



Children of the church lead worship: "It's okay to be different"



Lions, brave and bold



Lambs, with heart of gold



***Lambs and lions together,
following Christ's command to
love one another.***

See page 4 for more



Pastor's Pen

During a recent week-long study leave I devoted time to reading in the area of Youth Ministry. Perhaps the most important of the books I read was *Almost Christian* by Kenda Creasy Dean, Associate Professor of Youth, Church, and Culture at Princeton Theological Seminary.

In her book, Dean reflects on recent findings of the *National Survey of Youth and Religion (NSYR)* (2005) conducted by Christian Smith and Melissa Denton. Among Smith and Denton's conclusions, based on the NSYR, is that a parasite religion has infected the church, and is in the process of "supplanting Christianity as the dominant religion in American churches" by "feeding on and gradually co-opting if not devouring" the beliefs and practices of historic Christian faith. Smith and Dean call that alternative religion "Moralistic Therapeutic Deism", or MTD; Dean calls it the "Cult of Nice."

According to Dean, the guiding beliefs of MTD are these:

1. A god exists who created and orders the world and watches over life on earth.
2. God wants people to be good, nice and fair to each other as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
3. The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
4. God is not involved in my life except when I need God to resolve a problem.
5. Good people go to heaven when they die (Dean, p. 14).

If you're wondering what's wrong with those beliefs, listen to her critique:

MTD is what is left once Christianity has been drained of its missional impulse, once holiness has given way to acculturation, and once cautious, self-preservation has supplanted the divine abandon of self-giving love. Yet the gospel is God's invitation to young people – to all people – to participate in the divine plan of salvation in Jesus Christ and to rely on God's goodness, not our own. . . . Imitating Christ makes people lay down their wallets, their reputations, their lives for the sake of others, which is why parents rightly fear it for their children. The cult of nice is so much safer; God is friendly and predictable, offering little and asking less. MTD does not ask people to lay down their lives for anyone, because niceness does not go that far. Love goes that far – and true love is neither nice nor safe (Dean, pp. 39-40).

After reading *Almost Christian* I found myself wondering: Am I more interested living in imitating Christ, or living as a nice person? Are we adults teaching and modeling for our children and youth Christian faith or Moralistic Therapeutic Deism? If the latter, then how would things be different at MPC, if we were more committed to teaching and embodying the gospel of God's self-giving love in Christ, than in acculturating ourselves, our children and our youth in the "Cult of Nice"? Are we willing to do what this would take?

Hard questions, I know. But after a week of study and reflection, I'm convinced they are questions we all need to struggle with.

The peace of Christ be with you all.

Ron Rosenau
Pastor



Our Church Family

90+ Birthdays

Lucy Burns, 90
on June 5, 2011
J. Bond Godshalk, 97
on June 9, 2011
Agnes VanOrden, 93
on June 9, 2011
Ruth Safka, 93
on June 20, 2011
Frank J. Radvany, 93
on June 22, 2011
Alice Olafson, 95
on June 23, 2011
Margaret Williams, 91
on June 23, 2011

Baptism

To the glory of God, Grace Anne DiTulio received Christian Baptism on May 22, 2011, the daughter of Beth and Jim DiTulio and the granddaughter of J'Ann Ellis.

Condolences

Condolences to George Merson on the death of his wife, Wendi on May 6, to Brooks Mershon on the death of his mother, Wendi on May 6 and to Warren Ferguson on the death of his daughter, Wendi on May 6, 2011 and to Bob Northrup on the death of his brother-in-law, Paul Merrill on May 1, 2011.

In Loving Memory

In loving memory of Suzanne Delia, a member since 1976, who died May 1, 2011 and Wendi Mershon, a member since 1967, who died May 6, 2011. *"I am the Resurrection and the Life. . ."* says the Lord.

Sacrament of Baptism

The Sacrament of Baptism will be celebrated on August 7th, 2011 at the 10:30 am worship service. Parents who wish to present their children for Baptism, are asked to call the church by July 21st, 2011. Baptism instruction is Sunday, July 31st, 2011 at 11:45 am.

Pastor Hancock to Travel to Holy Land

Pastor Hancock will join a group of 20 pastors from the greater Trenton/Princeton Area for a two week pilgrimage to Israel, June 7 – 21. The pilgrimage is funded by the Cousins Family (CF) Foundation, an Atlanta-based non-profit organization with ties to the PC (USA), and is administered by Princeton Theological Seminary.

The group will spend its first week at Pilgerhaus Tabqa on the shores of Lake Galilee before moving to the Notre Dame Center in heart of Jerusalem for the second week.

You can follow Trent on his journey by checking out the official blog for the pilgrimage. Dr. Shane Berg, Assistant Professor of New Testament and pilgrimage leader, will be posting brief reflections and pictures every day.

www.holyland2011.wordpress.com

Ross Lang Completes Degree and is Certified Ready to Receive a Call

Ross Lang graduated with a Master of Theology (Th.M.) in New Testament from Princeton Theological Seminary on May 21st. Earlier in the month Ross was also certified ready to receive a call by the Committee on Preparation for Ministry of the Presbytery of Philadelphia. Ross is now eligible to be ordained as a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church once he has received a call. *Congratulations Ross!*

Lions and Lambs

Continued from front cover:

May 15 was Children's Sunday – a great day in the life of the church. The service started with the Children's Chimes. From the call to worship (Brandon Schnurr) and call to confession (Kathryn Gilbride) to scripture reading (Teddy Schott) and prayers (Lily Rushing, Anna Flook), the children offered their time and talent to lead the congregation in worship. Educational Ministry Council elders Paul Clough and Jeannie Alexander, along with Children and Family Council elder Beth DiTulio, and DCE Katy Yates Brungraber, were assisted by teachers in distributing age-appropriate Bibles to 2 year olds, Kindergarteners, 2nd and 5th graders. Under the leadership of Betty Hohwieler (Musical Director) and Carol Houghton (Director), Kindergarten to 5th grade children from Agape and Cherub choirs offered a message of tolerance, acceptance, and love, in response to Christ's call to love one another. Many thanks go to behind-the-scenes parents Dawn Fook, Judy Gardner, Lauryn Gilbride, and Beth Curtiss for all their creative support.

Pictured on cover:

Lambs(from top, L-R): Gus Dous, Evan Wadley, Amanda Bingham, Andrew Neiman, Santino Hernandez-Feehan, Eric Moyer-Harrington, Kathryn Gilbride

Lions: Ben Dous, David Curtiss, Elizabeth Pingor, Dean Wadley, Eliza Davulcu, Michael Krajci, Emma Schott, Anna Flook

Lions and Lambs in Harmony: Tess Hancock, Natalie Houghton, Joely Gardner, Lizzie Stoner, Brandon Keys, Alex Vincent, Sydney Flook, Lily Rushing, Avery Gardner

Pentecost Offering

for Children at Risk, Youth, and Young Adults

The Pentecost Offering will be received on the day of Pentecost (June 12, 2011). It provides a direct way to meet the needs of children at risk, youth, and young adults. 40 percent of the Offering will be given to Camp Kirkwood to provide "camperships" for children to attend this summer.

The General Assembly's portion (60 percent) provides leadership development opportunities for Presbyterian youth and young adults and supports children-at-risk programs at the national level. Since 1998, Presbyterians of all ages have raised over \$7 million for these ministries that benefit younger members of God's family.

Graduating Seniors

Alyssa Craft will be attending Mercer County Community College and will be studying psychology and music.

Kerry Dillon is graduating from Princeton Day School on June 10, 2011. She will be attending the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill in the fall. Her anticipated major is Biology. Kerry was accepted into UNC's First Year Fellows and Research Scholars programs, and also received a college sponsored National Merit Scholarship.

James Levan will be attending Temple University.





Stewardship

Stewardship by Mark Schnurr, Chair, Stewardship Council

May 2011

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Pledge Income | \$160,397 |
| Total Income | \$260,416 |
| Expenses | \$276,297 |
| Operating Income (Deficit) | (\$15,881) |

Year to date, pledge income of \$160,000 is tracking right on budget, and total income is ahead of budget due in large part to a bequest received at the end of last year, and return on savings showing an improvement over plan. Expenses are slightly below budget, and through May, we are posting an operating deficit of \$15,881. Our annual budget calls for deficit spending of \$151,000, and with thanks to the large bequest, we will come in under this number, but still in deficit spending.

For the year, pledge commitments are \$450,000, and our pledge budget is \$470,000. If you are doing your part and living up to your pledge commitment for 2011; thank you! Meeting our obligations for the ministry & mission of MPC relies heavily on everyone meeting their commitment. If you have fallen behind, or plan on traveling away from the area during the summer months, we would appreciate every effort to become or remain current during the “quieter” months. Our obligations continue every month, and remaining current to your commitment will alleviate the need to “catch up” later in the year.

Looking ahead, the beautiful building and grounds of MPC will need some **TLC**. Many windows need to be repaired, repainted, or replaced. Our parking lot is in dire need of patching and paving, and just like home, there is always a list of “to do” items within the building. At some point in the near future, we will need to develop a plan to build a fund to support capital improvement. When the time comes to develop our approach to this need, I hope you consider supporting MPC with a one time commitment, or a small increase in weekly giving. More to follow in the coming months...

Thank you for your commitment to the ongoing mission of MPC!

hi·a·tus
[hahy-ey-tuhs]—**noun, plural-tus-es, -tus.**

1. a break or interruption in the continuity of a work, series, action, etc.

MPC Currents will be on **hiatus** for part of the summer. Look for the next issue to come your way mid-August. Meanwhile, keep in touch with MPC happenings through our web site (MPCusa.net), and through e-mail announcements via FYI. If *you'll* be on hiatus for part of the summer, remember that audio recordings of worship services are available for download on the web.

Boomers and Beyond . . .

by Linda Seaman

The Currents will be taking a break, and with Summer fast upon us, so will you. Remember to include church attendance in your plans. Here are some random thoughts:

- Yes, Virginia, there will be a **Gala**. I am looking for a spot on our Sept. calendar. This year's theme will feature popular country music. Dick Wiseman will be traveling from his new home in the Allentown area to reprise his role as MC and CD maker. Shirley May and Loretta Whiteside are on deck, too!
- Kudos to **Presbyterian Women** for a most enjoyable Mother/Daughter Banquet in May. Remember . . . all women of the church are considered Presbyterian Women – you need not be a Circle member to participate in sponsored events! Join the fellowship!
- Florida farmers want you to know that tomatoes are not to be refrigerated.
- Wonderful and **EASY fruit dip** = one 8 oz. pkg. of Neufchâtel Cheese well softened mixed with one small jar of marshmallow cream. Yum . . . I love it especially with cantaloupe.
- Do you all have a POA, advance directives, and a will? Or . . . is it time to amend any of the aforementioned? Keep your family informed also.
- Congratulations **Morrisville Presbyterian Apartments** on 25 years of service. I enjoyed the anniversary celebration. Representatives from HUD, Presby's Inspired Life, local government, Rev. and Mrs. Kauffman, Lucy Burns, and a room full of residents marked the occasion. The original time capsule was buried 25 years ago by Dick Burns and was on display.
- Watch for more **day trips in our Mini Van** with Ted Fletcher and Dave Powers.

- I recently attended a Fall Prevention Seminar – bears mentioning – throw out the throw rugs, do not store items on steps, clean up spills immediately, keep frequently used items where you can reach them w/o a stool, fix outdoor cracks in driveways and sidewalks, place a non-skid mat in your tub, and consider adding handrails on both sides of steps. Think safety in the home!

- Another seminar topic – **Hyperbaric Oxygen (HBO) chambers** which supply 100% oxygen to wounds. This non-emergency treatment is covered by Medicare for 13 indications and is heavily used by diabetics and radiation patients. The chamber helps your body generate multiple new small blood vessels and also helps your white blood cells work more efficiently. St. Mary Medical Center offers these chambers at a location in Langhorne. The U.S. government is trying HBO on soldiers with brain trauma and is reporting good results. Might potential stroke treatment be a possibility? Interested in learning more? Call 215-710-4325.

Put the snow shovel away! *“Summer afternoon, Summer afternoon; to me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language.” - Henry James*



Celebrating 25th Anniversary of Morrisville Presbyterian Apartments

Judee Bavariu, CEO of Presby's Inspired Life
Judy Kauffman, First Manager
Linda Seaman, Second Manager

Thanks MPC for your 25 years of support!

**Church
Picnic**



All-Church Picnic

June 12

Following 10:30 am

Worship Service

Sign-up in the Communications Center.

Suggested donation \$2 and bring a salad or side dish to share.

Sponsored by Children & Family Council

Plan to join us on Pentecost and wear RED to celebrate!

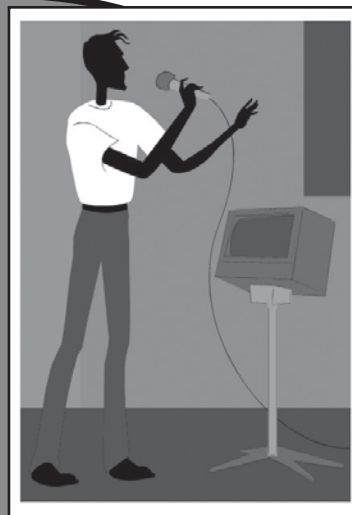
Join Us!

Karaoke Night To Benefit the MPC Food Center

Sat. June 18th – 5–9 pm

Location: American Legion Post 317

215 South Main Street, Yardley, PA 19067



Karaoke • Chinese Auction • Barbecue Buffet • 50/50 Raffle

Tickets:

\$20 in advance

Call 215-266-0849 for advance tickets

\$25 at the door

Morrisville Presbyterian Church

Phone 215.295.4191
Fax 215.295.0365
Web Address www.MPCusa.net



Please note our e-mail addresses:

Staff E-mail

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ronrosenau@MPCusa.net | The Rev. Dr. Ronald F. Rosenau |
| trenthancock@MPCusa.net | The Rev. Dr. Trent A. Hancock |
| lindaseaman@MPCusa.net | Linda Seaman |
| katybdce@MPCusa.net | Katy Yates Brungraber |
| lauriejacobson@MPCusa.net | Laurie M. Jacobson |
| marilynshenenberger@MPCusa.net | Marilyn Shenenberger |
| elizabethhohwieler@MPCusa.net | Elizabeth Hohwieler |
| carolhoughton@MPCusa.net | Carol Houghton |
| karencooley@MPCusa.net | Karen Cooley |
| rebeccacrawford@MPCusa.net | Rebecca Crawford |
| richdrabb@MPCusa.net | Rich Drabb |

MPC Currents (USPS#204-040), is published monthly. Periodical mail postage paid at Levittown, PA 19055.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Morrisville Presbyterian Church, Box 240, 771 N. Pennsylvania Ave., Morrisville, PA 19067. Phone 215.295.4191, Fax 215.295.0365

Please submit articles for the August 14, 2011

Currents by July 25, 2011. Thank you.



Looking Ahead

- June 12** Pentecost, Confirmation, Communion
All Church Picnic
- June 19** Baptism
Ordination and Installation of Officers
- July 11-15** Vacation Bible School
- July 17-23** Youth-In-Mission Trip to Pipestem, West Virginia
- July 17** Communion
- August 8** Baptism
- August 14** Communion

