

# THE AGAPIAN

March 2013 — Agape Church of the Brethren

## Attending to Our Relationship with God

One of the challenges we face as Christians is maintaining a vital relationship with our Lord. All of the pressures of life don't suddenly fall away after our baptism and commitment to Christ. We can repeatedly be distracted in life by the various pressures and everyday challenges that confront us, and we can sadly lose our focus on the quest of knowing God more and more. What follows then is often dissatisfaction, confusion and discouragement. It is imperative that we repeatedly seek to regain our focus on the Lord, when we realize it has turned elsewhere.

Nourishing a relationship with anyone takes time and sacrifice. You must say "no" to some things so you can say "yes" to the things that will build a relationship with the person you want to know. It is the same in nourishing a relationship with God. There must be times when we choose to be with God, over other pursuits.

How does a person spend time with God? It's not like going over to your neighbor's house, knocking on the door and sharing a cup of coffee together. God is invisible and rarely speaks with an audible voice. You can't shake God's hand. This makes relationship building with God obviously something that one must think about carefully. It's not like a casual contact. How then shall we overcome these obstacles?

The Scriptures give us several leads. The first lead is obviously faith. You gain an audience with God by believing that God is there, even if not visible, and by talking to and listening for God, intuitively. "Faith is being sure of what

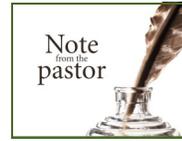
we hope for," we read in Hebrews 11:1 (NIV), "and certain of what we do not see." The invisibility of God does not have to be a barrier to relationship with the Lord, if we're inclined toward faith, toward trusting "what we do not see."

A second lead in nourishing a relationship with God is the willingness to spend time in silence. The psalmist reported God's command, "Be still and know that I am God," (Psalm 46:10a). If God likes to speak through silence, then shouldn't we seek to find time for it in our daily lives? Yes, we certainly should! We should seek time daily, for periods of silence and solitude, when we can unwind, calm down, let the distractions slip from our mind; release our worries and our regrets, and seek to rest in the lap of the Lord!

Some may be quick to say, "When do I have time for that?" If that's what you, or I, would say, then perhaps, we need to think about the pace of life we've let ourselves fall into. In Proverbs we read, "My son, pay attention to what I say; listen closely to my words. Do not let them slip out of sight" (Proverbs 4:20-21). In our admittedly busy and hectic world, that is counsel to heed, if we want to attend to our relationship with God.

**Think about it!**

**-Pastor Jeff**



### Inside this issue:

Agape Juniors	2
Brethren Disaster Ministries	2
Byron Bingo Collection	2
Service: Last Supper	2
Its' a Party!	2
Nurture Groups	2
Free Garage Sale	2
Blessings from Above	3
Sunday School Attendance	3
Secret Gal Pals Program	3
Agape Youth News Brief	4
March Calendar	5
Agape Seniors	6
Witness Commission Notes	6

## Camp Mack Volunteer Work Day

The Service/Mission Nurture Group is planning a volunteer work day at Camp Mack on **Mon., March 18**. We'll leave Agape's parking lot by **8:30 a.m.**, travel to Camp Mack, volunteer in whatever way we can, and return to Agape by **5:30 p.m.** The camp has planned volunteer work tasks for all skill levels and ages. They also provide **free meals** to volunteers! Please sign up by **Sun., March 10** so the camp can plan accordingly. There is a sign-up sheet on the white board—contact Peg Robison if you have questions.



**March**

## Agape Juniors

Let's celebrate Day-light Savings

Time with brunch at the Mariott following worship on March 10. Signing up by **March 3** will help with reservations, but there is always room for more.

## Brethren Disaster Ministries

The Brethren are currently working on building 8 houses in Holton, IN, an area damaged by tornadoes. Most are framed and under roof but need all the necessary workers to finish them.

**Workers of all skill levels are needed and can work during the week or weekends.**



- \* Examples of what needs to be done include electrical, plumbing, insulation, drywall, doors, windows, siding, paint, trim cabinets, and flooring.
- \* Housing is available but you will need to supply your own personal items.
- \* Tools are available but you can take your own as well.

If there is interest, a group from Agape could travel together. If interested, talk to Chuck Morris and/or contact Cliff Kindy at 260-982-2971 or [kindy@cpt.org](mailto:kindy@cpt.org).

## Byron Bingo Collection



Women's Fellowship will be assisting with **bingo at Byron Health Center on Mon., April 8**, at approx. **1:30 p.m.**

- \* Pudding cups, juice, and small gifts (especially for men) will be needed. (No soap or candles, please.)

There will be a box in the narthex for collecting these items. Contact Sharon Bender if you have questions.

## Service: Last Supper

**On Thurs., March 28**, we will hold a special service with a reenactment of the Last Supper, with actors sharing in the supper, participating in the foot-washing, breaking bread & drinking the cup. Please put

this date on your calendar so you don't miss this event. Look in the bulletins for

more details.

## It's a Party!

We had the annual Agape Church Birthday Party on **Sat., March 2** from **6-8 p.m.** in the fellowship hall. We thank everyone who participated in gifting the church with supplies for the coming year.

**Games for all ages, snacks, cupcakes, and ice cream sundaes** are planned as we gather with our "birthday buddies" to visit and enjoy an evening of fun! Questions? Contact Becky M., Joan S., or Deb W.



## Nurture Groups

Join one of the 3 Nurture Groups in March!

- \* The Friday night group will meet on **March 15, 6:30** at the home of Ron and Diana Spurgeon, with a carry-in meal followed by devotions and discussion. RSVP to Diana with what you'll bring.
- \* The Crafty Nurture Group will meet at Mary Ebert's home on **Tues., March 12** to work on individual projects and enjoy sharing ideas. RSVP to Mary.
- \* The Daytime Nurture group will meet on **Wed., March 27 at 10:00 a.m.** at the church followed by lunch at a local restaurant. RSVP to Marilu.

*The Service/Mission Nurture Group served breakfast on Sat., Feb. 23 at Huntertown United Methodist Church's Third Place. Join a Nurture Group so you can get involved and serve others as well!*

## Coming Soon: Free Garage Sale

For the third year, the Service/Mission Nurture group will sponsor this event which involves the entire Agape Church family. We will be collecting items you no longer need (clothing, kitchen, appliances, decorations, books, sports equipment, linens, furniture, etc.) and sharing with those in our community who need them. **Nothing** is too weird, so **start sorting out now** what might be a serviceable item for someone else and is accumulating dust on your shelf! **Note:** We do not want things brought to church yet, but look in the bulletin and for church announcements about when to start bringing things in and where they should go.

# BLESSINGS FROM ABOVE

By: Joyce Musser

Every day, God shows his love and direction to his faithful children. We cannot expect a journey without pain, tears, or struggles thru the storms of life, but with His help, we will find comfort in His arms. We can each be a blessing and share our faith with others. The words to this familiar song may provide some comfort to everyone:

## Count Your Blessings

Hymn Lyrics by Johnson Oatman, Jr. (1856-1922)

When upon life's billows you are tempest tossed,  
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,  
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,  
And it will surprise you, what the Lord has done.

Are you ever burdened with a load of care?  
Does the cross seem heavy you are called to bear?  
Count your many blessings, every doubt will fly,  
And you will be singing as the days go by.

Chorus:

Count your blessings, name them one by one,  
Count your blessings, see what God has done,  
Count your blessings, name them one by one,  
Count your many blessings, see what God has done.

Sometimes blessings are huge and easy to spot and sometimes they are so small, we may be too busy to even notice them. Thankfully, whether we recognize those blessings or not, they are there to teach us, encourage us, and help us grow to be the people we are supposed to be.

When Deacon Chuck Morris was asked how Agape is a blessing to him, his reply was that "I believe that Agape lives and promotes many of those things we are taught to do from the scriptures. Things like . . . we are the light of the world . . . we are the eyes, hands and feet of Jesus . . . and the body has many parts, each functioning in a special way. . . . So the lesson to me is that no matter what we do, and no matter how important (or not) we perceive the task (*anything* . . . from changing a light bulb to preaching a sermon), all things point to that trusted journey of Christianity visible at Agape."

People often ask, "What has God done for me?" Without God, "we are books without words or paths without directions." God takes care of us even when we have no clue what we need.

All we have to do is accept His love and show it by the way we talk and live. Go ahead and unexpectedly hold a door for someone, or feel free to sprinkle some salt on the icy driveway of Agape or shovel a path for your neighbor. Or maybe send a card to someone who needs your prayers. Isn't it amazing how coffee and donuts and cookies magically show up on Sunday mornings or how the fresh veggies appeared this summer to be shared with the city folk by the generous country folk? Be sure and keep an eye on the Agape Youth as they volunteer their time and efforts to help others, while modeling that positive behavior as the younger kids watch that happen. Keep the faith, count your blessings, and carry on! Remember, "When prayers go up, blessings come down!"

## SUNDAY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE RECOGNITION

We are pleased to give a "pat on the back" to those with outstanding attendance from October to December. Those who were in class at least 10 of the 13 week quarter were: TJ, Daniel, Joan S., Becky M., Beth G., Joyce M., Dean M., Jack G., Chuck M., and Bradley I. In addition the following people were there at least 8 weeks: Gene W., Mary Jo W., Ray I., Darwin S., Dave S., Wendy I., Becky I., Marilu B., Rhonda H., and Orie I. Thanks to all for your support to the teachers who prepare faithfully and for your effort as you share and learn each Sunday morning.

## *Ladies Secret Gal Pal's Program*

A dozen Agape ladies spent the month secretly sharing goodies, thoughts, prayers, and love during the month of February.

Mailboxes were full of sneaky packages and envelopes as we encouraged each other weekly. A revealing breakfast will be at Hall's Guesthouse at **9:00 a.m.** on **Sat., March 9** where we will discover who that encouraging lady is! Bring a card to tell who you are (no presents necessary J), as we wrap up this fun time of sharing.

# Agape Youth News Brief

Thank you, to all of you that stayed for the “Souper Bowl” Luncheon on February 3. It was a GREAT day. The Youth want to thank you also for all the cans of soup and other food items that were brought in for the food bank on Souper Bowl Sunday. If interested, look at the following website, <http://souperbowl.org/> to see all the participants and all that was donated this year during hunger awareness and Souper Bowl 2013. You will see there were 5,838 groups involved this year and \$6,420,362 was collected in cash and food items. WOW! And you, Agapians, were part of that!

- \* We want to thank everyone that took part of our Rada knife and kitchen utensil sales. We have heard that many of you that ordered the soup and dip mixes found them to be quite tasty. We hope you are enjoying you’re your knives and kitchen utensils also.
- \* We will continue to collect monies towards our National Youth Conference (NYC) goal. These monies will come from luncheons after church, aluminum recycling, (bring in your **aluminum cans** and **ink cartridge recycling – we found a new place to recycle that will give us a better price for these items**) and buy pop in the kitchen refrigerator. **Please** don’t forget about buying scripts...what an easy way to help the youth fund and really not pay any more than you would be spending anyway in any of the many, many businesses or restaurants. **If you have a few odd jobs you think the youth group could handle—please let Rick Flickinger know about them.**
- \* The discussion topics for the months of January and February were selected by Drew Hopkins and Nick Fox. A few of the topics are “School Pressure,” “Christmas in July February,” “Messages in Music,” “Temptation,” and “Failure.” The discussion topics for the months of March and April will be selected by Bradley Imhoff and Abbie Hopkins.
- \* The Youth are kicking off a Fund-raising project the first week of March. They are going to take orders again for **jumbo jelly beans**. They will take orders **March 3, 10 & 17** and will have the jelly beans to distribute on **March 24**, ready for Easter activities. These will make wonderful Easter gifts, and they fill Easter baskets well. We know you will really like them.

Thank you to Joyce Musser and Charlotte Schafer for providing some of the treats for the youth group meetings. Thank you also go to the Women’s Fellowship for helping to provide treats for the youth.

**Thank you so much for supporting the youth group.**

**All jumbo jelly beans come in \$5.00 bags – pick up an order form at Agape!**

**Jumbo Jelly Beans Available Flavors:** huckleberry, strawberry, root beer, black licorice, red licorice, cinnamon, cherry, pineapple, orange, chocolate covered cherry, lemon, lime, grape, blueberry, assorted fruit, cotton candy, assorted spice(wintergreen, peppermint, spearmint, anise, cinnamon, saffras), jelly stones (looks like polished rocks), (cinnamon, cherry, wintergreen, pineapple, citrus, licorice)

**Jelly Tarts Available Flavors:** lemon, grapefruit, pina colada, margarita, wild berry, grape, green, apple, orange, & assorted fruit tarts

## Some dates to keep on your calendar are:

March 24 Baked Potato Bar after church.  
March 28 Maundy Thursday “Last Supper” reenactment.  
April 7 Baptism  
April 14 Youth Sunday  
May 5 Council Meeting with lunch by the Youth

# MARCH 2013

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 7 am Men's Breakfast*	2 6-8pm Agape Birthday Party Brian McComas
3 6 pm Youth	4 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 4:30-7 Piano Lessons 6:30 Aerobics Jack Green	5 12 Agape Seniors; 4:30-7:30 Tutoring; 6:30-7:30 Scouts; David LeMay Bob & Betty Barkley	6 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 6:45-7:15 Piano Lessons 7:30 Choir Chuck Morris; Beth Green	7 4:30-7:30 Tutoring 6:30 B4G 6:30 Aerobics	8 Anthony & Carolyn Brantley	9 9am Gal Pal Party* Ross Robison; Ray Imhoff
10 12:00 Agape Juniors* 6 pm Youth	11 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 4:30-7 Piano Lessons 6:30 Aerobics Ryan Morris	12 6:30 Crafty NG* 4:30-7:30 Tutoring 6:30-7:30 Scouts Daniel James Musser	13 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 6:45-7:15 Piano Lessons 7:30 Choir	14 4:30-7:30 Tutoring 6:30 B4G 6:30 Aerobics	15 6:30 Friday Night NG*	16
17 6 pm Youth Tania Fox	18 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 4:30-7 Piano Lessons 6:30 Aerobics Camp Mack Work/Service Day*	19 4:30-7:30 Tutoring 6:30-7:30 Scouts	20 12:30 Area 6 Pastors; 2:30-5:30 Tutoring; 6:00 Board Mtg; 6:45-7:15 Piano Lessons; 7:30 Choir	21 4:30-7:30 Tutoring 6:30 B4G 6:30 Aerobics	22 6:00 Set-Up for Scout Derby	23 8-5 Boy Scout Derby Melissa Robison
24 PALM SUNDAY Baked Potato Bar following Service (sponsored by Agape Youth) 6 pm Youth; Jo Eastes	25 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 4:30-7 Piano Lessons 6:30 Aerobics Jim Kart AJ & Linda Rupp	26 4:30-7:30 Tutoring 6:30-7:30 Scouts Rick & Melissa Wagner	27 10 am Daytime NG 2:30-5:30 Tutoring 6:45-7:15 Piano Lessons 7:30 Choir	28 4:30-7:30 Tutoring Maundy Thursday Last Supper Reenactment/ Love Feast; Betty Barkley	29 Evelyn Moffitt	30
31 EASTER 8 am Sunrise Service						

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



Agape Church of the Brethren

11610 Lima Road

Fort Wayne, IN 46818

Phone: 260 489 6908

E-mail: [agapefort@frontier.com](mailto:agapefort@frontier.com)

*Sent to our friends at:*



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

## Agape Seniors

- \* The next Agape Seniors meeting is on **Tuesday, March 5th at 12:00 noon.**
- \* March brings spring, Easter, Daylight Savings Time, and St. Patrick's Day. Get creative and bring green foods to share for our carry-in lunch to celebrate. Think green salads, side dishes, desserts or surprises. Jack and Beth Green are hosts.

## *Witness Commission Notes*

- \* In March we will continue the **collection** of paper products, personal hygiene products, cleaning supplies, and instant mashed potatoes. It is to be noted that the needy can receive food stamps for food but not for the above products.
- \* **Fish and Crackers: Starting March first through Easter.** The Witness Commission Fish and Crackers contest will be kicked off at the birthday party for the church. We'll have a contest between those whose birthdays are: (a) January, February, March, (b) April, May, June, (c) July, August, September, and (d) October, November, December. The commission will designate 4 areas for each of the 4 birthday groupings for you to place your fish and crackers. After Easter we will announce which group collected the most fish and crackers.
- \* **Remember: Please volunteer for the work/service time at Camp Mack!** See the front of the bulletin for details.

