



CRESCENT SPRINGS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Editor: Carol Buckhout

Floyd H. Starr
Interim Pastor

Members of the Session

Class of 2010

Jerry Hinners
Scott Mozea
Tim Reed

Class of 2011

Dan Alexander
Jim Burdick
Ernie Elliot
Brad Neal
Janet Stadtmiller, Stated Clerk

Class of 2012

Mark Boyd
Karen Ginn
Terry David
Sarah Cottongim

Members of Board of Deacons

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Kim Newton, 341-2096
Millie Lockert
Heather Alexander
Nancy Reed
Jeff Williams
Candace Hinners
Erin Murphy
Billie Grant
Joe Stephenson

Committee and Contacts

Building and Grounds

Tim Reed, 291-6116

Christian Education

Karen Ginn, 341-8271

Fellowship

Jim Burdick, 586-8528

Finance

Ernie Elliot, 331-2941

Church Development

Sarah Cottongim, 363-8575

Mission

Brad Neal, 727-1424

Personnel

Ernie Elliot, 331-2941

Worship

Mark Boyd, 587-9137

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Between the Times

January 2010

A couple of months ago, I shared with you all some thoughts that came from my friend, Mike, who lives in Kansas. At the time, I received some requests to share more of his material, and I decided to do that this month. You may remember that Mike has a terminal heart condition and has been in hospice care for about six months now. He's still holding his own, even though his insurance provider isn't paying for medications anymore. And, he's still writing a monthly blog that continues to inspire those of us who know him and read his work.

In Mike's piece on *Tips for Living Within the Day That God Has Given Us*, he writes, *Identify and face your fears. When we take our fears out where we can study them ... look at them ... then we find that they are not as bad as we had thought. A fear not faced can turn your life upside down.*

Mike didn't invent the concept. Many of our mothers taught us various versions of the same truth. But, there's often a wide chasm between the concepts we have stored on the bookshelves of our minds and the ways in which we apply the information in daily living – or fail to.

I thought the idea of identifying and facing our fears was particularly appropriate for us as we begin the New Year. The first month of the year is always a time when we can be particularly optimistic about new beginnings. It's always a chance to make changes that we hope will make us feel better about our living and improve our ministry in the service of Jesus Christ. Making New Year resolutions is always a tongue-in-cheek adventure. But, things might look different if we were able, instead, to begin right now with some proactive behavior.

The year 2010 begins with a lot of fears. The human organism is designed and built with an automatic survival instinct deeply imbedded in our makeup. It operates at a physical and at a psychological level. When survival is threatened, a part of us goes on automatic pilot in an effort to preserve our physical or psychological survival, and often both. The intensity and rationality of our reactions depend how frightened we are.

Does God mean for us to live in fear? I don't think so. Let's name a specific fear and see how our faith in God's plan might help.

Are you afraid you might lose your job this year? That's a terrifying thought for many of us. Is it a real fear? Well, it is for me. By the numbers, there's a high probability that CSPC will hire an Installed Pastor sometime this year. So, it's reasonable for me to have anxiety about that. There are also proactive steps I can take to increase the probability that I will have another job when this one ends. When I factor in my faith that God has an investment and a plan for this congregation and for me, I can get a better handle on my fear. The threat of a job loss becomes more manageable for me.

As a congregation, CSPC faces another fear: who will our new installed pastor be? Will we like him --or her? Having an installed pastor will be another major change for this part of the family of God and change often makes us fearful. So, how will you take this fear out where you can study it? Can you give it a name? And how do you factor in the faith that God can help you face and overcome it?

Ultimately, the way in which we perceive our situations, influences the responses we will have. There's a psychological "formula" we often use to figure how intense a reaction will be to a perceived threat. We take the nature of the threat, and diminish it by the perceived resources we have to combat it. Then, we multiply that by our perception of the severity of the threat. That will equal the level of the crisis we perceive. You can apply that to virtually every fear that we experience. It's just another way of following Mike's advice.

So, as we begin 2010, take your fear out into the light of day. Just that apparently small step drastically reduces its intensity. Then look at it squarely. Figure how great a catastrophe it really can produce. Factor in your faith. Does God fit into this problem in some way? Multiply by that. It's not just some neat trick for solving complex problems. It's a really workable way to live safely in God's care as we continue our journey *Between the Times.* --FHS



Update from our PNC

The Pastor Nominating Committee continues to make good progress. Session has reviewed the Church Information Form, approving it with only a few amendments.

Next the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry will review the form. When we have their approval, the CIF can be sent to Louisville to be entered on the General Assembly website, so that we can receive Pastor Information Forms from potential pastor candidates.

Stewardship Update

Pledges received to date are almost \$5000 more than last year. As a result, Session has approved a balanced budget that covers through Priority 6 (see stewardship poster in the narthex) Session has also approved an additional \$5000 for 2009 Mission projects. This recognizes that through the efforts of many volunteers and cost cutting by CSPC committees, we are able to complete our mission in the community.

Consider Making a Per Capita Offering

CSPC, like all other Presbyterian congregations, gives an annual assessment to Presbytery for each active member on our roster (our "per capita".) These funds operate our Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly. For 2010, CSPC has paid \$5707 or \$26.92 for each active member as of the end of 2008.

Some congregations expect members to pay their own assessment via an Initial Offering. At CSPC, the assessment is budgeted from our general fund, but you could help our financial situation by contributing all or part of your per capita assessment. Use your initial offering envelope and mark it "per capita."

A Valentine for Rick in Iraq

The Ruth Esther Circle is putting together a Valentine's box to send to Rick Lutz, Norma Lutz's son, who is serving his second tour of duty in Iraq.

If you would like to make a donation, there is a basket available in the Narthex until the last week of January. Suggested items to bring include crackers, peanut butter, Vienna sausages, Fire Ball candy (hard), trail mix, nuts, and calling cards with shorter durations. Please do not bring books, games, movies, toiletries, chocolate or other soft candy.

If you'd like to donate money, place your gift in the collection plate and mark it for the Ruth Esther Valentine's Box. Questions? Call Donna Rigney (341-0655)

Deacons Offer Covenant Groups

CSPC's Covenant Groups offer the opportunity to be part of a small group that meets on a regular basis for friendship, spiritual growth and fellowship. The Deacons sponsor the Covenant Group ministry—contact Billie Grant (331-5977) for more information or to sign up.

Help Keep CSPC Clutter Free

You can help keep our church building clean and attractive. If you lead a meeting or other event, please:

- Put away tables and chairs;
- Wash and put away dishes; (And return pans or serving dishes to their owners)
- Take leftover food or beverages with you;
- And generally leave the area as clean as you found it.

The Lenten season, with its special church events, will be here soon and we want to have an attractive building for our members and visitors. Thanks in advance for helping keep things tidy.

Thanks—You Helped Make Christmas Merry!

Many thanks to everyone at CSPC who purchased Christmas gifts for those in need in our community. The Sunday School classes shopped for a family of four children, providing them with new clothes and toys. This family was one of 16 who received help at Christmas through the Northern Kentucky Children's Advocacy Center. And, through the River Ridge Family Resource Center, our "helping hands" provided gifts for many more children in Northern Kentucky. Thanks for your generous support of these local opportunities to serve others.

Opportunities to Serve CSPC

As the New Year begins, remember that there are several ways you can serve our part of God's family. Volunteer via the sign up sheets or contact the appropriate committee chair:

- Bring communion bread
- Serve as church secretary for an afternoon
- Clean the church building
- Serve as an acolyte
- Volunteer at IHN

Bound by Books in 2010

Bound by Books, CSPC's book club, meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month. The group will be reading and discussing the following books in 2010. Contact Michelle Hogan with questions (331-8909).

Jan. 26	The Pillars of the Earth by Ken Follett
Feb. 23	Frenny and Zooey by J.D. Salinger
March 23	Handle with Care by Jodi Picoult
April 27	Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen
May 25	A Reliable Wife by Robert Goolrick
June 22	The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins
July 27	The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
Aug. 24	Sarah's Key by Tatiana de Rosnay
Sept. 28	South of Broad by Pat Conroy
Oct. 26	Last Night in Twisted River by John Irving
Nov. 30	The Lacuna by Barbara Kingsolver

Session Notes

At its stated December 2009 meeting, Session:

- Designated first classroom on the left as CSPC Historical Room; see Janet Stadtmiller before leaving any items;
- Gave permission for Northern Kentucky Bridge Club to use basement fellowship room with a monthly donation to CSPC from that group. They will meet at CSPC for about six months beginning in April while their regular meeting space is under renovation;
- Added Mission giving to 2010 budget and voted to continue mission giving to Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly;
- Received a flag given by Rick Lutz. The flag flew over Baghdad and is given to thank CSPC for our support to Rick while he serves overseas. The flag will be displayed in the Narthex along with its proper certification.

Calendar

January 21	CE Meeting
January 22	Chicks with Sticks, noon
January 26	Bound by Books
January 31	Chili Cook Off