

From the Pastor's Pen...

LENT—it's not just that stuff in your clothes dryer anymore!

After the Reformation, observing Lent was thrown out with many other traditions that were considered too “papist” (including sanctuary art, singing anything other than the Psalms, and observing Christmas). Many Reformed congregations have since realized that they threw out the baby with the bathwater and have embraced many rituals of pre-reformation Christianity, “papist” or not. Along with Christmas, one of the traditions and rituals being embraced with increasing frequency is the observance of Lent—those forty days preceding Easter (excluding Sundays).

These forty days are used as a time of preparation for the joy and celebration of Easter. Some people prepare by fasting or giving up something important to them. Others spend extra time in prayer and Bible study. And still others give more time to service of neighbors or reconciling broken relationships.

The word Lent comes from the Old English word *lencten*, which refers to the lengthening of daylight and the coming of Spring. When the daylight hours are equal to nighttime hours, we have reached the spring equinox. The date for Easter is set on the first Sunday after the full moon crosses the celestial equator, about March 30 of each year. This year Easter Sunday falls on April 4th. Once the date for Easter has been established, we simply count backwards to determine the beginning of Lent, which is known as Ash Wednesday (this year Ash Wednesday was on February 17; our service was snowed out).

Originally, the season of Lent was used to prepare new converts for the sacrament of Baptism. The sacrament was administered on Easter Sunday and was the culmination of a time reflection, study, and discovery that traditionally lasted three years (known as *catechiztion*). By the year 400 A.D. the early Christian church had established this Lenten period as a time for all Christians to engage in practices of self-discipline and self-examination. But by the Middle Ages, the season was so strict that people dreaded its coming. Over time, the harsh demands and expectations have been softened and relaxed. Today the season is embraced as a time of growth and change.

Therefore, I invite you to consider observing some spiritual disciplines like prayer, worship, fasting, self-examination, hospitality, and/or devotional reading. However you observe these remaining weeks of Lent, may you use this time to prepare for the glory of Easter and the assurance of God's grace.



Congregational Life

Wanda Gervasi & Sherry McNeill

Albertine Blevins
Helen Hartzog
Mary Jones
Edna Miller
Reo & Clara Miller
Berniece Pennington
Ben & Mary Winters
Bill Underwood



The Congregational Life Committee visits our homebound members during the month. The committee members who are unable to visit in person call or send cards. The homebound really appreciate being remembered in any of these ways. If there are any members that need to be added to the list please contact a Congregational Life Committee member or the office.

On a recent visit, Berniece Pennington commented that she would love to have visitors. She is at Villages of Ashe, as is Edna Miller, Ben & Mary Winters, and Hugh McNeill.

Emergency Number

For emergencies outside of office hours, call the church's cell phone: **336-620-1100**

March Fellowship Calendar

7 open
14 Lenore & Gordon DePree
21 Nancy & John Reeves & Brad McNeely
28 open

We encourage you to sign up to host Fellowship! The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board near the water fountain, or call the church office. **Remember, Keep It Simple!**



by Sharon Frazier

**Help children cope!
A real crisis—
Bullying:
“Quit hassling me!”**

Bullying has always been around; used to be considered “normal” childhood behavior—boys and girls are guilty.

Bullying ranges from verbal taunting to being even brutally physical.

This can happen anywhere: 1) at school, 2) by phone, 3) cyberspace—for all to see, 4) cell phone (the child can be harassed anywhere!)

For the perpetrators it's fun!

For the victims—it's torture in every imaginable way!

The effects of being bullied can last an entire lifetime. It can cause low self esteem, depression, poor performance in an activities, and even can lead to suicide (for the bullied) and at the most extreme—planned random killing of “the bullies” and others.

The bully can also become involved in criminal behavior later on, if help does not intervene. It also leads to abusive behaviors towards spouses, children, the elderly, and anyone who is seen as innocent or helpless.

Almost 30% of youth in the U.S. are estimated to be involved—either as bully, a target of bullying, or both!

Kids are exposed (on a constant basis) to inflicted pain on others, and consider it a normal activity (TV programs, movies, brutal video games), and adults in their environment are setting the examples of bullying behavior.

We as parents need to be willing to hold the bully accountable, give power to the target (our child), and keep the target safe.

The parent also needs to be attentive to what their children are “really saying”, clarify what has occurred, then give the child ways to endure, respond, and be empowered in the face of bullying. If your child is bullied:

DO tell your child...

- I hear you and I'm here for you
- I believe you
- You are not alone in this

Continued in next column...

- This is not your fault
 - There are things you can do
- *As a parent, do tell the school personnel & ask them to be observant.

DO NOT...

- Minimalize, rationalize or explain away a bully's behavior
 - Solve the problem for your child—it takes away rather than empowers him
 - Tell the child to avoid the bully—worsens the problem
 - Tell your child to fight back (verbally or physically)
 - Confront the bully or the bully's parents alone
- *When with others, don't you, as parents, be a bad example.

Tips for bullied kids:

- Be nice to kids when they are mean to you and before long they will stop being mean—or "The Golden Rule"
- Don't tattle on kids who upset you—it makes them not like you, even hate you
- Don't get angry when kids insult you. They love to make you mad, make it clear they can insult you all they want & it doesn't bother you.
- If kids hit you and you're not hurt, act like nothing happened at all. That way, you look tough and cool because you don't get upset over nonsense.

If they keep hitting or pushing you ask them calmly "Are you mad at me?" It takes away their power.

March PW Circle Rescheduled

The PW Circle will meet **Tuesday, March 9th at 1:00pm** in the church parlor. Mary Katherine Robinson will conduct our Bible Study (lesson #9). All women of the church are cordially invited to attend.

Next month, The PW Circle will meet Monday, April 5th at 7:00 p.m. in the church parlor. Randy Brown from Camp New Hope will present the program. All women are cordially invited, come join us and bring a friend.



Worship

Carolyn Mock & David Meghoo

Looking Ahead to Easter

Egg-stravaganza

Watch bulletin board for date & time!

**Holy Week services
March 29th to April 2nd
Noon**

WJ First Baptist Church
Lunch following the service

**Maundy Thursday service
April 1st**

Meal at 5:30

Shepherd's Pie, Salad, Roll, Cake & Ice cream
Mac & cheese for the kids
(Lauren Meghoo is cooking)
Love offering taken for meal

Reservations needed, watch for sign up sheet

Service at 6:30

Communion

**Easter Sunrise service & breakfast
April 4th**

time to be announced

**Easter service
April 4th
11:00am**

Communion

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

March Flower Calendar

- 7 Anna Henson
- 14 open
- 21 Nancy & John Reeves
- 28 Vernie Blevins & Sherlyn Blevins

Sign up on the Flower list on the bulletin board, or call the church office.



Mission

3rd Wednesday at 7:00
Brad McNeely & Evans Leslie

The Mission Committee would like to thank everyone who came out and helped in all of our missions last year. In 2009 we:

- Conducted food drives for the Sharing Center
- Helped children at Westwood Elementary participate in nutritional education programs they would otherwise have been excluded from
- Increased our participation at Soup For You by committing to serve soup an additional weekend each month
- Took more names than in the past for the Christmas Project. There was such an overwhelming response last year to this particular program that we will make sure we pick up extra names this year so that there are plenty to go around. Thanks to everyone who took a name, to those who purchased gift cards or generic gifts to be used if the Christmas Project staff needed to add to a particular child's gifts, and to those who signed up to help wrap gifts.
- Grew participation in the Trash Pick-Up Program. Thanks to everyone who came out and helped keep the road into town looking nice each month.
- Sponsored Presbyterian Missions in Sudan and Iraq
- Opened our Church to the community with our first Job Skills Expo in partnership with the Ashe Campus of Wilkes Community College and the Ashe County Chamber of Commerce

In January, our Church co-sponsored the Character Recognition Breakfast for Blue Ridge Elementary with West Jefferson Methodist. In talking to the Assistant Principal, several areas were identified in which we as members of the community can help:

1. The school receives funds by collecting box tops from participating products. You should have received a copy at some point from the greeters as you entered the Sanctuary. If you haven't received one, please pick one up from the Mission bulletin board. This is an easy way to help the school by just looking in your pantry at the things you use anyway. We will be placing an envelope on the Mission bulletin board to collect those box tops.
2. The school is also collecting Campbell's soup labels. An envelope will also be placed on the Mission bulletin board to collect these.
3. The school is accepting gently used, age appropriate books for their library. Please place these in the designated blue bin in the hallway.
4. If you haven't recycled your old phone books, please bring them to the Church and place them in the designated bin in the hallway outside the Fellowship hall. The school collects old phone books and received money for turning them in. This will go on for part of March so if you haven't recycled your old phone books, this is a good way to get rid of them and help the kids.

Also, in continued partnership with the Ashe County School System, our Church is participating in a Community In Schools program. We will be making a monthly contribution to this program to be used to help purchase items from school supplies to clothing. Also, the Family Coordinator for the school system is starting programs to help with mentoring and crisis intervention. If anyone is interested in participating in either of these programs, please contact Brad McNeely or Evans Leslie.

In other news, the Mission Committee has canceled the Jamaica mission trip after not being able to raise any volunteers for the trip. We will be sending a donation to Jamaica Relief Ministries to help them with their work instead. Also, Relay For Life will be starting soon.

Finally, see the next page for a list of remaining 2010 dates for Ashe Outreach Ministries Fish Fries. A flyer with additional details, including directions can be found on the Missions Bulletin Board.

Evans Leslie and Brad McNeely - MJPC Mission Committee co-chairs

**RELAY FOR LIFE
JULY 16TH
Ashe County High School**



The Mission Committee is seeking volunteers to organize our Relay For Life effort this year. It's a fun-filled overnight event designed to celebrate survivorship and raise

money for research and programs of the American Cancer Society.

Responsibilities include:

- Attend monthly meeting @ MJPC (usually second Mondays around 5:30)
- Assemble team volunteers
- Collect funds
- Conduct fundraiser, ex. potluck, spaghetti dinner (Mission and Fellowship committees will assist)
- Event is July 16th

It would be wonderful to have 2-3 co-chairs to organize this event. Please open your heart and consider this important position.

Please contact Brad McNeely (877-3114) or Evans Leslie (384-4481).

**Ashe Outreach Ministries Fish Fry
Dates for 2010**

Mar 5	May 21	Aug 6	Oct 15
Mar 19	Jun 4	Aug 20	Nov 5
Apr 2	Jun 18	Sep 3	Nov 19
Apr 16	Jul 2	Sep 17	Dec 3
May 7	Jul 16	Oct 1	Dec 17

Sharing Center Report

December: 317 served; 361 for food. (We were closed several days during the month.)

During the *Joyous Sounds of Christmas*, \$1,002 was received for the Sharing Center!

For the year 2009: 5,337 served; 4,023 for food.

January: 324 served; 467 for food—a record for food. (We were closed several days during the month.)

February: We were only open 9 days in February, during which 254 people were served; 344 for food.



Discipleship

Karen Powell & Lew Mullinax

**Send Your Child to Camp
this Summer!***

Come to a place of rest, renewal, and escape...

Today's world seems to be one of constant hustle and bustle. Often, we feel bombarded by an almost nonstop diet of hi-tech gadgetry: phones, computers, iPods, HDTV, and the like. A steady stream of commitments and expectations set a very frantic pace by which we seem to live our lives these days.

Camp Grier, by contrast, stands out as a place of rest and rejuvenation for all ages. This summer, a week (or more!) at camp can be a counter-point to the hectic and often chaotic world in which our children live.

Brian Frick (Associate for Camp & Conferences Ministries with the PCUSA) states that our church camps are "*a place of rest, renewal and escape*", places where we can escape from our bustling lives, where we can go to "*experience simpler living in a way that empowers children...to re-enter that 'new reality' charged and in touch with their real soul—their real understanding that they are loved for who they are, not for what they do—because they are children of God.*"

Send your child to camp this summer...let 'em "un-wire" and recharge!

Tour Camp Grier at our Open House on Sunday, May 16 at 1:00pm.

(*reprinted from Camp Grier flyer)

Brochures are available on the bulletin board, or you can go to www.campgrier.org.

Scholarships to summer camp are available from MJPC through the Terri Wagoner fund.



Session Notes

Joe Blevins, Clerk of Session

The Session met on 1/17/2010:

Officers elected for 2010 are:

Clerk – Joe Blevins

Clerk Pro Tem – Mike Knight

Treasurer – Anne Crawley

The Building & Grounds Committee was instructed to draft a Church Use Policy.

We reviewed the new Committee Structure which is:

- **Finance & Administration** – Anne Crawley and Steve Murphree
- **Worship** – Carolyn Mock and Dave Meghoo
- **Congregational Life** – Wanda Gervasi and Sherry McNeill
- **Buildings and Grounds** – John Reeves
- **Discipleship** – Lew Mullinax and Karen Powell
- **Leadership** – Mike Knight
- **Mission** – Brad McNeely and Evans Leslie

Pastor Robinson gave a status report on the roof repairs and payment.

The Session met on 2/21/2010:

Financial and Treasurer’s reports were received and are posted on the bulletin board in the hall for your review. We also received the statistical report for 2009.

Brad McNeely reported that there will be no mission trip to Jamaica because no one has been able to commit to the trip for the past three years.

Steve Murphree, our commissioner to the February Presbytery meeting summarized the meeting which he attended in Burlington, NC on Feb. 20th.

Steve Murphree was elected President of the Mount Jefferson Presbyterian Church Corporation.

The Session meets at 12:45 p.m. on the third Sunday of each month. If you have any concerns you would like to have addressed please contact me or any member of the Session.

Grace be with you,
Joe



Finance & Administration

Steve Murphree & Anne Crawley

January 2010

General Fund

Beginning balance		\$ 49,066.13
Income	\$19,731.69	
Expenses	\$18,542.28	
Ending balance		\$ 50,255.54

Two-Cents-a-Meal (received YTD) \$ 0
(first 2010 offering was in February)

Pastor’s Discretionary Fund

Assistance was given to individuals to help with various needs, as listed below:

BREMCO	\$ 150.00
Water bill	\$ 75.00
Groceries	\$ 71.08

Church Directory

The church directory can be found on mjpc.org. Go to the Events tab, click on Newsletters; the log in area is below the list of newsletters.

Let Doris (846-7481 or wjeffpres@skybest.com) know if you don’t have the log-in info or are having problems getting in.

Copies of the directory are also available on the table just outside the sanctuary for those who don’t have internet access.

Church Staff

Billy Robinson	Pastor
Kermit Dancy	Pastor Emeritus
Carla Young	Youth Director
Jim Anderson	Music Director
Jeffrey Lazenby	Organist
Doris Facsko	Secretary/Bookkeeper

March 2010

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Church breakfast, 8:30 am	3 CKC 3 to 5 pm	4	5	6 Soup for You at WJ Elementary 10:30-1:00
7 Discipleship 9:00 Congreg Life 12:30 PAIN		8	9 PW Circle 1:00 church parlor	10 CKC 3 to 5 pm	11	12	13 Soup for You at WJ Elementary 10:30-1:00
14 Mission 12:00 PAIN Daylight Saving Time		15	16	17 CKC 3 to 5 pm	18	19	20 FIRST DAY  OF SPRING! Adopt-a-Hwy 9:30am
21 Session 12:45 pm PAIN		22	23	24 CKC 3 to 5 pm Fin/Admin. 5:30 Newsletter deadline	25	26	27
28 2 Cents a Meal PAIN		29 Holy Week services at WJ First Baptist, noon, thru Apr 2	30	31 CKC 3 to 5 pm		Each Sunday: Handbells 9:00 Sunday School 9:45 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 12:00	Each Wednesday: Choir Practice 6:00