

BETHLEHEM STAR

The newsletter of Bethlehem Original Free Will Baptist Church Joe Ard, Pastor September-October 2008



Revival will be Sunday through Tuesday, Oct. 5-7. Services begin at 6 p.m. on Oct. 5; 7 p.m. the following two nights. Rev. Philip Wood will be the guest speaker.

"It is my desire that it not just be a series of meetings," said deacon chairman Crandall Fountain, "but that we come expecting revival."



Homecoming

Homecoming is set for Oct. 12. During the 11 a.m. worship service we'll remember those who have gone on to their reward in the past year. After the service is one of those belt-stretching covered-dish dinners. Come early for Sunday school and stay for "meet and eat."

It all belongs to the Lord

During the last few months as I struggled with the help needed in Children's Church, I came across some pertinent information concerning ministries.

How valuable this was to me as I was stressing over the volunteer openings. I felt like a failure, or worse, that God had failed me — as though He works for me! I know God sent me this information. It plainly read, "It isn't your ministry." I think I had turned myself into the "protector" of this ministry or its "savior." To read this was a slap back into reality.

The article went on to say that if God wants a program or ministry to continue, He will provide the workers. Wow! I began to ponder the idea of no more Children's Church and my heart just broke. O Lord, could this be what you want? Had God not sent workers, I would've struggled with the thought of this ministry no longer existing, but then again that was with the mentality that this was "my" ministry.

I really had to believe that this is God's ministry. I also had to thank Him for placing me as the steward of His ministry, and it was then that vacancies were filled. People sometimes have the idea someone else can do a better job, and they may be right sometimes, but "better" is not always what is "best."

So if your ministry is in need of workers and God doesn't seem to



be answering right away, ask and pray and think about what God could be up to. He never ceases to amaze me. He has sent workers who have heeded His call.

Again I want to say "God bless you" to Marcia Jones, Sandy Miller, Reba Fountain and Nancy Ripley! And also to Rosa and Stanley Craft who love doing what they do with the children (right, Stanley?) and decided to stay on another year.

They will be filling these positions until July 2009. Please keep them in your prayers and consider becoming a team teacher too!

A thank you is also extended to Mallory and Tony Jones for filling in past their commitment time as well as to Tammi Alberston and Melody Strickland.

— Billie Ard

God's Children's Church coordinator

Offer words of encouragement

Willie Mays began his major league baseball career with only one hit in his first 26 at-bats. Though he went on to hit 660 home runs (third on the all-time list), and steal more than 300 bases, his debut was so unimpressive it seemed unlikely he would last more than a few weeks as a big-leaguer, let alone become one of the greatest to play the game.

The turning point for Mays occurred when his manager, Leo Durocher, found him crying in the dugout after yet another miserable performance at the plate.

The coach put his arm around Mays and said, "What's the matter, son?" Mays said, "I can't hit up here. I belong in the minor leagues."

Durocher said this to Willie Mays: "As long as I'm manager of the Giants, you'll be my centerfielder."

You know how the story ends. It wasn't long before Mays began hitting the ball, and he was on his way to becoming a legend of the game.

If Willie had been left alone in the dugout that day, his career might have ended before it started. Fortunately for him (and for baseball) someone believed in him even when he didn't believe in himself.

Durocher's speech wasn't, "You're a disappointment. Do you know how much you're costing the



team? You're on the verge on blowing your big chance!" He simply said, "I know that you can make it."

Is there someone in your life who needs your vote of confidence? Someone who's ready to give up? Someone who no longer believes in their ability to do what God has called them to do?

You have the opportunity to lift them up. Your words

— your confidence — can help get them back on track.

The Apostle Paul recognized the value of encouragement in the lives of believers. Have you ever noticed how often in the New Testament the word "strengthen" (or build up) accompanies the word "encouragement"? When you offer encouragement to others, you quite literally renew their strength. Paul challenged us all:

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as you are in fact doing." (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

Take a look around you today. There may be a future Hall-of-Famer who needs a good word from you. Give them some encouragement.

— Preacher Joe

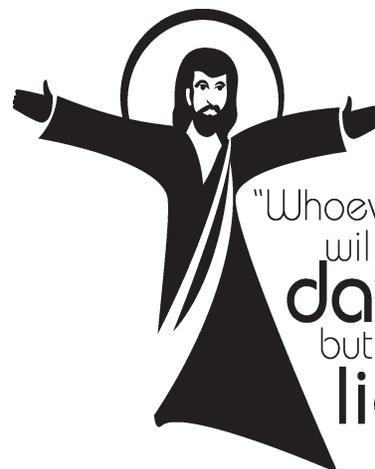
What I'm reading:

"Diapers, Pacifiers and Other Holy Things" by Lorraine Pintus is a fabulous devotional book for moms of young children. It inspires greatness and spiritual growth while reminding us who are in Christ of God's mercy and grace.

Anyone with five minutes will easily get a word from the Lord.

— Caron Fountain

What are YOU reading? Share the blessings by dropping a line to jerifountain@yahoo.com or scribbling out a paragraph for the next newsletter.



"Whoever follows me
will **never** walk in
darkness,
but will have the
light of life."

JOHN 8:12

Services now available on CD for shut-ins

As you may know, our church has a tape (now CD) ministry.

One of our shut-ins, Mrs. Ethel Wood, will be 97 years young on Sept. 29. I'm sure she would enjoy a card, a visit or a telephone call. I call her "our local historian." God has blessed her with a good memory and it's interesting to hear her tell about the times in which she grew up.

Another lady, Mrs. Evelyn Brown, has been added to our list. She has just celebrated her 90th birthday.

One of God's promises is that He has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind (II Timothy 1:7). Visit these ladies and you will see this promise in action.

When Sutton Fountain or Johnny Albertson is not able to attend our Sunday morning service, they get a CD. Of course, we enjoy seeing their faces when they can attend.



Remember Our Homebound Members

I know we all are busy, but if you can schedule any time to visit these dear people, I know you both will be blessed.

If you know someone who would like to receive a CD of our Sunday morning worship service, please let me know. You can contact me at church, at home at 910-324-1228 or by e-mail at mbrown108@ec.rr.com.

— Mary Jo Brown



Invite a Friend to Church

What's so great about going to Sunday school?

Sunday school teaches the Bible, the message of God Almighty.

Sunday school prepares one better to face the problems of life.

Sunday school teaches obedience and respect for parents and those in authority.

Sunday school gives us the opportunity to develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Sunday school helps build strong character.

Sunday school presents opportunities to share Christian experiences.

Sunday school shows the student how he can be of service in this sinful world.

Sunday school brings together those with whom you can form true friendships.

Sunday school gives the opportunity to bring others the message of the Gospel.

Sunday school teaches songs of real beauty, comfort and praise.

Sunday school gives the opportunity to discuss spiritual problems in small groups.

Requests for prayers

Johnnie Albertson
 Joe & Billie Ard
 Margaret Ard
 Joe Batts
 Kimberly Bryan
 Teresa Dempsey
 Mary Dudley
 Doris Fountain
 Joyce & Sutton Fountain
 Marvin Fountain
 Thelbert Fountain
 Mel Fowler
 Tyler Grady
 Janet & Paul Heaton
 Sadie Mae Humphrey
 Faye Ives
 Jennifer Johnson
 Leslie Jones
 Reba Jones
 Fallon Lanier
 Sadie Lanier
 Sarah Madigan
 Bill Nobles
 Gardner Pike
 J.R. Quintero
 Cecil & Geraldine Raynor
 Ronnie Raynor
 Tammie Register
 Tammy Ripley
 Gene Sanderson family
 Eric Simpson
 Jonathan Simpson
 Olivia Stallings
 Bill & Frances Voss
 Dennis Williams
 Guy Williams
 Jolly Williams
 Church leaders
 Elections
 Our military

News, notes and tidbits

Especially for seniors

The October senior fellowship dinner is set for 6 p.m. Oct. 23. On the menu is chicken casserole, green beans, rolls, layer cake and tea. Randy Jones will be the guest speaker.

No gathering is planned in November.

The December get-together, 6 p.m. Dec. 4, features entertainment by Gum Puddin' — Paige and Linda Murphy. The menu includes ham, green beans, candied yams, rolls, tea and banana pudding.

Tickets are \$3.50 and must be purchased in advance. See Ricky or Susan Dempsey (910-324-1747), Rosa Craft (910-324-4881), Chasity Brown (910-324-4881) or Alyce Horne (910-324-4555) for tickets or details.

Poinsettia orders

Mary Jo Brown is taking on the duty of poinsettias for this Christmas season. If you want to order a poinsettia in honor of someone or in memory of someone — or just for yourself — contact Mary Jo at 910-324-1228 or mbrown108@ec.rr.com.

Higher education

Caleb Ard won a \$750 scholarship from the North Carolina Association of Teacher Assistants.

He plans to attend Lenoir Community College and transfer to a major university. Right now he has his eye on the medical field.

Caleb also was awarded the James Sutton Jr. Memorial schol-

arship through LCC's scholarship program, and a Woodmen of the World scholarship.

Caleb is the son of Joe and Billie Ard.

Wedding bells

Congratulations are in order for Tina Smith of Beulaville and James Dail of Richlands, who were married June 23 in a private ceremony in Jacksonville. James is the son of Britt and Diane Dail. The couple is residing near Beulaville.

Church directory

A copy of the current directory is in the vestibule for updates, corrections and additions. Gail Walton handles this big task, and plans to have the new and improved directory in everyone's hands in time for the holidays.

Please be sure your information is correct.

Got e-mail?

You can have your Bethlehem Star newsletter delivered to your computer desktop simply by shooting an e-mail to jerifountain@yahoo.com. It will arrive in PDF form, so you can print it if you want, or send it on in an e-mail to friends and relations.

Got news??

Share your important information with the rest of the church family. Write it down and give your tidbits to Jeri Fountain or send it to jerifountain@yahoo.com.

Sounds of Life

A baby cries.
 A toddler screams.
 A child laughs.
 A teen argues.
 An adult says I do.
 An old married couple swings into the sunset.
 Family cries at a funeral.
 Then the cycle starts again.

— Rachel Southerland

Mount Olive College bridge builders gather

Our Duplin County dinner to support Mount Olive College will be at 6 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 1 in the college's dining hall.

The purpose of MOC is to build a Christian college to meet the educational needs of the Free Will Baptist Church and the people of eastern North Carolina. To help achieve this purpose, the college sponsors a series of annual dinners which focus on the Bridge Builders, a support program that invites individuals, families and church groups to participate in the educational services of the college. Bridge Builders are those who make an unrestricted gift or pledge of \$100 or more.

MOC was founded and is sponsored by the Original Free Will Baptist Church. The college provides services for the church that are unique — such as educational services, financial assistance and outreach — so please consider becoming a Bridge Builder and invest in the lives of our young people. Your gift can be given in memory or in honor of someone.

Unfortunately, the past two years we have not met our goal of \$1,000 here at Bethlehem. Our prayer is that this year we can exceed \$1,500. Join with us now as we "Build a Bridge" to further the cause of MOC. For more information on how you can participate contact Crandall Fountain, 910-324-6886, or Billie Ard, 252-568-4590.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

September

- 1-Gail Walton
- 1- Freddie Jones
- 4 - Elton Fountain
- 5 - Ross Rigdon
- 7 - Doris Wood
- 8 - Tori Jones
- 8 - Tammi Albertson
- 9 - Britt Dail
- 9 - Sheldon Fountain
- 12 - Reba Fountain
- 15 - Faith Fountain
- 19 - Gabriel Fountain
- 20 - Carl Metts
- 26 - AnnJelica McElroy
- 29 - Ethel Wood
- 30 - Robert Jones

October

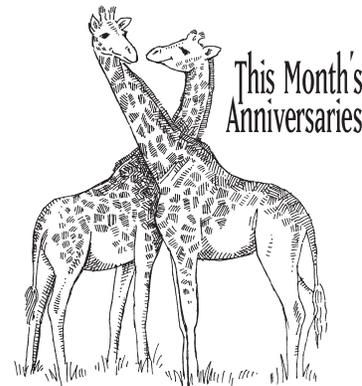
- 8 - Don Horne
- 9 - Ian Fetteroff



Birthdays

- 13 - Reba Jones
- 14 - Mickey Southerland
- 16 - Kimberly Bryan
- 23 - Chris Byron
- 26 - Joe Ard
- 29 - Michael Bryan Jr.
- 31 - Mallory Albertson
- 31 - Alyce Horne

Note: Birthday and anniversary dates are taken from the church directory. If your special event is missing, see Gail Walton or sign up on the directory under construction in the church vestibule.



- Fountain
- 27 - Peggy & Durwood Williams

October

- 7 - Caron & Charles Fountain
- 23 - Plina & Mike Green
- 29 - Janet & Paul Heaton
- 30 - Shirley & Kenny Pickett

September

- 6 - Mallory & Tony Jones
- 9 - Joyce & Sutton Fountain
- 26 - Reba & Marvin

Christmas Child shoeboxes due Nov. 16

Brochures about Operation Christmas Child and the Samaritan's Purse shoebox ministry are available in the church vestibule. Boxes must be at the church by Nov. 16. Billie Ard will be delivering them to Spilman Baptist Church in Kinston on Nov. 17.

Sandy Miller suggests using a plastic shoebox — which can be purchased at a dollar store — so the youngster has a sturdy, safe place to store his or her prized possessions.

Samaritan's Purse includes a gospel message, in the child's language, in each box. All we have to do is collect the gifts.

Shoebox packing guidelines:

- Use an empty shoe box (standard size, please) or a small plastic container. You can wrap the box (lid separately), but wrapping is not required. Most importantly, pray for the child who will receive your gift.
- Determine whether your gift will be for a boy or a girl, and the child's age category: 2-4, 5-9, or 10-14. Labels are in the brochure or can be downloaded at www.samaritanspurse.org. Mark the correct age category on the label and tape the label to the top of your box.
- Fill the box with a variety of gifts that will bring delight to a child. (See list at right)
- Please donate \$7 or more for each shoe box you prepare to help cover shipping and other project costs. You can give online or you can write a check to Samaritan's Purse (note "OCC" on memo line) and place it in an envelope on top of the gift items inside your box. If you or your family are preparing more than one shoe box, please make one combined donation.

Mark the correct age category:

<input type="checkbox"/>	2-4 Years Old
<input type="checkbox"/>	5-9 Years Old
<input type="checkbox"/>	10-14 Years Old

BOY

OPERATION Christmas Child Samaritan's Purse

Mark the correct age category:

<input type="checkbox"/>	2-4 Years Old
<input type="checkbox"/>	5-9 Years Old
<input type="checkbox"/>	10-14 Years Old

Girl

OPERATION Christmas Child Samaritan's Purse

Shoebox Gift Ideas

- **TOYS** — small cars, balls, dolls, stuffed animals, kazoos, harmonicas, yo-yos, jump ropes, small Etch-A-Sketch®, toys that light up or make noise (with extra batteries), Slinky®.
- **SCHOOL SUPPLIES** — pens, pencils and sharpener, crayons, markers, stamps and ink pad sets, writing pads or paper, solar calculators, coloring and picture books.
- **HYGIENE ITEMS** — toothbrush, toothpaste, mild bar soap (in a plastic bag), comb, washcloth.
- **OTHER THINGS** — hard candy and lollipops (please double bag all candy), mints, gum, T-shirts, socks, ball caps, sunglasses, hair clips, toy jewelry, watches, flashlights (with extra batteries)
- **A PERSONAL NOTE** — in a separate envelope, you may enclose a note to the child and a photo of yourself or your family. (If you include your name and address, the child may write back.)

40-day 'Love Dare' can help 'Fireproof' marriage

In the new movie "Fireproof," a couple dares to rescue their choking marriage from the flames of divorce and temptation using The Love Dare book. This daily devotional steers you through the fiery challenge of developing a strong, committed marriage in a world that threatens to burn it to the ground.

The Love Dare offers daily devotionals, asks you

to record your thoughts and experiences, and ends each day daring you to perform a simple act of love for your spouse. The 40-day journey equips you to melt hardened, separated hearts into an enduring love that can withstand the flames of fear, pride and temptation. The Love Dare is designed to help you reinforce and enrich your marriage, earn back a love

see page 7

Christians put faith in action at the polls

There is an election coming again. With it comes heated discussions, mud slinging and the media's spin on what they think. This is the world's way of dealing with it, but we as the body of Christ should be different.



In Romans 12:2, the Bible tells us to “be not conformed to this world,” so there are three things I think we need to do:

1. Pray! God is the only one with true wisdom. We will not find it anywhere else. You can have millions of analysts, scientists and political gurus and still never even touch the wisdom of God. He is the One with the answers. So before turning on the television or even listening to your friends, talk and listen to God.

2. Get informed! When I say this, I am not talking about turning on your television and listening to what the evening news has to say. Contrary to what they say, they are biased.

We need to tap into Christian media sources because they, unlike secular media, hold themselves accountable to God. We should not get the bulk of our information from those who do not even believe in Jesus. (For sources, see the footnote.)

3. Vote! We can do all the above and still have the wrong people elected to office. Our words and prayers are useless if we are not willing to do our small part. God is not asking much, just that we act, and He will do the rest.

Note: Some Christian media sources include Christian radio; Citizen magazine (www.citizenmagazine.org),

N.C. lacks marriage amendment

Our state still has not passed a marriage amendment. It is critical that you and I contact our North Carolina state senators and representatives and show our support for such an amendment. If we don't we could be the next state where the court decides the prohibition of same-sex marriage is unconstitutional. This is out of the court's jurisdiction and is a decision that should be made by the people, not judges. Let's not let our values go unheard. For all of you Internet users, it takes only a quick e-mail for your voice to be heard.

State senators

Harry Brown (harryb@ncleg.net)
515 Legislative Office Bldg.
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925
919-715-3034

Charlie Albertson (charliea@ncleg.net)
525 Legislative Office Bldg.
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925
919-733-5705

State representatives

Russell Tucker (russellt@ncleg.net)
416-B Legislative Office Bldg.
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925
919-715-3021

Robert Grady (robertg@ncleg.net)
302 Legislative Office Bldg.
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925
919-715-9644

zine.org), which is published by Focus on the Family; National Right to Life news at www.nrlc.org; the 700 Club on WNCT-Ch. 9 at 10 a.m. each weekday; and Concerned Women for America at www.cwfa.org.

— Caron Fountain

'Love Dare' from page 6

you thought was lost, and hear more about the One who not only designed unconditional, sacrificial love — He illustrated it.

In “Fireproof,” The Love Dare covers the topics of relationship parasites (addictions like pornography and gambling) and unconditional love. The Love Dare devotional book expands and extends the topics

addressed in the film's plot.

“Fireproof,” from the creators of “Facing the Giants,” stars Kirk Cameron. It opened Friday at Carmike Cinemas in Jacksonville.

For more about the movie “Fireproof,” go to www.fireproofthemovie.com. To find out more about The Love Dare, go to www.lovedarebook.com.

