

Covenant Chronicle

FEBRUARY 2010



Reminder

The Annual Congregational Meeting is called for Sunday, February 7th, following our worship service for the yearly purposes of: electing officers, voting on the pastors' terms of call, and discussing and receiving annual staff reports and the 2010 budget. Members will also vote on a change to Covenant's by-laws that would have the Session serve as trustees of the corporation, rather than continuing to have a separate board of trustees.

A Word From Ernie

Haiti is destroyed." That was the initial response of Pere Soner to the devastation wrought by the earthquake that struck Port-au-Prince on January 12th. While the island of La Gonave suffered little direct damage (including the church building we funded), the people there are faced with the death of many loved ones and friends, the loss of jobs on the mainland, and a large influx of refugees, who need food, water, fuel, and shelter.

"If one member suffers, all suffer together with it," wrote the apostle Paul (1 Cor 12:15). The members of Christ's body in Haiti are suffering, and so we feel their pain. And it moves us to prayer, tears, questioning, sharing, and action. Already relief aid purchased with your donations is on its way to help ease the immediate suffering of our brothers and sisters in Haiti. But we know this is just the beginning. In the months and years ahead we will continue to stand with our friends on La Gonave. They need us, and we need them. For we are one body.

Peace, *Ernie*

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Music Notes

by: John Coble



Over the last fifteen years or so, I've written a lot of church newsletter columns. Though my topic has usually been music, I have stretched that boundary to include many other subjects, things going on in our world and many times things going on in my personal life. These may not seem to be musical subjects, but music making, to me, does not take place in a vacuum. Music is a means of human expression and our experiences of joy, sorrow, happiness, anger, love, or whatever they may be, come out in the music. The notes, rhythms, and the words are merely the skeleton; the flesh, blood, and breath of life in music comes from our souls.

To put it another way, I've often worn my heart on my sleeve in these columns. I've expressed sorrow over the loss of loved ones, especially my father a few years ago. I wrote with excitement and joy about finishing my doctorate, going with some of our choir members on a tour of Scotland, and starting Horns for Haiti. These are all things that have had deep meaning for me, and I have expressed them in my music. Since we all share in worship each week, including making music together, it has only made sense to share other things as well. Many times, people have told me they found meaning in my sharing. We all have similar struggles and joys; we can all relate. We are on this journey together, and as a church community, we share our lives with each other.

So, I should have know better when, at a recent dinner group, one of you expressed surprise at learning some good news in my life, something I thought was common knowledge by now. "But, you didn't write about it in your newsletter column!" She was right! I had left undone that which I ought to have done: to share this news in my monthly writing as I have shared so many other chapters of my life while at Covenant. I am very happy to share this one.

I have made many good friends at Covenant. One of those friends has become very special over the years. She has provided me with strong support in my work at church and in my music, and she has been there for me personally, offering a sympathetic ear and words of encouragement when they were needed most. She has also been a source of mischief, laughter, and fun in our many hours of rehearsal! It wasn't too much of surprise to those around us when our friendship blossomed into romance during that trip to Scotland, and it has continued to grow as both friendship and love. Most of you know I'm talking about Kate Myers. The "big news" is that Kate and I are engaged to be married next October, and I could not be happier. Kate is my partner and my best friend and I feel very blessed that we will share the rest of our lives together. It has also felt very good to have the support and love of our church family. It is good to be surrounded by such wonderful people. We look forward to sharing our celebration over the next several months, and in the coming years, with all of you. Thank you for caring and for sharing.

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Bible Basics

The Bible Basic's class will dig deeply every Monday night at 6pm to prepare members to hear the Sunday morning sermon based on the Lenten texts from the Pauline letters-primarily Phillipians. Come and familiarize yourself with the church of Phillipi, the culture and worldview of the first Christians, and Paul's deep affection for this Christian community struggling to be faithful. We will meet in Fellowship Hall, 6:00-7:30pm every Monday during Lent. Bring your Bible and a notebook. If you plan to join us beginning Monday, February 15th, please email Julie Johnson, our parish associate (holycreek@aol.com) so that we can make sure we are prepared with handouts and materials.

A Lenten Day Retreat

Saturday, March 6th, 2010

9:30am - 3:30pm

"Finding Peace in a Crazy World"

Covenant Presbyterian Church

Leaders: Julie & Ernie

\$15 (lunch included)

Reservation Deadline: 3/3

email: office@covpresatl.org

2010 Lent Schedule

Feb. 16th - Shrove Tuesday (also known as Mardi Gras); but we hope to have a Pancake Supper this year at 6:30pm with various pancake themed games.

Feb. 17th - Ash Wednesday Service - 7pm in the chapel, soup supper at 6:15pm.

March 6th - Lenten Day Retreat - 9:30am to 3:30pm (see announcement above)

March 28th - Palm Sunday - 11am Worship

April 4th - Easter Sunday - 9:30am breakfast; Easter Egg hunt; 11am Worship

Forty Days to a Closer Walk with God: The Practice of Centering Prayer

Is the name of the book we encourage you to purchase from Amazon or your local bookstore. (\$8-\$11) Instead of "giving something up" for Lent, consider "taking on" a new practice. For many people, prayer seems foreign and even awkward. The author,

David Muyskens, uses a personal and gentle approach to teach in simple steps this ancient and enriching spiritual discipline. If you plan to attend the Lenten Retreat on March 6th, this would be excellent preparation- since both the book and the retreat will focus on Contemplative bible study and Centering Prayer.

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Update on Haiti Earthquake Relief

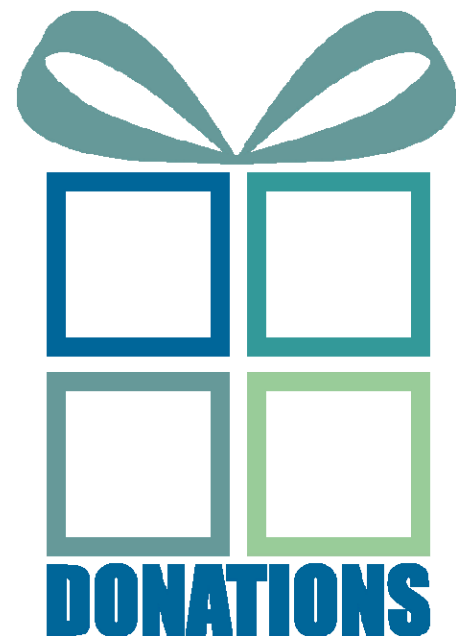
Literally. Thanks to the generosity of the people of Covenant and friends, we have a ton, that is right, a ton of donated goods headed to Haiti through the logistical support of Childspring International. All of the clothing and shoes that you have been bringing in to the collection bins have been sorted and packed into suitcases. We packed four duffel bags of shoes. The cash donated funded the purchase 480 pounds of rice and 240 pounds of beans as well as bandages, vitamins, antibiotic ointments, over-the-counter painkillers, infant formula, anti-acids, towels, soaps, toothbrushes... just to mention a few categories. Pere Soner reports that the island of LaGonave is teeming with refugees from the mainland who arrived with, literally, nothing. There is not enough food and supplies to buy on the island so Pere Soner has specifically requested shipments of food, clothing and supplies. So, a ton of supplies are on there way wrapped in your thoughts and prayers. The generosity of the Covenant family continues to be overwhelming and inspiring. We welcome ongoing donations (especially clothing and shoes!) -- if you will get something to church, we will get it to Haiti.

We have also sent \$550 to Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and \$3,000 to the La Gonave Haiti Partnership for earthquake relief. **We are still receiving donations. Make your check out to "Covenant," and put "Haiti Fund" in the memo line.**

Dr. Jim's Remarks about Haiti during our worship service on Sunday, January 24th are available (as are all our sermons) on our website (www.covenantpresbyterian.us) for listening online or download.

Here is a link to an article and video clip from CNN about La Gonave, Haiti, where our congregation regularly sends mission trips. Since the earthquake we have already used your donations to send food and relief supplies to help our friends there. Thank you for your generous support.

<http://www.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/americas/01/27/haiti.gonave/index.html?hpt>



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A Note From the Administration Committee

We have found that several mistakes were made on yearend statements and we apologize for each mistake. In researching what happened, we learned that the most common problem was crediting the wrong account with the same last name. We have several multi-generational families and multiple pledging units with the same last name. Kimberly Heyward, the financial administrator, only works part-time and does not know the congregation as well as we would like -- due to her schedule. Please help us help you by circling the pledging name on your check or writing the pledging name if different than the name on the check (for those of you with recently changed names or a nom d' plume). We have set up a system to double check pledge payments but we would appreciate your assistance in making sure your generosity is noted and recorded correctly.

Parents Night Out

Beginning on Friday, February 12th and continuing every 2nd and 4th Friday, we'll babysit your children while you have go out and have fun!

The nursery attendants, Terri Courtenay and Angie Hoffman, along with member Kelley Day will hold down the fort with children ages 6 months to 11 years old*. We play games, play on the playground (weather permitting), eat pizza, do arts and crafts and have a blast. The cost is \$4 per hour per child. Just sign up on the sheet out side the Church office to reserve your spot.

Mark your calendars, reserve your spot, plan your evening and come to Church on a Friday!

Call Kelley Day with any questions: 404-271-3844

****Older siblings will be allowed to come free of charge as helpers.***



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Spotlight on: Patty Short

by: Lee Wilder

Q. What is new with your family?

Patty: Well, I am studying for a masters degree in elementary education in addition to working full time at Jackson Primary School. Paul is in 5th grade at Jackson Elementary, Mary is a student at Pierian Springs School and Brian is still a manufacturer's rep in the furniture industry.

Q. You have had an interesting career path, details please.

Patty: I worked in the consumer affairs department at Coca-Cola here in Atlanta during the introduction of New Coke – that was memorable. It was all very low-tech – we did not have computers so we had to hire a whole slew of young college graduates to answer scores of phone calls every day. We had to track all of the comments. It was a crazy time.

Q. Do your children drink Coke products?

Patty: Well, I don't keep soft drinks in the house much. We do have an occasional Coke or Sprite!

Q. What was next?

Patty: I decided that the corporate environment was not for me so one day I called up the Girl Scouts national office in Atlanta and asked whether or not they had a job for me.

Q. Why the Girl Scouts?

Patty: My mother was my troop leader and I just grew up wanting to be a troop leader too.

Q. How did you and Brian meet?

Patty: We are both North Carolinians but we met in Atlanta. I was going to Savannah one weekend and a friend had a friend-of-a-friend who might be able to give me a ride. That was Brian! And now we have been married 21 years. I took 15 years off from work to stay home with Mary and Paul and am working my way towards a teaching certificate.

Q. How hard was it to re-enter the workforce after a long hiatus?

Patty: It was probably harder on the kids than on me. Of course, the complexity of taking care of the family increased dramatically and everyone had to get used to the fact that I had some other calls on my time. I work at Jackson Primary – assisting in a kindergarten class and working in the office. Basically, I pitch in where I am needed – including checking for headlice!

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Q. As if working in a school all week is not enough, you are teaching Sunday School too. What is the best part of that and the worst?

Patty: *There is no worst part. I share teaching with Billy Pinkston and Sandy Phillp. The kids are just wonderful and I like the materials we use. It is just not hard to put together a good lesson.*

Q. What do you do for fun?

Patty: *Other than enjoying our dauchunds, Danny and Ruby, we love to spend the summer in the mountains of North Carolina. I grew up doing this as my father taught at NC State and always had the summer off. It is pretty rustic – we don't have water or electricity. It is truly amazing how much you can fill up your day just being outside. It is especially meaningful to me that Paul's favorite memory of last year was hiking on top of Snake Mountain as that was my favorite time too.*

Q. How did you and Brian come to Covenant?

Patty: *We had moved back to Atlanta from Savannah and were living on Bohler Road. I guess we just stumbled upon Covenant but I remember being impressed by the community groups that met here – Al-Anon, AA among them. I liked the fact that the church was truly open to others. Brian and I looked at lots of churches but decided that we belonged here... even though I was a little disappointed with the social opportunities at first.*

Q. What did you do about that?

Patty: *I stole an idea from another church about dinner groups. I approached the hospitality committee at Covenant with this idea and everyone said, "no, that will never fly here. Won't work. No way." I asked that we just give it a try and it was a big success and is going strong. (editor's note: the January 30th dinner group at Kip and Martha's was great fun). I just really think that you have to share yourself with the community. Each person is a gift and has a gift and everyone misses out if you don't share yourself.*

Q. Thank you for sharing yourself with us – all of the Shorts are a gift to us.



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The Faith Alliance of Metro Atlanta presents Supporting Safer Schools: *Understanding the Anti-Bullying Legislation*

Last year people from all over Atlanta mourned the death of 11 year old Jaheem Herrera. His mother, Masika Bermudez revealed that her son tragically took his own life because of the bullying he experienced at school. She wondered, "Maybe he said 'You know what -- I'm tired of telling my mom, she's been trying so hard, but nobody wants to help me.' " Jaheem's story is not an isolated one. Children who are perceived as different (being an immigrant, socioeconomic class issues, perceived orientations, etc.) often feel like no one will help them. **Together we pledged to make our Metro Atlanta schools safer.**

Join FAMA in fulfilling that pledge by attending our next program where we will focus on educating how to make our schools a safer place through the legislature. Jeff Graham, executive director from Georgia Equality, and Shelley Rose, the SE Region Associate Director of The Anti-Defamation League, will be explaining the upcoming anti-bullying legislation in our state legislature. Together they are part of a loose coalition of concerned organizations that are coming together to speak up about our children's safety and how to make our schools safe. As people of faith, we must ensure that schools are safe for our children and at the same advocate for realistic policies that schools can enforce. Bullying must be defused because no child should think ending his or her life is the way out. Please join us for FAMA's legislative program on this issue.

We will also have a business meeting where we vote in our next slate of Board Members.

Wednesday, February 3rd

12 pm

Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

48 Martin Luther King Jr Dr SW, Atlanta, GA 30303-3599

Lunch will be available for \$10. Please RSVP to 404 622 3399 OR worldpilgrims@bellsouth.net

CYG News

Youth Sunday is coming! On Sunday, February 28th, CYG will be in control of the service-- from designing the bulletin cover, to determining what hymns we sing and lessons we take from the scripture. Don't miss this great opportunity to support and connect with the brilliant, talented minds of our youth group, and experience worship in a new and exciting way!

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BCM—Food Collection

The Mission Committee has started a monthly collection of food for BCM's pantry on the first Sunday of each; December was our first month. Due to your generous donations, we were able to make two deliveries instead of one. The Mission Committee and BCM thank you very much.

We will continue this process throughout the year, and if you forget to bring on the first Sunday, the following Sunday will be fine. There are two designated bins marked BCM; one outside the sanctuary on the Terrace street side, the other near the doorway in the Westminster Room off the parking lot. The suggested shopping list below will feed a family of four:

Instant oatmeal or grits - 1 box	Peanut Butter - 2 small jars
Jelly - 1 small jar	Cornbread mix - 2 boxes
Soup - 4 cans	Macaroni & Cheese - 4 boxes
Dried beans - 1 bag	Spaghetti - 1 medium box
Rice - 2 bags	Spaghetti Sauce - 2 jars
Canned Vegetables - 4 cans	Canned Beans - 3 cans
Canned Tuna - 4 cans	

Second Thursday Women!!

The time is approaching for our annual Second Thursday Women's Valentine Party. Please come to Jill Ulrici's house (75 Peachtree Hills Ave) on Thursday Feb.11 at 6:30 PM. Bring a decorated Valentine box or bag to receive your Valentines and bring a Valentine card or gift to put in each person's bag. (Gifts do not need to be expensive: a poem or thought or card or homemade gift is great). Don't forget to bring an appetizer, too. Wine will be available for two dollars a glass. Hope to see you there.



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Stewardship 2010—Pledge Status

Total pledges to date for 2010 = \$396,059 (increase of \$29,994, or 8.2% above our 2009 pledges of \$366,065)(2010 pledges are \$6,613 short of meeting the goal of a 10% overall increase, i.e. \$402,672)

103 total pledges for 2010 (includes 5 youth)

Of the 98 adult pledges 85 were from members who pledged for 2009. Thirteen were from members who did not pledge for 2009 or who are new members.

Twelve members who pledged for 2009 did not pledge for 2010.

The 13 new pledges amounted to about \$5,300 more than the amount lost from the 12 members who did not pledge.

The average pledge increase for the 85 members who pledged in both 2009 and 2010 is 10.02%.

Of the 85 members who pledged for both 2009 and 2010

57 pledges increased

10 pledges decreased

18 pledges stayed the same

Update from Nancy and Shelvis

Greetings Wonderful Family and Friends!

Tumefika! We have arrived! We spent the past few days settling into our apartment in the bustling metropolis of Nairobi, Kenya. We are enjoying reconnecting with friends and with our Nairobi church family.

In order to give you an idea of where we are living, I am including a video on cities in Africa with several pictures of Nairobi. While in the US, a friend explained to us, in an exasperated tone, that many Americans in her generation are afraid to visit Africa. "The reason," she explained, "is that the only images we saw of Africa growing up were of people with bones in their noses." So, I thought I could try to dispel that stereotype a bit by showing a few images of skyscrapers in Africa before I head to rural Sudan tomorrow.

To view the video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=826tpNNrCFO>

Thank you, as always for your prayers, words of encouragement, and support!

Nancy and Shelvis

<http://nancyandshelvis.com>

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February 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Congregational Meeting 12pm	8	9	10	11 Haiti Mtg 5pm STWG 6:30pm	12 PARENTS NIGHT OUT!	13
14	15 Bible Basics 6pm	16 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper 6:30pm	17 Ash Wed Worship 7pm Soup 6:15pm Admin Comm 2pm	18	19	20
21 Mission Committee Mtg 12pm Cong Life 12pm	22 Bible Basics 6pm	23 Session Mtg 6:30pm	24	25	26 PARENTS NIGHT OUT!	27
28 Youth Sunday	Parents Night Out Every 2nd and 4th Friday!		Bible Basics Class Every Monday night during Lent			

On-going Classes

Held in the Sanctuary Parlor

Men's Bible Study—Wednesdays 7am

Women's Bible Study—Wednesday 10am

Women's Spiritual Circle 1—Thursdays 10am

Women's Spiritual Circle 2—First and Third Wednesday 6:15pm

Women's Spiritual Circle 3—Mondays 10am

Women's Spiritual Circle 4—First and Third Monday 6:15pm



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2461 Peachtree Road, NE

Atlanta, GA 30305

"Equipping the People of God to Serve Christ in the World"

February Birthdays

6 Vance Woodcox

7 Mike Conger

8 Jenn Whitney

9 Libby Fennel

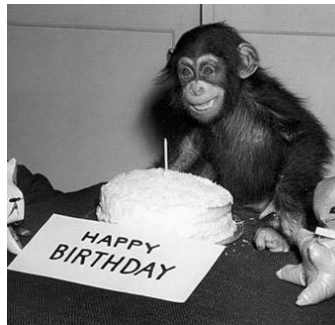
10 Nancy Elsea

12 Lucy Roberts

13 Phil Cheaney

13 Kathy Lansberry

13 Susan Brooks



15 John Jacobs

20 Erin Sells

21 Bette Green

21 Xandy Powers

23 Condit Lotz

25 Marilyn Roberts

26 Ann Starr

26 Miriam Longino

28 David Furth