



# Pilgrims' Progress

News of the journey at Vienna Baptist Church

March 2010

Volume 52, Issue 3

## Cultivating Fruitfulness

During this Lenten season members and guests of Vienna Baptist Church are meditating with the devotional guide, *Cultivating Fruitfulness: Five Weeks of Prayer and Practice for Congregations*, by Robert Schnase (Abingdon Press, 2008). I immediately think of Paul's words to the Galatians (5:22-23): *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.*

The important aspect of the fruit of the Spirit is precisely that it is not a work and not something you or I do. It is a fruit. My first work experience beyond mowing the lawn was working in our family orange grove. Fertilizing, pruning, plowing, and watering were hard work in the Florida sun.

"How many oranges did you produce?" you ask. I did not make one orange because an orange is a fruit, not a work. Oh, it takes a lot of work before that orange makes it to your kitchen, but I couldn't make an orange. Fruit is identified as produce, but we don't produce it ourselves. It's God's work to produce oranges, not ours. Our task is to prepare the soil, nurture the tree, and harvest the fruit.

And here is the point: The fruit of the Spirit is God's work in each of us and in our communities. *Love, joy,*

*peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control* are the fruit of the Spirit. If we try to make them our own works and our own achievements, then all our efforts will produce only works of the flesh, and the fragmentation and even death of any sense of community. An orange is not my work; it is a fruit that only God can produce.

We as individuals, and, more important, we as a community of faith, do not produce the fruit of the Spirit. That's God's task. Our task is to prepare our lives through the cultivation of spiritual disciplines so that we can receive the Spirit and allow God's love to produce fruit in our lives and in our church.

We meditate daily on God and cultivate our own lives as gardens where the Lord can work. We gather on Sundays and celebrate community with God and community with one another. We cultivate our lives and our faith community so that we can receive the fruit of the Spirit and allow it to change our lives. That's how we cultivate fruitfulness.

—Bob Albritton, working for God

**The fruit of the Spirit  
is God's work in each  
of us and in our  
communities.**

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## *Our Pilgrimage of Faith*

We are a congregation of Baptist Christians with a tradition of being progressive, inclusive, and culturally diverse. We hold dear the historic Baptist principles of the priesthood of all believers, the individual's right and responsibility for his or her own relationship with God, and the separation of church and state.

As the people of God, we gather to worship our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer—but our response to God's call does not end there. We actively pursue the disciplines that form us as followers of Jesus Christ: the inward journey of individual spiritual growth and the collective outward journey of mission and social justice.

## *Find That Sermon in Print or Audio*

Pastor Albritton's sermons are available in print form on the information table in the Foyer, or you can download a printed or audio sermon from the church's Web site. If you would like printed sermons sent to you weekly, please write Pastor Albritton ([Balbritton@vbc-va.org](mailto:Balbritton@vbc-va.org)) and he will put you on the weekly e-mail distribution list.

For those with hearing or language difficulties, he provides some printed copies of that day's sermon for morning worship.

You may also go to the pastor's blog and post comments, questions, or clarifications you wish to offer about sermons. Go to <http://vbcpastor.livejournal.com> and click on "Leave a Comment."

## Worship

### Lectionary Texts for March

- ◆ **March 7, Third Sunday in Lent:** Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9
- ◆ **March 14: Fourth Sunday in Lent:** Joshua 5:9-12; Psalm 32; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32
- ◆ **March 21: Fifth Sunday in Lent:** Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126; Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8
- ◆ **March 28: Sixth Sunday in Lent (Passion Sunday or Palm Sunday):** *Liturgy of the Palms:* Luke 19:28-40; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; *Liturgy of the Passion:* Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 22:14-23 or Luke 23:1-49
- ◆ **April 1, Maundy Thursday:** Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14; Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-17, 31b-35.

### Sermons for March

- ◆ **March 7:** Psalm 63:1-8: "Intentional Faith Development"
- ◆ **March 14:** 2 Corinthians 5:16-21: "Risk-Taking Mission and Service"
- ◆ **March 21:** John 12:1-8: "Extravagant Generosity"
- ◆ **March 28:** Philippians 2:5-11: "Choosing Barabbas."

### Come Experience Our Service of Prayer for Healing and Wholeness

**7:30 p.m., on the second Sunday of every month**

Once a month, at Vienna Baptist Church, we gather for our Service of Prayer for Healing and Wholeness. Modeled after the worship of the Iona Community,<sup>1</sup> this quiet, candlelit service includes corporate hymns and special choral offerings and closes with a meditative piano selection. A reflection on some aspect of healing or spirituality is offered by a member of VBC's congregation.

Then, we bring to the service our prayer requests for friends and family, and prayers for the larger community and world. We also bring to the service our prayers of celebration. There is time to offer support and to pray with individuals in the congregation. Anyone who wishes it may receive a laying-on of hands from members of the congregation.

What is meant when we say "healing and wholeness"? To those in the Iona Community, the search for wholeness is a desire to be fully human—to be fully present to God, who is fully present to us. This service expresses the belief that God's purpose for us all is a life of wholeness, as expressed in the life and teaching of Jesus. Usually we pray for the healing of broken bodies and wounded

hearts, but we also pray for the healing of divisions within our communities and among nations. According to the Iona Community, "We do this because each person and situation is known to God, not as a problem to be solved, but as a focus for God's acceptance and love. We are not seeking to change God but to change the world; and we trust God that our prayers will be answered, although we do not know when or how healing will happen."<sup>2</sup>

Our prayer gathering for healing and wholeness at VBC is a small but dedicated group. Many who attend feel the service is a haven of peace in a fast-paced world. Why not come and see for yourself what the service is like? You do not have to have health problems or specific needs. Come, attend our service, as we gather for prayer and join together in community.

—Carol Natella

1. The Iona Community is an ecumenical Christian community committed to seeking new ways of living the Gospel in today's world. It consists of more than 240 members and about 3,000 associate members and friends. Founded in 1938 by the Rev. George MacLeod, initially its purpose was expressed through the rebuilding of the monastic quarters of the medieval abbey on the island of Iona in Scotland.

2. *Iona Abbey Worship Book*, by the Iona Community (Wild Goose Publications, 2001).

# FaithQuest Sunday School

WHERE KIDS EXPLORE THE BIBLE & NAVIGATE LIFE



## Children Learn About the Story of Mary and Martha

In FaithQuest Sunday school, children focus on one Bible story for a five-week period. Each child attends a different workshop each Sunday, thereby experiencing the Bible story in different ways and exploring the story in the ways he or she learns best.

On February 14, third and fourth graders participated in Apostle's Playhouse, using drama to re-enact the story recounted in Luke 10:38-42: Martha welcomed Jesus into her home and got busy cooking. Meanwhile, her sister Mary sat down in front of Jesus and listened to everything he said. Martha was irritated that Mary wasn't helping out with taking care of the guests, and she went to Jesus and asked him to tell Mary to come help her. Jesus said, "Martha, Martha! You are worried and upset about so many things, but only one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen what is best, and it will not be taken away from her."

*(continued next page)*



FaithQuest photos by Carol Natella

*Martha (Tess Kay) works busily in the kitchen with help from Danielle Cuppett.*



*Ansley West, Tess Kay, and Danielle Cuppett read the story of Mary and Martha.*



*Mary (Ansley West) sits and listens to Jesus (Jack Thomas).*

## Children Learn About the Story of Mary and Martha

(continued from previous page)

Kindergartners through second graders experienced Creation Station, where they made clay models of a hand, symbolizing Martha's need to prepare food and care for her guests, and models of an ear, symbolizing Mary's desire to just sit and listen to Jesus.

Children fifth through sixth grade experienced Antioch Arcade, in which they played a game focusing on making choices. That day's question was, "Which is more important, love, peace, or hope?" After some thoughtful discussion, they sat down and wrote in their journals.



Ben Cyrus and Kendall West, with teacher Joyce Salgado, create clay models.



Christian Epperson, Alicia Kay, and Rachel Cooke work on their journals.

### VBC Sunday Schedule

- 8:45-9:15 a.m. Intercessory Prayer Group (Room 215)
- 9:30 a.m. Sunday Bible study classes
- 11:00 a.m. Worship service (Worship Room)
- 7:30 p.m. Monthly Service of Prayer for Healing and Wholeness (Second Sunday, **March 14**, Worship Room)

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## Baptist World Alliance

### Window on the World Concert

*Celebrate the diversity that marks our Baptist unity through music and song.*

You are invited to this Baptist World Alliance special concert, on **Saturday, March 6**, 4–6 p.m., at Columbia Baptist Church, Falls Church, Virginia. Tickets are free, but as seating is limited, reservations are required; contact 703-790-8980 x137.

During this inspiring event, we will celebrate with worship music from around the world—Africa, Asia-Pacific, Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, and North America. Come and see how our unity is expressed, even in the diversity of our music in Baptist worship.

## Youth

### Youth Lead Ash Wednesday Service

***Through readings, music, art, and meditation, we begin our Lenten journey***

Our Ash Wednesday service looked different this year, but at its heart it was the same reminder of our need for Christ's forgiveness. For the first time, our youth played a major role in leading the service. Through music, a dramatic sketch, and readings, they helped us begin our Lenten journey. Our worship was also enhanced through the Chancel Choir's singing, a visual prayer experience, confessing our sins through art, a meditation, and meditative music. All the senses were invoked during this meaningful service.

Please express your thanks to the following youth: Ryan Barker, Taylor Cooke, John Curtis, Kenzie Duffy, Stephanie Finegan, Carly Frederick, Zac Frederick, Cory Hall, Jacob Hall, Lindsey Jeffries, and Adam Thomas. We also appreciate the adults that provided leadership: Bob Albritton, James Gardner, Andrea Harvey, Wolfie Scherer and Heather West.

—Jennifer Singh

### Youth Council Created

Any interested youth are invited to join our new Youth Council, which will serve as a steering team for all youth activities. Our first meeting will be February 28, at 6 p.m. in the Bombshelter.

### Dreaming About the Future

Our youth parents recently met to dream about the future of the youth ministry at Vienna Baptist Church. There was lots of excitement about where we will be going! The group is now forming a Youth Parent Council. All parents of teens are invited to our next gathering—we will talk about the youth ministry, as well as support each other in parenting.

Next meeting: Tequila Grande, March 8, 6:30 p.m.

—Jennifer Singh

## VBCC

### Registration Now Open at Vienna Baptist Children's Center

VBCC is now accepting registrations for the 2010–11 school year. The preschool has openings for children ages 3 months to 5 years. There are places available in the M-W-F program as well as the T-Th program. Please call 703-281-2021 and ask for Sharon Wobie. She will be happy to talk with you about the registration process.

## Children

### Lead Nursery Worker Sought

VBC is seeking to hire a lead nursery worker for Sunday mornings. This person would be responsible for welcoming families into the nursery, providing guidance to volunteer workers, and creating a healthy and fun atmosphere for the youngest members of our church family. If you are interested in this position or know someone who would be, please contact Jennifer Singh (jennifernpeterson@yahoo.com, 703-434-2155) for a job description and to arrange for an interview.

### Come to Our Moms' Breakfast

***For all mothers of young children***

All mothers of young children are invited to a breakfast on **March 20** (rescheduled from February 20) at 10 a.m. We will gather for delicious food and great conversation at Shelbia Elkins' home (9737 Lawyers Rd., Vienna). This is a great opportunity to get to know other VBC moms. Please RSVP to Jennifer, if interested in attending (703-434-2155).



Photo Minh and Wass  
(Courtesy Real Simple)

## Fellowship

### 50 More or Less Coming Events

We would love to have you join us for fun and fellowship this spring.

- ♦ **March 9:** Terra Cotta Warrior Exhibit at National Geographic. Meet at VBC, 9:30 a.m.
- ♦ **April:** Wayside Theatre, "Harvey." Day and time to be announced.
- ♦ **May 11:** Potluck luncheon in VBC Lounge. Invited speaker.
- ♦ **June 8:** Celebration Luncheon at Clyde's in Ashburn, Virginia.

### New Opportunity for Fellowship at the Ping-Pong Table

One group found an answer to the snow doldrums in February: an intergenerational session of ping-pong on Saturday, February 20.

We played short one-on-one matches of the best of three 11-point games. Rich Behnke, Edwin Magno, Rob Ruth, Ben Wagener, and Roy Woodruff took turns playing each other. Ninth grader John Curtis held his own against all the adults with a powerful serve. Arlene Magno and Lee Curtis were spectators who cheered us on.

We are considering possible times for upcoming game events. Players are matched by skill level, as some people don't like to play with those who slam the ball! Paddles are provided.

If you're interested, contact Rich Behnke, who is coordinating the ping-pong games (njbehnke331@aol.com).

## Ecumenical Opportunities

### Ecumenical Lenten Discussion Series: Baptism in Scripture

#### *An Invitation from Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church (OLGC)*

The Vienna area has demonstrated a growing interest in interfaith and ecumenical activities over the last decade. The annual Vienna-Oakton Interfaith Thanksgiving service sponsored by the Shepherd's Center is consistently well attended and evokes great interest among local congregations.

Now an ecumenical Lenten discussion series at OLGC will bring together the congregations of four of those churches to explore common Christian beliefs. The four congrega-

tions are Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Vienna Baptist Church, Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church, and Wesley United Methodist Church.

The topic, "Baptism in Scripture," will be explored with great flexibility, concentrating on either the religious concept of baptism, as illustrated in scripture, or on the scripture itself, as it relates to baptism, or both. Our intent is not to highlight differences among the four denominations—although such differences may be apparent to the attendees—but to share the wealth of Christianity that is available in scripture regarding our common baptism in the Lord.

Four discussion sessions will be held in the OLGC Chapel from 7:30–9:00 p.m. on Thursday evenings, March 4, 11, 18, and 25, with a reception following the last presentation on March 25:

- ♦ **March 4:** "Scripture and the Baptized Life: Wearing Your Baptism Daily," Rev. Beth Neubauer, Senior Pastor, Emmanuel Lutheran Church.
- ♦ **March 11:** "Importance of Scripture Study in Our Spiritual Formation," **Mr. Bill Sykes, Vienna Baptist Church.**
- ♦ **March 18:** "How Are They to Believe in One of Whom They Have Never Heard?" Fr. Don Heet, Assistant Professor of Homiletics and Director of Pastoral Studies, Catholic University; OLGC.
- ♦ **March 25:** "What Does Your Baptism Mean to You: How Has It Changed Your Life?" Rev. Ray Brill, Pastor, Wesley United Methodist Church.

## Fellowship, cont.

### Real Men Love Their Wives

The Men's Fellowship group has begun a new spiritual formation topic that will continue through May. We are using John Killinger's *Christ and the Seasons of Marriage* (Broadman Press, 1987). Ben Wagener and Roy Woodruff will teach and lead the series.

Men's Fellowship evenings begin around the fireplace, as we share our recent family stories. We meet the third Monday of each month from 7:15 to 9 p.m. at the home of Lee Curtis, 277 Windover Avenue, Vienna.

—Ben Wagener

## Happy Birthday!

### March

- |    |                        |    |                   |    |                             |
|----|------------------------|----|-------------------|----|-----------------------------|
| 2  | Lucas Kondowe Jr. (14) | 12 | Sam Edwards (21)  | 24 | Elva Leighton               |
| 3  | Linda Gooding          | 13 | Sean Hallett (20) |    | Anne Daniel                 |
|    | Nick Ford (12)         | 14 | Jim Vining        |    | Drew Hallett (13)           |
| 4  | Juanita Matthews       |    | Jim Wiley         | 26 | Doris Boyd                  |
| 5  | Heather West           | 15 | Terri Klear       |    | Larry Matthews              |
| 7  | Andrea Harvey          | 16 | Sandy Turner      |    | Beverly Dickerson           |
|    | Anne Reed              |    | Steve Mathews     |    | Yudy Wiley                  |
|    | Annie Ellis            | 18 | Beth Blair        | 27 | Ollie Knight                |
|    | Anne Albritton (19)    |    | Don Boyd          |    | Alexandra Nicole Miller (3) |
| 9  | Joyce Lloyd            |    | Turner Bridgforth |    | Anne Wagener                |
| 10 | Nathan Fox (6)         | 19 | Jean Henderson    | 28 | Janet Ford                  |
| 11 | Nestor Lopez (20)      | 21 | Norma Daniels     |    | Sandra Frederick            |
|    | Morgan Duffy (13)      | 22 | Tim Anderson      | 29 | Ben Wagener                 |
|    | Noel Wymer (13)        | 23 | Linda Ingram      | 30 | Tara Hadley West (2)        |
|    |                        |    |                   | 31 | Norma Behnke                |
|    |                        |    |                   |    | Lars Gerritz (4)            |
|    |                        |    |                   |    | Madeline Gerritz (4)        |

## Retreating

### Upcoming Retreats

- ◆ **April 16–18:** Silent Retreat
- ◆ **April 23–25:** Youth Retreat.

A comfortable two-hour drive from the Washington, D.C., area, Lost River Retreat Center provides year-round conference and sleeping accommodations,

food service, recreational opportunities, and retreat services for groups up to 70. Adjoining the beautiful George Washington National Forest, it is a place of peace and tranquility.



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## Deadline for April Newsletter



Please submit any announcements or articles for this monthly newsletter by **March 16**. The deadline is important so that the newsletter can be mailed to arrive by April 1. If you miss the deadline, and you have a contribution to the newsletter, please let me know that it is on its way and when I can expect to see it. You can bring your material to the office, or you can send a Word file to [communications@vbc-va.org](mailto:communications@vbc-va.org) (type "for newsletter" in the subject box).

—Carol Natella, publications editor

## Our VBC Family

### Circle of Concern

VBC Study Team

JoAnne Bergin, Fairfax Hospital, infection

Bud Bergin, health

Jennifer Daniel Carter, health

Virginia Walterick, recovery

Bets Thomas, radiation therapy

Evelyn Gouge

Terri Klear

Linda Beamer, health

Tim Anderson, working overseas

Phyllis Balsler, recovery

Sandy Turner, health

Dee and Sara Jo Keys

Jerry and Barbie Walling

Mary Wiley, health

Jim and Mary Vining

### Prayer Requests for Friends and Family

The people of Haiti

Sheila Hodges' grandparents, Dale and Evelyn Gilliland, health

Hazel Brandenburg's cousin, Jim Bowers, cancer treatment

Cory Epperson's friend, Rick, leukemia

Bobbie Jean Tolson's and Jewel Donaldson's sister, Esthleen Myllyoja, health

Barbara Judy, pinched nerve in back

Terri Klear's parents, health

Ben Wagener's brother, Ken, improved

Audrey Grena's son-in-law, Ken Nowack, health

Diane Gardner's mother, Arlene Frost, health

VBCC teacher Sara Stone's husband, Steve, health

Darlene Morse's nephew, Andrew Beneigh, health

Evon Cassell's friend, C. D., health

VBCC mother Caroline Quezada, ankle broken in several places

Lewis Christian's father, Lewis Sr., cancer

Chris Thomas's father, Larry Thomas, critical condition

Linda Gooding's cousin, chemotherapy

Diane Gardner's uncle, Dale Hendrix, cancer

Linda Beamer's father, Maurice, treatments

Ray Salgado's brother-in-law, Gene, and family

Pete Reed's sister, Ellen Fuseler, cancer treatment

### In Service

John Blair, in Afghanistan

Sam Southern, Navy

### Bereavement

Our condolences to Vincent and Rajani Das and their friend, Rick Regan, on the death of Rick's wife, Janie, on December 26.

... to the Barker family on the death of Jan's father, Trozy Barker, on January 29.

... to Evon Cassell and her mother, Theda Whitt, on the death of their long-time friend, Evon Brougan Muse.

... to Debbie Dorcus's coworker, Kathy Ray, on the sudden death of her mother on February 1.

### Thank You

To the Congregation,

Thank you for walking with my family in mourning the death of my dad, Ervin Hastey, in December. You have prayed for us and participated in our sorrow. Your pastors Bob and Ben, along with Becky and Dorothy, have accompanied us above and beyond their duties.

For these gifts of grace we are truly grateful.

—Stan Hastey

### Signposts

Pastor Bob and Becky Albritton are featured for the month of March in the 2010 DCBC calendar. See the photo on the calendar page at the Web site: [www.dcbaptist.org](http://www.dcbaptist.org).

## Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations

For our Lenten stewardship emphasis this year, we are learning about the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations. Many congregations have used this study to highlight the five basic emphases that help every church multiply its ministry. For each Sunday in Lent, adults gather at 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall for study. Morning worship at 11 a.m. will focus on one practice each week.

We're invited to meditate on each practice for a week using the daily devotional guide, *Cultivating Fruitfulness: Five Weeks of Prayer and Practice for Congregations*.

Here are the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations:

- ◆ **February 21–27:** Radical Hospitality
- ◆ **February 28–March 6:** Passionate Worship
- ◆ **March 7–13:** Intentional Faith Development
- ◆ **March 14–20:** Risk-Taking Mission and Service
- ◆ **March 21–27:** Extravagant Generosity.

The study will culminate during worship on Palm Sunday, March 28, when we're asked to present our commitment cards indicating how we will offer to God our time, talents, and treasures for the following year. Each person is encouraged to commit to specific ways to incorporate these five practices into his or her faith journey.

The Generous Living team hopes that in the coming months and years Vienna Baptist can multiply our ministries by repeating, deepening, and improving on the Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations. If you wish to learn more about these five practices, please visit the Web site [www.fivepractices.org](http://www.fivepractices.org).



A people of faith on the journey of life

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