

Fountain of Life Fellowship

Grounded in the Gospel, we **Gather to Grow** in the Gospel and **Scatter to Spread** the Gospel
for the **Glory of God.**

Council Members

Elders:

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Scott Clair
Ed Mirth
Vince Cabral

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Irmgard Bishop
Jerry Schoenenberger
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Ronell Myburgh

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Pastor's Note by Matt Ford

How's Your Heart?

I'm not sure how to begin, so I'll simply ask: do you love God? It's the language of the Psalms that prompted this question in me. Listen in:

Psalm 27.4 One thing have I asked of the LORD,
that will I seek after:
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD
all the days of my life,
to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD
and to inquire in his temple.

Psalm 84.1 How lovely is your dwelling place,
O LORD of hosts!
2 My soul longs, yes, faints
for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and flesh sing for joy
to the living God.

Psalm 63.1 O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you;
my soul thirsts for you;
my flesh faints for you,
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.
2 So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,
beholding your power and glory.
3 Because your steadfast love is better than life,
my lips will praise you.
4 So I will bless you as long as I live;

in your name I will lift up my hands.

Taken seriously, these words are like a bucket of cold water sloshed into the sleeping face. I know what I believe about God. But how often is this the kind of stuff I *feel* about God?

I don't know that there's anything more disappointing and in the end more revolting than a persistently cold lover (I get this from Rev. 4.15-16). And yet, so often, that is what I am in my worship.

What if my heart was like this?

One thing, just one thing... All I want is to see Your beauty! Please. Or, God, I'm just dying to be with you. You make me want to...to sing for joy because of Who You are and Your love for me! Or, God, I seek You more than anything. I want You. This world is junk in comparison to You. Your love is better than life itself. I'd rather die than lose You. My life is praise to you – an expression of the happiness You are to me.

Isn't that what these Psalms are saying? But do we who have been saved by this God actually feel this way about God? How often? How often is our love for Him the highest love we have? And how trivial are the things that compete with Him for affection? O how sick a thing it is to be allured by such flimsy trinkets instead of God Himself!

Now here's a confession and a relief: I'm thankful that I am not saved by how well or how often I truly feel love for Jesus. Frankly, based on such a standard, I'd go to hell. My best love is weak. And even that is rare. The glorious truth is that the Gospel is *not* being saved by how well we love Jesus. **The Gospel is being saved by trusting in how well Jesus loved His Father!** That was a perfect love. And the merits of that love are ours through faith in Christ.

But what follows is both a warning and an encouragement. The biblical truth is that those who are saved will experience and grow in a true and deep love for God. What else can a verse like 1 Corinthians 16.22 mean?

22 If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed.

If you find you have no love for God, be warned. But be encouraged as well. We can repent. Jesus died for this. Trust Him. Be filled with His Spirit – and know that those who trust in Christ are already eternally loved by God and are invited and enabled to grow in returning that love to their God!

So let's just stop for minute. Or an hour. Let's seek God's face with seriousness. Let's confess our cold hearts. Let's trust in His Son. Let's plead with the Spirit for warm hearts. And let's kindle, foster, and grow in a real, deep, sincere love for and joy in God. For as Psalm 73 reads,

25 Whom have I in heaven but you?

And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.

**26 My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.**

Seeking God with you,

Pastor Matt

Ignition Update

by Scott Clair

Did you know that the Youth Group has been sponsoring a child in Haiti through Compassion International for the last 4 ½ years? It's true! When I first started at FOLF, our youth took the initiative to sacrifice soda and candy, every week, in order to support Mondesir Marc Hifely (Marc). We love Marc in the Youth Group and because of that I thought I would use this month's update to tell you about him.

Marc is 7-years-old and lives two miles south of the city Cap-Haitien in Haiti. He lives with both his parents and attends school throughout the week and then Sunday school and church on the weekends. Marc's Father works as a farmer and his mother sells in the market, however employment opportunity is rarely steady. Marc enjoys games, walking, reading, singing and doing art. At home, like most children, he has chores, which include cleaning and caring water.

Every time I think about Marc I am reminded of how thankful I am for our Youth Group kids. Through their sacrifice we have been able to provide food and clean water, medical care, educational opportunities, and important life-skills training. Most important of all, Marc has heard about Jesus Christ and been encouraged to develop a lifelong relationship with God.



Will you join the Youth Group in praying for Marc?

Shepherd's Corner

contributed by Matt Ford

The elders met Saturday morning, January 30th from 7.30 a.m. – 10.45 a.m. The meeting included accountability, prayer, and discussion of member needs and shepherd connects.

Note: Scott will be on vacation from 3.4-12.2011

Book Review

contributed by Julia Bailey

The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's First Migration

By Isabel Wilkerson

It's been a while since we had a book review in the newsletter. As some of you know, I read a lot, and my reading covers diverse topics.

I recently picked up this book off a recommended reading list. Non-fiction books can be difficult reads, so I approached this with interest, but not necessarily excitement. The book tells the story of the migration of colored...black...African Americans—the description changes over the course of time—from the southern part of the country to the north, from a timeframe roughly encompassing World War I to the 1960s. The story is told largely through the eyes of three people who made that migration: one in the thirties, one in the forties and one in the sixties. There were three major paths: up the eastern seaboard, up through the Mississippi river valley, and out to the west.

The story is also about the darkest period of American history (no pun intended): when, after killing off a significant percentage of America's youth in a war that freed the slaves, the country permitted the growth of laws that left American blacks with arguably fewer rights than they had under slavery. As I read the book, I realized that African Americans in the south, for much of the 20th century, had fewer rights than serfs in Medieval Europe.

We studied the history of "separate but equal" legislation in history classes. But Wilkerson draws the story out of our heads and into the lives of people—not just in pockets here and there, but throughout the south—who lived with this tyranny daily. Under her pen it's easy to forget that this is not a novel.

Why review the book in a church newsletter? There are several reasons why I think it's important. In the words of Edmund Burke, is that "all that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men to nothing." It is easy to look the other way when you see a little evil—whether it is bullying in the school yard, thievery at work, or abuse of power anywhere. But that little, in the absence of objection, soon becomes larger and more virulent. And before long, it requires major effort, and tremendous cost, to unroot it.

The second reason is that this occurred in an area of the country known as the Bible Belt. The people who created the laws that came to be known as Jim Crow laws were church-attending, Bible proclaiming folk. (I'll leave it to God to judge whether or not they were Christian.) Any time we are tempted to become self-righteous about evil in others, we need to be reminded of our corporate, ugly past. And lest we think it was relegated to the south, as the migration spread, the emigrants found that while there were no written laws in the north, freedom wasn't really much freer there.

The third reason is that this happened here, in the land of the free. Not in some third-world dictatorship. Not even hundreds of years ago. This happened in my lifetime.

On the other hand, it's also good to look at the positive side. When you consider how tightly held (and how violently) those views were held, it's pretty amazing that, less than fifty years later, we struggle to understand it. That is testimony to the ability of light to penetrate the darkness.

Today's victims of discrimination in American are a bit different. They are the unborn. The elderly, who increasingly are perceived as a drain on society. Those who are "handicapped"—less than "perfect" in some way, whether physically or mentally. It's my hope that fifty years from now, a history of our time will reflect Christians working to create a better way.

Prayer Guide

contributed by Matt Ford

Prayer Guide:

...Pray without ceasing... 1 thess. 5.17/

Monday – Growth in the Gospel

Pray Ephesians 3.14-21

Pray that we would be individually and corporately grounded on the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.

Pray that our Life Together Groups would be catalysts for substantial fellowship, sanctification, and practical care.

Tuesday – The Family

Pray Psalm 78.4; 112.1-2

Pray for singles in our community; pray that they would feel connected, loved and part of the church family. **Pray** that single parents would be filled with God's power and feel our support. **Pray** for the marriages of our church, that they would derive their wisdom and strength from the Gospel. **Pray** for the parents; that they would have the grace, wisdom, diligence and endurance to raise their children in the Gospel. **Pray** for the nursery, children's worship, and youth group ministries of the church. Pray for the leaders and the students involved, that God would give grace and power to transform lives.

Wednesday – The Sick and Suffering

Pray 1 Peter 1.3-9

Pray for sick and suffering in our church. Pray that God would heal physically, spiritually, emotionally, and relationally. **Pray** that we would be enabled to cling to Him throughout the difficulties and find Christ faithful.

Thursday – Growth of the Gospel

Pray Matthew 28.18-20

Pray that we would be wise, joyful, and bold in sharing the Gospel. Pray that hearts would be opened to believe. Pray that the unsaved would be a burden in our hearts, and that we would be filled with the Holy Spirit and power towards witnessing for Christ. **Pray** that younger singles would continue to find a place in our community and become more and more a part of the ministry here.

Friday – BSTC (Haitian Partner Church)

Pray 2 Thessalonians 1.11-12

Pray for Pastor Abner, that he might be full of faith and wisdom and faithful in preaching the Gospel. **Pray** for the congregation, that they would be strengthened by and bold in the Gospel. And **pray** for those orphans, that they would know the deep love of their Father and grow into men and women of God who are instrumental in the transformation of Haiti.

Saturday – Sunday Worship

Pray Acts 2.29-47

Pray that God would be honored by our sincere, Gospel-centered worship. Pray the preaching of God's word would be powerful for believer and unbeliever alike. Pray that folks would come, and that the meeting would result in lives changed for the glory of God.

All-Church Retreat

contributed by Scott Clair

This Summer we will be having our first ever "All-Church Retreat". The retreat will be held at Lake Isabella and go from **August 25 -28**. We will be staying at French Gulch campsite, which can accommodate up to 100 people. There is room for those who are into tent camping as well as those who are into Trailer/RV camping. The campsite has its own private bathrooms and showers as well as a group eating area. The campground is a 2 minute walk to the lake which has sandy beach and is perfect for soaking up the sun, letting kids swim, or docking jet skis / boats.

Why have a retreat? A retreat provides an opportunity to grow deeper relationships within our church body. A retreat also provides an excellent opportunity to invite friends and family members who do not know Jesus Christ. Most importantly we will be enjoying God's creation and sharing in his Word together.

Tentative Cost*: \$100 per family unit (Husband /Wife, Kids)
\$50 for singles.

*Cost will include all food and camping fees.

More detailed information will come shortly, however we wanted to give you the dates ahead of time so you can start planning your summer accordingly.

If you have any furniture that you are looking to sell/give away that would be suitable for a "cry room" (ex: rocking chairs, couches), please e-mail Rachel@folcfc.com.



Out of the Salt Shaker

contributed by Julia Bailey

“Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. Jer 9:23- 24

Boasting is not something we usually take pride in. But the Bible indicates that there is a time for boasting. Scripture uses a Hebrew word that has been adopted around the world without translation into nearly every Christian culture. That word is Hallelujah. The root of the word is the Hebrew *Hallel*, which means to boast or praise. Paul often, in his letters, paraphrases the verses from Jeremiah shown above, to admonish people to boast in the Lord.

Do we boast in our Lord? Little kids on the playground are known for their boasting about their fathers (“My dad is stronger than your dad”). As we grow older, we learn to make our boasting a little more subtle. But when it comes to Jesus, I don’t see much boasting going on at all. Rather than “My God is stronger than your god” it sounds much more tentative: perhaps like this: “well, I have a God too, and if you got to know him I think you might like him.” And that’s on a good day.

I’m not talking about in church. There, sure, we will praise God for his goodness and the marvelous things he has done. But when we are around the people who need to hear, we are “suddenly quiet and shy”.

I wonder why. Perhaps we don’t really believe that God is, after all, that great. Perhaps we think others will scoff at us. Perhaps we lack the words.

Observant Jews refer to several groups of songs as Hallel. Psalm 136 is sometimes called the Great Hallel, with its chant-like refrain of “For his steadfast love endures forever.” Psalms 113-118, often referred to as the lesser Hallel, are recited before and after feasts on Jewish holidays. And Psalms 145-150 are yet another Hallel, used as part of morning prayers.

One of the most saintly men I’ve ever known was able to recite the entire book of Psalms because he had learned them to melodies in the Netherlands. This man lived and breathed the Word of God, and lived with a grace and joy that continues to inspire me even though he now sings in the presence of God.

I am a big fan of putting Scripture into song—it allows me to remember it more easily, and take it with me through my day. Last weekend I attended a worship symposium sponsored by the Calvin Institute for Christian Worship (CICW). A meeting of the Hymnal Advisory board of which I’m a part held their meeting in conjunction with the Symposium, and CICW not only covered the symposium fees for all board participants, but also graciously covered out room fees to allow us to attend for free. There were many highlights of my time there, but one of them was to hear work being done in the Netherlands and in (of all places) Russia to put the Psalms to contemporary music. To say that the music was moving and worshipful does not begin to do it justice. I hope to be able to work to introduce more of it into our worship. In the meantime, I encourage you to take a look at the psalms I’ve listed here. Find one that gives voice to your boasting in the Lord. Commit it to memory. And then take it with you through your week.

Hallelujah.

Budget Report

contributed by Anne Buteyn

Newsletter Budget Report – January 2011

Inflow:

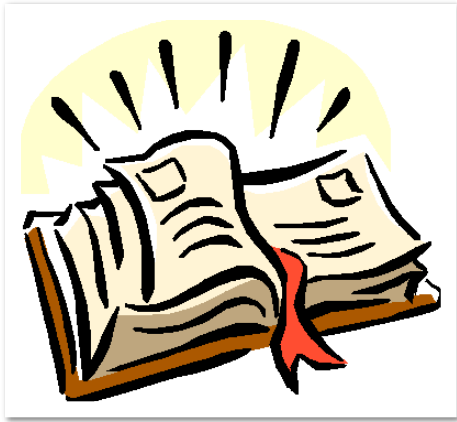
General Fund (offerings, rent): \$16,187.00

Special offering: – HORT - \$360.00

Outflow:

General Fund/Ministry Shares: \$14,300.81

Ministry Schedule	Feb 13, 2011	Feb 20, 2011	Feb 27, 2011	Mar 6, 2011
Nursery	Marcia F Debrah Veronica	Heather L TBD Michael	Melinda Carolyn Lizzy	Kathryn Gayle Audrey
Children's Worship	Debbie B Genesee	Debbie B Judy	Debbie B Ann S.	Wesley Jacky
Hospitality	John & Irene			
Scripture Reading	Heather L	Cinti	Wesley	Lynn
Congregational Prayer	Todd	Vera	Ed	Heather L
Greeters	Jacky and Anne B March: Ed and Melinda			
Communion Elements	March: Rachel			



WOW

Our ladies' bible study, is continuing through the magisterial Gospel of John. Come enjoy this amazing book with us, and bring a friend! Every and any lady is welcome! We meet Wednesday mornings from 9 – 10.30 a.m.

Daughters of the King

We will meet in two weeks (on February 20) at our regularly scheduled time of 5 PM. We will continue our study of the promises of God. With this month being the time for hearts and flowers, it can be difficult for those who struggle with the hurts of broken relationships, strife and loneliness. So we will take a look at God's promises to the broken-hearted. If chocolate helps, bring some to share! We also will have our regular game time, singing, and an interview with one of our members.

Daughters of the King is a fellowship of women from 18 to 102+ who meet to study God's word, play together and learn about each other. Visitors are always welcome! Feel free to bring a friend!

Andrizomai

Our next breakfast is Saturday, February 12th, 7 a.m. at Carrows (Magnolia, between Heil and Warner). Join us as we enjoy one another's company and continue our study in the Gospel according to Mark. We'll be giving our attention to Mark 6.45-56. Bring a friend!

Care for our Shut-Ins

Below is a list of friends & family of FOLF that would appreciate a call, a card, a visit, and prayer.

Please contact Rachel (Rachel@folfrc.com) for phone numbers and addresses of those we care for.

Joe Bakkelo has moved back into his home in Victorville. He would appreciate calls and cards.

Hetty De Jonge is still recovering. We give thanks to God for healing! Hetty still loves to have visitors and cards, and enjoys fresh flowers from your garden.

Russ Hanff is in an assisted living home in Whittier. Russ suffers from Alzheimer's; while forgetful, he really enjoys visits and cards (he has no phone). He LOVES to talk about the Angels, and his years of coaching Little League and softball. He recently was able to take a trip to Alaska.

June Verhoeven live at the Artesia Christian Home in Artesia. June cannot walk due to a stroke that she suffered a few months ago. She would love to receive cards and visits. She also enjoy home-cooked food and fresh fruit.

Rosalie would appreciate some visitors from the FOLF family. If you are interested in visiting,, please contact Irmgard for information.

Brian McGuire is a former member of our church. He lives in Fullerton with his son, Kyle. Brian suffers from advanced effects of diabetes. He would love a call or a card