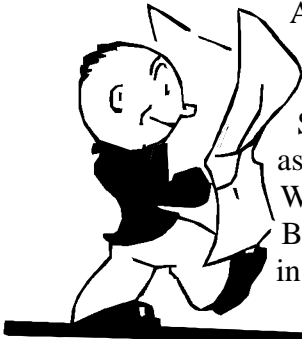


Would You Believe?

September 2007

NEWS IN THE PEWS

DONT MISS OUT!!! THE OPPORTUNITIES ARE MANY!!!!AND IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO BE A PART!!!! We have new Sunday School classes as well as home Bible studies. Also the Wednesday night dinners and Bible studies are all beginning in September! We have lots of opportunities to grow spiritually as well as to have fellowship with our church family. Be sure to avail yourself of many of these opportunities.



A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU KNITTERS!!!! Beginning on Wednesday, September 5, we will have a Knitting Group in the Parlor. Some yarn has been donated to the church so knitters are getting together at 3:00 to knit for others--lap robes for nursing homes, prayer shawls for cancer patients, baby caps for hospitals. Here is an opportunity to help others and also to enjoy the company of our fellow church members. COME AND ENJOY!!!!

It's hard to believe that school is back in session. We need to be faithful to pray for the teachers among us. They are Carl and Marie Ashley, Henny Bulten, Susan Campbell, Becky Forester, Sheri Fyke, Alice Hattendorf, Mayetta Lee, Lisa Lennon, Kathy Livanic, Laretta Moll, Jeff Roach, Suzanne Rivell, Olga Rybalkina, and Pearl Saunders. They have a big responsibility as well as quite an opportunity to influence the lives of young people. We too have a responsibility and privilege to pray for them.

Also several of our young folks are leaving for college and we too need to uphold them in prayer. Val Tate will be at Belhaven College, Michael Goderwis at Central Florida, Jeff Lee at Reformed Seminary, Amanda Backus in nursing training in Orlando. Chris Myers, Kyle Jones, and Deanna

McCombs as well as Evan Myers, who will be taking one class at the college in his last year in high school, will all be at Palm Beach Community College. Also Whitney Gahagen, daughter of one of our missionaries, Craig and Heather Gahagen will be at the nursing school of the University of Miami. Jenna Gauger started pre-school at Trinity Christian Academy on her 3rd birthday...she loves it, and Grace McCombs is in her class. Also, Jordan Gauger started 1st grade at Trinity and is going to begin violin lessons at the school on Aug. 28; maybe we'll have a new addition to the music program at LOPC one day! Do keep all these young people in your prayers.

Dick Miller, our Missions Chairman, has found a new outlet for his gifts from God. He is publishing a new quarterly bonsai magazine, which is going world wide. The magazine is Gulfstream Journal of Tropical Bonsai and is about Tropical tree species used in bonsai creations. His product can be seen on his new web site: www.gulfstreambonsai.org. Proceeds are committed to God's work in missions. Dick volunteers his services at Morikami.

The Tate family made a trip to Virginia to visit Keith and see him off on the *USS Ponce* on July 30. Keith will be deployed for a minimum of six months. He is the supervisor of a 20 man crew of young men whose job is to keep the entire ship in tip-top shape at all times. He is also responsible for securing and maintaining anything related to emergencies on board (Sounds like a BIG job to me. Do keep Keith in your prayers). Also Keith has a birthday on Sept. 24 so try to send him birthday greetings either by e-mail or snail mail. Here is Keith's e-mail and snail mail address while deployed keith.tate@lpd15.navy.mil /**Keith Tate, LTJG Engineering DEPT/Repair DIV USS PONCE (LPD 15) FPO AE 09582-1717**. The family all attended church together and I understand The Tate Trio performed the offertory music. This was the first public performance of these three talented young folks together. (We were fortunate

to have The Tate Duo take part in our worship service and look forward to the day when the trio will all be here and share their talents with us.) On the way home, Buddy was dropped off in Folkston, GA along with his bicycle which he rode the remaining 340 miles to Vero Beach. As hot as it was, I don't know how he did it! As many of you know since returning, Buddy has been hit by a car while riding his bike home from work. How thankful we are that he was not hurt VERY BADLY! (I think he needs to be on our prayer list for safety as he rides his to and from work!!!)

Maria Hoogendyk celebrated her 92nd birthday in Michigan on August 4th. Her three daughters, Anne Mejeur, Henny Bulten and their sister went up for this momentous occasion. Maria's 43rd great grandchild--a little girl arrived the following day. Anne and Larry Mejeur are the proud grandparents of this little girl, Olivia Mae Obrochita born in Naples, FL on Aug 5th and she is the Mejeurs 6th grandchild. If you've noticed Larry Mejeur has not been very visible lately. It's because he has retired and is spending much of his time working on their cabin in the hills of NC (The good part about that is that it is not far from THE BIG CITY. He even frequently goes though THE BIG CITY---- That doesn't take TOO long!)

Isn't it good to have Terry and Betty Kennedy back with us? They had spent quite a bit of time working on their Alabama home. Annette and Chris Myers made a trip to help with cleaning out Annette's mother's place---What a job that is! We are also glad that David and Leilou Brady have returned from about a months stay with their daughter in Tallahassee. Ann Seay had a family trip where she met her son and family at one of her sisters and then drove to visit the other sister. They also went to the Atlanta aquarium before returning home. The Browns made a weekend trip to NC for the birthday party of a nephew who was home on leave from overseas. Marlene Roese is once again visiting her daughters in New Jersey and New York. Walter and Helen Gutheil spent 7 weeks in Wisconsin, near Helens daughter and her family. John and Tiffany Panico vacationed in Tennessee. The Bob McCombs family enjoyed vacationing with family at Packer Lake in California. Martha Mattson enjoyed a visit with family and friends in Minnesota, The Minnemas spent some time with family in Michigan. Becky Robertson visited her

daughters in NC. Marc and Martha Smith are due to return from the northeast on Aug. 29th. It seems as if they have been gone a long, long time. Dorothy Brindle is spending a couple of months in New Jersey. The Downings have enjoyed a visit with Eric, Amy and grandchildren. Judy Lehtinen will be spending 3 weeks with her soon to be daughter-in-law in the Netherlands the first part of September. The wedding is scheduled in December so she will be making another trip then.

Arline Cortese attended the wedding of a grandson at Memorial in West Palm and a couple days later ended up in the hospital (not because of anything connected with the wedding). I'm happy to report that she is recovering nicely at home and her family members have been wonderful in caring for her and Norman.

The Sunday night crowd really enjoyed Laurie Moll's pictures and travelogue about the China summer trip she took with a group from Lake Worth Christian School. We are now looking forward to hearing about Buddy Tate's trip to Brazil. If you remember, we prayed for Buddy's passport and then for his health while there, so we really look forward to hearing all about the trip.

Matt Jones, is doing his internship in Minnesota and was in the ER when the victims from the bridge collapse started coming in. The youngest of the Ehlers clan is a senior in high school. Eric graduated last spring, Kevin is in college in Grand Rapids and Jenny is doing her internship toward her Masters. Doesn't it seem that long since Chris and Peggy were married. They will be celebrating their 25th anniversary this year. Sounds like we are ALL getting OLD! After making that statement, I guess I'd better sign off until next month!!!!

P.S. One of the very special ladies of our church, LEILOU BRADY, is having a birthday on Sept. 2nd and many of her friends will gather at the church for a salad luncheon on Tuesday, Sept. 4th to show our love and appreciation for this delightful lady who has faithfully taught a Bible class for many years. So, all you ladies bring a salad and come enjoy a luncheon and let Leilou Brady know how much we appreciate her.

Carolyn Kullmar

FROM THE PASTOR



Once each week I receive an email publication called The Pastor's Weekly Briefing. It is produced by Focus on the Family and is edited by H. B. London who was a pastor for many years before joining Focus on the Family.

I'm including two articles from a recent issue. I believe these articles deal with issues about which Christians need a truly Christian perspective.

The first is by Tony Perkins; the second by H. B. London.

In Tennessee, Rep. Steve Cohen (D) is finding out the hard way that pastors aren't buying the liberal line on H.R. 1592, the federal "hate crimes" bill. A growing number of ministers are sensing that the wave of support for applying "hate crimes" to sexual orientation also spells trouble for religious leaders and their ability to speak freely from the pulpit.

Although Cohen is doing his best to reassure Tennessee's churches that they'll be unaffected, the state's faithful are challenging his vote in favor of the bill. Together, with a powerful alliance of black and white pastors, congregations have ignited a firestorm across the Volunteer State that has resulted in a massive letter-writing and phone campaign. Cohen said his office fielded about 400 calls on the issue after local Memphis churches distributed thousands of fliers about where the bill could lead.

Yesterday, the congressman proved the churches' effectiveness by unleashing his anger on the House floor, accusing "right-wing, evangelical" groups of "misleading pastors." His accusation missed the mark; it is Cohen and his liberal leadership that are misleading the American public. Both have said that the bill, which is still pending in the Senate, would not trample on Americans' First Amendment rights.

Pastors like Chester Berryhill know better, saying that he and his colleagues understand that the purpose of the bill is to silence moral opposition. "If you get up in a pulpit now and, if you say homosexuality is a sin, you have 'attacked homosexuality.' ... We want absolutely no restrictions on what a preacher can preach." It is encouraging that these Tennessee pastors have taken such a principled stand and reached a level of engagement that FRC is working to help all states imitate.

(Tony Perkins is the president of the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C. <http://www.frc.org>)

Need There Be An Evangelical Schism?

This past week, I read with interest an article by Mark I. Pinsky in USA Today. It was entitled, "Who speaks for America's evangelicals?"

Mr. Pinsky attempted to make the point that the Warrens, Hybels, Jakes and Pages of the world are overshadowing the Dobsons, Robertsons and other like-minded defenders of the faith, morality and family. He said it's clear "that a subtle, incremental, but nonetheless tectonic shift is underway."

He further stated that the younger pastors want to broaden the evangelical agenda beyond what one clergyman calls "'below the belt' issues linked to sexuality." For them, "people of faith should engage issues such as AIDS, Darfur, economic justice, war and peace, prison reform and human trafficking. For Dobson and Robertson, this represents an unacceptable dilution of focus and a squandering of political capital." Wow!

Richard Cizik of the National Association of Evangelicals was quoted as saying, "It's a given among the elders of the movement that ceding authority to younger leaders rarely occurs — except by death."

So these gifted, anointed, aging men, according to Cizik, will need to "die off" before the "young guns" can gain the authority they seek. How arrogant can one be?

Does not the Bible — God's Holy Word — make the point that it takes a combination of gifts and efforts for the church to be as strong as it needs to be? We, in the body of Christ, do not need everyone on the same page or concentrating on the same issues. There is so much to be done, and so few to take a stand.

Do we abandon the family and the fight for life to devote our time to climate change and Darfur? Of course not!! Do family advocates turn a deaf ear to the cries of the hungry and the underprivileged? Of course not!! We, as the body of Christ, **must** address all human challenges, but all will not address the same things. For instance, Focus on the Family has contributed millions of dollars to the relief efforts related to the tsunami and hurricanes

Katrina and Rita. We will also be involved in an AIDS benefit this weekend.

Each ministry and local church must find an avenue that leads to the greater good outside the four walls of its buildings — to honor God, not look for credit. Satan would like to see the evangelical church divided, as would some "in-house" critics. We can't let that happen! Read Romans, chapter 12, again, and apply it to your situation: "**We have different gifts (mandates) according to the grace given us**" (Rom. 12:6).

The question: Are we using our variety of gifts and making the most of our opportunities?

Can't we just get along and rejoice with and encourage one another? I pray so! What say ye?

Be blessed, and be a blessing. —HBL

Lynn Downing

Larry's Column

"HOW 'BOUT ME?"

That's one of the things Betty and I frequently hear at home from our African Grey parrot, Mr. Max. Sometimes it comes at amazingly appropriate moments. We sit down for dinner, and he pipes up, "How 'bout me?" We tell him goodbye as we prepare to walk out the door, and he calls out, "How 'bout me?" We put our arms around each other for a hug, and we hear him ask, "How 'bout me?"

As you read and hear about the fresh start-up of our church ministries in September, it would be wonderful if each one of you would ask, "How 'bout me?" Yes, how about you? Will you be enthusiastically taking advantage of these opportunities? Will you be looking for ways you can not only participate, but assist those leading these ministries. Will you be considering how your involvement will be an integral part of the revitalization of LOPC? Will you understand how your decision will affect the spiritual health of the whole church, positively or negatively? What will you begin doing this year that you haven't done before?

Pastor Downing often warns us about the "willingness gate" of our mind being closed as we begin to hear something. Too often, we have already decided we're not interested even before the person making the challenge has finished speaking.

This time, open that gate. And as you look over this list of ministries, ask yourself prayerfully, "What would the Lord want me to be doing with this?" Ask yourself, "How 'bout me?"

All these ministries start up again the first week of September. So ... **How 'bout you?**

Adult Sunday School Electives

John Brandt ... Paul's Letter to the Romans
Dick Peterson ... John Piper's "Desiring God"
Buddy & Debby Tate ... Christian Marriage and Family
Larry Roff ... Hymns and Hymn-Writers of the Faith
Lynn Downing ... OT and NT Bible Survey

Wednesday Nights

Catered dinner (reservations required)
Teens' praise band, dinner, games, and Bible study
Childrens' choir, games, and study
Adult choir and discipleship groups

Thursday Home Groups

Jesus' "High Priestly Prayer" in John 17
The REAL Lord's Prayer
A model of how to pray and what to pray for, as well as a picture of what real intimacy with God looks like

Youth Discipleship

Sunday Mornings ... Sunday School
Sunday Evenings ... "Plugged In" Discipleship
Wednesday Evenings ... Praise Team, Games, Dinner, and Study
Weekends ... Westgate Ministry, Concerts, Parties
Next July ... Mission Trip to Belize

Sunday School

For the last month, we've been hearing testimonies on Sunday mornings from people at LOPC who are "high" on Sunday School. (Wasn't Ryan Fyke's great?!!!) Based on the numbers who attend worship, we ought to have twice as many as we do now attending Sunday School, both children AND adults.

Our adult classes shift to an elective mode this year, with five great classes being offered. With the variety of themes, there's a class to suit the particular spiritual needs and interests of every adult

here. And our children's classes have the best teachers of any church you'll find.

Last month we listed ten great reasons why people ought to be in Sunday School. Here's the other side this month: ten pitiful reasons people give for not being in Sunday School.

1. Sunday is the only day I get to sleep late in the morning.
2. I'm usually too tired after working in the yard on Saturday.
3. It's too hard to get the kids dressed that early on the weekend.
4. None of the Sunday School subjects interest me.
5. I'm too old for Sunday School.
6. The kids say they don't want to go.
7. My husband / my wife just isn't interested.
8. I can study the Bible better at home by myself.
9. We're usually up late on Saturday night.
10. I have homework / office work / housework I need to do on Sunday morning.

Can you imagine Jesus as a boy using any of those excuses when Mary and Joseph told him, "It's time to get up and go to Sabbath School at the synagogue"? What do suppose He thinks when He hears you use any of those excuses?

Larry Roff

INTENTIONAL EVANGELISM

Are you cultivating friendships with unbelievers?

This excellent article was written by seminarian Jeff Lee, a son of our church, for the newsletter of the church he attends in Charlotte, NC. It is wonderfully appropriate to our situation here at LOPC. We thank him for his permission to reprint it here.

What is your initial feeling when you hear someone ask you about evangelism? If you are like most Christians, I suppose that you initially feel guilty because there are always more people with whom we can share the Gospel. For many of us, evangelism is one of those things that we know we should do but often leave undone. Earlier this year I heard a statistic that within 18 months of becoming a Christian, 80% of believers are unable to identify a non-Christian friend in their lives. Although these numbers may not be exact, I believe that it is a telling statistic.

The more I reflected on this, I realized that since moving to Charlotte I had very little interaction with unbelievers; I go to school at seminary, attend church and small group, and even work out at a gym which is connected with a church. I started to feel that almost everyone I came into contact with was a professing Christian. Perhaps you have experienced this as well.

This should concern us on several levels, but there are two glaring reasons why this is a hindrance to our personal evangelism. The first is that Christ has called us to go and make disciples throughout the world. How can we make disciples and see converts to Christ if we have no interaction with unbelievers? The second reason this is problematic is because the Gospel is intensely personal and highly relational. So often we fail in sharing the Gospel with others because we are missing the first crucial step of forging a relationship with an unbeliever.

With more and more people moving into this area of South Charlotte, we are surrounded by folks who don't know Christ. The opportunities to encounter our culture with the Gospel are abundant but we cannot forget that initial step of building a relationship. Not only are we surrounded by unbelievers, but we are also living in a post-modern culture that is highly skeptical and craves integrity.

As we consider how we can share Christ with those around us, it is imperative that we build relationships as a springboard for the Gospel. The Gospel is not a list of facts that we present in a take it or leave it fashion. To do so would not communicate the love that Christ has shown us. Remember Jesus' words, "As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Let me encourage you to be intentional in building relationships with those around you. As you begin to build these relationships and as you love them with the love of Christ, you will be more and more compelled to look for opportunities to share with them the transforming message of the cross. Our purpose in sharing the Gospel is not so that we can see Grace Community Church grow in numbers, but so that we will see more lives transformed by the Gospel and in turn more worshippers who will glorify God in all that they do.

In Christ,

Financial Report

January- July 2007

LOPC Ministries Fund

	Budget	Actual	2006
Receipts	\$290,349	\$274,449	\$248,242
Disbursements	\$296,693	\$292,827	\$275,872

Improvements and Emergency Fund

	Budget	Actual	2006
Receipts	\$ 33,347	\$ 15,384	\$14,697
Disbursements	\$52,850	\$58,789	\$91,248

Mission Fund

	Budget	Actual	2006
Receipts	\$57,495	\$64,592	\$62,429
Disbursements	\$60,234	\$57,822	\$67,390

Year to Date Receipts and Disbursements

	Budget	Actual	2006
Receipts	\$381,191	\$354,425	\$325,369
Disbursements	\$409,776	\$409,439	\$434,510

YOUTH PLUGGED IN



Dear Church Family,

Grace and peace to you in our Lord Jesus Christ. As I write this, perhaps you have noticed that we have broken ground on the new outdoor recreational area for our youth. Shannon approached me midway through last year very excited about what God was doing in our youth program. His vision was to better utilize the space towards the west side of the property by creating a sand volleyball court. ½ court basketball, and to move the playground down to that area also (allowing more parking up top!). Lord willing, we are on target to have our first Wednesday night, September 5, 2007 celebrated outside. It will be like a beach party minus the water. Starts at 6:30 pm and should be a blast.

Please note on your calendars: We have also rescheduled our September events. The Scavenger Hunt / Ice Cream Social will now be September 28, 2007 from 7-9 (we will meet at the church). Also, our Westgate Trip will now be Saturday, September 22 from 10-2.

Please continue to pray for our youth as they have started school, and are facing the challenges of a new year. Please pray that they would continue to hear and respond to God's Word, that He may sustain them and make their obstacles into opportunities as they grow further into their dependence upon Him.

*Love in Christ,
John, Tiffany, and Hannah*

SAY WHAT?

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

1. Thou shalt not speak from another room.
2. Thou shalt not speak with your back toward the person with a hearing loss
(or their back toward you).
3. Thou shalt not start speaking and walk away.
4. Thou shalt not start speaking and turn away from the person who is hard of hearing.
5. Thou shalt not speak in competition with something else (turn off the water, or turn down the radio, etc).
6. Thou shalt get the attention of the person who is hard of hearing (do not start speaking while she/he is reading or concentrating on TV, etc).
7. Thou shalt try to remove obstructions while speaking. (move your hand from your face, the cigarette from your mouth, etc.)
8. Thou shalt try to speak face to face at all times.
9. Thou shalt try to speak distinctly.
10. Thou shalt try to be patient.

Lou Langley

ADS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SPECIAL SUNDAYS IN SEPTEMBER

September 2

New Sunday School classes begin for children and teens

Adults meet together in sanctuary at 9:00 for R. C. Sproul's sermon from General Assembly
Quarterly Prayer service in morning worship; focus on Sunday School

September 9

New Adult Sunday School electives begin at 9:00
"Ministry Dedication Sunday" in morning worship
Sunday evening communion and testimonies regarding spiritual gifts

September 30

"VIG" (very important guest) Sunday – bring a friend
Covered dish luncheon after church

SENIORS!! NEED INCOME OR CASH?

REVERSE MORTGAGES MAY BE THE ANSWER.

We have found many seniors needing extra income or cash who have a significant equity in their home. The appeal of this type of mortgage is many fold. Here are some of the benefits:

- This is an FHA program and is insured by FHA
- No qualifying required for income, employment, or credit
- No payments required as long as you live in your home
- Receive income you cannot outlive.

Call John Morris at 433-1228 for information

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Full face or cheek art

Glitter tattoos will last a week and are great for pool parties.

Call for rates - Henny Bulten, Artfully Yours

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Would You Believe?

Peggy Bates	Church Secretary
Bill Campbell	Editor and Administrator
Lynn Downing	Senior Pastor
Shannon Bates	Maintenance Manager
Phil Elder	Maintenance
John Panico	Youth Ministry Intern
Larry Roff	Associate Pastor
Judy Smiley	Administrative Assistant