

CHRONICLES

of

Reems Creek-Beech Presbyterian Church



The Pastor's Part

From snow to robins doesn't take long. I saw several robins on the way to the office today, and yet, there is still snow in some parking lots where it was piled up over a month ago. There was still some ice on one of the ponds down from the church just the other day, although we have had a couple of weeks of above freezing weather. It all is interconnected in ways that we can only glimpse. The same is true of joy and sorrow. Right now the sorrow of the news from Haiti is dominating all, and the tragedy is beyond our comprehension, but it is not the final story. There will be healing to that troubled land once again. Perhaps this will bring about real and lasting solutions to their many problems. If we do our best and turn the rest over to God, He can bring work miracles out of the chaos. There can be healing and renewal even to the poorest land in our hemisphere. That is what God can do. Let us turn to him each day for our own healing and renewal. Let us look for the robins of spring even in winter. Let us remember that God has promised the rainbow after the rain and he never fails on his promises.

Peace,
Preecha

2009 Budget Summary Debt to Income

Month	Deposits	Expenses
Jan	10,951.92	11,626.73
Feb	5,855.82	15,258.22
Mar	12,811.22	10,371.91
Apr	11,122.27	10,423.86
May	9,865.07	9,783.91
June	14,235.25	8,123.78
July	9,752.62	10,902.50
Aug	11,504.50	8,367.96
Sept	8,514.39	12,017.98
Oct	11,332.16	10,664.18
Nov	7,828.92	9,984.03
Dec	10,174.41	16,305.85
Total	123,948.56	133,830.91

Building Account

Deposit Summary	Month	YTD
Offering—3rd Sunday	\$1,094	\$1,094
<u>Donations/Gifts</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Total	\$1,194	\$1,194

<u>Loan Summary</u>	
Building Fund Loan	\$40,000
Payments	24,000
Loan Balance	16,000

Team Reports

We honor our God by working for Him.
Offer your time and talents to our teams, our church, our community.

Care

Our shut-ins benefit from home visits by members of the Care team and congregation. We are a connection to church family life and help keep those involved who cannot get out on their own. What a great ministry and encouragement to our homebound family and friends!

We would like many to be involved. The deacons have accepted this mission as part of their responsibilities and would like your participation too. Pat Nesbitt has a schedule of visits planned, so see her to sign up.

Christian Education

A January 31 planning meeting will involve all who teach or lead Christian Ed programs at our church. Ask Elizabeth Barbee how you can serve.

God's Garden VBS, June 14-18, is in the planning stages now. Teachers and staff are excited about planning the curriculum and activities for children ages 3-13. Mark your calendars and prepare to plant God's message and watch it grow this season. Want to help? Contact Elizabeth Barbee.

Youth Group will support the Souper Bowl of Caring project (on Super Bowl Sunday). Collected food and funds will help support NBSM. On February 7, bring at least one non-perishable food item and \$1 for each member of your family and show support for our youth and our local mission agency.

Other youth activities for the beginning of this year include a ski trip to Wolf Laurel and working at local relief agencies. Sunday school attendance by our youth is growing and the high school students are enjoying the *Flood Series* curriculum, discussing real life issues.

Julian and Carolyn Rice donated a new refrigerator for the youth room and the youth say, "Thank you so much!"

Kids Club serves church and community children on Monday afternoons and needs your help. Mary Ellen Flaherty is serving as coordinator, leader, recreation leader and transportation expert. Too many hats for one person! David Penland drives the van to take children home and other drivers are needed to bring them to Kids Club. Another adult is also needed to help with activities and/or snacks. Please contact Mary Ellen or Hank to offer your help.

Fellowship

The Fellowship Team invites everyone to bring family and friends to a **Valentine's Day Family Supper-February 14 at 6:00.**

Property

Property leader, Dave Penland, announced a new workday schedule for the second Saturday of each month beginning February 13. The Win Team will plan a workday once a quarter to help community members with projects.

Thank you to David Bradley and Bob Nesbitt for working on the water problem in the basement. We have a relatively dry basement because of their constant attention, their talent and perseverance.

Worship

Attendance pads will be discontinued and attendance will be kept by visual count. Visitors will be asked to leave information cards in collection plates.

The congregation is encouraged to make song requests for the Worship service. Please communicate your requests to Cathy Roberts.

Team Reports continued

Mission

A review of the 2009 Mission team work shows that our church participated in eight projects throughout the year, supporting a variety of causes, both in our community and abroad.

Sixteen volunteers put in five workdays building the Presbyterian and Methodist Home and Rev. Scoggins attended the key passing ceremony for that home. We collected items to donate for the Habitat Store, collected almost \$900 in special offering and donated an additional \$600 in designated benevolence.

Missionaries Steve and Buffy White and Becca Young continue their work with help from our church's benevolence fund. Steve and Buffy returned home for a year and joined us twice to share their experiences.

We participate every month in both Nickel-a-Meal and NBSM offerings. We gave \$1682.96 to Nickel-a-Meal and over \$1500 to NBSM with monthly donations, designated benevolence, and Souper Bowl Sunday. Local families also benefited from the hundreds of food items donated.

We collected \$543.71 for One Great Hour of Sharing.

Operation Christmas Child donations increased this year with the help of Presbyterian Women, Kids Klub, and Youth Group. Fifty shoeboxes were packed and 12 volunteers helped process the donated shoeboxes at the Boone Processing Center.

Our church donated \$500 in designated benevolence to the Presbyterian Home for Children and 11 volunteers participated in the Work, Worship, and Play Day this past spring.

Our Pig Picking raised \$1000 for the Weaverville Senior Meal Site this fall.

Plans are being made to continue our mission work for the same persons and organizations this year. We are thankful to have such a caring congregation that continues to reach out sharing God's blessings with our neighbors, wherever they are.



Presbyterian Women Begins New Bible study

The Lucy Holmes Circle will begin a new Bible study in March, *Joshua, a Journey of Faith* by Mary Mikhael. The book of Joshua traces Israel's entering and possessing Canaan and illustrates the Christian's spiritual experience of conflict, victory, and blessing. It also raises difficult matters related to aggressive warfare and extermination of an enemy which allows us to examine, in a Biblical context, some problems faced in the Middle East today.

Elizabeth Barbee, Bible study leader, will present an introduction and overview of this year's Bible study during a brunch hosted by our Circle on Saturday, February 27 at 10:00 a.m. All women are invited to attend, enjoy fellowship, prayer, and hear highlights of the upcoming study.

Lucy Holmes Circle will meet this year for business and Bible study on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00.

The Everglades in January

I feel the quiet at dusk and the heaviness of the sun hanging on to those last few minutes before its weight pulls it into the trees, producing a silhouette of arms in praise of its rosy glow. Tissue paper wings of the ibis, flying low, rustle above my head as they glide toward roosts in the island grove on the pond before me. They float above, hang, and disappear into the trees, three, four, or twenty at a time. Silence again, until the next shush of wings above my head, wave after wave of flying birds, until thousands of ibis have returned to roost. Competing for roosting space are also great blue herons with voices like grumbling old men, noisily settling, bouncing first on springboard edges of branches, and then scrambling deeper in, demanding their place to bunk. On the other side of the pond, roseate spoon bills fly in and go about their bedtime ritual, out of hearing range, but adding flashes of their pink bodies to an already fading sky. All quiet now, lights out at Paurotis Pond in Everglades National Park.

January has a much different meaning in the Everglades and I enjoy my notes and pictures of our 2008 trip while winds whip and temperatures of this January in the mountains have dipped into the single digits for too many nights.

Everglades National Park is a wild place, suited to birds, gators, fish, insects, and vegetation, adapted to a humid, watery climate, but cooler months offer respite from blazing heat and barrage of mosquitoes, and a good time to explore this shallow, slow-moving sheet of water.

Board walk trails and boat tours in the Everglades, Biscayne National Park, and several state parks introduced us to collections of bird life larger than anywhere else in the U.S. Wood storks whose powerful dark rimmed wings rustle like dry

foliage as they lift their large white bodies and unfold long elegant legs to flight. Hawks, osprey, pelicans, blue herons, anhinga, egrets and more wading birds than I can identify, busy themselves as actors on their stage, ignoring the audience. Crocodiles and alligators cohabit here but nowhere else in the United States will they live together. Vegetation is very different in this sea environment too. Mangrove trees are prolific and fascinating, displaying their spider-like roots arching above the water. An adaptive tree, they tolerate of the salt in the brackish water where sea meets inland fresh water, and can filter the salt and transfer it to their outer leaves. These mangrove clusters thrive, so dense they seem to wrap roots around each other and hover over land or float as one unit on the water. Sea grape trees produce round flat leathery leaves that people mailed at one time as postcards, and now can be found in upscale restaurants serving as small plates for fancy desserts. Bald cypress trees covering marshy landscapes resemble standing whitewashed driftwood along the coast, but here, simply lie dormant in winter, waiting for the heat and humidity to revive them. A different environment, indeed.

It's good to get out of our comfort zone, away from the familiar. It's good to see God's creation in its many forms, where we are visitors, not intruders. That's what I like about national parks. We have an opportunity to see as a child might, some wonderful new creature, or plant, up close for the very first time. And, as we concentrate on the newness and even strangeness of each day of discovery we chase away the ruts and wrinkles of everyday sameness. We are renewed in body, mind and spirit.

Elizabeth Barbee