

TWINBROOK BAPTIST NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2008

Pastor's Reflections: Beds and Roles

In Greek mythology, Procrustes was a bandit who maintained a hideout in the hills. When people traveled by his place, he would invite them to stay awhile and rest in a special iron bed he had made. What these visitors did not know was the determination of Procrustes to make sure everyone fit his special bed. If someone was too tall for the bed, Procrustes would cut off the visitor's feet or legs to make sure it was an exact fit. And if someone was too short, he would stretch the visitor on a rack to make sure that person fit the bed precisely. The term "Procrustean bed" has come to stand for any rigid framework into which things or people are inappropriately made to fit. For example, someone can take a pre-set idea and apply it to a person, making that person fit into the idea, even if it distorts the true nature of that person. This is done all the time with stereotypes, where an idea or bias or prejudice becomes a framework (iron bed) in which an individual person is made to fit.

I think this also happens for people when they are identified solely with their roles in life. In working out who we are, all of us choose various roles or have roles placed upon us. We adopt the role of our job, take on certain roles in our families, and play various roles in our community. The temptation is to let any one role define us completely. I think of the epitaph which read: "Here lies John Smith, he was born a man and died a grocer." When we are defined solely by one role or another, then that role becomes a kind of Procrustean bed into which we are squeezed and distorted. People can't see us as anything else when this happens.

Yet I believe that within every person there is an eternal mystery that cannot be reduced to the roles we play. Within all of us there are large spaces which don't always see the light of day as we fulfil our roles. There are spaces of treasured memories and hopes, spaces where we nurse the wounds we have known, spaces we long to share but have squelched out of fear, contradictory spaces housing longings of all kinds, and childlike spaces of original goodness. This eternal mystery within each of us is our heart's true home. It is the spring that feeds the good in all the roles we embrace. It is the place where light flickers and shadows dance in perpetual response to our truth and our illusions. And it is the place where we encounter a gentle and generous God.

Sunday by Sunday in worship we purport to do business with God. We gather to sing and pray, listen and share our lives. In and through the doing of this, my hope is that we are opening to eternal mystery and not just clinging to roles. My hope is that we are encountering God in the mystery of our souls and recognizing the mystery that resides in others. Instead of one more role at church, one more Procrustean bed for us to squeeze into, may we know the freedom of a broad place to open ourselves before a gentle and generous God.

Our Church Family

Hank Clough, as he considers options for his bladder cancer.

Phil Gruentzel, as he recovers from recent surgery.

Lois Harris' sister in-law, Marie Henry, is recovering from a stroke.

Tom Lawrey, has chosen radiation treatment to deal with his bladder cancer.

Nancy Lindinha's co-worker Mary, who is undergoing surgery on Jan. 31.

Bill Mader, is dealing with an inner ear problem and other health issues.

Eileen Mader, is dealing with a pinched nerve and other health concerns.

Carroll Matthews, continues a regimen of chemotherapy and dialysis.

Linda McNish's mother, continues to struggle with her health.

Linda McNish, is currently at Collingwood Rehab. Ctr. in Rockville.

Win Puglia, who is recovering from swelling due to an overdose of medication.

Debbie Rickman underwent nasal surgery on Jan. 31.
Debbie Rickman's co-worker, Crystal, as she deals with cancer.
Laura Williams, is undergoing rehab at Potomac Valley Center Health Center

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*Hannah, Carroll and Judy thank you for your prayers and gifts
at Amy's home going and funeral.
We covet your prayers in the days ahead.*

Love, Carters and Matthews

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Feb. 1 — M&Ms

The M&Ms will have lunch at Mykonas Restaurant on Friday, Feb. 1. Please let Marge Haire know if you can attend. We will meet in the church parking lot at 11:30 a.m.

Feb. 1 — Romeos

Those men in our church who are interested in eating out together for lunch are encouraged to meet in the parking lot at 11:30am on this Friday.

Feb. 3—“Souper” Bowl Sunday

The Super Bowl is Sunday. We will once again be having a “Souper” Bowl Sunday on Feb. 3rd at church. You are invited to bring cans of soup to worship, where we will dedicate them to the glory of God and give them to Manna.

Feb. 6– Ash Wed. Meal /Service

We will gather in the Fellowship Hall at 6:30 p.m. on Feb. 6th for an evening of fellowship and reflection

Feb. 26—Help The Hungry

Help the Hungry by dinning out at certain location in our area on Feb. 26th. A portion of the proceeds from this day will go toward hunger organizations in our community. For a list of restaurants or any other information, you may pick up a brochure on the table in the main hallway.

Costco Renewal

For those who have a Costco card through Twinbrook Baptist, it is time to renew your membership. Our membership is from March 2008 to March 2009, for anyone who wants to join Costco this year. If you no longer want to have Costco privileges please contact Lois Harris by March 1st. We plan to make one payment to Costco covering all those who want memberships. The cost depends on the number of members. You will be notified of the exact cost when all renewals/requests have been received. To pay for this service your check should be made out to Twinbrook Baptist Church. Be sure to mark your check (and envelope) "Costco". If you have any question about this, Please contact Lois Harris.

Lenten Series

Our Lenten Series theme this year is "Psalms for Aging." We will be looking at a different Psalm each week in light of the challenges and blessings of aging. Instead of meetings at night, we are trying a new time this year by meeting at 10:30 am. Also, we are going to meet in places that we don't usually meet and see some people we don't get to see often. Here's the schedule and topics:

- 1) Feb. 20 - "Psalm 137: When Aging Feels Like a Strange Land"; home of Tom and Nettie Lawrey
- 2) Feb. 27 - "Psalm 71: Shame and Dignity"; home of Evelyn and Smitty Smith in Leisure World
- 3) Mar. 5 - "Psalm 131: Seeing and Trusting"; home of Jim and Shirley Campbell in Riderwood Village
- 4) Mar. 12 - "Psalm 121: Being Kept by God and Others"; home of Jean and Wally Wilson in Buckingham's Choice Retirement Community. We will provide transportation by van for the last two meetings for those who wish, and we can carpool for any and all of the meetings.

Ministry Fair and Book of Reports for 2007

We had a good day at church on Jan. 27, as we gathered in the Laney Fellowship Hall after worship for our Ministry Fair and Congregational Meeting. There was a lot of conversational buzz and activity as people moved from table to table considering what ministries they would like to be involved in this year. We had many options available, and judging by the sign up sheets, it will be a good year of ministry and fellowship for us. It was announced that Lois Harris will serve as Outreach Coordinator for 2008. She will help to organize our outreach efforts to the needs of our aging congregation, and she will coordinate outreach toward those who visit our church. If you are interested in helping with this, or in receiving help with a need, don't hesitate to contact Lois. After the Ministry Fair, we met as a congregational family to receive the Book of Reports from 2007. We are grateful to our council members from last year, and the excellent work they have done which was reflected in the reports. We heard a general report from the pastor, a financial report from Debbie Rickman, and a property update from Reinaldo Cabañas about railing and lighting in the front of the church building. There was positive response from the congregation, and the meeting was adjourned with good feeling and thankfulness for God's faithfulness in and through our church.

BIRTHDAYS

February	March
7 Louise Peck	7 Theresa McClellan
8 Linda King	10 Phyllis Crouse
10 Brittany Harris	13 Judy Matthews
Victoire Makembe	16 Lois Harris
12 Laly Cabañas	18 Gaye Hoot
21 Gladys Donoghue	19 Daniela Makembe
22 Jack Donoghue	Blanche Rickman
23 Nancy Lindinha	25 Evelyn Smith
24 Jim Campbell	27 Wally Wilson
26 Tiffany McClellan	28 Abel Debilogo
	29 Zoey E. Tiller
	Abigail A. Tiller
	Sonia Cartagena

ANNIVERSARIES

February	March
6 Lois and Gerry Frick	14 Amy and Gregg Freese
8 Linda King	19 Mary and Saul Honigsberg

Newsletter created by Sonia Cartagena and edited by Kip Ingram

THE END