

The C R O S S T I E



The July 25, 2008
Newsletter of the
Smoke Rise Baptist Church

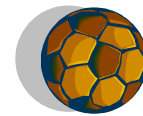
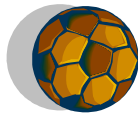


2008 Smoke Rise Baptist 9th Annual Model Train Exhibit

Saturday, July 26 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday, July 27 12 p.m.-3 p.m.

Exhibits in the
Gym and Fellowship Hall



Indoor Soccer for 4-8 Year Olds

Parents' meeting August 18 at 7:00 p.m.

Practices will be held on Tuesdays & Thursdays beginning August 26. 4-6 year olds practice from 6-7:00 p.m. and 6-8 year olds practice from 7-8:00 p.m.

Games will be held on Saturdays at 9 & 10:30 a.m. with the first game beginning on September 2. The season ends October 11.

The cost is \$95. For more information, contact Jill Wade at 770.413.2133 ext 224.

Register online at: smokeriseministries.org

Don't Forget About Katrina

There is still much work to be done!! The schedule for upcoming Katrina/Biloxi trips is:

- September 4-7
- October 9-12
- November 6-9
- December 4-7

Please check your calendar and see if you can be a part of one or more of these important mission trips. Remember to sign up online. The cost is \$85. Please contact Greg Everett at geverett@wilwat.net or Jim Huston at srbckatrinamission@comcast.net for more information.



Goal: \$570,000
Given or Pledged: \$486,105.13
Needed: \$83,894.87



Life Connections

Classes for Adults
Fall 2008

Can We Talk? Soul-stirring conversations with God

Author Priscilla Shirer teaches how to make our time in God's Word a two-way conversation. 6 weeks.

- Sundays at 5:00 beginning Sept. 7
- Mondays at 9:45 beginning Sept. 8

Beginning Again

A class for people who have experienced divorce. Sessions are based on the book, *Beginning Again*, by Terry Hershey. Hershey's advice on surviving heartbreak will free you from the past and give you hope and encouragement for happy and fulfilling relationships in the future. 13 Weeks

- Sundays at 4:30 p.m. beginning September 7

El tren ha salido
de la estación.

Yo no tengo un caballo.

Yo me compraré un auto.

Conversational Spanish

The Hispanic culture is growing in our country as well as in our community. Smoke Rise is committed to missions involvement in two Hispanic cultures: Honduras and Tijuana. Are you going on one of these mission trips in the future or have a circumstance that would be facilitated if you spoke the language? If so, this class is for you. In just minutes a day, you'll pick up the language you need for most everyday situations. You'll learn the basic vocabulary for introductions, finding your way, dining, shopping, plus days of the week, weather, time, basic grammar and more! \$15.00 for the text book, *Learn Spanish The Fast and Fun Way*.

- Sundays at 6:00 p.m. beginning Sept. 21. 6 weeks.

Registration deadline is Sept. 7. Leader: Elbia Coe



The Community: Sunday School at Home

Be part of a new group that is forming to study the Bible on Sunday evenings. Perfect for people who can't get to church on Sunday mornings or for anyone who wants to have more time for Bible study than is possible in a regular Sunday School class. It's also a great way to introduce your neighbor to Smoke Rise.

- Leader: Dr. Gary Leazer
- Sundays at 6 p.m. beginning Sept. 7. Host home locations will be announced to participants.
- For more information or to register, call Kathy Dobbins at kdobbins@smokerisebaptist.org

From Thankful Hearts to Christian Friends



Dear Smoke Rise Friends,

Thank you so very much for your prayers, cards, calls, notes, visits, meals, gifts and the loving concern you have shown us as we journey through this process. All of your support has literally meant more to us than words can express. You have and are our backbone of support.

I am coming along but still have a ways to go. As soon as I'm strong enough we start the final stage of the process with the last of the chemo.

Ray and I feel so honored to be part of this loving congregation. Please continue to keep us in your thoughts and prayers.

Love,

Linda & Ray Cummings

Dear SRBC family,

Thank you for ALL your cards, prayers, phone calls and food. Smoke Rise is the best, a wonderful group of God's people. I thank God for leading us to such a wonderful congregation many years ago.

In Christ's Love,

Al and Shirley Furr



Wedding

Congratulations to Beth Moody and Matthew Wren who were married July 13; Beth is the daughter of Ray and Gail Moody.



Deaths

We extend our sympathy to these whose loved ones have died; Bill Strain whose sister died; Mark Gray whose father died; Al Furr whose sister died; Jim Rountree whose mother died; and to the family of Dane Sanderlin; Karen and Dane have been members of Smoke Rise since 1978.

From the Pastor's Heart

“The Fugitive”

Genesis 28:10-19

Last Sunday I preached on Jacob fleeing for his life because he stole his twin brother's birthright and deceived his father, Isaac, into giving him his final blessing. When Esau discovered what Jacob did, he vowed to kill him. With assistance from his mother, Rebekah, Jacob left Beersheba and headed north toward Haran to live with his uncle, Laban, until Esau's anger subsided.

After the first day's journey, he stopped in Luz, eleven miles north of Jerusalem. Alone for the first time in his life and scared, he bedded down for the night under the open sky. He placed a rock near his head for protection from wild animals or intruders. While he slept, he had a rather dramatic dream.

In his dream, he saw a staircase reaching from heaven to earth. Angels were ascending and descending and God spoke reassuring words of hope to him. When Jacob awoke, his first response was, **“Surely the Lord was in this place and I was unaware of it.”**

I am intrigued by those words. Why did Jacob not know that God was with him in that place? I can think of two reasons.

I believe the last thing that Jacob expected that night was a divine encounter in a strange place. He was merely passing through Luz and had a lot on his mind, one of which was not an encounter with God.

By the way, where was the unlikeliest place that you had an unforgettable encounter with God? Were you startled and caught off guard like Jacob? Did you memorialize the spot or give it a sentimental name? Have you shared the experience with anyone?

What did you learn from that experience? Are you less likely to confine God to your expectations? Do you see every place as sacred and each experience as fertile ground for a divine encounter? I hope so.

I think this dream revealing God's awareness of and concern for Jacob surprised him for another reason. This was a place of shame, guilt, fear, confusion, despair and alienation. This was not a place for God or anyone else that knew Jacob to come to him. Jacob was a con-man, a deceiver reaping what he had sown and he deserved to be alone and suffer in silence.

Come to think of it, why was God there? For the same reason you and I would be if Jacob was our son. God was doing what any loving parent would do that was worried about a wayward child. Jacob made a mess of his life and needed help. It wasn't time to let him go and spiral out of control. It was time to go find him and remind him that he was still loved in spite of his many mistakes and that his family needed him to assume the mantle of leadership handed down to him.

In other words, it was time for Jacob to grow up and become responsible. It was time for him to get serious about life and become a servant leader, helping those that needed him as the covenant with his ancestors stressed. It was time for him to bless people rather than bless them out.

It was also time for Jacob to get serious about his faith and recognize his dependence upon God. The Lord would make this journey of faith with him just as He did Jacob's ancestors and provide the wisdom, understanding, strength, courage and confidence he needed. He, like Abraham and Isaac, however, needed to let God lead him.

What impact did this experience have on Jacob? I would like to think that he woke up a new man and decided to get serious about his faith, responsibilities and future. At least I want to think that it began that lifelong process and there are indications that it did.

Let's allow this story to intersect our lives. **Is it time for you to wake up?** Do you need to make some changes? Is it time for you to get serious about faith, responsibilities and your future? Is it time for you to come to grips with your past and change the course of your life? Is it time for you to become a positive role model and leader? Who needs you to grow up and assume the mantle of leadership in your family and become a servant leader? Who needs you to move from Luz to Bethel?

How many encounters with God and wake-up calls have you missed? I have to believe that this was not the first time that God tried to reach Jacob. It was, perhaps, the first time that Jacob got away from his family or faced a problem that he and his mother could not solve that made this encounter possible. “Surely the Lord was in this place and I was unaware of it” Could you say the same thing?

This morning, are you so focused upon a destination or goal that you cannot see the value of the journey and the importance of relationships? Are you at such a low point in life that you think even God cannot reach you? Are you, too, living in fear and shame and with so much guilt that you feel that you deserve to languish in misery forever?

Aren't you impressed with the fact that God visited Jacob while on this journey at the lowest point in his life and did not reprimand him or heap more guilt upon him? Have you noticed that not a word of condemnation was spoken to this guilty man?

Why? Was God unaware of Jacob's glaring faults? Of course not. Then what was God's intent that evening? What lesson did Jacob need to learn in that moment through that divine encounter? He needed to know that he was redeemable. Sure, he deserved condemnation, but God's amazing grace gave him what he needed, not deserved. Under the circumstances, no loving parent would do differently that wanted to redeem a child that had lost his way.

I don't know what you have done, who you have hurt or how badly you feel this morning, but I want you to know that God has not given up on you and I would be willing to say that no one else that truly loves you has either. You may have given up on yourself, but they haven't, and their support is all you need in order to turn your life around. If you don't do it, you only have yourself to blame.

You may be on the other side of this equation this morning. You may be a struggling parent or grandparent of a wayward child. **Who needs you to come to their aid in their hour of greatest need?** Who around you has messed up his or her life so badly that they are reeling out of control? Who needs you to love them at their worst and hear that you still believe in them? Who needs you to be the healing, comforting, forgiving, encouraging and guiding presence of God in their life at this time? Are you willing to be that person?

How can you? You can't. You don't have enough grace and mercy or willpower, but I know one who does. Ask the God of Jacob to help you do for someone you love what He did for someone He loved. He will. He will give you wisdom, understanding, insight, patience, strength, courage and stamina. He will go with you down a road that few are willing to go and no one wants to travel. I hope and pray you will let Him.

Until Sunday,
Bob

A Conversation About Teaching

Sunday, August 24; 12:00 noon in S223

Everyone is welcomed to join in the conversation we will have several times during the year. Teaching does not mean having all the answers, but rather asking and thinking about the important questions. If you would enjoy being a part of a conversation about learning and how it happens in our family of faith, and if you have ever thought about the possibility of participating in others' learning, please join us for lunch and some discussion on August 24th, at 12:00 noon.

To R.S.V.P. or for more information, contact Kathy Dobbins (adult Sunday School), Kristy Eggert or Lee Prohitt (youth Sunday School), or Kellie Denton (children's Sunday School).

The Lilburn & Stone Mountain Co-ops Need School Supplies: Writing tablets, backpacks, college & wide ruled notebook paper & notebooks, dictionaries, hi-lighters, pencils (#2 & colored), scissors, hand sanitizer, boxes of tissue, erasers, pocket folders with brads, graph paper, composition books, markers, pens, glue sticks (not glue bottles please) & rulers.

In addition, the Lilburn Co-op also needs cereal, canned meat, canned fruit & toilet paper. Items maybe placed in either the food bin near the office or on shelves in the hallway under the gym.

Thank you!

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Tim W. Adcox	Minister of Missions/Recreation
Danny Vancil	Minister of Worship & Music
Kellie Denton	Minister to Families with Children
Kristy Eggert	Interim Minister of Families with Youth
David MacFarlane	Director of Administration and Communications
Linda Cummings	Coordinator of Congregational Life/Senior Adults
Amanda Burton	Nursery Director
Truett Gannon, D. Min.	Pastor Emeritus

Smoke Rise Counseling Center

Affiliate of Care and Counseling Center of Georgia

770-469-6547

Gloria White, M. Div., LCSW	Counselor
Rene Ely, M. Div., LMFT	Counselor
Gina Campbell, M. Div., LCSW	Counselor

FINANCIAL STATISTICS

As of July 17, 2008

Four hundred fourteen families have pledged \$1,966,177.60 to date for the 2008 Budget.

	YEAR TO DATE (THIS YEAR)	BUDGET TO DATE
<u>INCOME</u>		
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$1,200,793.64	\$1,493,331.00
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	<u>12,876.86</u>	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,213,670.50	\$1,493,331.00
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 919,486.70	\$1,125,956.00
TOTAL MINISTRIES – WORSHIP	33,716.69	37,540.00
TOTAL MINISTRIES – EDUCATION	69,316.06	107,137.00
TOTAL MISSIONS	117,442.76	149,249.00
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	66,778.58	71,581.00
TOTAL EQUIPMENT	<u>6,532.97</u>	<u>10,704.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,213,273.76	\$1,502,167.00
MORTGAGE BALANCE:	\$ 116,525.53	



Attention Nursery Parents & Extended Session Volunteers

It's time to sign up for August, September & October service dates. The scheduling poster is outside the Nursery Office. Thank you.