

The Cross Tie Newsletter

MARCH 20, 2009

Have You Ever Been on a Mission Trip?

Maybe you could go to one of these ministry places. The contacts are listed for more info.

Park Avenue Baptist

March 28
Mickey O'Kelley

Katrina

April 6-10
Greg Everett

Appalachia Construction

May 10-17 & Oct. 11-16
Bill Blanton

Siberia

June 13-26
Jim Palmer

Youth Missions

July 5-11
Carra Hughes Greer

New York

July 11-18
Whitney Calhoun

Tijuana

July 25-Aug. 1
Gary Prohitt

Appalachia

July 25-Aug. 1
Jenny Brannan
Bill Blanton

Uganda

Oct. 17-31
Wilson Echols

Co-op Volunteers & Donations

Smoke Rise is signed up to work at the Co-op April 27-May 22. We work 10am-2pm on Mondays and 12pm-2pm on Wednesdays and Fridays. If anyone is interested in working any of these days, please call Becky Seay at 770.381.6865.

During March and April, monetary donations to the Stone Mountain Co-op and other participating ministries will be matched with funds from philanthropist Alan Feinstein. This would be a great time to give a donation so they could receive double.

Thank you Smoke Rise for loving your neighbor as you give so generously to both of our co-ops.

Relay for Life

Smoke Rise has a Relay for Life team for the 5th year! Why do Smoke Rise members raise money for the American Cancer Society? The reasons vary but overall, the members have been touched by cancer, personally or among family and friends, and are working toward finding a cure for cancer. It's important for us to have the goal of fighting cancer.

Did you know that there are 11 million cancer survivors alive in the United States? Did you know that in 2008 the mortality rate and the incident rate of cancer both declined? The 5 year survival rate from cancer is now at an all time high of 66%!

How can you help? Join the team. Support the Silent Auction and Biscuit Breakfast on April 26th. Contribute old cell phones. Give a donation. Be a prayer supporter. Ask a team member how you can help him/her in their dedication to the cause.

Questions? Visit the Relay booth in the upper breezeway on Sunday mornings. Contact Bill or Cathy Blanton, Sheila Dean, Aaron, Austin or Amy Allison or any of the other members of our team.

Thank you, Gary Leazer!

For twelve years, Gary has edited our newsletter, The Cross Tie. He has done an outstanding job and been so faithful and dependable. All of us owe him a great debt of gratitude for his good work and I encourage you to express it when you see him.

As you can see, we are making changes to The Cross Tie and the way the information is received, assembled, printed and distributed. We hope you like the new look and find it to be a useful tool for helping you to stay informed and involved in our church.

Ladies Spring Event

Hope and Healing for Every Woman
Tuesday, April 28, 2009 at 6:30 pm
In the Fellowship Hall

Tickets are \$15.00 beginning March 29th

Kimberley Kennedy was 24 hours away from being the woman who had it all. She was about to marry her perfect man - until, on the eve of the wedding, her fiancé uttered five words that crushed her perfect world: *I just can't do it*. Suddenly her life went from a blockbuster love story to a Lifetime movie gone bad. But that's not the end of her story. Through her numbing pain, public humiliation, and extreme anger at God, Kimberley found a hope for her life that she wasn't sure she'd ever have again. Kimberley's words are for all women who have felt the pain of disappointment and rejection - whether you are divorced or have never been married, whether you feel rejected in your marriage or rejected in the dating world. This is not a story of a woman and her man - it's the story of a woman and her God...

Kimberley Kennedy is an Emmy Award-winning journalist and producer, and is writer and host of the weekly newsmagazine television show *Hot Topics*.

The event is expected to sell out, so don't delay!

the
Honduras Mission Team
Leaves March 21

They will return on Saturday, March 28th. Please pray for them by name:

Lyle Caswell, Ernie Forrester, Darlene Foust, Carol Ann Fulgham, Page Fulgham, Jim Howard, Nick Langdon, Deb Leamon, Patricia Perez, Victor Perez, Gene Slaton, Marsha Winston and Phil Winston.

They will be working in the village of San Pedro de la Cruz in the Agalta Valley. Their projects will include 1 water connection, 5 roofs, 3 room additions, 6 latrines and 4 floors.

Appalachian Construction Trip

As part of our ministry to God's Appalachian Partnership (GAP), there will be a construction trip to McDowell, KY May 10-15.

We will be staying in the Servant's Heart Lodge. The cost is \$125 per person. Scholarships are available. This will be a wonderful time of work, fun and fellowship as we improve a family's house. Please contact Bill Blanton at 770.921.4115.

Appliances, Furniture, Household Items Needed:

We are once again collecting appliances, furniture, and household items to take to God's Appalachian Partnership (GAP) in McDowell, KY. We are most grateful for the overwhelming response from the church in the past and look forward to this continuing. Please call Bob Jernigan at 770.934.3005 to arrange for your items to be picked up.

Smoke Rise's Annual Community-Wide Egg Hunt

It's that time again! The SRBC community-wide egg hunt will be Wednesday Night, April 1st, 6:30-7:30pm on the ball field. Each Smoke Rise child should bring a dozen stuffed and taped eggs by Wed., March 25th.

We need Circles and other Volunteers to help stuff eggs. If you can help, please contact Kellie Denton or Amanda Burton in the church office. (No Regularly Scheduled Choir or Missions for Children this evening)

Smoke Rise Census

Participation in the Smoke Rise church census has been an overwhelming success. Now that we have finished collecting your responses, we will send them to the Baylor School of Social Work.

The staff anticipates the results of this anonymous survey to help us identify our strengths and stressors. Thank you very much for your participation. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Kara Blankenship — kblankenship@smokerisebaptist.org .

Academy of Arts

Where God-given Gifts Blossom

Painting Classes:

More and more people are picking up the brush! Longtime art teacher Linda Pollack is now offering an afternoon art class from 2:30-4:30pm in addition to her regular morning classes. Dennis Assayac will also be offering another evening class. Check www.smokeriseministries.org for specifics.

Summer Drama Production Class:

Perform a full musical production with songs, dance and acting on Smoke Rise's main stage! We may perform Disney's Beauty and the Beast, The Music Man or another popular show. Classes will be held on Mondays, beginning April 20, from 6-7:15pm for children ages 5-9 and 7:15-8:30pm for youth ages 10-high school. Additional rehearsals will be added to the schedule.

Private Lesson Discount

New students who sign up for private music lessons can now receive \$10 off registration! The Arts Academy offers private lessons for most orchestral instruments, piano, guitar and voice by conservatory-level instructors. Any new students who sign up before May 1, 2009, are eligible. Simply type in "10 off music" in the coupon portion of the online registration form.

To register online for any Arts Academy program, go to www.smokeriseministries.org and click on "Arts Programs," or call the Academy office at 678.533.0557.

The Living Room

A place for prayer in many forms.

In room A124, under the Gym; open Sundays 8:30-11am

1st Sundays: Classes on prayer in many forms

4th Sundays: Communion served 9:30-10am

The Living Room is a multi-purpose space devoted to prayer, reflection, and discovery where Jesus is the host. You are invited to visit this place of quiet, to become still enough, quiet enough, long enough to have a conversation with God. Prayer is about building a relationship with God. You don't need anything but a willing heart to begin.

Songs, Hymns & Spiritual Songs

Sanctuary Choir Spring Concert
Sunday, April 26, 2009 at 7pm

Lent 2009 Schedule

Events scheduled for Lent 2009 on Wednesday at 6:30pm in the Smoke Rise Fellowship Hall:

March 25 th :	Forgiveness by Dr. David Fite
April 1 st :	Sacrifice/Suffering by Rev. Ernie Forrester
April 9 th :	Maundy Thursday Service, 7:00pm

Early Offering Music

Music planned for the Early Offering services in March:

March 22 nd :	Brian & Carra Hughes Greer
March 29 th :	"The Following" Praise Band

Deaths

We extend our sympathy to Doug Cowan, and his family, for the loss of his mother, and to Percy Marchman, and his family, for the loss of his brother.

From the Pastor's Heart . . .

"The Most Disturbing Story in Scripture"

Last Sunday, I preached on John 2:13-22, which is an account of Jesus clearing the temple during Passover. I mentioned that Jesus was upset because he realized that people coming to worship were unable to find what they needed. This was because greed and corruption had pushed out compassion, community and any hope of connecting with the Holy. As a result, he overturned the money changers' tables, scattered their coins and fashioned a whip out of reeds and cords to drive out the animals being sold for sacrifices, along with the merchants selling them.

I confess that this story disturbs me more than any in scripture. This is because it revolves around conflict between Jesus and the religious leaders in the temple. Many of those in power were less concerned about the needs of others than their own welfare. They were more intent on telling people what they had to have to enter the temple than listening to what they needed. I fear this is not that uncommon in religious circles today.

This story compels me to ask questions about my own Ministry. What would Jesus say to me if he came to a church I pastor? How would he react to what he would see on a typical Sunday in our church? I've thought of this on more than one occasion.

I think the writers of the gospels thought about it a lot too. All four included it in their biographies of Jesus, although John was the only one that placed it at the beginning of Jesus' ministry rather than the end. He used it to introduce his readers to Jesus and frame his ministry, whereas the synoptic writers used it to reveal the religious authorities' contempt for Jesus and the final reason for crucifying him.

How are we to use this story today? How does it speak to us? I believe there are two messages we need to hear. One is to individual worshippers and the other is to the church.

Jesus cares for you and, just as he knew what the worshipers in his time needed, he knows what you need. I may not know nor does the person next to you, but Jesus does. Your welfare is of great concern to him.

He knows what makes your heart ache and how painful it is. He knows what you are worried about and how much sleep you have lost. He knows what temptation is nipping at your heels and how difficult it is for you to resist. He knows who it is in your family that you are most concerned

about and how troubling it is for you. He knows what questions and doubts are attacking your faith and how crippling they are. He knows about the heavy loads you are carrying and how tired you have become. He knows how devastating guilt is and how you yearn to be forgiven. He knows how hard it is to make ends meet in a severe recession, especially if you have lost your job. He is ready to listen and respond to your pleas for help if you will unburden your heart and talk to him. I strongly encourage you to do that.

There is a message in this story for the church, too. There is nothing we do that is more important than creating community. The church needs to be a place where people find acceptance, unconditional love, forgiveness, encouragement and hope. It needs to be a safe place to fall, where wounds are bandaged and strength is renewed.

About once a month, I have coffee with a friend that is quite different from me. He is an African-American minister. He is thirty years younger than I am and runs in circles that I never will. I grew up in a rural, county-seat southern town and he grew up in Philadelphia. I was reared in a home with both parents, much like all my friends. The divorce rate in his neighborhood was 100%. He had no friends that had a father in the home.

We talk church and culture when we get together. He helps me see the world beyond my borders. The picture he paints is not pretty.

"Do you know Atlanta has one of the highest rates of sex trafficking in the world?" he asks me. He encounters boys, girls and women who have been or are sex slaves and tells me what their lives are like.

"Do you know what middle age women are struggling with at an alarming rate?" he inquires. "It is eating disorders. No longer is this just a young person's problem."

"Do you have any idea what young people are doing to release stress and pressure in their lives?" I winced as he told me.

"Bob, the world outside our walls is hurting so badly and people are lonely, confused and depressed. What is the church's response?"

I think I know why Jesus overturned the tables and threw out the greedy merchants and money changers. The people running the temple were not doing their job.

See why this story disturbs me so much?

Until Sunday, *Bob*

The Second Hundred Years: Jesus Followers

The 101st Annual Meeting of the Atlanta Metro Baptist Association is Sunday, April 26th, at 5:45pm at Chattahoochee First Baptist Church (1950 Bolton Road NW, Atlanta GA). There will be dinner on the grounds catered by the Varsity—\$5 per person.

New business will include adopting a new mission statement:

"The Atlanta Metro Baptist Association of Churches' mission is to assist congregations to develop Jesus Followers who are living out the Great Commandment, Great Commission and Acts 1:8."

Joel Harrison, Lead Missionary
Atlanta Metro Baptist Association
3070 Mercer University Drive, Suite 100
Atlanta GA 30341
770.455.4877 or 404.771.6131

New Excursions for Smoke Rise Adults

Visit the New World of Coke Museum

Thursday, March 26th
Leave at 10:15am and return at 3pm
Cost: \$15 per person
Lunch at Mary Mac's (on your own)

"Tuesdays with Morrie"

Sunday, April 19th, at the Art Station
Leave at 2:20pm and return at 7pm
Cost: \$21 per person
Dinner at Nagano Restaurant
(on your own)

Limited spaces! Sign up soon — bring or send your check to Linda Cummings.

Guess Who's Coming To Dinner?

March 28, 2009 at 6:30pm

You should receive your host home information by Monday, March 23rd. If not, please contact Linda Cummings at lcummings@smokerisebaptist.org or call 770.469.5856.

We have a great group participating. It promises to be a fun evening!

Cookie Donations for Military Away

Let's use the month of March to donate boxes of Girl Scout cookies to the Smoke Rise Military Away Project. We need 200 boxes!

Any flavor of cookies will be appreciated, so don't let the cookies go to "waist"! We'll send them to our Military sons and daughters in their Easter boxes. The boxes of cookies may be brought to the reception desk in the main church office during the month of March.

Financial Corner: through March 13, 2009

Three hundred sixteen families have pledged \$1,592,143 to date for the 2009 Budget.

	Year to Date	Budget to Date
Income		
Total Contributions	\$ 428,929.67	\$ 629,997.00
Total Other Income	(150.05)	0.00
Total Income	\$ 428,779.62	\$ 629,997.00
Expenses		
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 344,376.05	\$ 471,532.00
Total Ministries—Worship	5,391.12	15,232.00
Total Ministries—Education	25,350.14	47,413.00
Total Missions	38,898.50	72,890.00
Total Capital Expenditures	17,763.08	19,125.00
Total Equipment	1,623.65	14,333.00
Total Expenses	\$ 433,402.54	\$ 640,525.00

40th Anniversary Offering

Two hundred sixty two families have pledged \$443,410 towards our, to date. \$72,970 has been given by families that have not signed pledge cards.

Goal:	\$ 570,000.00
Given or Pledged:	\$ 516,380.00
Needed:	\$ 53,620.00

Mission Offering During this season (through April 12th) we have the opportunity to give to Global Missions (CBF) and The Annie Armstrong Offering (SBC). Your generosity will help mission work around the world. Please designate your preference on your check or offering envelope.

Our Staff

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 to Families with Youth
David MacFarlane	Director of Administration & Communication
Linda Cummings	Coordinator of Congregational Life/Senior Adults
Amanda Burton	Nursery Director
Truett Gannon, D. Min.	Pastor Emeritus

Church Office: 770.469.5856

Mission Day Work Alert: Saturday, March 28th

Put on your work clothes and meet at the church on Saturday, March 28th, at 8:30am. We will car pool to Park Avenue Baptist Church. For info, or to sign up, contact Mickey O'Kelly at sbarr30045@alltel.net

Birth Announcements

"Kyler Marie," born March 6 to Kevin and Lauren Hammond; grandparents are Dale and Donna Knapp; aunt is Megan; great grandparents are Dallas and Jerrie Long

"Daniel Dillon," born March 6 to Daniel and Sonya Duckett; brother, Riley; grandparents, Larry & Shirley Duckett.

Cross Tie Article Submission

Please submit all announcements and information to be included in The Cross Tie Newsletter to crosstie@smokerisebaptist.org.

Looking Ahead...

Smoke Rise Garden
Club Plant Sale
April 18, 2009

SRBC Car Show
May 2, 2009

Pipe Organ Recital
and Rededication
August 16, 2009

40th Anniversary
Celebration
Sept. 20, 2009

SMOKE RISE BAPTIST CHURCH
5901 Hugh Howell Road
Stone Mountain, GA 30087

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