



# The GoodNewsletter

## First Baptist Church, Littleton

“Journeying to God’s Sacred Beat”

October 2009

### Be Surprised by Walking in Different Shoes



#### Philippians 2:5-7

*Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness*

#### October is World Mission Month!!

The Missions Board will be receiving donations to the World Missions Offering throughout the month. You can use the special envelopes in the church pews and bulletins, or give your offering to any of the *smiling* Missions Board members- John Court, Lynn Vesey, Jan Whitfield, Cherie Trout, Bob Stetson or Donna Horvath. Half of our donations will be earmarked for the Ghana Initiative, in its final year of the 3 year fundraising effort. The World Mission Offering helps people come to Christ, grow in Christ and change their world in Christ.

#### Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> Turkey Supper at 5:30pm

We are blessed to have the Reeds with us in our community! Please come to the October Church Supper on Sat. Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>. A Turkey dinner with the fixings will be served at 5:30 pm for \$6.50. At 7PM David, Joyce and Aaron Reed will share their experiences serving the Baja Mexican mission field.

#### Be Surprised By Walking In Different Shoes

Joyce and David invite you to **Walk in their shoes** at 7:00pm Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> following the supper.

**H1N1, Drug Wars, and Hurricanes** - from the headlines to your back door.

Joyce and David Reed, American Baptist Missionaries to La Paz, Mexico for the last 10 years, invite you to journey with them into the hearts and lives of the Mexican people. You will be challenged to consider how La Paz, Mexico and Littleton, Massachusetts are not so far apart.



# FROM THE PASTOR



## *My Easy Spirit Shoes*

My walking shoes are a wreck. I have literally walked over 700 miles in this particular pair of shoes and recently I stopped and took a closer look at them in to determine whether they were still usable and wearable. They had definitely seen better days!

The outer sole of the shoe was thin, dirty and worn down. The grooves on the bottom, designed to provide traction, were now filled with dirt, sand, pebbles of various sizes and what looked like the remains of a dead bug. I had little traction left.

I took out the insole of the shoe, the part my foot comes in contact with, and saw an accumulation of debris laying on the midsole of the shoes: more dirt, a leaf, and mold! Mold! It was disgusting and until that moment I had no idea that the inside bottom of my shoe was as dirty as Hurricane Katrina's receding waters.

I had no idea because my foot was protected by the insole, which was in remarkable shape for the miles I have walked. The insole is the removable piece that is there to cushion my foot and protect it from the impact of the ground. The insole is a buffer, acts as a shock absorber and provides comfort.

I am grateful for insoles and shock absorbers, thankful for buffers and cushions. But I am confident that it is time for a new pair of shoes! I plan, however, to stick with my Easy Spirit shoes, the brand I have used for so many years. I like their insoles. They have carried me many miles and I sense many miles yet ahead. I look forward to being surprised by walking in some different shoes.

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now being confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will carry it on to

completion until the day of Christ Jesus.  
*Philippians 1:3-6*

Blessings.  
Pastor Debbie



## October Micah 6 Opportunities

### **Saturday Mornings** **Miracle League of MA**

Join Joe Vesey as he works with and cheers on children with physical and mental challenges in an organized non-competitive baseball league. Held at Blanchard Memorial Elementary School 493 Massachusetts Ave, Boxborough, MA. Speak to Joe Vesey or visit <http://www.miracleleagueofma.com/index.html>



### *Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>*

9:30am Team Papi vs. Team Papelbon  
10:45am Team Youkilis vs. Team Varitek

### *Saturday, October 10, 17, 24*

Two games these Saturday mornings at 9:30am and 10:45am

### **Loaves and Fishes**

Needs are always ongoing. Items can be placed in the large basket at the Goldsmith Street Door. Most needed items this month; Jello, Pudding, Pasta-shells, Chunky soups, White Tuna.

## Lowell Transitional Living Center Collections

Needed for Sunday October 18

- Gallons of Orange Juice
- Packs of Hamburger Rolls

Needed for Thanksgiving Day - **150 Grace Bags** (in large zip lock bags) to be handed out following the meal. Needed this month:

- Packages of gum,
- Small packages of Kleenex
- Packages of cheese crackers
- Chapstick

### **Guitar Workshop with Ronnie Earl**

**Saturday, October 24 at the church 1-3pm**



Interested in learning a little bit about the guitar and playing music with soul? Ronnie invites church members and friends to bring their guitars for this informal workshop. Ronnie will also be talking about playing with soul and invites all interested in music to attend. All ages and abilities are welcome to attend. *Please sign up on the kiosk.*

### **Women's Day Retreat at Grotonwood**

**Saturday, November 14**

#### ***Becoming a Woman of Simplicity***

9:00am – 3:00pm

\$20 includes lunch & book

With Elizabeth Deveau, Canadian Christian singer/songwriter who will also lead us in worship on Sunday, November 15.

<http://www.elizabethdeveau.ca/>

Sign up on the Kiosk by November 1 and please pay \$20 to Pastor Debbie. Checks should be made out to First Baptist Church

## Book Discussion Group with Pastor Debbie on *The Shack*



Saturday, October 31  
A Breakfast Discussion  
*Sign up on the Kiosk*  
9AM

### **HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED...?**

*By Mark Reilly*

*“Where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them”*



Have you ever wondered how many people attend Littleton First Baptist Church on any given Sunday? I have, and recently I discovered that a headcount is done every Sunday and the total number of attendees is written down in a little black book and kept at the audio booth in the balcony. What a treasure trove of valuable information!

Upon my review of that little black book I was a bit surprised to find out how many people attend Littleton First Baptist Church. On average, over the last six years, seventy-seven people attend the Sunday worship service. That's a healthy number of people and I don't think that includes the many that do not make their way to the sanctuary, but rather stay downstairs readying coffee and refreshments or mingling about the nursery keeping a watchful eye over the toddlers.

As you could imagine the attendance numbers jump wildly on holidays and special events. Easter Sunday remains the best-attended day when over one hundred and thirty faithful folks make their way to the church. It's always a joy to see the kids

dressed so nicely and the adults sitting shoulder to shoulder. The surprise for me was discovering the second best-attended day of the year. It isn't Christmas as many might expect. The second highest attendance of the year is when our friends from Grotonwood arrive to kick off another season at camp. That day, with over one hundred twenty people average, is special as so many young people sing and clap to the praise music and bring an extraordinary excitement to the service. Third place belongs to the special Christmas services and fourth place to the Sunday before Christmas. Finally, to round out the top five best-attended days of the year is Rally Day at number five. All five of those days average well over one hundred attendees.

A little extra work goes into preparing for those days, but it always seems to be worth it as the big crowd and lively enthusiasm is a joyful noise and a sure sign of the Spirit among us. I know God's promise from Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them", but for sure it's even better with one hundred! That is when we truly get to see the fingerprints of God, not only at the church, but also for days to follow.

Wouldn't it be great if every Sunday at church were filled with the excitement and energy of a Rally Day or Easter Sunday? It can be. It's just a matter of making the decision to be there. Certainly there are those Sundays when it is a little harder to get breakfast made; get the kids corralled into the car or avoid the temptation to sleep in. But know that the dividend to that extra effort is being part of a Spirit filled church that grows and teaches and makes good the promises of God. We don't need a special holiday or theme for showing up and being excited about God's presence. God, and the blessings He pours out on us, are worthy of your praises every Sunday, and every Sunday we should come determined to make a joyful noise a little bit bigger and better than the last one. I hope you will join me as I challenge myself to make every Sunday like Easter Sunday, and fill every Sunday with the hopeful enthusiasm of Rally Day.

## BOY TO THE WORLD

by Caroline Poser

### I H@7& You!

### Wanna Play DS Download?



*I will never leave  
you nor forsake you.  
Joshua 1:5 NIV*

"I'm *never* gonna let go of you no matter what!" my middle son avowed to his younger brother. We were packed into our car with a friend and his children on the way back from a three-story indoor playground, which oh-by-the-way also has video games, bowling, and amusement rides where we had spent the better part of a rainy afternoon. The visit had brought out the best and worst in the kids, and by the time I insisted we had to leave *now*, two thirds of my offspring had told me (one more than once), "I h@7& you, Mommy!"

There was considerable ado about the seating arrangements. Our sporty station wagon can seat seven passengers, but not as comfortably as a minivan. I had to configure and reconfigure, in order to accommodate my youngest who had collapsed on the wet ground in the parking lot when I insisted he walk the rest of the way to the car after having hauled him away – writhing like a sack of octopi – from all the riveting fun.

When he refused to buckle his seat belt in the car, or keep it buckled when I strapped him in, I asked the kids to rearrange themselves once again. "I *need* you," I said to my middle son. Our eyes met and he sighed and groaned as he swapped seats with one of our guests, because he understood my innuendo. I was requesting that he sit next to his brother and hold the seat belt to prevent it from being unbuckled.

My youngest wept and wailed and gnashed his teeth and tried to convince us all that his brother was

hurting him; that he couldn't breathe. He howled, he moaned (thus I was sure he could, indeed, breathe). "Click it or ticket," my middle son maintained. The tension in the car was thick; our communal anxiety was high. I could tell by the fact that even the children in the way-way back were silent. I had given up on playful banter, trying to reason with my youngest, or attempting to cajole anyone in favor of simply driving the car safely: we were on a winding backroad with no streetlights and lots of mist after the day of rain. I reached back to put my hand on my middle son's knee, shoring him up for what I was sure was an especially unpleasant task for him.

My youngest was still carrying on; I was concerned that he was going to hyperventilate, and might not be the only one. I glanced in the rear view mirror to see my friend's daughter nervously leaning as far away from the wrestling duo as she could, looking panic-stricken.

"God, just let me get to a safe place to pull over," I prayed.

Just when our collective crisis was reaching a crescendo, I saw the school crossing sign. I pulled into the school driveway. "Okay, everybody out," I ordered, "let's take a break!"

As the car doors opened, the pressure dissipated. The three oldest boys took off hooting and hollering like banshees into the dark night, down the driveway towards the school parking lot. My friend and his daughter walked behind them, his arm around her shoulders. I sat with my youngest and just held him and rocked him until he stopped crying. Neither of us said anything.

Then: "Honey, your brother and I love you very much. That's why we want you to wear your seatbelt."

"I know, Mommy."

Before we all got back in the car, I thanked my middle son.

"He's such a baby sometimes!"

"Yes, you're right, he *was* acting small...and thank you for not calling him that."

My boys can be thick as thieves or wish they "didn't even have a brother!" Yet often when I insert my presence into their disputes, they turn on me: "Don't you put my brother in time out! You're a mean mom!" Never mind that this boy could have been getting whacked, kicked, poked, looked at the wrong way or otherwise taunted moments before by the very one he is now protecting.

Their verbal game of king of the mountain began from the moment they could form complete sentences.

"I have a cack-u-layta, you-ooh-ooh doh-ohn't!" my oldest had said to his younger brother, long before my youngest came along and certainly before either of them knew what a calculator was.

"Ma ma ma ma...I wanna cack-u-layta!"  
"But you-ooh-ooh doh-ohn't!" his brother reminded him.  
"Ma ma ma ma...wuzzah cack-u-layta?"

Not long after that, I had said, "Boys, look at the excavator!"  
"Where?" they both perked up in their car seats.  
"Look out the window on the passenger side!"  
(where my youngest at the time was sitting.)

"Oh, wow!"  
"I can't see it!"  
"Nah nah neh nahnah, you dih dint thee it!"  
Revenge was sweet.

Today the three of them are constantly scrapping to see who can do even the most mundane things first! Better! Faster!

"I win!"  
"No, I win!"  
"No, I do!"  
"No, me!"  
"Nuh uh!"  
"Uh huh!"  
"Yessah!"  
"Nossah!"

Repeat.

Repeat.

Repeat with physical contact for emphasis.

## PEACE TWIRLERS

My oldest has become sophisticated in verbal sparring. Unctuously, he'll ask, "You don't mean *me*, do you, mom?" in reply to my "I think I'll go nuts of you boys don't stop \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)!"

Or rather than saying, "I wish you were never born!" (which my middle still says to my youngest), my oldest will say – so all can hear, "Mom, what do you think it would be like if I were an only child?"

Early on, I did have twinges of guilt over how I could "ruin" my oldest's life by having more children or how could I shove my middle out of the nest by having another baby. Then I'd recall something my mother once told me: "One of the best things you can give your child is a sibling." Indeed, having my second and third sons made it clear to me that when there are more people to love, love is multiplied, not divided.

The love of God flows easily through my boys. For example, my middle son, as a baby, every morning when I lifted him out of his crib would press his face against mine almost until it hurt, eyes boring into mine soulfully, mouth open against my nose, razor-sharp teeth grazing my skin as he lovingly stroked *my* back. At night he would cling so tightly that I could use both hands to get his toothbrush ready after bath without having to put him down.

At age two, he'd bowl over his older brother in a jubilant embrace. From beneath the sprawl, I'd hear a muffled, but not really wholehearted, complaint, "Too much love, Baby, too much!"

And now to his younger brother, "I'm *never* gonna let go of you no matter what!"

This is why – though we're still working on not saying it – I know deep down they don't mean the "H" word. Brotherly love appears to be a special kind of adoration; the kind where there's room for both (inhale) "I h@7& you" and (exhale) "Wanna play D.S. download?"



*By Joyce Anderson-Reed*

Being a single mom is hard. Especially if you have three active boys. I had to give Caroline credit—points for sheer guts—for having the courage to sit on the front pew . . . right beneath the pulpit. The text for the sermon was Micah 6:8b. "What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." In Sunday School, when the theme was explained to the kids, they had all received a classic rainbow peace charm strung on a cord that could be worn as a necklace. (The prophet Micah was considered the first original hippie so we had a 60s theme going!) Mid-sermon, Caroline's son Daniel wound the cord of his necklace around one finger, and then began twirling it in ever-widening circles until it was making a spectacular arc. Then, he'd spin it back onto his finger until he could clasp the peace charm in his hand again. Sitting two pews behind him, and unable to see Pastor Debbie's face while she was preaching, I must admit that I became not only distracted but also fascinated by Daniel's peace twirling. Spinning out. Spinning in. Amazingly, the charm never clanked into the pulpit, which I'm sure relieved his mother.

What happens when we begin to practice peace with those around us? When we start twirling? The impact of our actions makes an ever-widening circle. Until the circle is so big that the peace is twirling wildly in a kaleidoscope of color. It is the cord of God's love that keeps us anchored so that we don't spin out of control. And, when we need rest and a change of pace, God twirls us back into his palm. After a time of respite and renewal, God twirls us out again. Slowly at first, then faster and faster. Spirals of light and love.

Pastor Debbie challenged us to consider how we might implement justice, mercy and humility in our lives this fall. (See, I didn't miss the entire sermon!) Peace twirlers. After the service, Caroline told me she had cautioned Daniel to be a

reverent twirler. Not to stop twirling, but to do it reverently. Maybe that's why most of us don't twirl peace anymore. Someone told us to stop doing it . . . instead of giving us gentle parameters of how to do it. We're being invited this fall to spin out from ourselves. To experience our walk with God in an active, more vibrant way. To experiment with twirling again.

So, how, where, when, why, and with whom is God beginning to twirl you? Peace twirlers. Amazing what one creative, imaginative child can teach you during church.

*(Joyce and her family are attending First Baptist Church of Littleton, MA, while they are on their year of U.S. assignment. A change of pace from their life and ministry as missionaries in La Paz, Mexico.)*

## MORE OF MOSBY'S MEANDERINGS

*By Mosby Mac Fisher, Ministry Dog*



Hmm. Well, I suppose I must tell you about a different kind of ministry that Dad and I are doing – without Mom! Of all things!

It all started quite a few years ago, probably before I was even born – maybe even before I was a gleam in my daddy's eye. More like a gleam in the breeder's eye, to be practical about it. But I digress. When Mom and Dad used to work on the Tuesday night suppers at the Congregational church, there occasionally was a guy attending who looked like he really needed the help of the meal and friendship of the people. They only knew his first name, Victor; they never knew anything more to call him. We've all seen him walking all over town. He seems to spend his time outside, in all kinds of weather, just walking, walking, walking. For a while Mom and Dad thought he might be homeless, but just last year or so, they found he lives in Pine Tree Park somewhere.

Anyway, for quite some time now, when Dad would run into Victor on their walks (not together, but they'd

sometimes cross paths), Dad would invite Victor to attend our church's monthly Ham and Bean suppers, and he'd tell Victor not to worry about paying – Dad would see to it. Then Dad would tell Phyllis sitting at the money table not to take any money from Victor, but to see Dad and he'd pay.

So that's where it went for quite a while – just a quiet, casual kind of “ministry” between Dad and Victor. Now, since we've been living in this wonderful little condo community so close to the Common area, Dad and I have seen Victor quite frequently while we're out on our daily walks. Dad has treated Victor to some coffee and a donut at Dunkin' Donuts when he sees Victor near there, and they have sat and chatted a bit as they sipped on their coffee. Usually when we'd walk by the Old Cemetery, we'd find Victor taking a smoke break sitting on one of the benches, and Dad would stop by, sitting next to Victor and they'd chat while Victor patted my head and scratched behind my ears. We really thought that Victor might be a veteran of one of the wars and might have emotional problems relating to his service to his country. But Dad found out that Victor was never in the service. Then Dad asked him if he knew about Loaves and Fishes, and Victor said he tried it once but never went back. When Dad told Mom about Victor's experience at L&F, he mentioned that he'd try to take Victor over there and personally walk him through the screening and signup process. Hasn't happened yet, but it surely will, some time or other.

Now that Dad has this new friend, we both want to help him. He pawsitively can use a little helping hand, and Dad and I have taken Victor on as our “ministry” - to lend him a little support and friendship.

So – a little bit of a different turn for us. You never know when God will whisper in your ear and give you a little nudge to help someone out. I thought you'd like to know that a Ministry Dog's work isn't just visiting folks in hospitals, etc., but, like a true Christian, my Ministry work is all over the place – I just have to learn to recognize it when it crosses my path.

Arf! Mosby

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