
The Waltham Courier

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December 2005

A Family Journal

Volume LV, Number 12

From the Pastor's Desk ...

Chris Clemmer, the visiting minister last Sunday, took special care to compliment the systems of Waltham Church. He was impressed by the abilities of the laity who helped in the worship, the capable and inspiring music, and the efficiency of the folk following the worship service. He's a hard guy to impress, but he was. It was good to hear what I already knew.

One challenging system during this last week was communications. A week ago on Thursday there was a power surge around 6:30 a.m. The phone in the master bedroom rang once, and then there was silence. The power was off, the phones were dead in the manse and the church.

Bev Scharlau called the electric and the phone companies. The power was on by noon, but the phones were another issue. It took a day for the church, but we're still wrestling with the systems at the manse!

We have our phone service through MCI. The arrangement between MCI and SBC is that SBC owns the cable, etc. up to the "box" and MCI rents it. The consumer is responsible for the telephone line and hook ups inside the house or business.

Luckily, or unluckily, Ann and I do have cell phones. I called MCI to get help, and we followed all the rules. Twice, we disconnected all the phones from the walls. We waited 10 plus minutes and then hooked them up again. All we got was a slight humming noise, and no dial tone. The MCI customer service representative said that

everything checked out on his end, and that the problem was in the house. He'd be able to send someone out on Monday a.m. The service person would call my cell phone on Monday morning.

Monday morning came they called. The MCI guy couldn't make it in the morning and wondered if we'd be around in the afternoon? I explained the reason we chose morning was because we couldn't be around in the afternoon. In addition, I shared that a couple of intelligent expert, electrical type men in the church had checked the connection and the problem was not in the house. We set the new appointment up for Tuesday a.m.

Tuesday morning Glenn, a really nice guy who usually works with the MCI account for the FAA in Aurora, came and we learned about all the phone wires of the manse, including a bundle of them at the church! After three hours he discovered what he had guessed fairly early in the investigation that the problem was not in the wiring at the manse.

So, MCI has to call SBC. The complicating system factor is this. Our home phone service seems to be working to everyone who calls us, because the MCI message system is working fine. Folk have left messages for us for over a week now, but we haven't known about them or been able to pick them up. In reality, the creative network of communication of the phone companies, and their procedures has mixed up communications in another network of relationships and communications in our extended family and the church! I only discovered this

when I met one of our members while shopping yesterday afternoon.

All of us have experienced this kind of problem form time to time. We're all parts of systems which change faster than we can keep up. We take the systems for granted until there is a problem, and it takes time to fix systems. This is true for families, churches, denominations, and phone companies (national, regional, and local). In the midst of change we have to address one part of the system at a time until we arrive at the desired results and there are adjustments which have to be made with each test and change.

The Lord knows this too. The systems of this world were and still are messed up by sin. It took a personal visit and sacrifice by our Savior. But when the Lord entered and enters into the mix, then our familiar systems have to adjust. We have to see that the changes are not just our own, because they change the relationships in our lives. In Christ, communications change, and the way we do things change. Often it takes a reorientation of our goals for the institution and ourselves. It just feels different, and it takes awhile to get the systems up and going again. The key is in the communications, and sometimes that changes too!

We're starting a new church year. New officers. New committees. Renewed and new goals and directions for our church family. The spirit we exemplify during the addressing of these issues will determine our movement together. It may seem slow or even a little awkward for a while, but we will make it through the beginning of this New Year. The Lord who visited so long ago is still visiting us and addressing our systemic movement towards His will in our lives and the direction of this faithful church of Jesus Christ.

The Lord bless you all!
Pastor Roy C. Backus, Ph.D.

We praise God for your participation in the Blanket and Tool Offering. The total received was \$892.00 - our largest to date!



"Come To Christmas" Tea

We invite all women of the church and ask that you invite your neighbors and friends to our 25th **"Come to Christmas" tea, COME, LORD JESUS**, on Wednesday Dec.14th at 1:30 p.m.

We remind all our women to share 4 dozen cookies for the tea. Also remember to bring your creche figures-baby Jesus and animals for set up day for the tea tables.

Women's ensemble for the tea will rehearse Wednesday evenings at 8:00 p.m. - Nov. 3rd and Dec. 7th and Saturday the 10th at 1:00 p.m.

Presbyterian Women will continue to meet thru the winter months and will continue with the Horizon's Bible Study. We will meet Jan. 26th at 9 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Our study is titled "CHRISTMAS - A Time to be Born, and a Time to Die." In case of inclement weather the meetings will be canceled.

Decorating Committee

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Thank you for sharing your poinsettias this Advent Season. You may take them home following Christmas Eve Service. The cost is \$7.00 each - we were unable to get white ones in the size planned. Payment is due to Bev Scharlau. Thanks to all who helped in any way to decorate the church for Advent - many hands do make light work!!

We will remove all Advent decorations on Monday, Jan. 9th at 9 a.m. Do plan to give us a hand!!!

YOU'RE INVITED ...

Jan 8th at 11:30 the 6th graders thru 12th graders will meet at Waltham Curling Club for lunch, curling, and other activities. More details to be announced later.

MEETING REPORTS Session

November Session Report:

The special congregational meeting was held at the end of worship on Sunday November 13th.

After establishing that a quorum was present, electing a secretary to take the minutes for the meeting, and declaring that the Session could approve the minutes of the meeting. Dave Deutsch from the nominating committee nominated Ida Brown and Ross Wilson for the office of Elder, Marlene Moshage and Glenn Stevenson for the office of Deacon, and Jeff Ficek and Mark Small for the office of Trustee. The nominations were closed and a unanimous ballot was cast for Ida Brown, Ross Wilson, Marlene Moshage, Glenn Stevenson, Jeff Ficek, and Mark Small for their respective boards. The meeting was closed with the benediction at 11:10 a.m.

The Session held it's regular November meeting on the 15th at 7:35 in the upper lounge of the Church. There were five members, the Pastor, and

the Clerk of Session present. The meeting was opened with prayer and the minutes of the October meeting and the Special congregational of November 13 were approved.

It was voted to have baptism December 4th for Megan Jo Ann Shears the infant great granddaughter of Tom and June Freebairn.

It was voted to employ Lisa Nichol on a part time basis for \$7.00 per hour to assist Chris Finley with the church secretary duties while she recovers from her hand surgery.

It was voted to approve the Pastor's employee business expenses of \$193.42, mileage expense of \$279.43, and an advance of \$300.00 for continuing education at McCormick Seminary.

Rev. Backus gave the report of the Presbytery meeting. Reports from the various session committees were received.

It was voted to have the next Session meeting on December 13th at 7:30.

It was voted to have ordination and installation of church officers December 4th.

The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 9:05 p.m.

Albert Hagenbuch, Clerk of Session

Trustees

Only two members were able to meet on all committee night, Nov. 8th.

The kick plates have been put on all metal doors throughout the building. Kevin Callahan will again plow the snow this winter.

Next meeting is Dec. 13th at 7 p.m.

Trustee for the month of Dec. is Dave Wilson

Deacons

No meeting in November

Next meeting will be *December 13th at 7:00 p.m.*

Christian Education

Note: No Sunday School on December 25th.

Children's Christmas Program:

December 11th at 1:00 p.m.

Program Practices:

December 3rd at 10:00 a.m.

December 10th at 10:00 a.m. (*Pizza Party to Follow.*)

Please come and join us for an inter-generational Sunday School gathering on January 1, 2006. There will be refreshments and games for the whole family. We will meet from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. Please mark your calendars today.

Stewardship & Finance

No report received for this publication.

Mission Committee

Camp Katrina

The Ottawa Presbyterian Church is taking a chartered bus to Waveland MS to volunteer at "Camp Katrina." They would like to fill 4 or 5 more seats and we in the Mission Committee see this as an opportunity for Waltham. They will be leaving on December 16th at 8:00 p.m. in the evening. The return date is December 22nd. The Christian Life Church of Alabama has partnered with a large church in Illinois to co-ordinate volunteers and pay for the 5,000 meals that are served each day in their full kitchen. While there, the volunteers will be stocking warehouses, serving meals, helping in their Christmas Store and wrapping gifts that will be available for storm survivors. They are also planning an area for children's activities with man made snow and an ice skating area. There will be a covenant to be signed by each volunteer that will basically say that all your words and actions will be in a

Christian spirit and that you will work under the direction of the co-coordinating leaders. The cost for this trip is \$250.00 each which includes travel and food while there.

Sleeping will be in a large communal tent with showers available for each sex. (They claim there will be hot water). You would need to bring your own bedroll and personal items that would probably need to be in a water proof container. Any questions from interested volunteers should be directed to Jean Jones. Home phone 638-2834. Cell phone 878-1635.

Sunset Gap Work Camp

The Work Camp for Sunset Gap will be held from July 30 thru August 6, 2006. The plans include a VBS for the local children and a work project that will be assigned after the first of the year. If your family might be interested in this trip, please contact a member of the Mission Committee. We realize it is early to be making plans for next year. Please speak up if you have any interest so that we can get an idea of the number of folks that might be going. Also, any family that would be willing to act as leaders for the camp and co-ordinate the food along with worship times, please talk to Jean Jones. We hope that this will be a labor of love in reaching out to others and ministering to our group.

Benevolence Fund

No report received for this publication.

Linda Chalus, Treasurer

Memorial Fund

No report received for this publication.

Joyce Anderson, Treasurer

Ross Wilson at 434-1469 for information about the troop.

Treasurer's Report

Account Balances as of 10/31/2005:
 General Account: \$3,342.98
 Special Building: \$6,595.58
 Youth Work Trip: \$ 441.60
 Sunday School Savings: \$1,127.53

Diana Deutsch, Treasurer

Scout Master Bob's Corner

Troop 797 hopes that all of you have a wonderful holiday.

Upcoming Events

- December 6 – Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
Troop Elections & Planning for the upcoming Caving Trip
- December 9-11 – Caving Trip to Buckner's Cave
- December 13 - Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
Troop Christmas Party
- December 20 & 27 - No Troop Meetings
- January 3 – Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
- January 4 – TLC Meeting 7:00 PM
- January 10 – Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
- January 17 - Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
- January 20-22 – Klondike Campout
- January 24 – Troop Meeting 7:00 PM
- January 31 – Troop Meeting, Family Potluck & Court of Honor 6:00 PM
Everyone is to bring two dishes to pass.

Troop 97 meets every Tuesday night at the Waltham Presbyterian Church.
Contact Ralph Moshage at 667-4511 or

Texts and Sermons

DECEMBER 2005

4 2nd Sunday in Advent

THE CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
 The 1st Lesson: Mark 1:1-8
 The 2nd Lesson: 2 Peter 3:8-15a
 Sermon: "Ignorance Isn't Always Bliss"

11 3rd Sunday in Advent

THE CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 126 or Luke 1:47-55
 The 1st Lesson: John 1:6-8, 19-28
 The 2nd Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
 Sermon: "All We Need Is Another Test!"

18 4th Sunday in Advent (Christmas Joy Offering)

THE CALL TO WORSHIP: Luke 1:47-55 or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
 The 1st Lesson: Luke 1:26-38
 The 2nd Lesson: Romans 16:25-27
 Sermon: "There's Nothing Like a Great Mystery"

24 Christmas Eve (Saturday)

THE CALL TO WORSHIP: Isaiah 9:2-7
 The 1st Lesson: Luke 2:1-20
 The 2nd Lesson: Titus 2:11-14
 Sermon: "The Hope That Waits for Us"

25 Christmas Day/Nativity of Jesus Christ

THE CALL TO WORSHIP: Psalm 97
 The 1st Lesson: John 1:1-14
 The 2nd Lesson: Hebrews 1:1-4
 Sermon: "The Last Revelation"

Nursery Workers

December 4

Nikki Mertes
Tim Mertes

December 11

Phyllis Mertes
Tony Mertes

December 18

Relynn Olivero
Lindsey Olivero

December 25

Rita Van Drimmelen
Bob Van Drimmelen

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

11 Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Hagenbuch
18 Mr. & Mrs. Marc Delaney
31 Mr. & Mrs. Earl Finley

10 Wayne English
Earl Finley
Emily Ficek
Sharon Klein
11 Shelley Chapman
Diana Mital
Peggy Geiger
12 Barbara Christopher
14 Mary Whipple
15 Scott Freebairn
LaVern Klinefelter
16 Mike Veit
17 Olivia Freeman
18 Don Croissant
20 Heather Kiner
22 Justine Larabee
26 Holly Videgar
27 Bruce Munson
Tom Sroka
28 Janet Small
30 Scott Moshage
31 Kory Robinson

Deacon of the Month

December - Lois Edgcomb

Trustee of the Month

December - Dave Wilson

Ushering Group

December - Misc.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2 Audrey Deutsch
April Givens
Sally Wilson
Lois Edgcomb
4 Ross Muckey
7 Diana Deutsch
8 Sue Baker
Ron Chalus
Lindsey Olivero
9 Charlotte Kennedy*
Kristen Wensel