

The Connection

Volume 5, Issue 9, September 2007

from Pastor Mike...

Healthy Church Atmosphere Part 2

As you recall last month I talked about the first two key elements to a healthy church atmosphere. The first key was a church “where the presence of God is sensed” and secondly, is a church that is other-centered.

3. Understanding terminology

Healthy churches tend to speak in terms everyone can understand. They make an effort to translate religious terminology into everyday language rather than to repeat clichés and jargon that constantly remind insiders they are insiders. An insider knows that a revival is a series of weekday and weekend services but an outsider might never guess. “The ushers will wait on us for the offering” could mean that they aren’t going to let anyone out until we all put something in. The most alienating lingo is abbreviations: BYO may mean “Baptist Youth Organization” to church members but “Bring Your Own” beverages (or booze) to everyone else. Blessed are those churches where everyone can understand what is being communicated.

Meet Isaac Freeman Student Ministries Pastor Candidate

Isaac, his wife, Amy, and their two children (Esther and Grace) come from Portland, Oregon, where Isaac is currently the youth pastor at Rockwood Church of God. Isaac and Amy met in 2003 and were married in the summer of 2004. They soon moved down to Portland, Oregon, from Centralia, Washington, with the intention of Isaac attending Warner Pacific College and Amy continuing her work as a pediatric nurse. Plans changed only weeks after classes began for Isaac and they discovered they were pregnant with their first child Esther. Isaac has since graduated from Warner Pacific College in December of 2006 and Amy enjoys being a stay at home mother of their two daughters.

The Freemans believe that ministry is a lifestyle that starts in the home. As a parent Isaac has gained an understanding of how important it is for our children to be taught about the story of Jesus Christ and the life of purpose that we are instructed to live as Christians. Conveying these truths has become of key importance in Isaac’s family and ministry.

Isaac and his family will candidate on September 7-9. His itinerary will appear in the bulletin.

continued on page 6



From Your Administrative Pastor

I shared this devotional with our church staff the other day, and we thought that you might enjoy reading it as well. You can subscribe to John Fischer's daily devotional at www.fischtank.com

No Leftovers by John Fischer

An Iranian woman was asked what was the most difficult part in her adjustment to living in the United States. She didn't say anything about the different environment for women as might have been expected. Instead, she said the most difficult adjustment was the fact that she found it hard to cook for only her family of four. She was used to feeding, at any time of the day, meals for various extended family members and friends. Serving in that way is a natural part of her culture.

Her solution to this problem is simple. Besides providing an elderly woman across the street with dinner delivered each night to her door, she goes out and invites people to join her family — sitting at the table and eating what would have been leftovers. Now there's an easy solution to leftovers — invite the neighborhood.

Hearing this story reminded me of a parable Jesus told of a man who prepared a great feast and invited many guests, but when those guests made excuses about other things they had to do, he sent his servant into the streets and alleys of the town to invite the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame. *"After the servant had done this, he reported, 'There is still room for more.' So his master said, 'Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full'"* (Luke 14:22-23). There won't be any leftovers at this feast!

It's quite an indictment on western society that this woman's most difficult adjustment was to the selfishness of our culture compared to her mid-eastern culture of hospitality. Americans don't share very well. We have been raised in a culture that worships individuality and ownership. The goal is to have all our own stuff so we don't need to depend on anyone else. We work very hard to have our own house, our own car, our own swimming pool, our own entertainment system, and our own dinner with our own family. Sharing is not an American trait.

I've noticed in myself a resistance to sharing the family dinner with outsiders. When my older children were around more, they often sprang their friends on us at the last minute. I always resented this at first, but then it would often turn into an evening enlivened with conversation, music and laughter. I would go to bed a little later and a little more tired but always richer for it.

Maybe it's time to go out and invite in the neighborhood. I have a good enough sense of God's economy to know that if we work at making sure there are no leftovers, God will help us have more to share.



Newsletter Deadline

If you have an upcoming event you'd like to promote, faith story or poem you'd like to share, or anything else that pertains to the life of the people of Blue Mountain Community Church, please consider writing a small article (300 words or less) and submitting it to the newsletter. The deadline for articles is the second Wednesday of each month. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space.



Pastor Sharon

Labor Day Facts

Labor Day originated during the labor union movements of the 1800s as a way to celebrate the social and economic advancements of the United States and pay tribute to the American laborer.

Labor Day is a national legal holiday that is a day of rest and marks the symbolic end of summer for many. Labor Day is observed not only in the U.S. but also in Canada, and in other industrialized nations.

A prominent Labor Day event in the United States, since 1966, is the annual telethon of the *Muscular Dystrophy Association*, to fund research and patient support programs for the various diseases grouped as Muscular Dystrophy. The telethon raises tens of millions of dollars each year.

An old custom prohibits the wearing of white after Labor Day. In actuality, the etiquette originally stated that white shoes were taboo while white or “winter white” clothes were acceptable. This custom is fading from popularity as it continues to be questioned and challenged, particularly by leaders in the fashion world.

In the world of western attire, it is similarly tradition to wear a straw cowboy hat until Labor Day. After Labor Day, a felt hat is worn until Memorial Day.

From 1950-2003, the NASCAR Southern 500, the oldest and most traditional superspeedway race, and one of the crown jewels of the circuit, was held on Labor Day weekend in Darlington, South Carolina.



Celebrate Recovery

by Teri Stewart

Sex is everywhere; TV, radio, magazines, fashion, and now easily accessible over the internet. Men and women of today fight temptations never seen before in Christendom. Spouses live in fear and shame when they find out that their partners are trading their marriage vows for a few minutes' pleasure.

It seems no one wants to talk about this. But that is not Biblical. We can see from Genesis to the New Testament that sex was not a taboo subject. Bible authorities say Song of Solomon shows that Christians shouldn't have a “don't touch, don't speak” attitude about sex. And look how gently and matter of fact Jesus treated the woman at the well who had many lovers.

It takes guts for the real men at CR to come forward and admit their addiction, and that they can't handle it alone. Then they experience freedom that comes from living in the light instead of in secret. Their testimonies speak of the damage those secrets did to them and what CR showed them; that God had a purpose for them all along. It is awesome to see the leadership qualities these men have and the strong moral convictions they adopt as they get into God's word.

There may be men or women out there that are feeling hopeless and trapped by their addictions. There may be wives or husbands out there unhappy and full of shame. At Celebrate Recovery, we are dedicated to giving people **safety** and **anonymity** for those subjects that seem so “unmentionable.” We have all learned from the CR material that, “**Secrets make you sick.**”

Come and see — CR is a safe and welcoming place.

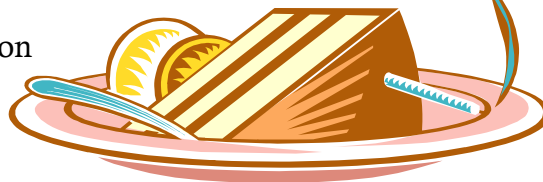
- 1 Joli Carlile
- Kathy Grewell
- Michael Huie
- 2 Renee Irwin
- 3 Gabe Podolski
- 5 Diane Miller
- Alex Wooton
- 6 Joe Leamy
- 7 Kelle Cannone
- Dustin Josifek
- Kay Keyser
- 8 Hannah Burns
- Jacie McDaniels
- Douglas Nichols
- 10 Brianne Shea
- Carrie Spencer
- 11 Annie Ledbetter
- Lisa McDonald
- Mike Pettyjohn
- Emily Snider
- 12 Carla Haen
- Kandee Hoppen
- 13 Max Carrera
- Gary Stewart
- 14 Sue Willsey
- Destiny Wooton
- 15 Jane Harrold
- Dale Hutcherson
- 16 Mary Ellen Farr
- Jeffrey Holway
- 17 Asia Clark
- Galadriel Jensen
- Nat Swisher
- 18 Mitchell Anderson
- Justin Evans
- Gabriel Jardon
- 19 Calvin McNeil

- 11 *Bob & Sharon Loar*
- 11 *Larry & Carolee White*
- 12 *Frank & Sonia Trapani*
- 18 *Ed & Elissa Stites*
- 19 *Gary & Teri Stewart*
- 20 *David & Karen McDaniels*
- 23 *Michael & Linda Clark*
- 24 *Max & Holly Carrera*

*Celebrating
an
Anniversary*

- Dana Miller
- 20 Danna Jones
- Tyler Shea
- 22 Melanie Clark
- 23 Cindy Angotti
- Craig Spencer
- Sheila Woelfle
- 24 Kim Skifstad
- Trudy Young
- 25 Travis Erb
- 26 Scott Baslee
- Ellen Kilmer
- Cindy Tackett
- 27 Tyler Neissl
- Jerry Willsey
- 28 Kenneth Hobbs
- Katherine McEuen
- 29 Sonia Carias
- Marlene Saager
- 30 Sydney Hobbs

*Happy
Birthday*



Monthly Events

- 6 SAMS 10:00 AM
- 7-9 Student Ministries Pastor Candidate**
- 8 Men's Breakfast 7:30 AM
- 9-16 Photo Shoot for Directory**
- 10 EOD Meeting 6:30 PM
Worship Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- 11 Quilter's Guild 6:00 PM
- 13 MOPS 9:00 AM
Baord of Elders 6:30 PM
CE Commission 6:30 PM
- 14-16 Prayer Partner Retreat
- 16 Fall Kickoff
Gaither Singfest 6:00 PM
- 17 Ark Commission Meeting 6:30 PM
- 19 FIT Kickoff Dinner 5:30 PM
FIT Kickoff 6:30 PM
- 20 SAMS 10:00 AM
Building and Grounds 6:45 PM
Missions Commission 7:00 PM
- 27 MOPS 9:00 AM



Weekly Events

- Sunday**
Middle School Group 6:00 PM
- Tuesday**
Taking Off Pounds Sensibly 5:30 PM
Boy Scouts 7:00 PM
- Wednesday**
Women's Bible Study 9:00 AM
Families in Training 6:30 PM
- Thursday**
Worship Team Rehearsal 7:00 PM
- Friday**
Celebrate Recovery Dinner 6:00 PM
Celebrate Recovery 7:00 PM

continued from page 1

4. Healthy problem handling

You can often tell more about a church by the way it handles problems than by the way it handles success. This makes for an easy measure because every church has problems. What happens when the sound system emits a squeal or drops into embarrassing silence? How does the preacher respond to the howling two-year old? Do nursery workers apologize or become defensive when they can't find your baby's diaper bag? When the church is running behind in budget, is there a denunciation for under giving or a challenge to prayer and generosity? What makes a healthy church is not the absence of problems. It's how problems are handled.

5. Accessibility

Every Saturday the Minneapolis Star Tribune reviews a local church, and every review evaluates whether the church building is handicapped accessible and whether there is adequate parking.

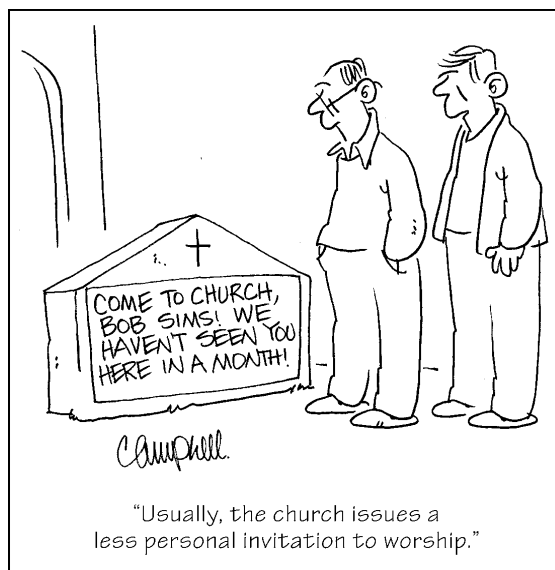
However, wheelchair ramps and parking stalls are only the beginning of accessibility. Is there clear and easy access to getting questions answered, meeting new people, talking to church leaders, joining the membership, discovering opportunities for spiritual growth, becoming a part of a small group, signing up to serve? High ratings go to churches that are "barrier free" in every sense of the term. At our church, every attendee is invited to complete a communications card every week. Each week people write questions, comments and criticisms on the back of their cards. By Monday morning all of the cards are sorted and assigned for personalized follow-up. It is part of our commitment to be accessible in every possible way.

6. Sense of expectation

Listen to hallway conversations about the church and you can decide if the primary verb tense is past, present, or future. Most healthy churches are hope-

ful churches. They are permeated with high expectations of God's blessing for the future.

The majority of people who come to church feel beaten up Monday through Saturday; they are not looking for another beating on Sunday. They come to church for healing and hope. They want to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. They want to be told that God is there, God has not forgotten them, and God will bless them in the future. The church that truly believes and says that "because of Jesus Christ the best is yet to come" – that is the church that breathes spiritually healthy air.



Homecoming Celebration

The Worship Commission would like to invite you to a celebration of Gaither-style music in the sanctuary on Sunday, September 16th at 6:00 PM. Come sing along with us and enjoy some special music! Afterwards, the fellowship will continue in Baker Hall where baked goodies will be served.

*Interview with Holly Carrera
Moms In Touch Coordinator*

What is Moms in Touch?

Moms In Touch is an International Organization (non-denominational) of moms who gather **one hour**, once a week to “*Pour out our hearts like water before the face of the Lord; lift our hands toward Him for the lives of our children.*” (Lamentations 2:19). We pray for them as well as the particular school they attend. We are moms, grandmas, aunts, or anyone who desires to stand in the gap for a specific child.

What do you do in a typical meeting?

Gathering in one accord, we praise God for who he is, thank him for what he has done, confess our hearts, and intercede for our children and school. We pray, through scripture, for each of our children individually, by name, their school and staff members. We always begin and end on time so we stick to **one hour only**.

How do we know it works?

God has answered so many prayers in the many groups. God often changes our hearts in the midst of our requests for our children! It truly is amazing! To gather and pray scripture, inserting your child’s name is so powerful. To then have another mom back up your prayer for your child is incredibly touching. We are freed to release our children to God.

How do I join?

Contact Dixie Lienen (525-4635) to find out information on our gradeschool groups in our valley.

Contact Holly Carrera (529-4003) to find out information on middle school/high school groups in our valley.

Wednesday Night FIT

FIT stands for Families In Training, a new opportunity for the families of Blue Mountain Community Church to grow together in the same place, at the same time. This format is designed to give kids and adults the spiritual meat needed to grow in Christ, and do it together. It is so easy these days to drop off your kids at practice, rehearsal, and so many other things, but take no part in them yourself. By coming together as a family to FIT nights, parents teach their children the importance of continuing to learn more about God and his principles for living.

You and your family are invited to the inaugural evening of FIT on September 19. An Italian Spaghetti dinner will be provided at 5:30. At 6:30, classes begin! Elementary students will experience God’s love in Kids’ Club (formerly SNL). Middle Schoolers will strengthen their leadership muscles as mentors in Kids’ Club with their own devotion and review sessions. High Schoolers will have their usual night of games, study and fellowship.

But don’t let these awesome activities be only for the kids. Choose one of the following classes designed to arm you against the forces of this world:

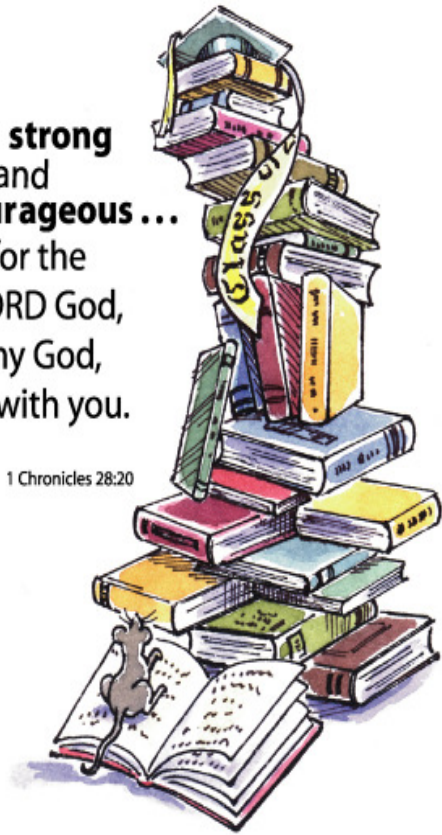
- Financial Peace University
- GriefShare
- Book by Book Study
- Noomas
- Life Development Classes
- When Godly People Do Ungodly Things
(women only)

Reserve your spot today by filling out the registration card in the Sunday bulletin or calling the church office at 529-1212. If you have questions, please call Julie Caton 526-3778 or Kathy Nelson (526-5518), Adult Sunday School Coordinators.

Mark your calendar and get FIT with us!

Be **strong**
and
courageous ...
for the
LORD God,
my God,
is with you.

1 Chronicles 28:20



Our Ministry Team

Senior Pastor — Mike Hinrichsen
Administrative Pastor — Dan Huntley
Children's Pastor — Sharon Wiles
Worship Interim Pastor — Richard Easton

A monthly publication of **Blue Mountain Community Church** 928 Sturm Ave., Walla Walla, Washington 99362, (509) 529-1212, www.bluemountainchurch.com, Editor: Julie Caton, bmccbulletin@gmail.com. Deadline for submissions: The second Wednesday of the month prior to publication. Editor reserves the right to edit for content and space. Unsolicited materials welcome.
© 2006 Blue Mountain Community Church.