



✧ Reflections ✧

Kerry Shull

Fifty years ago, on April 16, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was sitting in the city jail in Birmingham, Alabama. He and other leaders of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) had arrived in Birmingham in March to begin a campaign to provoke Eugene “Bull” Connor, the city’s commissioner of public safety, into an act of violence that would shine media spotlight on the brutality of white segregation and so give impetus to the fledgling movement for racial equality. A classic of nonviolence came from that jail, King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail.” The story of the Birmingham mission was told by King himself in his book, *Why We Can’t Wait* (1963,1964).

In honor of the anniversary of the “Letter,” I reread King’s account. The purpose was not only to remember and to honor. It was also to search the past for alternatives to violence in our own era. Violence is so ingrained in our American psyche, as witnessed by the votes taken in the Senate last Wednesday (April 17th) to expand gun control. While we may mouth that Jesus is Lord, in fact, the god served by our society is Marduk, the Babylonian god who brought the world into being as the result of his defeat of the goddess Tiamat. Violence is the very nature of creation, according to the Babylonians. The contrast with the Biblical stories of creation in Genesis 1 and 2, could not be greater. Even more, we call “Savior” Jesus who willingly suffered violence rather than inflicting it. His death in obedience to God brought defeat to the very powers of evil and death. The early church followed in Jesus’ footsteps, enduring suspicion and at times even persecution. Even under these conditions, the church grew and expanded. Yet the faith of today’s church seems more committed to power than it is trusting in the “weakness” of the cross. [“For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we are weak in him, but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God,” (2 Corinthians 13:4).] In spite of the victory of the resurrection, we are still immersed in fear. We are eager to classify others as “enemies,” thereby justifying the protection of ourselves and the destruction of the other.

Where are the alternatives to violence? Where is there demonstrated a faithful response to evil that seeks, not the destruction of the opponent, but his/her redemption? Where is the method that seeks to release both the victim and the perpetrator from enslavement to the power of evil? Nonviolent direct action, as practiced by King, Gandhi, and numerous others, is one such alternative.

Reflections (Cont.)

“The doctrine they preached was a nonviolent doctrine. It was not a doctrine that made their followers yearn for revenge but one that called upon them to champion change. It was not a doctrine that asked an eye for an eye but one that summoned men to seek to open the eyes of blind prejudice. The Negro turned his back on force not only because he knew he could not win his freedom through physical force but also because he believed that through physical force he could lose his soul,” (*Why We Can't Wait*, page 35).

We lose our soul when, in resort to violence, we display that we are serving the same god as our opponent. This is the enemy Jesus faced. It was not the Jewish or Roman authorities. It was the power of evil to which these entities had freely given themselves.

“To the Negro in 1963 . . . it had become obvious that nonviolence could symbolize the gold badge of heroism rather than the white feather of cowardice. In addition to being consistent with his religious precepts, it served his need to act on his own for his own liberation. It enabled him to transmute hatred into constructive energy, to seek not only to free himself but to free his oppressor from his sins. This transformation, in turn, had the marvelous effect of changing the face of the enemy. The enemy the Negro faced became not the individual who had oppressed him but the evil system which permitted that individual to do so,” (*Why We Can't Wait*, page 38).

Nonviolence draws upon the power of God's love to overcome the worldly powers of fear and hate. Nonviolence strives to elevate, not just the victim, but also the perpetrator. It does this by bringing evil, normally hidden, out into the open.

“When, for decades, you have been able to make a man compromise his manhood by threatening him with a cruel and unjust punishment, and when suddenly he turns upon you and says: ‘Punish me. I do not deserve it. But because I do not deserve it, I will accept it so that the world will know that I am right and you are wrong,’ you hardly know what to do. You feel defeated and secretly ashamed. You know that this man is as good a man as you are; that from some mysterious source he has found the courage and the conviction to meet physical force with soul force, (*Why We can't Wait*, page 30).

In calling us to follow him, Jesus summons us to alternatives to violence. Nonviolent action is one such alternative. It requires a different way of looking at ourselves (who are not lacking power because we have been shown the power of God's love) and at those who perpetrate violence (who are not evil, but who are enslaved to the power of evil). We need to find a way to end the cycle of violence. But that violence is not just “out there” in society. It is within us. It is lingering idolatry. As well as working to curb violence in the world, we must also decide which God really is the source of Life.

Ocean View Presbyterian Church

67 Central Avenue
Ocean View, DE 19970

Service

Sunday, 9:30 A.M.

Pastor

Kerry Shull

Church Office

302-539-3455

Website

ovpc.org

Session

Carole Trent
Karen Colwill
Richard Peoples
Jennifer Read
Herb Sheetz
Bob Wolf

Deacons

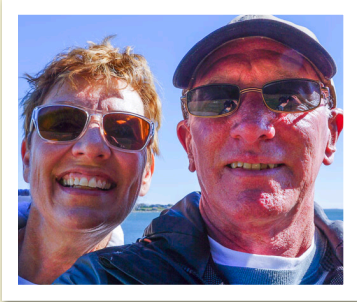
Mike Read
Jane Sergison
Jim Hartsig
Bruce Hobler
Amy Peoples
Kathy Sheetz

Newsletter Editors

Lorie and Jim Hartsig
Send submissions to:
newsletter@ovpc.org

....From The Editors

Lorie and Jim Hartsig



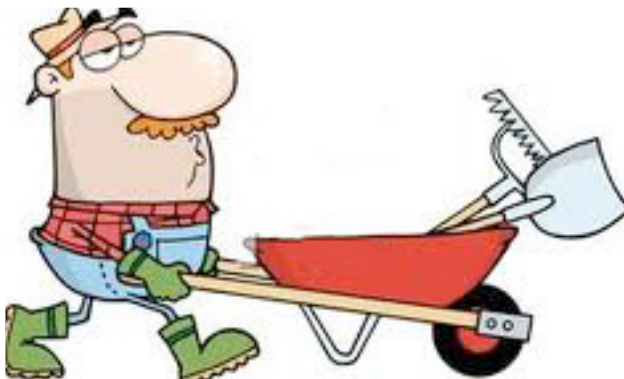
from the couch.....

For the past month I have viewed life from my perch on the couch, awaiting surgery for a torn meniscus in my right knee. Being sedentary is not who I am, loving exercise with my CURVES friends and walking miles with Jim. Biking will take over the summer months.....I hope. While not sure why God planned this quiet and uncomfortable time for me, I will share what perspective I have gained. I am sure my fellow inactive friend, Sue Baer, has lots to add to the list.

- Don't complain...even you get sick of hearing the whining.
- Look for three things to be grateful for each day. (I always start with gratitude for the beginning of each day.)
- Love your visitors. They give you a breath of fresh air from the outside.
- Be serene and work on meditation and prayer.
- Hope for spring.
- Drink lots of water and eat well, but not too well.
- Learn new knitting projects...thanks, Sue B.!
- Put more time into daily Bible study.
- Always look for the positive.

Building and Grounds

Colwill



' **Whole Church Spring Clean-up:** We have much to do to get our church into tip-top shape. Spring clean-up is on **Saturday, May 4**, from 8:30 to 1:30. We hope everyone will help with this effort. From inside cleaning to outside mulching, there is something for everyone! Coffee all morning and lunch starting at 1:00. Come and enjoy the fellowship. "

Crop Walk

On May 11, 2013, members of Ocean View Presbyterian Church will be joining congregants from many area churches and members of the community in the annual Crop Walk to raise funds to fight hunger. Monies from this event will be used to buy food, supply seed and tools for farmers, fund the drilling of wells and help support the general ministries of Church World Services. Twenty-five per cent of all monies raised stays here in Sussex County. Your help is needed to join the OVPC team of walkers or to make a donation. See Bob Doherty for more information. An informational video is available on the church website.



Last year's walkers.

English as a Second Language *Jen Read*



Ocean View Presbyterian has a new ESL family. Meet Khaled and Nouha Dabaj. They and their four children are refugees from the civil wars in Syria. Pastor Kerry Shull and Beverly Stalnaker, Cindy and Don Benjamin, Bev Bailey, Bruce Hobler, and Mike Read are tutoring them in English two mornings a week. The South Coastal Library has kindly allowed us to conduct our classes there so that the Dabajs can walk to their lessons. We will post more news from this family and let you know how their ESL classes are coming along. Meanwhile, if you have any bicycles to spare, we are trying to round up five adult-size bikes for the parents and the three daughters. A bike has already been donated for Joseph, their only son and youngest child.

★HAPPY★
BIRTHDAY!

| | |
|-----------------|--------|
| Marlene Quinn | May 13 |
| Eunice Rollings | May 19 |
| Eve Tolley | May 23 |
| Elaine Wolf | May 23 |
| Sue Dick | May 26 |

Happy
Anniversary

| | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Amy and Ed Hiner | May 2 |
| Kathy and Herb Sheetz | May 6 |
| Karen and Bill Colwill | May 20 |
| Cindy and Stephen Sziasa | May 22 |
| Kathy and Larry Hofsis | May 27 |

Mother's Day Coffee Hour



The men of the church are going to honor the women with a Coffee Hour after church on Sunday, May 12. If you would like to participate in this thoughtful event, please contact Bob Wolf or Mike Read.

Ladies: Lets celebrate with a hat appreciation day - **wear a hat!**

“Most of all the other beautiful things in life come by twos and threes by dozens and hundreds. Plenty of roses, stars, sunsets, rainbows, brothers, and sisters, aunts and cousins, but only one mother in the whole world.”

Kate Douglas Wiggin

Newsletter Bible Study

Ed Thornton

Introduction

Second Corinthians, written around 55 to 56 A.D. approximately one year after First Corinthians, is a response to the complex history between the Apostle Paul and the church he had established in Corinth. Of all Paul's letters it is the most personal and intimate. In it he bared his heart and declared his steadfast love for the Corinthians even though some had been extremely critical and very fickle in their affection for him. What concerned Paul preeminently was the presence of false teachers, claiming to be apostles, who had entered the church. They promoted their own ideas and at the same time sought to discredit both the person and message of the apostle.

The circumstances behind this letter reveal the difficult, often painful realities of life in the ministry. More than any of his letters, this one shows us the heart of Paul as a pastor.

As we learned in First Corinthians, the church in Corinth was weak, struggling with division and spiritual immaturity. Paul's authority had been undermined by an opposing teacher who was misleading and dividing with false teachings.

In an attempt to solve the turmoil, Paul traveled to Corinth, but the distressing visit only fueled the church's resistance. When Paul returned to Ephesus he wrote again to the church, pleading with them to repent and avoid God's judgment. Later Paul received good news through Titus that many in Corinthian had indeed repented, but a small and fractious group continued to cause problems there.

Purpose

Second Corinthians was written to defend the authenticity of both his apostleship and his message. In the process of Paul's defense, three key purposes emerge: (1) Paul expressed his joy at the favorable response of the church to Paul's ministry (chaps. 1-7); (2) he sought to remind the believers of their commitment to the offering for the Christians in Judea (chaps. 8-9); and (3) he sought to defend his apostolic authority (chaps. 10-13).

The link to the complete article on the OVPC website is: <http://ovpc.org/Biblestudy.html>

Mother's love is peace. It need not be acquired, it
need not be deserved.
Erich Fromm

Session Report

Eariene DeFazio, Clerk of Session

Session met with Bill Colwill from the Building and Grounds Committee. A MOTION was made, seconded, and passed to encourage the B&G Committee to present plans for establishing a reserved area in the parking lot for members.

The church Auditor, Elaine Wolf requested that she be allowed to have online access for the church accounts. This would make her job much easier and allow her access to the information and documentation she needs to review and audit the financial records.

A MOTION was made, seconded, and passed to allow the Auditor, Elaine Wolf, online bank access for all church accounts at M&T Bank and PNC Bank.

The contract with Neat Cleaning is due to renew. A MOTION was made, seconded, and passed to renew the contract with Neat Cleaning, without any price increase.

Donna Bowers, will be preaching, Sunday April 28th when Kerry is away on study leave.

The Session is hosting a covered-dish dinner on May 10, 2013 from 6-8:00 p.m.; a representative from the Pyle Center will be the speaker.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 9:09 p.m.

Session is hosting a covered-dish supper! Please join us from 6-8pm in Memorial Hall on Friday, May 10, 2013. We will have a guest speaker from the Pyle Center to talk about the many projects they do in partnership with Ocean View Presbyterian Church.

Worship Wanderings

Cathy Yantz

Pentecost is coming! We would like to see everyone wear red on May 19th to celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. My father always told me that this is the birthday of the church, because with the gift of the Holy Spirit the first disciples went out and spread the Gospel. Lets wear our red proudly and share God's gift with our family, friends, and neighbors. Happy Birthday everyone!

**"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly dove,
With all Thy quickening powers;
Come, shed abroad our Savior's love,
And that shall kindle ours."**



*Memorial Day Fajita Mania
hosted by
Wolfs and Reads
Monday, May 27 from 4-7 pm.*



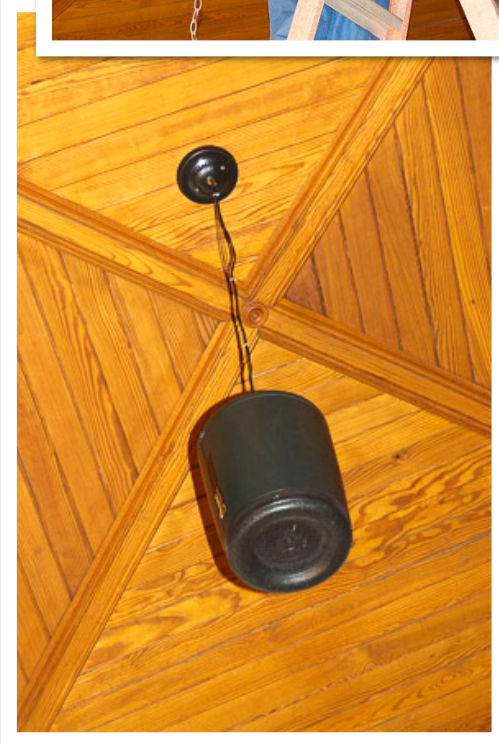
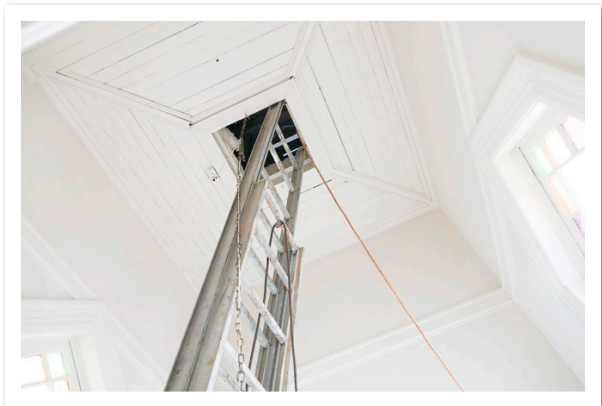
These tulips are in front of the Sanctuary .

**Everything is blooming most recklessly;
if it were voices instead of colors,
there would be an unbelievable
shrieking into the heart of the night.
Rainer Maria Rilke**

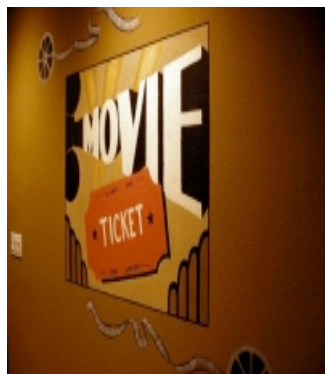
Photogenic

Photos by Jim Hartsig

Did you notice the new speakers in the Sanctuary? We had to climb into the bell tower to get above the Sanctuary ceiling to install them.



Dinner and Movies - What Could be Better



On Friday May 3rd, Bill and Karen Colwill will be hosting a pot-luck supper at their home before the movie. Please bring a favorite dish to share and enjoy great food with friends before we go over to the church for the movie. We plan to eat at 5:00pm – the more the merrier!

This month we will be featuring the film 'I AM'. This film, set in modern day Los Angeles, and framed around the Ten Commandments explores the consequences of our actions and the far reaching affects they may have. We follow the cast as their lives intersect because of the choices they make, each joined by a mysterious stranger, offering guidance but never judgment – but will they come to trust in the wisdom being offered? We hope you will join us!

And mark your calendar now for our June movie – By request, we will be showing 'The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel'. We join a group of seniors from Britain lured by a wonderful website to a new retirement home in India. Upon arrival they find it is nothing close to what was advertised but each chose to leave their homeland hoping to find a new life; and just perhaps with a little patience and willingness to adapt, this disaster of a journey will be transformative after all.

Feel free to bring your own comfortable chair (and anything else you like when watching movies --- blanket and pillow?)....

If you have a special request for a movie, please let Bob Wolf know and we will do our best to obtain it.

