

THE AGAPIAN

March 2014 — Agape Church of the Brethren

DANCING UPON INJUSTICE

From the **PASTOR**—

Chris Tomlin, at Passion 2007, performed a song titled "Did You Feel the Mountains Tremble?" It is one of my favorite songs. But there is a line in the chorus that has puzzles me. He pictures the Church as "dancers who dance upon injustice."

What a peculiar visual image. How does one dance upon injustice? In the bible, there are many stories and parables that describe injustice. I get the feeling that our reaction to them is supposed to be anger. After all, how will positive change happen if people are content to let injustice survive? Isn't our moral exception to injustice the basis of human law? Doesn't God command us to establish government with justice?

But the book of Jonah tells us a different story. You know the Sunday School version of the story. Nineveh was doing wrong and they were about to be judged by God. But God, in His love for humanity, sent one of His prophets, Jonah, to warn them. Jonah didn't want to go so he set sail on a ship heading the opposite direction. The waves came; Jonah confessed; he was thrown overboard; the fish swallowed him; Jonah repented and God landed him on the beach in front of Nineveh. He preached and the city repented. We emphasize the miracle of Jonah surviving three days in the belly of the fish (yes, I believe it). But that isn't the point of the story.

Here is the rest of the story. Jonah was upset and angry with God because Nineveh repented. He said: "I am mad enough to die." Israel and Nineveh were enemies. Jonah didn't want to go to Nineveh because he didn't want them spared from God's wrath. But God said "There are 600,000 young age children...." The Spiritual principle that we find in the book of Jonah tells is that God alone is God, God loves everyone and God does not play favorites among the nations.

So how do Christians dance upon injustice? The answer is simple: with the gospel. God's news is good news. Jonah suffered three days in the belly of a fish because he confused his religion with his politics. God doesn't care about human political systems that always create winners and losers. His desire is for everyone to win. His desire is for everyone to be blessed. God wants to bless the entire world with no exceptions. That is why God came to us in Jesus Christ. Jesus said: I came that you might have life to the full. (John 10:10).

The gospel does not get political. The gospel tells a different story than politics. The gospel seeks to redeem everyone involved. Unconditional love melts hard hearts. Unconditional love raises up those who believe they are trapped in despair. Unconditional love creates generosity. The good news helps people no matter what station their life possesses. God loves saving the world.

We are the church. We have the same power inside of us. Romans 1:16 tells us that the good news is like dynamite that releases the power of God to transform anyone. Therefore, I am apolitical. And I have to remind myself that God loves every side as much as He loves me.

The mental image "dancing upon injustice" is different than "stomping out injustice." Yes, the dancer is on top, but the dancer is celebrating God's love. And the celebration of God's love lifts the injustice up to the point of celebration. And that is the place where the Good News redeems us all.

Praise God!

-Pastor Phil



| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Annual Conference | 2 |
| Agape Birthday Party | 2 |
| Cook's Corner | 3 |
| Camp Mack 2014 | 4 |
| Ash Wed. Service | 4 |
| VBS Planning Committee | 4 |
| Time Change | 4 |
| Free Garage Sale | 4 |
| March Calendar | 5 |
| Senior Moments | 6 |
| Irish Blessing | 6 |

Annual Conference

Annual Conference has been an important component of Brethren life for more than 250 years, offering a smorgasbord of activities from morning through evening for all ages: worship, business meetings, Bible studies, meal events, workshops, insight sessions, service projects, concerts, making new friends, and much more. It provides a wonderful kaleidoscope of the various people and groups who comprise our Brethren family. Some of us are eager to attend as often as possible and everyone should experience it at least once. This year's event is in Columbus, OH, close enough for many to participate and enjoy. The conference begins with worship on Wednesday evening, July 2 and concludes with worship Sunday morning, July 6. Our delegate, Dan Klopfenstein has already been registered, and registration for non-delegates starts at noon, February 26 at www.brethren.org/ac.



On the sixth day, God turned to Archangel Gabriel and said, "Today I am going to create an area of land called The Midwest. It will be a land of outstanding natural beauty. It shall have tall hills and rolling plains full of game and eagles, beautiful sparkling lakes bountiful with bass and streams full of trout, forests with many deer and turkeys, and valleys with fertile soil with an abundance of nutrients to grow things. I shall make the land rich in resources so as to make the inhabitants prosper. I shall call these inhabitants Midwesterners, and they shall be known as the most friendly people on earth."

"But Lord," asked Gabriel, "don't you think you are being too generous to these Midwesterners?"

"Not really," replied God. "Just wait and see the winters I am going to send them!"



Happy Birthday Agape!

The "pile" of goodies in the fellowship hall grows, and we thank those who have taken sticky notes and purchased items for the church. Feel free to take more especially if you haven't, and we will continue to accumulate until the March 16th party date! Plan to join us for lunch, games, and a fun time for all ages.



Thanks for your help - Nurture Commission (Becky Morris, Joan Sievers, Deb Wetzel)

COOK'S CORNER

By: Joyce Musser

Bette Marie Paul Scribner was born to Marie and Fred Paul in Huntington County and raised in Lancaster County. She was the baby of the family of five sisters. After (hubby) Duaine served three years in the Army, he got a job with Fort Wayne Drug Co. where Bette worked and love bloomed. They will celebrate their 49th anniversary on May 8. Born to them was Joel (married Samantha, lives in Chattanooga, TN with Caecilia, Jon, and Maya) and Christine (married to Tim Scroggs, lives in Columbia City with Regan and Quinten). Bette worked thirty years as a teacher's assistant in kindergarten and first grade at Franke Park School before retiring. Her comment was, "I never got out of first grade!" She continues to work for Keltch/Scotts/Krogers pharmacies for 27 years.

Pot pies and beef & homemade noodles remind Bette of her childhood. Her mother really knew how to stretch a meal for her large family. Bette did not spend time helping in the kitchen as she was doing "boy" stuff with her dad outdoors. One of the most requested meals by the Scribner family is Hillbilly Casserole. Duaine is helpful in the kitchen and is an excellent cook. Anything he makes is great. The Scribners like any Chinese restaurant and Bette's favorite dish to order is cashew chicken with crab rangoon. Her advice to a beginner cook is to not be afraid to tackle anything and give it a try.

Hobbies for Bette include following I. U. basketball, eating out, and playing solitaire. Her pet peeves are road hog drivers and lazy people who are not willing to work. Three things she could not live without are family, sweet hubby, and health. Her answer to the question, "What famous person would you like to meet?" was President Obama, just to have a normal conversation with him. The Scribners have several long term jobs at Agape including financial secretary (record donations and get the offerings to the bank), lead hymns, Duaine is an usher, and being greeters. Bette and Duaine appreciate the love and friendships found at Agape.

Hillbilly Casserole

1 & 1/2 lbs. hamburger, fried and drained
1/2 box of dry spaghetti broken in half, boiled and drained
1 can creamed corn
1 can stewed tomatoes, chopped
1 chopped green pepper and 1 chopped onion cooked in 3 T. butter
2 cups grated County Line Cheese

Mix all together.
Bake in 9 x 13
sprayed pan for
30 min. Enjoy!

Camp Mack 2014

Time to Spring



forward

Camp Mack 2014 Summer Camps

Registration Forms &

Fee \$ due by

Sunday, March 16th
(in order to receive the before
March 20th discount)

Camp Rep, Peg Robison



**Remember to reset your
clocks on Saturday night,
March 8.**



Ash Wednesday Service

Join us for an

Ash Wednesday service,

Wed, March 5 @ 6:45 pm.

Free Garage Sale

VBS Planning Committee

It's not too soon to be thinking about our Vacation Bible School – if we continue our theme of the past few years, we will be continuing “In the Beginning, God Created. . . .” and that is where we are right now. Some ideas have been considered, but if you would like some input, talk to one of the Nurture Commission members and we'll begin planning. Tentative dates for VBS are June 16/17 and 23/24.



Many have indicated an interest in HAVING our 4th FREE Garage Sale. There is no organized nurture group to plan and execute this event. Therefore if you are interested in having it, you need to commit to helping with one or all of the following areas: Planning, Publicity, Set up, Working, Clean up. If you are cleaning those closets (and several have indicated they are already accumulating stuff) then decide now to put forth the effort to make it happen. Keeping the dates we have had in the past will make May 20-21 the set up dates and the actual sale will be

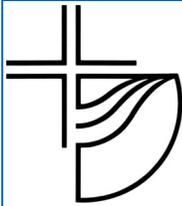
May 22-23. We especially need MANY workers the first morning as the bulk of our “stuff” went out the door in the first few hours.



MARCH 2014

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|--|--|--|---|--|----------------------------------|--|
| | | | | | | 1 |
| 2 6:00 Youth Group Brian McComas | 3 4:00-7:30 Piano 6:30 Aerobics | 4 6:30 Scouts Jack Green | 5 12:00 Senior Moments 6:45 Ash Wed Service 7:30 Choir David LeMay Bob & Betty Barkley | 6 6:30 B4G 6:30 Aerobics Chuck Morris Beth Green | 7 8:00 a.m. Men's Break-fast* | 8 |
| 9 Daylight Saving Time begins 6:00 Youth Group Ross Robison Ray Imhoff | 10 4:00-7:30 Piano 6:30 Aerobics | 11 6:30 Scouts 6:30 Crafty NG* Ryan Morris | 12 7:30 Choir Daniel Musser | 13 6:30 B4G 6:30 Aerobics | 14 | 15 |
| 16 Camp Mack Reg. Due 5:00 Agape Birthday Party | 17 4:00-7:30 Piano 6:30 Aerobics | 18 6:30 Crafty Nurture Group* 6:30 Scouts | 19 6:00 Board Meeting 7:30 Choir | 20 6:30 B4G 6:30 Aerobics | 21 | 22 |
| 23/30 23rd - Melissa Robison 6:00 Youth Group | 24/31 24th - Joanna Eastes 4:00-7:30 Piano 6:30 Aerobics | 25 6:30 Scouts Jim Kart AJ & Linda Rupp | 26 10:00 Daytime N G 7:30 Choir Rick & Melissa Wagner | 27 6:30 B4G 6:30 Aerobics | 28 | 29 Evelyn Moffitt Madison McMillan |

* Denotes an event held outside the church. Contact the person in charge of that event for details. **Red** = Anniversary **Blue** = Birthday



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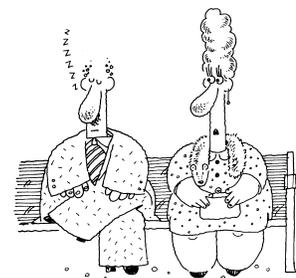
Sent to our friends at:



Continuing the Word of Jesus—Peacefully. Simply. Together.

Senior Moments

The next Senior Moments meeting is on **Wednesday, March 5th at 12:00 noon**. Bring a covered dish to share!



IRISH BLESSING

May there always be work for your hands to do;
May your purse always hold a coin or two;
May the sun always shine on your windowpane;
May a rainbow be certain to follow each rain;
May the hand of a friend always be near you;
May God fill your heart with gladness to cheer you.