



The GoodNewsletter

First Baptist Church, Littleton

“Journeying to God’s Sacred Beat”

May 2009

Catch the Vision Dinner
Friday, May 1
5:30pm



You are invited to join the church family for a potluck supper with all types of food, fun, and music. *For Higher* will be with us to lead us in lots of singing and celebrating. We will gather to give thanks, enjoy our community of faith, as well as celebrate our Volunteer of the Year and some other fun awards that have been dreamed up Chris Raine.

Sign up on the kiosk to bring any type of potluck dish – **ALL** types of food are welcome!



Check us out online at:

www.FBCLittleton.org



Friday, May 15 Ronnie Earl & the
Broadcasters Benefit Concert
7:00pm

Cost is a \$20 donation at the door which will benefit the homeless programs at the Lowell Transitional Center.

Sponsored by **Starbucks** of Westford.

The problem of the homeless has not gone away since our benefit concert last year and statistics have shown that the number of homeless have increased. We can do our part by helping out the homeless shelter that is closest to Littleton. Please join us and be generous in your giving!

FROM THE PASTOR



March has been an interesting month. Holy week and Easter have come and gone and all the worship services were a blessing to those who attended. I am in awe how the church community worked together to make those five worship services happen. Thank you to all our musicians for the Cantata, special music, praise music, guitar music, piano, organ, hymns, brass, bells! The singing was heartfelt and joyful. Thank you to the Deaconesses for all their ministry, work and eye for God's beauty and art. And more thanks to all who helped set up, clean up, and for those who spoke up - whether reading scripture, doing an invocation or speaking at the sunrise service on Easter morning. This small community of faith - reminds me of the small churches in the New Testament that kept on persevering, full of faith and love for one another.

Personally it has been an interesting month for our family with Eddie's diagnosis of cancer. You have walked alongside of us and we are grateful. I feel even more aware of the medical, emotional and spiritual struggles that so many are going through and know for absolute certainty that God walks alongside us no matter what life may bring before us.

Many of you have loved ones and friends whose lives are affected by cancer. We have been praying and journeying with Chris Raine through her treatments at Dana Farber for breast cancer. Her family and friends have organized a **Relay for Life team on May 30th in Methuen** and I have signed up to be on her team. Relay for Life is an all night team relay that raises money for cancer research. You may support Chris' team by visiting my website - which I also am now doing in honor of Eddie - at <http://main.acsevents.org/goto/InspiredByChrisRaine>. Or when you are at my part of the website - you may contribute to the whole team.

Many Thanks!
Debbie

Mission Spotlight - LTLC



One of the local ministries FBCL supports through our missions program is the **Lowell Transitional Living Center (LTLC)**. The LTLC is a community supported, non-profit organization that provides a safe, temporary shelter for 90 homeless men and women, ages 18 and older, in the Greater Lowell area. The LTLC operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In a multi-service focused environment, volunteers and staff provide opportunities for individuals to end their homelessness.

There are many opportunities for volunteers to use their gifts and talents to enhance LTLC's mission of serving the homeless and the poor in the Greater Lowell area. Volunteers can utilize the expertise they possess in their chosen fields, to enhance the performance of LTLC staff and the lives of LTLC guests & diners.

Volunteer opportunities at the LTLC include serving a meal in the kitchen at supper time, donations, managing a donation department, soliciting supplies to keep the shelves stocked, tracking diners (as required by our various funding sources) as they come in to eat, help write grants to increase LTLC funding, and many more opportunities. Talk to a Missions Board member to find out more. Volunteering in these tough economic times is needed now more than ever.

"We all need help sometime."

Had you told Barbara Droll that she would one day be living in a homeless shelter, she would have probably laughed. Growing up in Lowell, Barbara was a bright, well-spoken and ambitious young

woman who graduated with a teaching degree from Lowell State College (now University of Massachusetts Lowell) and went on to earn her master's degree during a successful 22-year teaching career in Lowell elementary schools. After retiring from teaching, Barbara pursued a second career in home health care and moved to Maine to provide live-in care for an ailing young man with multiple sclerosis. When that resident died unexpectedly and Barbara had trouble finding work that paid enough to cover her expenses, she ultimately returned to Lowell, where she began substitute teaching, but could not make enough money to pay the rent. Penniless and not knowing where else to turn, she found herself at the doorstep of the Lowell Transitional Living Center.

"I never dreamed this could happen to me. I am educated and a hard worker. But I made a couple of bad decisions, didn't save money, and I found myself here. I cried when I had to move into the shelter and go on welfare. But I realize now there is no shame. We all need help sometime. It doesn't matter what position you have, what education you have, or how hard you work. It can happen to any of us."

After several months, Barbara was able to move into one of the affordable housing apartments above the center. She has returned to teaching, working as a teacher's aide at the Lowell Community Charter School around the corner on Jackson Street.

"It is terrifying for me to think of what might have happened if the center hadn't been here for me. I am not a street person. I would not have survived out there. I might have been dead. Thank God they were here. They allowed me to get my life back."

Check out more stories from the LTLC at <http://www.ltlc.org/ourstories.html>.

Upcoming Events

The Ham and Bean Supper for May has been cancelled.

Boy to the World: One Day You'll Thank Me

By Caroline Poser

*"Her children arise and call her blessed."
~Proverbs 31:28 NIV*

"You didn't go to the store yet? We're almost out of milk!"

"I had a busy day, boys. We can go on the way back from the den meeting." (I was lucky to get the laundry done, changing it between machines during breaks in my workday, and folding it during a conference call.)

"Chicken and smiley fries again?"

"Yes, isn't that great? It's something you all like!" (I can't be a short order cook every night.)

"What are these piles of clothes all over my bed?"

"Clean laundry. Put it away – in your drawers – please." (Yes, I need to specify where, since sometimes the definition of "away" is anywhere but the bed.)

I don't know what my kids think I do all day. One day recently when we were waiting for the bus, they announced that they hadn't had time to brush their teeth. I was astounded. As I reflected on the hubbub that morning -- my middle son doing his homework while eating his breakfast, my oldest doing anything he could to distract him (which was something akin to yodeling after I insisted he keep his hands to himself), and my youngest telling me he needed help with his shirt (which he did not – he needed attention), the dog and cat orbiting me, while I was trying to make the lunches and ensure everything everyone needed was laid out next to their backpacks (recorder for oldest, library books for middle, snow suit and boots for youngest), and consume enough coffee to continue functioning against the backdrop of an early morning conference call on speakerphone, I could barely wait for the bus to come. Despite how busy I might be, I still make time to brush. "But you get to stay home all day, Mommy!" my son said. He must assume I am sitting at home in my pajamas watching Nickelodeon and eating toaster pastries

(which is what he would be doing if I hadn't reoriented him this morning).

"Where's my homework?"

"Did you put it in your homework drawer or is it still in your backpack?"

"I don't know. Can you get it?"

"Not right now, honey, I'm doing the dishes."

"I'm not doing it then!"

"Well, think again, 'cause I'm sure not gonna do it!"

"You never do *anything* for us!"

What is so absurd about that comment is that everything I do is for them (though I try not to do too much of their homework) or because of them.

My children are my "why." They are why I get up in the morning (usually earlier than I would like to), why I go to work every day, why I "vacation" at a local beach rather than at a Caribbean resort, why I drive a Mommy-wagon, why I have toast crusts for breakfast and half-eaten chicken "noggins" for dinner, why eating out and going to the theater means having dinner on the porch (because the dining room table is covered with laundry and homework papers) and seeing animated films at the movie theater (rather than borrowing them from the library), why our house is decorated in the fingerprint-and-strewn-toy motif, and so on ad infinitum.

"All my friends have Wii. We're like the only kids that don't have a Wii!"

"You have X-Box set up in your den in the basement! When I was a kid..." (...but I stopped myself.

Anything I said would be as meaningless as my own mom's stories about how far she walked to school when she was in kindergarten were to me as a child, though they do mean something to me now.)

When I was a kid, we didn't have video games or even a color T.V. until I was a senior in high school (even though they were already invented.) I had to eat whole wheat bread and yogurt and tofu before it was cool (I have not yet insulted my children with tofu, but the other items are standard fare). I wore yard sale and thrift shop clothes and we heated bricks on the woodstove that would later be wrapped in towels and slipped between our bedsheets since we turned our thermostat down to just-above-pipes-freezing every night. (I still love a good bargain but the bricks are a

thing of the past and likely would be even if we had a woodstove.)

Our family is fortunate to have most of what we need and some of what we want: My boys don't know what it's like not to get relief from their hunger or cold, and they're not yet too cool to eschew hand-me-downs. (Are they ever going to appreciate how good they have it?)

"Heavenly Father, thank you for this day and our food and we went to the playground and I fell down and hurt my knee. I was the line leader in school today, and then it was library day. I got a book about SuperFly Guy. I don't really like apple but mom makes me eat it before I can have treat. Oh, yeah, and thank you that we got to go to Disney World. In Jesus Christ, Amen." (Maybe they will!)

Not long after my mother passed away, I came across a thank-you card amongst her keepsakes. I had written it to her on Mother's Day the year I graduated from college. "You have given up so much and made so many sacrifices for us. I guess I've just started realizing this and I'm very grateful. And also proud. You set an example for us... Thank you for all your love and support, and sanctioning, advising, encouraging, cooking, and everything else..." (Gratitude increases as awareness grows. Maybe it will be that first time my sons do their own laundry, plan and execute a family meal, or insist that everyone stop shouting and kicking in the back of the car -- it might take time, but I am sure that one day they'll thank me. I am eternally grateful to my own late mother, as the magnitude of all she has done for me continues to unfold.)

Newsletter Note



The newsletter is also always online at the church website at www.fbclittleton.org

Let us know if you want us to remove you from the hard copy mailing list.

Thank you.

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