



The GoodNewsletter

First Baptist Church, Littleton

“Journeying to God’s Sacred Beat”
April 2011

Holy Week at First Baptist Church

Sunday April 17

Palm Sunday

10am Worship

Presentation of the Cantata, *See What A Morning* by the FBC Choir.

Under the direction of Steve & Cindy Hudson

See What A Morning

Comments from the publisher on *See What a Morning* “...the Easter story well is at the heart of **See What a**



Morning, a creative, moving Easter musical created by Mark McClure... Magnificent prose and poetry from award-winning author Nikki Grimes' best-selling book, *At Jerusalem's Gate* will take the listener from the Triumphant Entry to the Cross to the Resurrection.... let *See What a Morning* "tell the old, old story of Jesus and His love" in a

vibrant and life-changing way this Easter.”

April 21 Maundy Thursday

7:30 pm in Fellowship Hall

Service of Communion & Tenebrae

April 22 Good Friday Service

12:00 Noon held here at **First Baptist Church**

Join service with the Congregational Church

April 24 Easter Sunday

Christ is Risen!

5:30am Sunrise Service (Sunrise is at 5:51am) on Telephone Hill, Newtown Road, with members of the Congregational & Unitarian churches. John Court will be speaking on our behalf.

9:45am Praise Celebration with *For Higher*.

10:00am Easter Celebration & Worship





Lately I have been pondering the importance of being grounded. What does it mean to be grounded?

- If you hit a baseball that stays on the ground, it is called a **grounder**.
- If you are a teenager **grounded** by your parents it means you have to stay home and usually have to give up something – such as not being able to participate in something that you really wanted to do.
- If you are an airplane or a pilot and you are **grounded** you are not able to fly.
- If you are on a ship or a boat which is **grounded** it usually means it has come ashore.
- An electrical outlet is **grounded** when there is a third wire – the ground wire that keeps you safe. In case of a short circuit or malfunction, the electricity goes to the ground wire and a fuse is blown – instead of a person being blown!
- If you are a person who is **well grounded** it usually means that you are a down to earth person, and your feet are firmly planted on the ground, meaning that you have common sense and good judgment.

I like the image of being grounded in our faith. Being grounded in our faith reminds me of the image found in *Jeremiah 17:7-8* of a beautiful tree that is so well rooted that it can withstand all kinds of stormy weather.

*“But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD,
whose confidence is in him.
They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.
It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.
It has no worries in a year of drought
and never fails to bear fruit.”*

It takes years for the roots of a tree to reach down further into the ground where it anchors itself. For people of faith it also takes time and commitment to become strong in the Lord, and to develop roots of our faith that will keep us anchored. We are grounded by practicing prayer, reading the Bible, being engaged in book studies and times of learning, worshipping in community, engaging in mission & service, AND rest and renewal. Sometimes we forget that rest and renewal are just as important as prayer and fellowship.

Rest and self-care is the basic theme of our Lenten Study, *Say Yes to Grace, How to Burn Bright without Burning Out* by Kirk Jones. He begins his book with the sleeping Savior! That’s right – I said the sleeping Savior. Have you ever seen a picture of Jesus asleep? I have not – yet that is what Jesus does in the middle of a storm on the choppy waters of the sea. In Mark 4 we read about Jesus teaching from the front of a boat, and later on sleeping in the back of the boat. Rest and renewal was a regular practice of his life, and the scriptures tell us of many occasions where Jesus went off to rest and to pray awhile. He would then reenter his ministry with fresh resolve and strength. Kirk Jones talks about a Circle of Rest which leads to peace...to clarity...and to creativity. Rest was an essential part of his life and it should be for us as well.

It has come time for me to intentionally rest and this summer I will be taking my second Sabbatical. Can you believe it has been five years since my first sabbatical? I can’t believe it either, but yet it is almost here, as my contract provides for a three month Sabbatical every five years. This church has always done a good job taking care of its pastors and I am grateful for this time of rest.

The Pastoral, Growth and Relations Board and the Board of Deacons have approved my time away which will be from Monday June 20 and returning Monday September 12. My theme for this sabbatical is Rest, Writing, Music and Renewal of Ministry and Ministries. I am thinking of calling it God’s Restorative Blueprints...but I am still pondering that! My plans for the twelve weeks don’t involve as much as they did last time, but I plan on spending at least two periods of time at a retreat center or conference center. I will continue

to work on the book that I am writing now about the church. I will continue to gently absorb music for the soul & spirit. And lastly I plan on doing some reading about transformative ministries & new models of ministry as well as visiting with some clergy who have gone through successful and fruitful transformations or mergers. And I have a daughter who is getting married at the end of August – so I plan on being a proud mother as well as minister during these twelve weeks.

Now to be honest with you, I have heard some folks ask if it is a good time for me to take a sabbatical and I appreciate their honesty. Answering as honestly I can, I have to say that it is THE time that God wants me to take a sabbatical. I believe what the scriptures say about taking time to rest. I believe in Jesus who modeled self-care and time away. I believe what Kirk Jones says as a seasoned pastor and man of God lead to teach and encourage self-care. I believe that he speaks wisdom and truth about the Circle of Rest, and that my rest will bring peace, clarity and renewed creativity for the church. I believe that I am practicing my faith and my ministry by taking this Sabbath time. I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity to take care of myself, so that I can return with renewed energy and creativity as we begin to move forward in our journey together as the people of God in Littleton.

The sabbatical time is not yet here, and the Diaconate is looking for an interim pastor for the summer. I know that God is faithful and will bring someone here that will minister to and with you these three months. In the meantime I pray that as we all journey ever closer to Easter morning – that each of us may take Sabbath time that will ground us and strengthen the roots of our faith so that our fruit may blossom for many seasons to come!

God is good – all the time.
Pastor Debbie

You're Invited

To: A Women's Tea
When: Saturday, May 14, 2011
Time: 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM
Where: First Baptist
Theme: The Story Of the Loaves & Fishes

Come enjoy a yummy lunch and Rhonda Tiedemann, a wonderful story teller who will do a dramatization based on the story of Loaves & Fishes.

Donations of non-perishable food items, personal care products, school back packs and school supplies will be deeply appreciated and given to Loaves & Fishes.

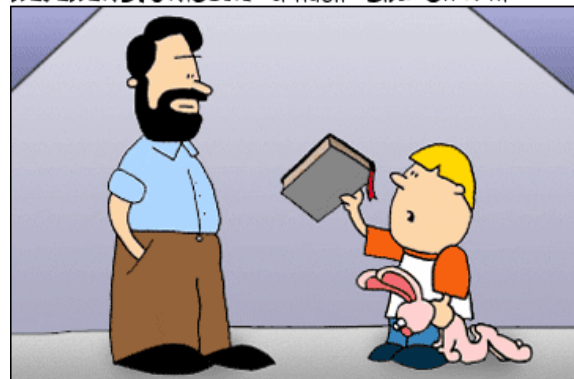


Please invite a friend, neighbor or coworker to come join us for this day.

John 6:35 "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth in me shall never thirst."

If you'd like to help organize this Tea please speak to Anne Lee.

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



DAD, I NEED YOUR HELP TO FIND OUT WHERE IT TALKS ABOUT THE EASTER BUNNY IN THE BIBLE

Copyright Gospel Communications International, Inc -
www.reverendfun.com

Boy to the World!

By Caroline Poser

Don't know what you've got 'til it's gone

"...in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." ~1 Thessalonians 5:18 NIV

Two Christmases ago, Santa brought us a flat screen TV. It was a marvelous thing, and seemed to take up an entire wall. Of course, it didn't, but it's a small room, so the TV seemed larger than life. The TV we had in the living room at the time (which has similar dimensions as our coffee table and was freecycled to us after someone upgraded) was relegated to the man cave. This really is a cave – our basement is unfinished: you can still see bark on the trees that comprise the ceiling beams, which may very well date back to the 1880s when the house was built. Currently the wii (that Santa brought the next Christmas) is hooked up to the coffee-table TV, as well as an older cable box (no DVR).

It wasn't long before our marvelous flat-screen TV was "damaged." The Bigs were throwing Jenga blocks and one hit the TV, leaving a colorful mark behind.

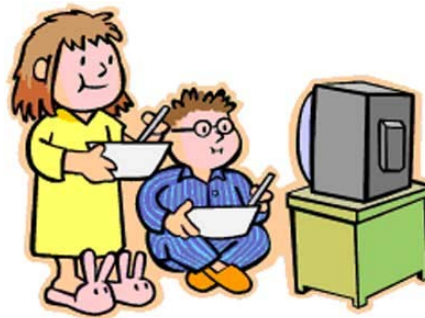
"He did it!" one of them accused the other.

"It doesn't matter *who* did it. You were both throwing the blocks so I hold you equally responsible."

Apparently they had been throwing their best pitches, because the TV was scarred – the mark didn't fade. They had to look at a colored splotch every time they watched. Over time, the scar grew until it was a vertical line on the right side of the TV. Then several vertical lines, then horizontal lines as well, and finally, when the TV became unwatchable, I removed it from the living room. (The Jenga game had long since been removed from our household altogether, though I did continue to unearth pieces from time to time.) The Bigs were probably relieved that it was gone: having no TV in the living room was less embarrassing in front of their friends than having to answer when they asked, "Dude, what's wrong with your TV?"

Besides the man cave, there's a TV upstairs in my room (another cast off), again with an older cable box. (I don't even know how DVR works.) Whenever we had "Family Movie Night," it was upstairs, since I did not enjoy spending time in the man cave. The problem with that was that I really don't want kids eating snacks in my room and I was tired of the jockeying for position – which often culminating in pillow fights – that trashed my room as things escalated.

So, after more than two years, I decided it would be a good time to put a TV back in the living room. But not a new TV – I borrowed an old, no-frills 19-inch TV from our neighbor, that has no remote (and won't work with the cable remote), so you actually have to push a button on the TV to turn it on. Can



you imagine? I remember turning a knob, which was also the volume control, to power on a TV. "Yes, we did have TV's when I was a kid," I assured

my children. "They even had them when Grandma was a kid." I had gone to the local cable office and picked up a new cable box (with DVR: the matronly customer service agent assured me if I could use a VCR, which I no longer have but do remember how to use, I could figure out the DVR. And I supposed if she could do it, so could I.)

Well, after two years of going without, my boys were thrilled. They did point out that the color was not the same as on our other TVs. "It's like, black and white, Mom..."

"Boys, this is not at all like black and white." "...But that's okay," they were quick to assure me, lest they appear ungrateful.

The first night we watched, the four of us sat like sardines on the love seat watching "The Laughing Show" (*America's Funniest Home Videos*).

An added bonus is that I had to move the furniture around so the TV could be placed near the cable outlet and now there's a couch blocking the double-

wide doorway through which the kids used to race cars, play soccer, and run before they took a flying leap onto the couch, ramming it into the wall: the configuration of the couches seems to keep everybody blissfully contained in that particular area.

Thus it came to pass that my children would be grateful for a little old box TV in our living room. (I told The Bigs it's their job to figure out the DVR.)

~

Easter Flowers Order Form 2011

It is time to order our Easter Flowers. The cost this year is \$14/plant.



Please give orders and payment to a member of the Chancel Team (Harriet DiLuzio, Anne Lee Ellis, Carol Huebner, Lynda Fisher, Dawn Gravlin or Marge Payne).

Orders may be mailed to: Carol Huebner, 17 Sherwood Drive, Westford, MA 01886

Checks should be made payable to Deacons Fund
Order deadline is April 17th

Quantity

Easter Lilies _____

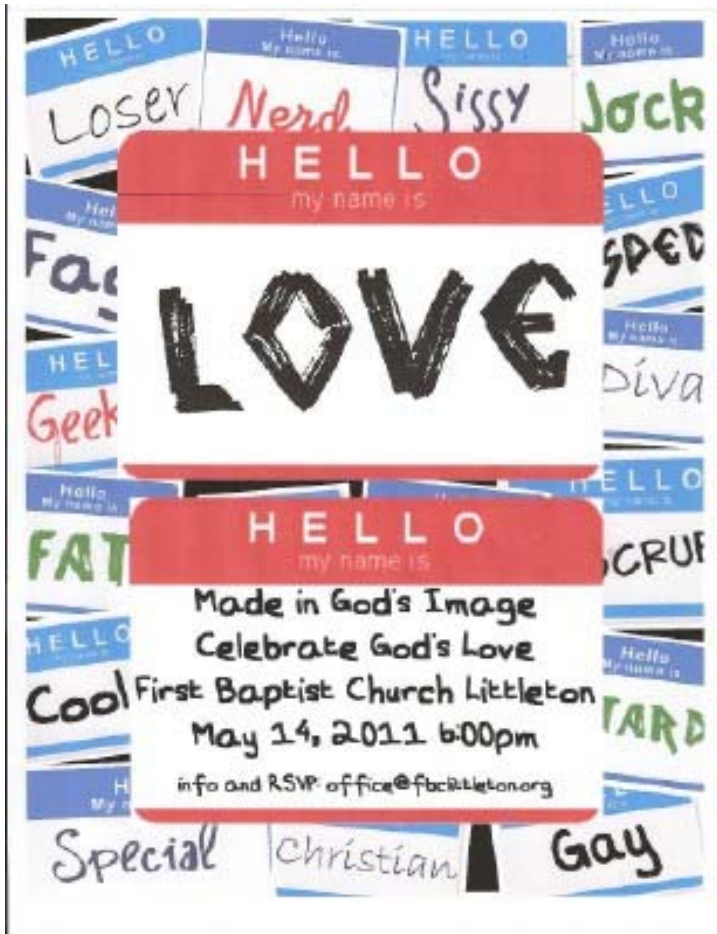
Tulips _____

Please include the words of recognition you would like to use in the bulletin. In memory of (or use your own works):

Leave _____ Pick up _____

Your Name:

Thank you!



First Baptist Church of Littleton

P.O. Box 156

Littleton, MA 01460-0156

Phone: 978-486-4660

Email: office@fbclittleton.org

Website: www.fbclittleton.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

