

TWINBROOK BAPTIST NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2008

Pastor's Reflections: What Do You Believe?

Everybody believes in something, even if it's only the narrow personal agenda of getting through the day. Most of us realize that our beliefs and the actions that flow from them are an important and inevitable part of our living. As Bob Dylan once sang, "You gonna have to serve somebody. Well it may be the devil or it may be the Lord, but your gonna have to serve somebody." We all of us hold some network of beliefs and actions which serve larger values for good or for ill. Belief of some kind is unavoidable. The real question, then, is what we believe.

In the coming weeks in worship, I plan to preach a series of sermons on one of the oldest Christian expressions of belief, the Nicene Creed. This affirmation has been around for over 1500 years, and people of faith have used it as a guiding framework or starting point for thinking about their basic convictions. Even if they ended up disagreeing with some of it, they still used it as a reference point in thinking about faith and living.

In working through the Nicene Creed and this sermon series, I want to avoid three approaches (call them the three C's) which will allow it to be more beneficial for us. First, we will not take the conservative approach, which holds that you must maintain the exact words and ideas in the creed. Some of the language is archaic, and some ideas may not be credible in our day, so we will be looking through and beyond the words to the important realities which they portray. Second, we will not take the coercive approach, which maintains that people of faith must affirm the Creed as it is written in order to be accepted by and included in the church. Too often, sadly, creeds have been used to exclude people of honest Christian faith. You surely know that we are not like that at TBC. There is room for all people here—learners, seekers, doubters, believers. Our approach to the Creed will be more of an invitation for thoughtful exploration than a boundary wall showing who's in and who's out. Finally, we will not take the consumer approach, which holds that each person can "have it your way" and merely believe whatever he or she might want to make up. This is the great temptation these days brought on by the hyper-individualism of our consumer society, where everyone is encouraged to make up their own creed out of the immediacy of their own impulses. As we are starting to see in our society all too well, such an approach only leaves us in a "world" of our own making, unchanged and isolated. What makes for genuine growth is to engage in something other than our immediate world of choices, something we may not have chosen for ourselves at first, but which can open us up to unexpected insight and growth and community. At its best, our engagement with the Nicene Creed can do this. Instead of getting lured by a 30 second commercial, we can be drawn by the Creed into a faithful conversation spanning centuries.

As this New Year begins, I hope you will join us and honestly consider the question of what you believe. Sometimes it is good to go back to the basics and reconsider our lives and our values. When everything today is presented as the newest thing, yet seems to be just one more in a long line of the latest installment, it would be wise to consider that only when we engage with something old can something truly new come forth.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Amy Carter, is at home recovering from pancreatitis.

Barbara Carver's daughter in-law's sister, Lisa, is doing better and due to give birth at any time.

Hank Clough is facing some upcoming medical decisions.

Will Edmiston, a former member, has been diagnosed with lung cancer.
Kay Fenton's friend, Jeannie, experienced a relapse of leukemia and is responding well to treatment.
Rabecca Gondwe's co-worker, whose son was shot and killed during Christmas.
Tom Lawrey, is facing upcoming bladder surgery on Jan. 7.
Nancy Lindinha's co-workers, who are facing difficult times of health concern.
Carroll Matthews, continues a regimen of chemotherapy and dialysis.
Linda McNish's mother, continues to struggle with her health.
Marlis Moholt, who is recovering from shoulder surgery on Jan. 3.
Peter Puglia's friend, Debbie, whose family is facing several challenges.
Debbie Rickman's co-worker, Crystal, as she deals with cancer.
Laura Williams, is at Shady Grove Hosp. with severe back pain.

Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to Judy Matthews and the Matthews family in the recent loss of Judy's sister, Lin Norman.

Jan. 3 — Choir

We will start up choir rehearsal for the new year on Thursday, Jan. 3. at 7:30 p.m. here at TBC. All are welcome.

Jan. 4 — M&Ms

The M&Ms Luncheon will be at Mrs. Saigon Restaurant on January 4. You are encouraged to meet here in the church parking lot at 11:30 a.m.. Hilda Alpaugh is the contact person for this month.

Jan. 4 — 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.

Jan. 8 — Book Club

The Book Club will meet at 10:00 a.m. in the multipurpose room on Tuesday, January 8. We will be discussing The Fifth Mountain by Paulo Coelho. It is about Elijah's life. Hope all those interested in Elijah will join us for a good discussion.

Jan. 10 – Handbells

We will start our handbell rehearsals again for the new year on Thursday, January 10, from 6:45 - 7:30 p.m.

JAN. 27 – Ministry Fair and Congregational Meeting

We believe that God has gifted each one of us with special abilities and interests for the work of ministry. And there are lots of opportunities for us to work in the ministry of God and to help our community. We invite you to consider the opportunities in our ministry fair. On Jan. 27 after worship, we will converge in the fellowship hall where a number of different tables will be set up. At each of these tables will be a person to talk with you about specific kinds of ministry for which you can sign up. The general areas of ministry will vary from stewardship to property

maintenance to worship leadership to kitchen fellowship and other possibilities. We hope you will take time to find a place of service that is meaningful.

After we take an appropriate amount of time for the ministry fair, we will have a congregational meeting, where we will present to you the Book of Reports for 2007, as well as final budget numbers for the previous year, and any other church items of concern. We hope to see you there.

Sign up Sheet for Coffee Hour and Flowers

There is a sign-up sheet for coffee hour, and a sheet for bringing flowers, on the table in the main hallway. If you would like to sign up for a Sunday sometime in the upcoming months, let us know by signing your name to one of these sheets.

Offering Envelopes for 2008

Many of you already picked up a box of 2008 envelopes from the table in the main hallway. We have a few that have not been picked up, and we will be mailing them out this week. If you do not have a box of envelopes designated for you, please let us know in the church office, and we will be sure you get one. We offer envelopes to any church member or interested contributor, and they enable you to receive a record of you giving later on in the year, which you can use for tax or other financial purposes. Thank you for your support of TBC!!

Thanks for Christmas Eve

We thank those who participated in our Christmas Eve service recently. We had a number of musical presentations, both vocal and instrumental, and we are grateful for the musical talent which was shared on this sacred night. We thank all of you who participated in this event with song and candlelight.

“Souper” Bowl Effort on Feb. 3rd

The Super Bowl is just around the corner! We will once again be having a “Souper” Bowl Sunday on Feb. 3rd. You are invited to bring cans of soup to worship, where we will dedicate them to the glory of God and the nourishment of others. Afterwards we will take the cans and donate them to Manna, where they will go to feed some of our hungry neighbors. Remember whenever you see or hear about a football game think “Souper” Bowl and get your cans ready.

Remarks from Our New Moderator – Carol Linder

I thank you for electing me as moderator for this year. It is one of the great honors of my life. I have much to learn, but I believe the Lord wants me to do this and will help me. I also ask for your help and support so that together we, as a community of believers, can accomplish much in doing the Lord's work.

I offer you a challenge for 2008. Call it “forward 5 percent and fun.” The “forward 5 percent” part is for each member to set a definite and reasonable personal goal to spend at least 5 percent of your time (or two hours a week) on church participation and ministry. Remember, if you are attending each Sunday, then you already are on your way. The “fun” part is for each of us, as we participate in church life, to find ways which feel good and right to us, in order to increase our joy and our gratitude. The upcoming ministry fair will be a good opportunity to think about this and talk with others about possibilities for ministry and fun. In 2008, let's make it “forward 5 percent and fun!”

BIRTHDAYS

January	February
5 Reinaldo Cabañas	7 Louise Peck
7 Debbie Rickman	8 Linda King
Rebecca Gondwe	10 Brittany Harris
10 Tara McClellan	Victoire Makembe
11 Jonathan Alpaugh	12 Laly Cabañas
13 Emily Alpaugh	21 Gladys Donoghue
22 Andrew Freese	22 Jack Donoghue
24 John Alpaugh	23 Nancy Lindinha
25 Hilda Cashwell	24 Jim Campbell
30 Mary Honigsberg	26 Tiffany McClellan

ANNIVERSARIES

January	February
4 Kay and Jim Fenton	6 Lois and Gerry Frick
19 Win and Frank Puglia	

Pastor - Kip Ingram

Pastor Emeritus - John W. Laney

Interim Music Director - Carla Ingram

Administrative Assistant - Sonia Cartagena

Treasurer – Debbie Rickman

Custodial Services - Sonia & Humberto Barrientos

THE END