



The Taftsville Chapel Current

God calls us as followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as a community of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to our world.

Jan Collins, Editor

April 2006

"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."
John 3:8

I Shall Not Want...

"I shall not want," the psalm says. Is that true? There are lots of things we go on wanting, go on lacking, whether we believe in God or not. They are not just material things like a new roof or a better paying job, but things like good health, things like happiness for our children, things like being understood and appreciated, like relief from pain, like some measure of inner peace not just for ourselves but for the people we love and for whom we pray. Believers and unbelievers alike go on wanting plenty our whole lives through. We long for what never seems to come. We pray for what never seems to be clearly given. But when the psalm says "I shall not want," maybe it is speaking the utter truth anyhow. Maybe it means that if we keep our eyes open, if we keep our hearts and lives open, we will at least never be in want of the one thing we want more than anything else. Maybe it means that whatever else is withheld, the Shepherd never withholds Himself, and He is what we want more than anything else. Frederick Buechner, from his book *Listening to Your Life*.

If I can't see Him, hear Him, or feel His touch, maybe my eyes and ears and hands are filled with the stuff of my own demands. What an amazing grace that His longing to fully shepherd me is so much more faithful and consistent than my rare unencumbered longing to have Him be my shepherd. So often, my Inn is overbooked, so there is no room for Him. Still though, "He leads me beside still waters, He restores my soul..."

Have a blessed Easter,

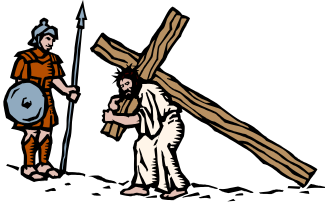
Randy

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* Photos throughout this issue were taken by Richard Glick.



"The Passion," Resurrection Day & the Sunday after



Instead of a regular Friday Night at the Movies this month, we will be viewing *"The Passion"* on Thursday evening, April 13th at 6:00 pm. This is a very difficult movie to watch, as it attempts to portray what our Lord went through on his Good Friday. The point, though, is not the horror, but the unimaginable love He showed in enduring the cross and God's punishment for sin for us - so that we would not have to. We will be sharing a simple Communion following the movie, and a time of prayer.

On Resurrection Day morning, we will again have our "cross walk," leaving the Chapel at 7:00 am. We walk in silence, and stop a few times to read the Easter story from Scripture and sing a hymn, while taking turns carrying our cross together. This continues to be a wonderful way to connect with what Jesus did for us, and to worship together. All are welcome. Following the "cross walk" we will have a potluck breakfast together at the Chapel, and our service will begin at the regular time, 9:30. There will not be a regular "Second hour" that morning.

The Sunday following Easter (April 23rd) is an Ekklesia Sunday. This would be a great time to reflect together on how the Lord has been shepherding us during the Lent/Easter season. We will also be sharing in Communion on that Sunday.

Bits and Pieces

A Birth Announcement

We welcome Evelyn Rose McCrory, born on Monday, March 27 at 12:12 am, to proud parents Judy and Mike McCrory, big brother Calvin, and big sister Mabel. Evelyn Rose weighed 8 lbs. 7 oz. and measured 20 inches long.

Candlelighters And Ladies Breakfast

On Saturday March 11 six ladies enjoyed breakfast at the Mountain Creamery in Woodstock. Then we went to church to cut out 8 inch squares to piece twin size comforters for Mennonite Central Committee. Carie started to piece a comforter while we ironed and cut. She took the partially pieced top home to finish "sometime." The next morning she returned with the completed top so now we have a top ready to tie "sometime." If someone wants to piece another top please see Ruth Ann to get squares.

Saturday, April 8, ladies breakfast will again be at the Mountain Creamery. Please note that the time is 8am, not the usual time.

Carie Good and Janice Zook piecing quilts for MCC→





New Comfortable Chairs

Our new chairs arrived the 6th of April. Randy, Carie, Joan, Mary, Allen, Ken, Fred, Micah, Russell, Kerry, and MaryBeth helped with the take down of the old chairs and set up of the new ones. Russell transported 40 of our used folding chairs up to Bethany Birches Camp, and Carie coordinated a donation of about 3-dozen chairs to Mid-Vermont Christian School. Approximately 20 of our old folding chairs are stored at the church. Several of the above-mentioned individuals helped with taking apart the old chairs and vacuuming before the new chairs arrived. This was extremely helpful. *Definitely a big thanks to all who helped!*

Responses to the "MARCH QUESTION OF THE MONTH"

According to the responses to the March Question of the Month, our general preference is to learn new songs during a Song Service.

I prefer to learn new songs during our regular Sunday morning worship time:

- 50% occasionally
- 25% regularly
- 25% not during regular worship

I prefer to learn new songs as a part of Song Services

- 60% occasionally
- 40% regularly

We had a 6% response from the congregation, with some suggestions to include more praise and worship type music.



*** SEE BOTTOM OF PAGE 7 FOR "APRIL QUESTION OF THE MONTH"**

Dear Churchmouse

Dear Churchmouse,

I know that God wants me to pray every day, and so I try. But my prayer life feels dry and dutiful and unsatisfying. Maybe I just don't know how to pray right. Do you have any suggestions?

Dear Saint,

Prayer, in itself, is not an automatic good. Our prayers, whether clumsy or skilled, heretical or orthodox, verbatim from the Psalter of ad-libbed from a sinking ship, get us no merit with God. Right words and correct forms are not prerequisite to a heavenly audience. It is possible to practice prayer in such a way that it drives us deep into egotism; or bloats us into a prideful ostentation. All the same, prayers are necessary to develop in the life of faith, to mature in our humanity and to glorify God with our entire heart, mind and soul and strength.

Prayer is not a narrow use of language for special occasions; saying the right sort of words to the right kind of God. And we do not learn to pray by simply directing our language to God, instead of to parents or friends. Prayer is primal speech... it is a dialogue. Our *"being"* is involved. The *"way"* we are. We do not first learn how to do it, and then proceed; we just do it. In the doing we find out what we are doing, and then deepen and mature in it. We find that until we are in prayer, we are not teachable. It is better to pray badly than not to pray at all. A ship that is dead in the water can't be steered.

We want to be at our best before God. Prayer, we think, means presenting ourselves before God so that he will be pleased with us. But we must pray who we actually are, not whom we think we should be. We are unfinished creatures – longing, reaching, and stretching towards fulfillment. We express these desires for completion in prayer; and try, if possible, to get for ourselves credit instead of shame. *But what really matters most in prayer is not that we learn to express ourselves, but that we learn to answer God.* We speak to the God who speaks to us. Presumptuous prayer speaks to God with out first listening to Him. If we pray without listening we pray out of context.

In prayer, we do not merely speak our feelings; we speak our answers. Prayer is the language used to respond, with the potential for saying all that is in us. If we truly answer God there is nothing that we may not say to him. We become ourselves as we answer, sometimes angrily disputing with Him about how he rules the world, sometimes humbling ourselves before him in grateful trust. The answers are not always articulate; silence, sighs, groanings – these all constitute responses. The answers are not always positive: anger, skepticism, curses – these also are responses.

The Book of Psalms can train us in this conversation. By means of the Psalms we can find our voice in the dialogue. The practice of Christians in praying the Psalms is straightforward: simply pray through the Psalms, psalm by psalm, regularly. That's it; open our Bibles to the book of Psalms, and pray them – sequentially, regularly, faithfully across a lifetime. This is how most Christians for centuries have matured in prayer. Nothing fancy. Just do it. The praying itself is deliberate and leisurely, letting (as St. Benedict directed) the motion of the heart come into harmony with the movement of the lips.

The Psalms are not provided to teach us about God, but to train us in responding to Him. The Psalms train us in converting from talking *about* God to talking *to* God. They will not primarily give us ideas about God, or direction in moral conduct. We will expect, rather, to find the experience of being human before God exposed and sharpened. Left to ourselves, we will pray to some god who speaks what we like hearing, or to the part of God that we manage to understand. The Psalms, instead of being tributaries into the flow of the great prayer-river of longing for the absolute, they abruptly stand us up, our lungs half-full of water, coughing and sputtering our unrehearsed answers to the God who calls us into Life.

Here is the deeply felt, honestly voiced raw data of the human condition; brimming with human experience and explosive with energies of soul. The Psalms... don't so much as tell us something we never knew, but bring into recognition what is latent, forgotten, overlooked, suppressed.

Comprehension of the invisible begins in the visible. One way the Psalms teach us to pray is by saying 'Open your eyes'. Often our prayer pattern is: fold your hands, bow your head, shut your eyes, and we'll pray. But the Psalmists take us into the "theater of the glory of God" and calls us to look around, and see the hills, "from which comes our help;" the trees, "planted by streams;" to hear the mighty thunder, the trees "clapping their hands." They show us how to pray with our eyes open,

wide open. But God's word precedes these words: these prayers don't seek God, they respond to the God who seeks *us*.

The primary use of prayer is not for expressing ourselves, but in *becoming ourselves* with God. We prepare to pray not by offering our prayers, but ourselves. When we engage in the act of prayer itself, there is no preparing, no getting the right words, no posture to take, no mood to assume. We simply do it. At or near the center of our lives, where God and the human, faith and the absurd, love and indifference are tangled in daily traffic jams, we must... come to personal relationship, response and intimacy: "Abba! Father!"

(Compiled from quotes by Eugene Peterson in *Answering God*)

Children Participate in our Worship Service

Most Sundays we have a special time for the children in our morning worship service. Various individuals from our congregation volunteer to share with the children a story, a visual illustration that goes along with the theme of the morning, or perhaps just give them time to share and pray together.

On March 5th Brandon Bergey, Director of Bethany Birches Camp, was our guest speaker. Most of the children were excited to see him because they attended BBC and know what a fun guy he is.

On another Sunday in March, Carol Whitney had a good time with the children, speaking to them about John the Baptist, the man that was shouting and announcing the coming of Jesus, the Messiah. Some of her props were many different kinds of hats that the children could choose to wear, along with gummy worms (*closest thing to bugs that John ate in the desert*).



↑ Mara Beck models her hat in style.

← Brandon sharing with the children during worship.



Getting Familiar with the Bible

During Second Hour / Sunday School the children through 6th grade have continued to become more familiar with the Bible through stories, related activities and Bible skills. One Sunday we talked about the Fruits of the Spirit. The older students worked on memorizing the two verses below. Can you name all the fruits? This hint may help you: The first three fruits have one syllable, the second three fruits have two syllables, and the last three fruits have three syllables. Now fill in the blanks.

The fruit of the Spirit is

_____, _____, _____,
_____, _____, _____,
_____ and _____.

Against such things there is no law. Galatians 5:22,23

We have also been learning the books of the Bible. The children are familiar with the New Testament books with the help of a song. The Old Testament books are still a challenge for them, as it is for all of us. Jan Zook submitted the puzzle below. See if you can find all 30 books.

Find 30 Books

There are thirty books of the Bible in this paragraph. Can you find them? This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket, on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends. One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his johnboat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new sales record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "the books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus. There really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found. *Good Luck!*

Schedule for April

Each Sunday morning: 9:30 am – Worship Service
 10:45 am – Coffee and Fellowship
 11:00 am – Second Hour

- April**
- 1 7:00 am – Men’s Breakfast / *TBA*
 - 2 Sabbatical Committee Meeting
 - 6 6:00 pm – Young Adult Potluck / *TBA*
 - 7 6:30 pm – Cabin Fever Faith Series / *Church*
 - 8 8:00 am – Women’s Breakfast / *Mountain Creamery*
 4:00 pm – Leadership Meeting
 - 9 **PALM SUNDAY**
 - 13 **MAUNDY THURSDAY**
 6:00 pm – Movie: “The Passion” - Communion Following / *Church*
 - 14 **GOOD FRIDAY**
 - 16 **EASTER SUNDAY**
 7:00 pm – Cross Walk followed with Potluck Breakfast
 9:30 am – Worship Service / NO SECOND HOUR – SUNDAY SCHOOL
 - 23 9:30 am – EKKLESIA with Communion
 - 25 Deadline for May issue of *The Taftsville Chapel Current*
 - 26 7.00 pm – Church Council Meeting / *Church*
 - 28 7:00 pm – Song Leader Workshop with Sharon Williams / *Church*
 - 29 12:00 pm – “Gather ‘Round” training, with potluck.
An introduction to the new Anabaptist Sunday School Curriculum at Bethany Mennonite Church
 - 30 9:30 am – Song Service

Taftsville Tally		
	Attendance	Offering
Feb. 26 th	36	\$676.49
		<i>Birthday Offering for Library</i> ---70.00
Mar. 5 th	65	\$2,057.05
12 th	51	1,116.85
19 th	61	1,619.00
26 th	49	1,206.08

April Birthdays

20th Mabel McCrory
 22nd Homer Welch
 23rd Melissa Ayres
 23rd Lila Rowell
 25th Ted Shattuck
 25th Gavin Eisenberg

April Anniversaries

4th Dave & Carmeleta Beidler
 14th Bob & Jan Collins
 22nd Ted & Elinor Shattuck

April Song Leaders

2nd Dave Lutz
 9th Jan Zook
 16th Richard Glick
 23rd Carmeleta Beidler
 30th Rebekah Deitrich

April Childcare Schedule

2nd Nancy Pejouhy
 9th Janet North
 16th Carie Good
 23rd Carie Good
 30th Laura Beidler

April Cleaning Schedule

2nd Cox
 9th Cox
 16th Esch
 23rd Esch
 30th Snader

“APRIL QUESTION OF THE MONTH” (Please mark your responses, tear off this section, and deposit in the White Box)

I feel that **Sharing Time during Sunday morning Worship** is:

- not especially meaningful for me
- a distraction from worship
- a vital part of our spiritual community

I would like us to:

- leave it as is
- eliminate it
- move it to 2nd hour
- structure it

Comments: _____

Taftsville Tidbit Trivia

35 Years ago this Month

April 13, 1971

John Lutz shared about an MMA plan under consideration to form a kind of congregational group health insurance. The congregational "kitty" would be controlled by one of our own members, with partial payment to MMA, which would in turn provide additional assistance if needed

April 28, 1971

Candlelighters will meet at the home of Annie Lind. Miss Davis will speak to us about making a will - a subject that concerns everyone.

30 Years ago this Month

April 6, 1976

For an estimated \$400-\$500 it would be possible to trench and lay drainage pipe around our building. It would be a real convenience to have a dry basement floor.

April 6, 1976

An overhead projector has been purchased along with some visual aids for our congregation. The total price was around \$150.

25 Years ago this Month

April 19, 1981

Ken Stoltzfus prayerfully considered a call to come to serve as our pastor. He does not feel the Lord is leading him to do that at this time.

20 Years ago this Month

April 2, 1986

Seven week "Wellness Program" begins, with session on 'Abundant Living'.

15 Years ago this Month

April 9, 1991

We started planning to purchase new hymnals. Our goal is approximately 50 new books plus a piano edition.

*Send your contributions for
"The Taftsville Chapel Current" to:*

Janice.g.collins@valley.net

OR 802-295-5123

OR slip a note in my church mailbox

Taftsville Chapel Mennonite Fellowship

is located in the village of Taftsville,
one block south of Route 4 on Happy Valley Road.

<http://www.taftsvillechapel.org/>

Randy Good, pastor
(802) 457-1516

Taftsville Chapel

P O Box 44

Taftsville, Vermont 05073

