



OCTOBER 2008



Ushers: Sally Barthell & LaJuan Fleming
 Presby Cab: Scott Postlethwaite
 Hospital Visitor: Sally Barthell
 Liturgist: Rosella McQuain



Update from Amy

Dear Church Family,

I'm going to love this semester! We just finished the first week of our Fall semester and I absolutely loved all of my classes. No test anxiety to worry about this semester because all three of my classes are paper-writing classes.

I really like my Systematic Theology professor. Dr. Ellen Charry taught an introductory theology class I took last year and I learned so much from her. One can see that she teaches theology because she loves to learn about God and wants to share that passion. She has a great sense of humor and wants to be close to her students.

My other two classes are taught by Dr. Donald Capps. This is his last year and I'm fortunate to be able to arrange my schedule to take both of his classes: Minister & Mental Illness and Pastoral Care & The Life Cycle. As a Psychology undergrad student, both of the classes interest me. We'll be studying mental disorders in the first class. During the semester we will be reading the biography of John Nash (A Beautiful Mind). Dr. Capps is familiar with him personally since he also lives in Princeton.

In the Life Cycle class I believe it will be interesting because Dr. Capps uses Erik Erikson's theory of the 8 Ages of Man and forms his own theory (which became his book, Decades of Life). Dr. Capps has also interviewed Erikson's wife and daughter so he has a wealth of information that interests me.

I will also be working 10-15 hours a week as an intern at the First Presbyterian Church in Moorestown, NJ. It is a large church (approx. 1,500) and there will be three interns from Princeton working there this year. They have three services on Sunday morning so we each will be assisting in worship each Sunday and will preach once per semester. We also will be teaching classes, visiting members, and learning what it is that keeps a church running.

It's going to be a GREAT semester!

Amy Florence

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
October is "Walk or Bike to school month" Enjoy!			1 Pumpkin Patch Opens! 6:00pm Worship/Music Meeting 7:00pm Choir Practice	2 Toy Shop Rummage Sale	3 Toy Shop Rummage Sale	4
5 <i>World Communion Sunday</i> 9:00am Disciples Class 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Fellowship 10:45am Worship/Communion Bridgebuilder Process Begins Noon Meal Provided Peacemaking Offering	6 Bridgebuilder Process meetings in morning 10:30am Staff Meeting	7 6:00pm Fellowship and Renewal Mtg	8 7:00pm Choir Practice	9 1:30pm Circle II Mtg	10 9:30am Circle I Mtg	11
12 9:00am Disciples Class 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Fellowship 10:45am Worship	13 10:30am Staff Meeting <i>Columbus Day Observed</i>	14 5:30pm Mission Committee Meeting 6:00pm Diaconate Meeting	15 Noon – Birthday Lunch @ El Palacio 7:00pm Choir Practice	16 5:30pm Witness & Evangelism Mtg <i>World Food Day</i>	17	18 Church Women United meet in Tulsa
19 9:00am Disciples Class 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Fellowship 10:45am Worship 6:00pm PotLuck Dinner & Games Youth Food Harvest	20 10:30am Staff Meeting Noon - Health & Safety Mtg	21 6:30pm Session Mtg	22 7:00pm Choir Practice	23	24 Faw Entry Deadline <i>United Nations Day</i>	25
26 9:00am Disciples Class 9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Fellowship 10:45am Worship Reformation Sunday	27 10:30am Staff Meeting	28 6:00pm Property & Maintenance Mtg	29 7:00pm Choir Practice	30	31 Halloween	



To Our Supporting Churches and Friends: The Tender Voice of Truth

Houston, Texas
Thursday, 11 September 2008

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Although my son Everett had recently made good progress with chemotherapy in gaining control of the Ewing's sarcoma in his left pelvic bone, the last follow-up scan revealed a new spot in his right pelvis, and a biopsy showed spread of his cancer to that area. The team of sarcoma specialists at the MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston believes the new spot is due not to direct local invasion by Everett's primary tumor but metastatic, distant spread of his disease. The distinction is crucial, because finding one metastasis implies there may be other metastases not yet evident on the scans. It also means that Everett's chances of being cured are now very low. The immediate plan is to melt the spot on the right with high-frequency radio waves delivered through a probe, continue to shrink the tumor on the left with chemotherapy, and support Everett in every way we can.

If you could read my devotional journal entries from the past year, you would see how many times I have prayed that we could contain Everett's disease and offer him potentially curative surgery. Now that we are losing grasp of that possibility, the agony I have suffered since last September is grinding harder and harder upon my soul. The malicious forces from which I prayed to God for deliverance are now raising their hideous, vengeful voices against me, ridiculing me for ever hoping for life and happiness. Every morning they wake me up before my alarm with piercing reminders of my harsh predicament, and during the day if I even begin to lose myself in the beauty of a crisp blue sky or in my favorite music, they prod me back to my tragic circumstances. During my devotional times, they taunt me: "You, who tried to have a life of faith and follow God's calling; you, who trusted that God would protect you and your family as you served him; you, whose hopes are now dashed upon the rocks--admit it! God has forsaken you! Go ahead, ask him why! Just say it, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

I was about to write those painfully clear words in my devotional journal this week. But I could not put them on paper. My pen hovered millimeters above my journal, but my hand would not lower it to the page. A tender, compassionate voice from deeper within stopped me and told me the truth--that Jesus Christ has already spoken those words for me and my family; and because for us he has already gone to that place of deepest agony, we don't have to. Nothing, nothing can separate us from God and his love.

I also understood then that to write that hopeless question in my journal would be to deny the very proclamation I, as a medical missionary of the church, bring to those who suffer. It would deny the care I provided for Milton, an orphan with tuberculosis; for Morjina, a woman in a Dhaka slum who was abandoned by her husband after she had a stroke; for Babulal, a deaf boy in the rural Village of Komlapur; for Fulmoni, a severely malnourished girl with rickets; and for Benjamin, a man in Dhaka, whose young son died of meningitis. And most importantly, it would deny the truth that I want with all heart to convey to my son Everett, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Yours,
Les

Dr. Leslie Y. Morgan
PC (USA) Mission Co-Worker/Bangladesh
7500 Brompton Rd., Apt. 552
Houston, TX 77025

Notes from the Administrative Commission

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

We are so gratified that Peter Steinke will be working with you this fall. He is a top of the line conflict management consultant and believes that his Bridgebuilder program will create opportunities for honest reflection, healing and moving forward in faith. **We urge you** all to participate fully in this process.

As you read in Dr. Steinke's letter, everyone has an opportunity to communicate with him in the "Tell it to Peter" session, by phone, fax, email or in writing. If you do not get a chance to be interviewed by him, and have something to say to him, please use these avenues of communication.

We understand that you have worked with a conflict management consultant before and did not see her recommendations implemented. **The onus is on you**, as leaders and members of this congregation to come to terms with and manage the issues that have troubled this congregation in the past. The Action Plan developed by Dr. Steinke and the Action Plan team will guide you in this process. Dr. Steinke plans to be with you on four separate occasions and the Administrative Commission will remain at work with you as you implement the Action plan.

This time of transition is truly a one day at a time, one step at a time process. We have spent the summer beginning to learn about you and the concerns of this congregation and its leaders. We are not through listening yet. We will be present for as much of the afternoon on October 5 as we can be. We will continue to hold our own listening sessions as we move forward in our work with you.

On another note: In concurrence with the Moderator of Session's ruling, the session has suspended the bylaws of the church while the Administrative Commission drafts a new set of bylaws for the congregation's vote later this fall. The old bylaws were not compliant with the Presbyterian Church (USA) Book of Order in a few places. The new set will be simpler and will cut down on the number of elected officers. With 29 elected positions, including clerk of session, treasurer and assistant treasurer, it is increasingly difficult to find that many leaders for this congregation. We will be working quickly and you can expect an announcement of a meeting of the congregation this fall. The current officers remain in office until new officers are elected and installed, so the work of the church will continue.

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." Let us all grow in practicing and ripening this fruit for the sake of Jesus Christ.