

Chestnut Hill Views



Chestnut Hill Church
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**Whoever you are
and wherever you are
on life's journey,
you are welcome here!**

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From The Pastor's Desk

The Importance of Fellowship

Many in America have observed that the sense of belonging and community has been lost in America. This is due to many factors that need not concern us here except to note that they are varied and pervasive. This was brought to my mind in a fresh way as I read an Op Ed piece by Roger Cohen in the February 23, 2010 New York Times. He wrote:

“Community — a stable job, shared national experience, extended family, labor unions — has vanished or eroded. In its place have come a frenzied individualism, solipsistic screen-gazing, the disembodied pleasures of social networking and the à-la-carte life as defined by 600 TV channels and a gazillion blogs. Feelings of anxiety and inadequacy grow in the lonely chamber of self-absorption and projection. Sometimes, it seems, we are as lonely as those little planes over the Atlantic in on-board video navigation maps.

I was thinking of this during a recent spell as a grand juror. Thrown together for two weeks at Brooklyn Supreme Court with 22 other jurors, I was struck by how rare it is now in American life to be gathered, physically, with an array of other folk of different ages, backgrounds, skin colors, beliefs, faiths, tastes, education levels and political convictions and be obliged to work out your differences in order to get the job done. I can still hear the juror next to me. “I work at 311” — the number New Yorkers dial with complaints or questions about the city. “Drives me nuts, been doing it five years. People treat you like idiots. Most of the time it’s water seeping into basements, sewage systems blocked. At least my job hasn’t been outsourced to Bangalore. People ask me, ‘You in New York?’ They ask me, ‘Are you a human being or a robot?’ Sometimes I say, “I ... AM ... A ... ROBOT.’ But we’ve got supervisors listening to calls. One thing that drives me crazy is all the people who speak slowly, as if I’m an idiot. I tell them, ‘You can speak faster, you know!’ Jury duty’s actually a relief!”

The church of Jesus Christ is, among other things, the place where we can find community and a sense of belonging. However, it will require some effort on the part of each of us and it will require that we make different choices. For some, this will mean less time spent watching TV. For some, this will mean less time in front of a computer screen or video game. For some, it will mean less time in after school sports and

From the Pastor's Desk (continued)

otherwise healthy activities. None of these things are bad per se, but cumulatively, they are isolating us from one another rather than engaging one another in meaningful, close relationships. For some, it will mean getting over the reluctance to be friendly with someone who looks or acts differently than we do. That person might be the grouch who disagrees with everything you say, the southerner who “talks funny,” or the one who enjoys five dozen jalapeno peppers covering his scrambled eggs! OUCH!

Churches in the New Testament and successful churches across the world are those that enable and encourage close and meaningful relationships among their members. In Luke’s summary of the early converts in Acts 2:42, two of the four items he singles out involve close community involvement and fellowship. Here is Eugene Peterson’s paraphrase from *The Message*: “They committed themselves to the apostles’ teaching, the life together, the common meal, and the prayers.”

If we want to have strong, healthy families and a church that is thriving rather than just surviving, we must make greater efforts towards deeper involvement and fellowship with one another. When is the last time you invited another church family over for dinner? At church dinners and functions, whom do you sit with? Someone you know or someone you do not know so well? Have you considered joining a discussion group? If you don’t like the ones we have, the times they are offered, or the current topics, start one yourself. We will not last long as a society, as a church, or as a family unless we spend more time in face-to-face interaction with one another. Let’s work together to encourage a community of love and mutual acceptance at Chestnut Hill Church.

Pastor John

Annual Meeting held on February 28, 2010

At the Annual Meeting, the election of council members for 2010-2011 took place. Betsey Schmeltzle was unanimously elected to serve on the church council. The church council for 2010-2011 will consist of: Jack Camburn, Arlene Billger, David Kadingo, Kevin McKee, Harry Rupp, Steve Schey, Betsey Schmeltzle, Rodney Slota, Carolyn Werkheiser, and Kathy Zerby. Council will have elections for council president, vice president, and secretary at the regularly scheduled meeting on March 9, 2010

We want to thank Laura Held and Gloria Arndt for serving on the church council for the past 4 years.

There was a discussion concerning the number of council members serving at one time. This will be a change to the constitution. The change will appear in the April newsletter. It will take one year before the change can be implemented.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

March 28	Palm Sunday	8:00 am & 10:00 am services
	Children's Easter Egg Hunt	11:15 am
April 1	Maundy Thursday Service	7:30 pm
April 2	Good Friday Service	7:30 pm
April 4 th	Easter Services	8:00 am 10:00 am

SLAC Food Bank Help Wanted

Volunteers Needed! It is Chestnut Hill Church's turn to staff Betty Lou's Pantry in April. Eight volunteers are needed on Saturday, April 10th and Saturday, April 24th from 8:30 a.m. to approximately 11:00 a.m. We will be filling food orders for families in need, and restocking the shelves of the food bank. Your time is greatly appreciated! Please call Mandy Dicker to volunteer at (610) 966-5599 or e-mail msdicker@ptd.net. Thanks!!

The Black-Eyed Susan

Baltimore's only Authentic Paddlewheel Dinner Boat

Friday May 21, 2010 cost is: \$94.00 pp adult includes \$1.00 bus driver tip

Our bus trip to Baltimore MD in May has 49 passengers signed up. We have had a few additional requests.

I have a sign up sheet posted for a POSSIBLE 2nd bus, but I would need between 21 and 31 people interested, before I can make the 2nd bus happen.

So if you missed the first sign up sheet, now's your chance

see Debbie Koder or call 610-967-1975 for more information and come join the fun!

Sunday School and Youth Group Easter Project

The One Spirit Youth Group will be putting together the Easter Egg Hunt this year. We are asking for donations of fun size candy or stickers that can fit in an egg. We are asking that these donations be put in our box located in the fellowship hall on the table. Donations will be accepted up until Sunday, March 21st. (We will be making up the eggs before Palm Sunday.) Thanks for your help! We couldn't do it without you! If you have any questions, please email or call Sandy Snyder, onespirit@ptd.net or (610) 841-9874.

This Lent is all about sacrifice like the one Jesus made for us. This Lenten Season the children from Chestnut Hill's Sunday School will be decorating boxes to put spare change in. We will be collecting these boxes on Palm Sunday, March 28th. The proceeds from this collection will be sent to the **United Church of Christ's Kids to Kids Mission Project- Haiti's Babies!** This special project provides the kits that the UCC sends out to Haiti to take care of all the babies they can. The kit includes much needed items like cloth diapers, tee-shirts, and blankets. The cost of each kit is **\$41**. (\$39 for all the items in the kit and \$2 for shipping. The money is for these kits. There are many ways for our children to earn this money from parents, grandparents, and even neighbors. They can do chores. They can donate all or part of their allowance. If you would like to donate, please see one of the Sunday School kids and they will take the money to be put in their box. If you have any questions, please email or call Sandy Snyder, onespirit@ptd.net or (610) 841-9874.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Checking Account as of January 31, 2010	\$9,493.70
Building fund	\$4,273.16
Special Savings Account	\$14, 023.39
Investment Accounts	
Ameriprise	\$ 48,790.23
Hoff Endowment	\$135,487.30

The Lord Works In Mysterious Ways (or, Did You Know?)

We've often heard it said that "the Lord works in mysterious ways". One person who certainly would not argue with that axiom is singer Dolly Parton.

Long before she was dubbed "The Queen of Country Music", before she earned acclaim as a singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, philanthropist, and actress, even before she gained notoriety for her, er, statuesque physical dimensions, Dolly Parton was...poor. "Dirt poor" by her own assessment, she was the fourth of twelve children born to sharecropping parents in Sevierville, Tennessee. The Partons lived in a "rustic" one-room cabin in Locust Ridge near the Great Smoky Mountains, an area of great natural beauty but also considerable poverty. (In my experience, "rustic" is usually a polite euphemism used to avoid calling something "dilapidated" or "ramshackle".)

Her father could neither read nor write (although Parton has often said she considered him a very smart man who simply never had the opportunity to get a formal education). While her mother was literate, due to the family's poverty and large size there were very few books in the house. But if you're only going to have one book, it's a good idea to start with the Bible, and the family did have one of those. "Mother read that to us," Dolly has said, and she credits the Bible with helping her learn to read and fostering a life-long love of literacy.

Although she could not know it at the time, the Bible also provided another great gift to Dolly Parton. One day her mother sat down to sew a coat for Dolly, to help ward off the Tennessee chill. She used a box of fabric scraps which the family had been given to piece together the jacket, and as she sewed she told Dolly the Biblical story from Genesis of Jacob and Joseph, likening the garment to Joseph's "coat of many colors". After considerable detours, of course, things came out right in the end for Joseph, and Dolly's mother likewise hoped that "perhaps this coat will bring you good luck and happiness".

With this inspiring story still ringing in her ears, Dolly hurried off to school ("with patches on my britches/holes in both my shoes") to show off her new jacket. Even by the standards of deepest rural Tennessee, the Partons must have been poor, for it didn't take long for some of her schoolmates to point out that she was wearing a coat made out of...well, rags. Years later, she described her puzzled reaction in

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Did You Know? (continued)

song: "I couldn't understand it, for I felt I was rich/And I told them of the love my mama sewed in every stitch/And I told them all the story mama told me while she sewed/And how my Coat of Many Colors was worth more than all their clothes." The moral of the story as Parton saw it, which would become the "hook" of her hit song, was that "One is only poor, only if they choose to be/Although we had no money, I was rich as r could be/In my Coat of Many Colors my mama made for me."

The song, which had its roots in a mother's love, a humble upbringing, and the words of the Bible, eventually hit #4 on the U.S. country music singles charts. Cover versions of it have been recorded by artists such as Shania Twain and Emmylou Harris. The record album of the same name would be ranked by Time magazine among the 100 Greatest Albums of All Time, and as #299 in Rolling Stone magazine's listing of the 500 greatest albums. Of the more than 3,000 tunes which Parton has penned, she often describes "Coat of Many Colors" in interviews as her favorite. The original coat can still be seen on display at Dollywood's "Chasing Rainbows Museum". Hits such as this, and astute business sense, caused Dolly Parton to be ranked by "Nashville Business" in 1998 as the wealthiest country music star. Through a variety of philanthropic endeavors, she has sought to "give back" some of these material blessings. Perhaps it sounds easy now for her to declare in an interview, "You've got to keep your faith, first of all. I pray every day. I always have. I always believed that God would provide." Certainly, however, neither Dolly nor her mother could have envisioned the Lord operating in His mysterious ways so long ago, as Mrs. Parton worked: "Sewin' every piece with love/She made my coat of many colors/That I was so proud of." Did you know?

WORK F.A.S.T. TO RECOGNIZE STROKE SYMPTOMS

Many of us know of at least one co-worker, friend, or loved one who has experienced the devastating and potentially life-threatening emergency of a stroke, or CVA (cerebrovascular accident).

A stroke occurs either when a blood vessel becomes blocked, or a vessel breaks and causes bleeding in the brain. Because of the rupture or blockage, the affected area of the brain

WORK F.A.S.T. TO RECOGNIZE STROKE SYMPTOMS (*continued*)

cannot get the blood and oxygen it needs to function, and critical nerve cells begin to die within minutes. In fact, it is estimated that two million brain cells die during every minute of a stroke! So although it's not always possible to prevent a stroke, it's important to recognize the warning signs of a possible event, and to seek medical attention as quickly as possible.

Warning signs may include one or more of the following:

*Numbness/weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body;

*Confusion, trouble speaking or understanding;

*Trouble seeing in one or both eyes;

*Trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination; and

*Severe headache with no known cause.

It is suggested that you remember the acronym "F.A.S.T." if you suspect you or someone you know may be having a stroke.

Face: Ask the person to smile or stick out his or her tongue. Does one side of the face look crooked or droopy?

Arms: Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one seem weaker, or drift downward?

Speech: Have the person repeat a simple phrase, such as, "The sky is blue." Does his or her speech seem slurred? different? "just not right"?

Time: If possible, note the time the symptoms or unusual behavior began. Depending on, the cause of the stroke, clot-busting medication can sometimes be given within three hours of the stroke onset to limit or prevent damage.

As with a person having a heart attack, the most common initial reaction is denial: "It can't be anything serious," or, "It can't be happening to me." Precious minutes are lost before realization sets in that something serious may indeed be going on. Remember: Time lost is brain lost! That's why medical personnel preach the importance of acting F.A.S.T.! Call 9-1-1 and seek emergency evaluation as soon as possible if you or someone you know exhibits these symptoms or complaints.