenant Presbytery. For further information contact Janette Hearne: [janettehearne@gmail.com](mailto:janettehearne@gmail.com) or phone: 713-772-1258 or Janice Schessler: [janiceschessler@att.net](mailto:janiceschessler@att.net) or phone: 713-666-3209.

## NEW NEWSLETTER

## DEADLINE -

## THE 20TH



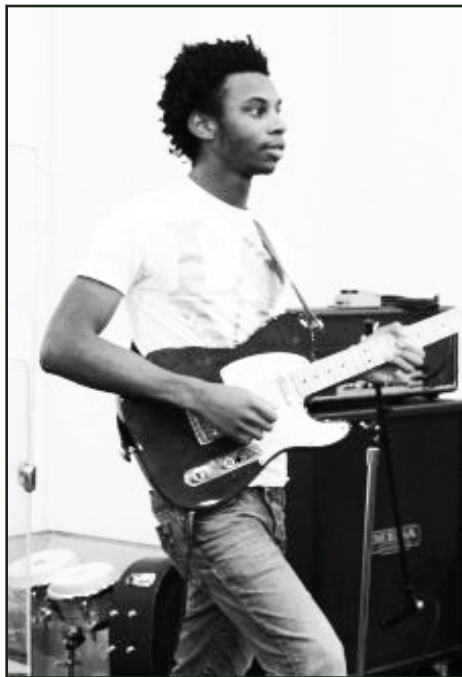
As of March 2010, CCP will begin implementing a new hard deadline for newsletter submissions. This deadline applies both to readers who wish to contribute and to staff. Any submissions after the 20th of the month will either not be published, or will be pushed to the next month. Thanks for your cooperation!

# Youth Ministry



## YOUTH MUSICIAN - DAVID RUDD

Welcome the newest addition to the CCP family: David Rudd! David attended Fall Retreat last November with the youth group and led us in musical worship. Let's just say we hit it off. He liked us, we liked him, and now he's agreed to help us put together a praise band! David is a jack of all trades, but the two things he's most passionate about are Jesus and music. By day he is a Starbuck's barista and can make you a great cup of joe. He also manages a recording studio and helps local



bands put together albums. By night he's an extraordinary musician. He plays in a Latin band, a country band, and a Christian band. His musical talent and heart for God will be a great resource for ChristChurch and the youth group. If you see him around on Sunday be sure to say hello!

Good News is a monthly publication of ChristChurch Presbyterian, and is sent to members, visitors, and friends.

**POSTMASTER:** Send changes of address to:

ChristChurch Presbyterian  
5001 Bellaire Boulevard  
Bellaire, TX 77401

Bulk mail postage paid at Bellaire, TX  
USPS #105.

All articles for submission should be sent to [mmartin@ccpres.org](mailto:mmartin@ccpres.org). Issues deadlines are the 20th of the month. All material is subject to editing for space and content; every effort will be made to include all articles.

### STAFF DIRECTORY

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713-668-9869

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Volunteer Interfaith  
Caregivers SW  
713-772-8181

**Website**

[www.ccpres.org](http://www.ccpres.org)

**Presbytery of New Covenant**

713-526-2585

## Conclaves 2010: Living out Loud!

If you're coming to Conclaves this year, here's what you're gonna get: This year's theme is "Living Out Loud" and we'll be focusing on transforming in God's image. Me, Josh Persely and the rest of the Presbyterian Youth Connection Council (PYCC) have been working all year to make this a spectacular weekend! This year the jr. and sr. high weekends are combined so everyone can go together! There will be energizers, praise and worship, lots of small group time, and of course...ULTIMATE FRISBEE! This will be our best Conclaves ever! You don't want to miss it!

When: February 19th-21st

Where: Camp Cho-Yeh

Cost: \$125 (limited scholarships available)

Forms are due to Mandy by February 8th.-Jamie Townsend

### **SUMMER MISSION TRIP REGISTRATION HAS BEGUN!**

We are going to Managua, Nicaragua June 21-26th and to Birmingham, Alabama July 25-30th. Please talk to Mandy A.S.A.P. if you are interested in either of our mission trip opportunities!

# HAITI RELIEF EFFORTS CONTINUE

In a partnership that included the Synod of Living Waters, the Synod of the Sun, and the Southwest Rotary Club, members of ChristChurch Presbyterian and St. John's Presbyterian installed a water purification system in Arcahaie, Haiti in July 2009. The successful installation was pilot project that represented the first time a Living Waters for the World water filtration system was powered by solar energy.

That small group expanded to include others interested in Haiti, and has been working on a number of projects prior to the earthquake. One of those projects included outfitting a shipping container as a mobile clinic, and in the past two weeks it has been filled with medical equipment, supplies, clothing, non-perishable food, and water, and was shipped the last week of January.

Many groups and individuals have helped tremendously in gathering supplies and equipment to fill the container, including CCP and STPC, Christian Alliance, Faith in Practice, the Multi-Cultural Service Center, the Haitian Multicultural Association,

the CCP Youth Group, First PC in Palestine, Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, and individual doctors dentists. The group has also channeled much of its relief efforts through Seventh Day Adventist Medical Mission networks in the US and Haiti, the Haiti Education Foundation, and the Episcopal Church in Haiti.

One project in the planning stages has become desperate. The JELA School ("youth in action" in Creole) in Limbe, Haiti has been absorbing internal refugees from Port au Prince since the earthquake. The number of orphans they are caring for has doubled, and they are now feeding and



**The Haiti relief group after a morning's hard work**

providing medical care for a large number of injured elderly. The situation is dire, and we have been sending emergency aid money to provide food and basic necessities for the JELA School as they try to meet these needs. If you would like to help with this project, please send funds to ChristChurch and mark your donation for the JELA School.

-Mark Cooper

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**Sunday Service**  
10:15 a.m.

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