



THE LIFE AND WORK OF THE CHURCH IN THE ACRES

THE CHALLENGER

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 3

APRIL 2009

A VISITATION OF HIS PRESENCE

²⁸As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus acted as if he were going farther. ²⁹But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. Luke 24: 28-29

There is something really nice about having a special visitor come and stay with you for a while. When they arrive they have the power to make time stand still. When they leave, it feels like an emptiness has set in. Recently many of you prayed for Gina's mom. We really appreciate that. Struggling with congestive heart failure and other ailments, every moment is precious. Our recent visit was spent in the hospital at her bed side. Although she was recovering when we left (and has subsequently gone home front the hospital), leaving Canada left an emptiness in our hearts. Being in the presence of ones we love meant so very much.

When Jesus was walking on the road to Emmaus, all of who Jesus was, not fully revealed initially but in part, was so great that the men with him "strongly urged" that he stay with them. That is the way it is. If you and I spend time with Jesus, in His presence, we will feel compelled to stay with him even longer. When Jesus "shows up" in our world, we may have not sent him a message asking that he show up, but when he does, it is usually more than we could ever imagine and then we simply don't want him to go.

Jesus' appearance now comes through his Holy Spirit. There are no restraints on when and where Jesus may manifest His presence so we should ready our hearts for his surprise appearance at any time.

There are a few places that He has been seen in the past. It does not mean that He will reappear in these places next, but don't be surprised if He does:

- In a quiet place – It is funny that with all the opportunities there are to get away, it is often in the "get away" quiet moment that God reveals Himself. Because I am so focused on the "get away" part I miss that it may not be the get away part but rather the quiet place part that is activating the King of the Universe to speak.
- In the mundane – Jesus may be speaking to us in the ordinary, and so we cannot overlook that which seems unimportant. It may be the place that He is choosing to speak to me and you from.
- In an argument – Sometimes I can hear the voice of God speaking through someone I have had a disagreement with. I must be careful not to discount their words, because they may be speaking on behalf of my master!

(continued on page 2)

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

Installation Day

Holy Week

Mexico Missions Night

Rummage Sale

Church Clean-Up Day

TABCOM News

Elected Church Leaders



HOLY WEEK

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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(Pastor's Page continued)

Most often I can remember that before Jesus "showed up" in a big way He would take me to His word, and as I was engulfed in His word I heard the doorbell of my heart ringing and Jesus was at the door!

There are many good things about a having the right guest visit me, certainly one by-product is that I now have something special to talk about! When friends ask me what did I do this week, I can tell them about my special guest.

When my life and heart are invaded by God, I too have something special to share with others! Oh, please don't hold it in. Share the truth of His visit with others.

I did not mention a place we would assume God to manifest himself – church. Yes, oh yes, He does show up in church in great ways. A few weeks ago as a concert chorale from Lancaster Bible College certainly helped usher in the presence of God over our congregation, the joy and amazement that flooded the church was great, and we look forward to many more times when God's house catches His fire.

With eternity in mind,

Pastor Greg

TABCOM'S TRANSITIONS

(The American Baptist Churches of
Massachusetts)

UPDATE

1. **The administrative offices (except for financial) have moved to Grotonwood. Phone number is still in Dedham 781-320-8100.**
2. **Our Area Minister, Rev. Dr. Jim Sinclair's position has been eliminated. He is now the New England Representative for the American Baptist Foundation.**

Find more information at tabcom.org.

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

THURSDAY, MAY 7TH AT 7 P.M.

**ON THE STEPS OF THE SPRINGFIELD
CITY HALL**

All are invited to this annual event sponsored by the Mission Pioneer Valley Pastors.

Visit www.ChristianLifeCenterMA.org for a link.

Slow down!

Are you going to Fast?

Seek the Spirit at a deeper level through embracing the discipline of fasting. Church in the Acres will be hosting a 2 day fast as we lead towards the victory of the Cross. Please consider joining us in this journey.

Where: Church in the Acres

Start: Tuesday, March 31 6:00PM

Finish: Thursday, April 2 6:00PM

We will begin and end the fast with a light meal, time of prayer and reflection on what fasting is, and how we were impacted by the experience. Please sign up if you are interested in participating in this experience.

Mike Giovaninni will lead this fasting experience. You may contact Mike for information and/or questions at 786-9675 or 636-5189.



HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

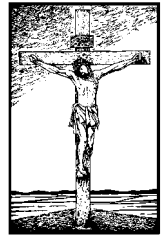


APRIL 9TH MAUNDY THURSDAY

7 p.m. Service of Tenebrae in the Sanctuary

APRIL 10TH GOOD FRIDAY

12 Noon Good Friday Worship Service in the Sanctuary



EASTER SUNDAY: RESURRECTION DAY

7 a.m. Son Rise Service at Eastfield Mall

9:45 a.m. Celebration I Easter Morning Worship

6:00 p.m. Celebration II Easter Evening Worship



MEXICO MISSIONS NIGHT

THURSDAY, APRIL 16TH AT 6:30 P.M.

FEATURING MEXICAN FOOD AND MISSIONARY MERCY BARNES

Save the date and be sure to come for our very special Family Christian Living Night. This will be an evening of great Mexican food and news from the mission field.

Mercy and Rick Barnes have been working with the Dios con Nosotros (God With Us Baptist Convention) in Baja California Norte, Mexico since 2002. Their ministry in Baja includes leadership development for new church planting, teaching at the Seminary, and work with short term mission groups from the United States. Our mission team worked at one of their churches in La Rumorosa, Mexico with Pastor Romo last April. New church planting can mean many things. The Barnes have learned to frame the terminology of New Church planting with phrases such as cooperating churches, sponsoring churches, partner churches to help reshape the traditional structure and reflect a more relational approach.

Rick and Mercy are part of the faculty of the Dios con Nostros Seminary in Mexicali, where they teach courses on church planting, Church History and Ecclesiology, pastoral ministry and discipleship. They also help shepherd short term mission teams and facilitate continuing education for church leaders. They try to balance their ministry duties with family duties; they volunteer at school and parent their children. Mercy and Rick live in El Centro, CA, 12 miles north of the border, with their children, Aida, age 17, Rich, age 14 and Joshua, age 8. Folks from other area churches will also be joining us for this festive evening.



SPRING CLEAN-UP DAY
SATURDAY, APRIL 18TH
9 TO 1

Are you tired of the same routine, and want a different place to work out...

Church in the Acres offers stretching (washing windows), bicep work (raking) and other exercises, Saturday April 18th.

This is an ALL-CHURCH event, and is sponsored by the Board of Trustees.

ANNUAL WE CAN WEEKEND!

A Retreat for Adult Cancer Patients and Their Families: June 12-14 in South Hadley

See the posted brochure in the church lobby or call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345 for information and registration. Registration \$35 / family. First come-first served.

RUMMAGE SALE,

SATURDAY, APRIL 25TH 9 TO 2

HELP is needed to receive items, set up and work the sale. Men with trucks are needed to clear Walker Hall after the sale. Youth are needed for set up and courtesy carry-out of items. Anyone interested in coordinating the sale, please call Deb Batista at 589-8728 or Bev Vautrain at 782-7074.

Let's Spring clean our homes, cellars and garages. **Items will be received that week from Wednesday through Friday, 1—8 p.m.** Due to health and safety concerns we request all items be clean and in good condition. Please, no computers or televisions.

CIA Women's Ministries rummage sale is a popular local event. In 2008 among the areas that benefited from the proceeds of the rummage sale are: new coffee maker for our kitchen, new kitchen curtains, Christmas gifts for families in need, Michael's gift card for the Silent Auction, Big Y cards given toward our Thursday Family Night dinners and various other areas have benefited from your hard work.

Sign up sheets will be located in the church lobby and Walker Hall entry.

BIBLE ALIVE!

SPRITUAL REFRESHMENT WEEKEND

At Bethany Assembly of God

Hosted by Pioneer Valley Community Bible Study

Friday, April 17: 7 pm—9:30 pm

Saturday, April 18: 9 am—12:15 pm

Doors open 30 minutes prior for registration.

Mark your calendar and see the Sunday bulletins and posted flyers for more information. You can also download a flyer at: PioneerValleyCBS.org.

Bible Alive! is recommended for adults and students in junior high and high school. Pre-registration is recommended; walk-ins accepted (\$15each/\$25 couple/\$40 family).

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

The American Baptist Churches of Pioneer Valley offer scholarships each year to students who are active in their churches. Applications are in the blue folder rack by the church office door and must be filled out and returned with all necessary documents to Pastor Greg by April 16th.

Church in the Acres Scholarship Applications will be available soon.



**DEADLINE
 FOR
 MAY
 2009
 CHALLENGER
 ARTICLES IS:
 APRIL 15TH**

K-PAW UPDATE — KIDS' PRAISE AND WORSHIP



February was a great month with our numbers averaging 23 children a week! With so many bodies running around it is vital to have a good leadership team to keep things focused. Our team is: Christine and Jenn (members of the Springfield Christian Chinese Church, Leah and Jessica (high schoolers from Church in the Acres). In addition to this team, a small group of middle schoolers (from both churches) have expressed an interest in helping out on Sunday mornings. This group includes Ben, Jackie, James and Anna. The goal of this team is that children would be given the same opportunity on a Sunday morning as their parents: to praise God through song, learn truths from His Word, and seek Him in prayer, while still including fun activities suited towards this age group. With this goal in mind, our weekly schedule includes a craft time, a praise and worship time, a lesson, snack, games, and a prayer time.

Although "normally" we do a 15 minute prayer time (encouraging the kids to first pray by themselves and then bringing them together to pray aloud in a group), around October we realized that due to how big the group was, in addition to the large number of new children we had, our job was really introducing a lot of children to the concept of prayer, and so we shortened the time to about 7 minutes of either praying quietly or praying aloud. As we got further in—especially throughout January—God began to move through these shorter prayer times, as evidenced by children who would opt out of extra game time so they could finish their alone time with God! We were so encouraged by this that we felt it was appropriate to transition back into a full prayer time in February. Throughout this transition we began short group conversations on what prayer was, why do we pray, how do we pray and Who are we praying to. The answers we received (and continue to receive from this group) were amazing: "Prayer is talking *with* God!" "Prayer is giving God love." "Prayer is opening up your heart and letting Jesus see what's inside." The children we work with continue to go above and beyond our expectations of them. Even their prayers, which one would expect to be simple ones, leave all expectations in the dust: "Dear God, I pray for my great-grandmother to have a safe trip to Heaven." "Please Lord, help my father love me." "Dear God, I thank you for giving me a soul!" "Dear God, help me to remember you in times of struggle." Big prayers, for such little people. As we have witnessed these children spending time with their Maker, the team as a whole has been inspired and further driven to make sure K-PAW is continually a place where they can spend uninterrupted time with God.

Since the beginning of their use of Walker Hall, the Springfield Christian Chinese Church has helped K-PAW greatly by providing teachers from their congregation for the lesson time. Jenn and Christine work on a monthly schedule and make sure that the children are understanding God's Word. This month the children have been learning about the fruit of the Spirit. Jenn and Christine have been endlessly creative in finding new ways to present truths - from songs and motions, acting, including fun props or engaging in a teaching activity. The team is very thankful for the addition of these two women of God to our leadership.

The Praise and Worship part of K-PAW is run by Leah and Jessica). The children are encouraged during this time to participate in fun dances and motions while singing upbeat Christian songs. We always have a lot of fun during this high-energy part of our time. A large amount of feedback has come from teachers and parents about this part of our time especially, as children will go to another class singing the songs or are at home still doing the motions!

This month God continued to work throughout the children as well as the leaders of K-PAW, encouraging and inspiring us, renewing our thankfulness to be able to work with these kids.

We thank you for your encouragement and prayers for the K-PAW Ministry, and we look forward to being able to tell you many more stories about how God is working through our children, so you can praise God with us!

God Bless,
The K-PAW Team

FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT FROM THE TREASURER

As of February 2009

	<u>Month-to-date</u>	<u>Year-to-date</u>
Income towards Budgeted Items	18,171	32,805
Disbursements	22,859	41,420
Over/(Shortage)	(4,688)	(8,615)
Budgeted Expenses	19,347	38,693

Have you taken the \$5.00 per person per week challenge?

Don't know what that is? Talk to the Treasurer!

Thank you to those that have taken the challenge!

Submitted by Michelle Giovaninni

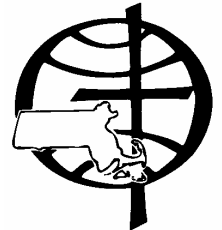


Your over-and-above Easter Offering will help us to meet our budget needs and our ability to extend our mission giving ability.

Remember, 10% of our church income goes to local and global mission outreach.

Easter Offering Envelopes are in the giving envelope boxes and available at church.

**ANNUAL GATHERING
OF THE AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF MASSACHUSETTS
MAY 8TH AND 9TH AT GROTONWOOD**



The Annual Gathering is being held at Grotonwood (our Baptist Camp in Groton, MA, and the new home of the TABCOM offices) on May 8th and 9th. Our church's delegates as well as others are invited to attend. The event will include workshops, worship and fellowship with American Baptists from across the state.

VOLUNTEERS are needed for:

Food and Beverage — assisting with meal preparation, dining room set-up and breakdown, buffet staffing, etc. for 4 hour shifts, beginning Friday at 10 a.m..

Hospitality — tour guides, parking lot attendants and assisting delegates as needed throughout the weekend.

Set-up/Break-down — meeting rooms dining areas and guest rooms, beginning on Thursday — Youth group opportunity??

Registration — beginning at 10 a.m. Friday, assisting with check-in, directions and information.

Anyone who volunteers for both days will receive free overnight accommodations and free meals.

To help in any of these ways, please contact John Mulloy, Volunteer Coordinator at 978-448-5763 or email jmulloy@grotonwood.org.

Copies of the brochure and registration form for the Annual Gathering are at the lobby bulletin board.

OUR NEW CHURCH OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

The following people have been elected to serve as church ministry leaders.
(See page 8 for Committees and Delegates.)

Officers

Moderator: Garry Heiney
 Clerk: Marie Angers
 Assistant Clerk: Cheryl Nacewicz
 Treasurer: Michelle Giovaninni
 Financial Secretary: Catherine Cabey
 Assistant Financial Secretary: Alexandra (Sasha) Heiney
 Auditor: Robert Baranowski
 Church School Superintendent: Audrey Williams
 Librarian: Karen Pasquale
 Historian/Archivist(s): Ruth E. Butler and Joanne Case



Board of Trustees

John Ebersold
 Leslie DeMaria
 Melody Bicknell
 Stephen Nacewicz
 Leah Williams
 Clodovaldo Concepcion
 Kevin Hand
 Kevin O'Neil
 Warren Christensen
 (and Ex-officio Treasurer Michelle Giovaninni
 and Financial Secretary Catherine Cabey)

Diaconate

Rev. Andrew Kilpatrick, Jr.
 Leland Lovell, Honorary Life Deacon
 Robert Henthorn
 Shiloh Bradshaw
 Matthew Pasquale
 J. Byron Nelson
 Nancy Hand
 Lianexis Collazo
 Lena Lee
 Melissa Cabey
 (and Ex-officio Clerk Marie Angers)

Board of Christian Education

Rebecca Bicknell
 Barbara Lavalley
 (and Ex-officio Church School Superintendent
 Audrey Williams)

Board of Mission Outreach

Beverly Vautrain
 Jane Beckland
 Susan Bushey
 Olive Edwards
 Debra Rondeau
 Megan Smith
 Dolores Malone

We thank our Nominating Committee for their excellent work, and all those who have accepted roles.
 We hope to have another church meeting soon to fill remaining positions.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND DELEGATES

Library Committee

Melanie Nacewicz
Beverly Vautrain
(and Ex-officio Librarian Karen Pasquale)

Music/Worship Committee

Sandra O'Neil
Beverly Tisdell
Shiloh Bradshaw

Nominating Committee

Stephanie Bradshaw
Pastor Gregory Dyson
John Ebersold
Andrew Kilpatrick, Jr.
Rebecca Bicknell
Beverly Vautrain

Safe Church Committee

Audrey Williams, Safe Church Advocate

Investment Committee

J. Byron Nelson
Audrey Williams
Jeffrey Rondeau
(and Ex-officio Treasurer Michelle Giovaninni)

Flower Committee

Carolyn Baranowski
Julie Whittemore
Cheryl Nacewicz
Katharine Champagne

Ushers Committee

David Bamford, Coordinator
John DeMaria, Chief
Richard Walowicz, Chief
Richard Bragg, Chief
Julie Whittemore
Robert Henthorn
James Fields
Lena Lee
Stephen Nacewicz
Dorothy Rempp

DELEGATES

To the American Baptist Churches of Pioneer Valley

Donald Williams, Melissa Cabey, Martin Fleming, Pastor Gregory Dyson

To the Council of Churches of Greater Springfield

Deena Goldberg, Stephanie Bradshaw, Lena Lee, John DeMaria, Pastor Gregory Dyson

To the American Baptist Churches of Massachusetts (TABCOM)

Rev. Andrew Kilpatrick, Jr., Mary Kilpatrick, Pastor Gregory Dyson

FAMILY NEWS PAGE



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:
(Our members 60 and up)

- April 7 Jim Fields
- 18 John Ebersold
- 19 Richard Bragg
- 23 Dr. James Sowell
- 28 Nancy MacCallum

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Miranda Dyson and **Jessica Dyson** who participated in Teens Involved on February 28th and qualified for the regional competition in their areas.

Jessica Dyson and **Pastor Greg Dyson** who were honored as Home Town Heroes at the March 18th breakfast at the Mass Mutual Center sponsored by the American Red Cross. Thanks to Claire Mendoza for nominating them both for their outstanding work in our community.



Nancy and Tim MacCallum on the passing of husband and father, Gilbert MacCallum on March 21st. A memorial service will be held in our church at 4 p.m. on March 30th.

Gil has been an important part of our church family for many years and will be sadly missed.

LAY CARE LIST

Send a card, make a call, say a prayer...

(Addresses are in the Church Directory. Office 782-2577)

- April 5 Frances Davidson
- 12 Jean Rondeau
- 19 Rena Ward (Wingate at Springfield)
- 26 John Wanat

Send a Card to These Friends



BAPTISMS

Millie Alicea and **Shelby Johnson** were baptized by Pastor Greg Dyson on March 8th.

HOSPITALIZED

Phyllis Larson
Polly Nelson

NEW PHONE NUMBER:

Dave and Jenn Bamford
1-413-461-5222

Church in the Acres (Baptist)
1383 Wilbraham Road
Springfield, MA 01119-2614

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*Where Christ is at the center,
the Bible is our guide, and People matter.
Growing Disciples to transform the world.*

Time Valued Material
Mailed March 26, 2009

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



**SEE THE YELLOW INVITATION
INSIDE THIS CHALLENGER.**

**SUNDAY, April 5th is
“Installation Day”**

We will install our newly elected board and committee members and officers during our 9:45 a.m. service, followed by Fellowship Time.

We will join together for a 4:30 p.m. Dinner and 6 p.m. evening Installation Service for Pastor Gregory S. Dyson as our sixth pastor. Several area pastors will participate in this service.

The Challenger is a monthly publication of the Church in the Acres (Baptist) except for a combined July/August edition. Articles should be placed in the office drop-off folder outside the office door, the drop-off box on the office counter, mailed, placed in the Walker Hall door mail slot, faxed or e-mailed by the 15th of each month. (Articles may be edited for length.)

E-mail: info@Churchintheacres.org *Fax:* (413) 782-6856

The Church Office is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, *and* Tuesday through Thursday from 1 to 3 p.m.
Phone: 413-782-2577

Pastor	Gregory S. Dyson
Pastor Emeritus	Rev. E. Gage Hotaling
Administrative Assistant	Cheryl Nacewicz
Director of Music	Catherine Berry
Handbell Choir Director	Jeff Tisdell
Celebration II Worship Leaders	Sandy O’Neil, Don Williams
Weekday Custodian	Ric Norris
Weekend Custodians	Ruth Butler and Joanne Case