

# The

# CROSS

# TIME



The January 23, 2009  
Newsletter of the  
Smoke Rise Baptist Church

**Church Conference  
Deacons' Lunch/  
Meeting**

**Sunday  
February 8  
12:00 p.m.**

## **Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University Seminar**

**Beginning February 5 — 7:00pm**

**Smoke Rise Baptist Church**

**“A Life Changing Experience”**

**Coordinated by Kitty Keadle**

**Kitty has taken the course and is very excited about sharing this information. Questions, contact Linda Cummings at 770.469.5856 or e-mail Kitty at [keadle.ktk@gmail.com](mailto:keadle.ktk@gmail.com).**

**Financial Peace University is designed to teach you and your family how to get out of debt, stay out of debt, and build wealth. You'll meet with your class each week to watch the video lesson and participate in discussion and accountability groups that will change your whole attitude about money.**

**Cost for the seminar is \$100 per family. For this you will receive a packet of information (including budget planning information and forms, the Financial Peace Revisited book, hardback workbook, CD Library, Envelope System, Bonus CD-Rom, access to interactive software online, the course itself and more).**

**To sign up, mail a check to or contact Linda Cummings at the above number.**

**Class begins Thursday, February 5, for 13 weeks in Room S223**

***Enjoy an evening “With All Your Heart”***



*When: February 14, 2009 – 6:00pm*

*Where: Smoke Rise Baptist Church  
Fellowship Hall*

*What: Dining, Dancing and/or Listening to.....  
Big Band Sounds & Swing Music*

*Music by: “Footnotes”*

*Band Leader: Our very own Ken Simpson*

*Tickets are now available...Cost \$20 per person.*

*(Write your name on the back of your ticket for door prize drawing.)*

*Semi-formal attire! Limited Seating...so don't delay!*

*Ask about childcare.*

*Join us for a special evening on Valentine's Day,*

*February 14, 2009*

## Celebrating 400 Years of Being Baptist

Did you know that the first Baptist church was founded in 1609? Learn more about our history, heroes, distinctives, contributions, and peculiarities on Sunday, February 15, 2009, as we celebrate this significant year in Baptist history. Dr. Bill Leonard, Dean of the School of Divinity and Professor of Church History at Wake Forest University, will be preaching at 8:30 and 11:00 am. Adults will meet in Fellowship Hall during Sunday School (9:45 am) for a Question/Answer session with Dr. Leonard. This is your opportunity to ask anything you want to know about Baptists – past to present.

Wednesday, February 18, 2009 – “You’ve Come A Long Way, Baby!” Pam Durso, Associate Executive Director of the Baptist History & Heritage Society and Smoke Rise member, will speak about the Journey of Baptist Women from Colonial Days to 2009.

Free information booklets about Baptists are located in the Sanctuary Breezeway.

## Page & Deb Need You On Their Team!

The Mission Trip to Honduras will be March 21 – 28

It will be a great adventure in “Life Style Evangelism,” working to improve the living conditions in a village home. You’ll have a great team experience.

Please pray about your chance to be a part of the team.

Email Page Fulgham at [rpfulgham@bellsouth.net](mailto:rpfulgham@bellsouth.net) or Deb Leamon at [dalor53@comcast.net](mailto:dalor53@comcast.net) to reserve your spot.

## Uganda Mission Trip Set June 27 - July 11

You can be a blessing and you will be blessed as you minister to children with the African Children’s Mission. This ministry provides medical, educational, and spiritual help to the children as well as providing meals to school children. Contact Janet Palmer at 770-922-9502 or email [jpalmer2006@comcast.net](mailto:jpalmer2006@comcast.net) for more information.

## Klesis: God’s Call and the Journey of Faith

Klesis is a process designed to assist in the examination of your “calling.” It assumes a concept of ministry that is inclusive to all who follow Christ and one that is as unique as each follower. It provides help in finding out who you are and learning how to give yourself away.

Three sessions: \$25 for materials on Sundays, February 1, 8 and 15 at 4:30 p.m.

Sign up for classes in the Sanctuary Breezeway or email Kathy Dobbins at [kdobbins@smokerisebaptist.org](mailto:kdobbins@smokerisebaptist.org).

## Deaths

We extend our Christian sympathy to these who have lost loved ones: Judy Curry whose mother died; Connie Wilbanks whose mother died; Peggy Burnette whose mother died; and Alice Gardner whose mother died.

We also extend our Christian sympathy to the families and friends of Betty Howington, Ernest Lunsford and Blanche McNeely who have died.



## Prayer Retreat

**February 27-28, Simpsonwood Retreat Center  
Sponsored by Best Practices for Ministry Network**

Enrich your prayer life in a beautiful setting. Smoke Rise will be one of many churches participating in this weekend led by Jeanie Miley, popular author and retreat leader from Houston, TX. \$100.00 per person includes lodging (double-occupancy) and three meals. Scholarships are available. Deadline for reservations is January 14. Pick up a flyer and registration form in the Sanctuary Breezeway or contact Kathy Dobbins.

## Georgia Connection

13-time Area 6 Chorus Champion  
Chapter of Harmony, Inc.

Proudly Presents:

## “Rock ‘n Roll is Here to Stay”

Saturday, February 28, 2009, 7:00 p.m.  
Fellowship Hall

For information and tickets, contact Jill Wade,  
[jwade@smokerisebaptist.org](mailto:jwade@smokerisebaptist.org)

## Smoke Rise Academy of Arts

*Where God-given Gifts Blossom*

• **Evening painting class.** For the first time, the Academy of Arts is offering *evening* painting classes for teens and adults beginning in January. Paris-trained artist Dennis Assayac teaches the new course. Daytime classes are also available with Linda Pollack.

• **Ballet & Tap for tots.** Now is the time to sign up your little dancer for Pre-Ballet & Pre-Tap classes held in the afternoon. Available for girls and boys ages 3-5.

• **Private lesson discount.** New students who sign up for private music lessons can now receive *\$10 off registration!* The Academy offers private lessons for most orchestral instruments, piano, guitar and voice by conservatory-level instructors. New students who sign up before May 1 are eligible. Simply type in “10 off music” in the coupon portion of the online registration form.

*To register for any Academy program:*

[www.smokeriseministries.org](http://www.smokeriseministries.org)

*Click on Arts Programs*

***Don’t Forget!***

\$10 off registration fee with coupon

Enter coupon code in online registration:

**10 OFF MUSIC**

Offer valid thru May 1

## Lilburn Co-op Food Needs:

Jelly, toilet paper, canned meats

## *From the Pastor's Heart*

### **Great Start to 2009**

We are off to a great start in 2009 at the church. The calendar is full of events which provide us plenty of opportunities for fellowship, spiritual growth, worship and service. I am grateful for the leadership of our staff and church members who work together to dream, plan and implement these programs. It takes a lot of hard work to make dreams and goals reality. Thanks!

Take the time to read about each one of these programs in this newsletter or on our website to see if you need to participate or know someone who does. Let me list some of them for you so that you will not miss them.

- Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace Seminar
- Life Connections Classes for Adults: "Klesis: God's Call and the Journey of Faith," and "Esther: It's Tough Being a Woman"
- Valentine Dinner and Dance
- Happily Ever Laughter Marriage Retreat at Simpsonwood
- Prayer Retreat at Simpsonwood
- Smoke Rise Academy of Arts Classes: Lessons in painting, ballet, drama and music
- Recreation Programs for all ages, including Ballroom Dance classes
- Martha Stearns Marshall Day of Preaching Celebrating Women in Ministry
- Baptist Heritage Day Celebrating 400 years of Baptist History
- Smoke Rise 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Activities leading up to our celebration on September 20
- Mission Trip Sign-ups for trips planned to Biloxi, Honduras, Uganda, Tijuana, Appalachia and New York
- "Run the Reagan" 10K Road Race to support Gwinnett Community Clinic and Young Life

These activities are in addition to the weekly programs, classes, meals and worship services that allow us opportunities to grow in our faith, serve our community, worship and spend time with one another. Again, I appreciate the hard work that goes on behind the scenes to help us be the church God has called us to be in this historic 40<sup>th</sup> year.

### **400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Baptists**

Not only is this Smoke Rise's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, it is the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Baptist beginnings. Go on line at [www.baptisthistory.org](http://www.baptisthistory.org) to get more information. Our own Pam Durso is the assistant director of the Baptist History and Heritage Society. Her office is on Mercer's Atlanta campus and she can answer questions you may have.

### **End of the Year Financial Report**

Debbie Lloyd, our Financial Secretary, is closing the books on 2008 and getting the report ready for the Finance Committee and Church Conference. I do not have all the details as I type this column, but she told me that while we did not make budget this

year, our income exceeded expenses. Gifts to the budget were \$2,342,966.22 and expenses were \$2,332,781.91. Total church receipts, including all fee-based programs and mission gifts, were \$3,904,747.25.

This is good news and another reason to celebrate God's goodness and your generosity. Given the unprecedented collapse of the financial markets on Wall Street last fall and the recession we are in, I am both pleased and relieved.

My colleagues around the metro area have been quite concerned about the impact the economy would have upon their churches. I shared their concern. We know that most of our members have lost a large percentage of their investments, some have lost their jobs and many are struggling to make ends meet.

I feel we ended 2008 on a high note and are beginning 2009 on a firm foundation. This is because of your generosity and willingness to make giving to the church a priority. It is also due to good leadership in the office by our staff. They have been careful to watch expenditures and be as frugal as possible, while still providing programs and ministries that meet the needs of our members and community.

Add to all of this the fact that last spring we had a campaign to raise money to pay off our debt, repair our organ and replace our sanctuary flooring in preparation for the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Celebration, and you see why I am even more amazed at your generosity. You gave or pledged over \$500,000 last year in addition to the 2008 budget! This is astounding when you think about it.

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**May those around us hear that we care about them  
So that they never feel alone or abandoned.  
Thank you, Smoke Rise, for being that voice in these  
difficult times.**

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I cannot thank you enough for your love for this church, confidence in the staff and faithfulness to God. It encourages all the professional and lay leaders to work hard and do everything that can be done to make Smoke Rise the church God envisioned it to be forty years ago when the Charter Members came together and followed His lead. What a joy it is to be a part of such a fine church and to be on journey with some of the most gracious people I know. It has been an honor to be your pastor for ten years.

I pray for God's continued leadership and blessing upon our church in 2009. It is a historic year for us, our fortieth. In all likelihood, however, it will be one of the most difficult years in our country's history as far as the economy goes. The prognosticators are not encouraging. The recovery will begin, but it will be challenging. This means that every member of our church is needed in order for us to maintain our level of ministry and meet the overwhelming needs that are all around us. No gift of time, talents or resources is too small or insignificant. Pulling together, we can make it through these difficult times. Let's join hearts and hands and do this every week.

### **Families in Need Ministry**

Speaking of those that are struggling, I could not be happier with our Families in Need Ministry that is up and running. \$50,000 has been set aside by the Missions Committee to help our members who need assistance. This includes money, financial planning, counseling, resume writing, job placement and prayer support. Members are already receiving help and what a difference it is

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making. What I appreciate about the work of those in charge of this ministry is the way they are protecting people's privacy and maintaining confidentiality. No one knows who is receiving help and this is as it should be. How grateful I am that our church eagerly wants to respond to those in need and help them. This is the church at its best!

### Sermon Quote

In my sermon on baptismal blessing a couple of weeks ago, I said, "It is hard to hear from God what we do not hear from others." This was in reference to God's words to Jesus at his baptism, "This is my Son, the Beloved; with you I am pleased." I believe Jesus was able to hear these words from his heavenly Father because he heard them often from Mary, Joseph and others. He grew up in a loving and affirming environment.

May those around us hear that we care about them so that they never feel alone or abandoned. Thank you, Smoke Rise, for being that voice in these difficult times.

Until Sunday,  
Bob

## 40th Anniversary Pictorial Directory

It's time to sign up for your photo appointment. Olan Mills will be here the Wednesday-Saturday the first two weeks of March and the Wednesday-Saturday the first week of April. Make your appointment in the breezeway before or after the 11:00 service or at the Fellowship Hall before Sunday School the next five weeks. Every household that sits for a photo will receive a free directory and a complimentary 8X10 photo. You can sign up on-line from a link to our Smoke Rise web site at [www.olanmills.com](http://www.olanmills.com) for the next two weeks.

### Be IN THE KNOW!

Visit [www.smokerisebaptist.org](http://www.smokerisebaptist.org) for the latest news about the many summer opportunities at Smoke Rise.

### FINANCIAL STATISTICS

As of December 31, 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
<b>INCOME</b>		
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$2,321,817.79	\$2,560,000.00
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	21,148.43	0.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$2,342,966.22	\$2,560,000.00
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$1,801,912.92	\$1,986,701.00
TOTAL MINISTRIES – WORSHIP	55,591.51	60,304.00
TOTAL MINISTRIES – EDUCATION	130,256.19	158,895.00
TOTAL MISSIONS	212,033.47	217,600.00
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	115,487.82	119,000.00
TOTAL EQUIPMENT	17,500.00	17,500.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$2,332,781.91	\$2,560,000.00
<b>MORTGAGE BALANCE:</b>	\$ 0.00	

### 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OFFERING:

Two hundred sixty-one families have pledged \$442,370.00 towards our goal of \$570,000.00. Sixty-two families that did not sign a pledge card have given \$67,615.00.

GOAL	\$ 570,000.00
AMOUNT GIVEN OR PLEDGED	\$ 511,330.00
NEED	\$ 58,670.00



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### OUR STAFF

Church Office: 770-469-5856

Robert F. Browning, D. Min.	Pastor
E. Ernest Forrester, Jr.	Associate Pastor
Kathy Dobbins	Minister of Spiritual Formation
Tim W. Adcox	Minister of Missions/Recreation
Danny Vancil	Minister of Worship & Music
Kellie Denton	Minister to Families with Children
Carra Hughes Greer	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