



September 15, 2013

Christians have often wondered why we need four gospels, especially since the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) contain very similar accounts of the healing and teaching ministry of Jesus. In the purest sense, we probably don't require four accounts to present a portrait of Jesus and the disciples. We all have our favorite books and passages in the Bible. Martin Luther believed that Genesis, Matthew, and Romans were of higher importance than the other books. Many of you have said how you love the gospel of John and can remember when the "Good News" version of the Bible came out in the 1960's and you could get a copy of John for a quarter.

The more I read through these gospels, the more I fall in love with them. This year as I read through Luke in preparation for my sermons, I find myself imagining how the personal faith and life experiences of Luke and the experiences of his distinctive church community came together to produce such powerful portraits of Jesus' life.

A couple New Testament teachers at Luther Seminary in St. Paul got together and asked themselves, "If the Gospels were people in my life, who would they be?" Here is what they came up with:

**Matthew:** He's that old Jewish widower that never talks to me outright or smiles; he just nods when I drive by. He's always working in his yard with the lilies and the mustard seeds. One day he comes over and he asks me if I'd like some raspberry shoots because he needs to thin them because they're so wild. So, I follow him over to his house and he says as he begins clipping, "You know the raspberry is in the same family as the rose. My wife, she loved her roses. Be careful, now, with those thorns." And, I realize he is all about the law, but even more so, he is about the least of these.

**Mark:** He's that thirteen-year-old boy who wears an Insane Clown Posse black t-shirt and loves "The Walking Dead." He starts to tell me stories about an episode, but he gets lost in the details so, I'm not sure what the point is, but I love hearing him talk, anyway. I'm just like, "Wow." He asks his parents for a guitar for Christmas and learns to play early Bob Dylan and Bob Marley, and one day he tells me that his favorite two seasons in the church year are Advent and Lent.

**Luke:** She's that girl who grew up in the suburbs and is really smart, and everyone wants her to be their babysitter for their kids when she's a young teenager. She is on a dance team in high school and every musical, but then she goes off to college and is undone by a J-term trip to Haiti. She returns and tells her parents that she wants to do mission work somewhere, that she experienced Christ in community, and that we need to take care of the poor. She tells a story about how she saw one old woman give her only chicken to the whole village. She also took a feminist literature class and believes women are underrated in history. She starts her own non-profit and begins by writing a grant to Theophilus.

**John:** John is the very old black woman at my gym who knows God is God, and that's that, and Jesus knows what he's doing even if it doesn't make sense. She tells me that her cat got away and that she's been looking all over for it, and she's worried sick. She often will go off on long tangents about prayer or the Holy Spirit -- so long I could walk away, do a set of bench presses, and she would never even know. She'll use images like light and bread, and I'm not quite sure I really get them, but I nod a lot and realize she's the wisest person I've ever heard. I look at her and realize there is a translucency to her skin that is honest and that she smells like apricots. I imagine myself drowning in her and her love of Jesus, and then asking her where the gardener went.

I enjoyed these modern portraits; they reminded me of the Trinity in "The Shack." The Gospels do to us what all love does; it changes how we see and how we imagine. Gospel means "good news." If you were writing your gospel account of the good news of Jesus, which stories would you include? What parables do you find most precious?

Keep reading the Bible.

Grace and peace,  
James Brassard



## *Worship Notes*

**September 15:** In Luke 15 (my favorite chapter in the gospels), we find three “Parables of the Lost.” The third is better known is the Prodigal Son. We will look at the first two, The Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin. Have you ever been really lost? How big was the celebration when you were found?

**September 22:** In Deuteronomy 30 15-20, Joshua asks the people of Israel who are about to settle in the Promised Land to “Choose today who you will serve.” He then makes an argument for following the law of life and asks that they “Choose Life.”

## **Worship Wars**

by Dick Neff

A week or two ago in the hallowed halls of CCPC, I overheard an animated conversation over worship wars in our peaceful assembly. Evidently some people in our congregation object to organ music and traditional hymns and some other people want to outlaw drums, guitars, and praise songs.

I learned a long time ago, probably in my first year of ministry 55 years ago, that whatever you do you can't please everyone. I've heard all sorts of criticisms — lousy preaching, sermons that are too long, hypocrites in the congregation I can't stand to be with, and so on. But let's stick to music.

About the same time I overheard that "worship wars conversation," I read an article online in *Relevant Magazine* written by Stephen Miller who is pastor of worship arts at *The Journey* in St Louis. It is titled *The Modern Music Worship Wars*. Mr. Miller begins this way:

"Ours is a generation marked by war.

"I'm not referring to a war with guns and tanks, though we have certainly seen our share of that as well. We are a generation that grew up witnessing the church fight over the very thing that was supposed to unite us: the worship of Jesus."

"The Good Old Hymns vs. Modern Worship Choruses."

"Organ & Piano vs. Those Demon Drums."

"Few of us emerged from these consumerism driven worship wars of our younger years unscathed. Their impact has been profound, both personally and corporately."

He goes on to say that in our corporate worship we complain about everything and we tend to attach spiritual value to our own preferences.

He concludes his article by writing about the real worship wars we should be waging and issuing a ringing challenge to us all:

"Worship is war. But it is not to be fought over our own preferences. We must turn our energy towards killing the selective, prideful nature within us. We must fight to put to death anything in us that would hinder us from pursuing Christ with all we are. We must fight to worship him with a joyful adoration that cannot be contained.

"So the next time you go to church and the music is too loud, or the leader is singing that song you don't like, go to war. Fight against the sin at work within yourself. Fight against consumerism and disunity. Fight for a grateful heart. Fight for the truth to captivate you in a way that music never could. Fight to stand in awe of a mighty God who rescued you and graciously sings over you.

**"Fight the true war of worship."** (Emphasis mine - HRN)

## *Thank You!*

The family of Jackie Smith would like to thank her CCPC family for their outpouring of support during these difficult times. Her life and ours have been richer because of your friendship, fellowship, and prayers.

Bob Smith



I'm sending out a special thank you to the Health and Healing group for my 90th birthday celebration last Sunday after church.

I felt Dodds Hall radiating with love for me! Wow! Thank you and blessings to all of the congregation.

Sarah Hyde



## *Births*

Grandbaby #5 has  
arrived for Melodie and Charles!

On September 5 at 6:01 am, Nicholas Eric Gedrich was born to Kimberly Dziduch and Kevin Gedrich.

He weighs 7lbs. 10 oz. and is 19 inches long.

Mommy and baby are doing very well.

Congratulations to the Dziduch and  
Gedrich families!

# DEACON'S CORNER

This is the 32nd in a series of articles about living well by considering the host of things we can change in our lives, our homes and our surroundings that can make our lives healthier, happier, and safer. Special thanks to Joy Bible, former Moderator of the Board of Deacons, for sharing her wisdom and expertise through the Deacon's Corner. We will be preparing a complete set of Deacon's Corner articles to share with CCPC.

“There is nothing in the intellect that is not first in the senses.” (Thomas Aquinas) Though it is a sad statement of life today, unfortunately, everyone must be suspicious about things we read, hear, or see. We are all at risk of being scammed, some of us may already have fallen prey to a scam. The most vulnerable of all of us are seniors. Knowledge is power and the avoidance of scams requires knowing where to report suspicious proposals, contracts, or estimates; where to go for more information; and overall vigilance. The sad fact of today's world is there are “a lot” of people willing to play the game of life with NO rules, values, or morals — they just play by their own rules. Seniors have become easy prey, partly because they are more trusting, having been brought up in a different era, and partly because they are just more vulnerable. There are things we can all do to not only protect ourselves, but take back our power to control what happens in our world. Knowledge and our senses give us that power and reduce our risk of being scammed.

To be safe and effective our choices, we must be AWARE of how contractors and outsiders infiltrate or penetrate our home or our privacy. One way is through the MAIL. Every day we receive tons of unsolicited mail, from charities seeking donations to great deals on all kinds of home repairs. Choose only those charities you absolutely know about through your church or personal experience, like Hospice, the food pantry, Habitat for Humanity, etc. Ignore all others as junk mail. The PHONE is another way for people to scam you or get vital information you do NOT want them to have. Surprisingly, many people say, “Oh, I would never give out any information on the phone,” but remember these scammers are very clever and can solicit information out of you before you realize you have given it. NEVER, EVER provide confidential, personal information on the phone unless you are VERY familiar with the caller or the organization. If you have doubts as to whom you are talking, ask some questions. “How do I know you are who you say you are? I need proof of your identity and authenticity.” If it is a charity, ask them to send you some written material and only then you might consider it. NEVER get into a discussion or debate with telemarketers, the longer they keep you on line, the more likely you will reveal some personal information they can use.

IDENTITY THEFT is another major concern today. Without becoming paranoid, there are some basic preventative measures to take: AVOID exposing your confidential information to ANYONE by word or document. Shred or destroy any sensitive information before throwing it away in the garbage. This sensitive information includes bank account numbers, Social Security identification, and credit card identification. Shred credit card solicitations with your “preapproved” number on it. Never share your Social Security number or any personal information over the phone or with anyone one you are not familiar with. Review your personal credit reports periodically to make sure there are no surprises there. Review your bank accounts carefully for any suspicious activity. Private Identification numbers (PIN) should be memorized and not written down or carried with you. If you must write them down, be careful where you store them. In today's world, sadly we must be very aware, remembering, “Misplaced trust can become disastrous.”

I have written about some of this information before, but it never hurts to repeat it because every day we hear of someone, whom we think of as smart and alert, getting scammed: from the guy who wants to blacktop your driveway, to the painter, plumber, or electrician you need to do some work. Over and over I hear stories of how they got their money before you got the work done and so long money. Be very vigilant !



## *Christmas Families* **School Supplies** **UPDATE**

We have received the following school supplies for our Christmas Families replenishment packs:

- 145 boxes of 24 count crayons (**Need 55 more**)
- 117 bottles of washable school glue (**Need 83 more**)
- 92 packages of 3 ring wide ruled notebook paper (**Need 108 more**)
- 33 boxes of 12 count color pencils (**Need 167 more**)

We appreciate your donations and hope they keep coming so we can meet our goal of 200 replenishment packs by October 31st. Donated items can be placed in the box labeled "Christmas Families School Supplies" in the church Atrium.

Details or questions, contact Roxanne Johnson.

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## *Adult Education Classes*

Adult education classes started on September 8th with Dick Neff leading four sessions under the topic, "Formation of Scripture and Christian Beliefs."

The first class was a big success. Join us for the next one, two, or three! They start at 11:15 am in the Adult Ed Conference room. The remaining topics for discussion are:

- September 15 Forming the New Testament Scriptures
  - September 22 The Development of Orthodox Beliefs
  - September 29 Persecution of Christians in the First Three Centuries
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## **Crop Walk**

### *Bikini Girls!*

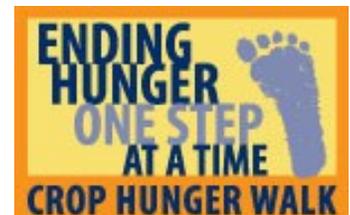
October 6<sup>th</sup> is the annual Crop Walk. Registration is at Noon and the walk is at 1 pm at St. Matthews, 14900 Annapolis Rd. The proceeds help various countries, and the Bowie Food Pantry receives 25% of the money raised in Bowie.

You can sponsor a walker, walk and obtain a sponsor(s), and/or you can fill a bag with nonperishable food, which can be brought to the church and stored in the library.

Please do not put any groceries for the Crop Walk in the Pantry food basket or on the table in the Atrium.

Peggy Oates and Joy Bible have agreed to walk dressed in a bikini if the church raises \$5,000 and 150 bags of groceries!

Contact for this event is Frances Rocha.



## *A Call to Duty*

Our thoughts and prayers are with John and the Cox family while John serves in Afghanistan.  
We wish him a safe and speedy return home and thank him for his service.

John Cox  
451 AEG/772EAS  
APO AE 09355

For information about sending care packages to our armed forces, please visit <http://soldierpackages.org/index.html>.



## *Jack Jones*

Jack is making good recovery in rehab from his stroke, which affected his speech and walking. He's likely to be there for another week, or so. He appreciates cards and letters, which his family reads to him.

They can be sent to his home address at:

Jack Jones  
52 Stonebridge Drive  
Ashville, North Carolina 28805.

Please continue to remember him, his beloved wife Mary Frances, and his family in your prayers.



The next newsletter will be sent out on September 27th. If you have any articles you would like included in it, please turn them in by 9 AM Friday, September 20th. Any questions, please contact the church office.  
Thank you.

# Christian Community Presbyterian Church



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CCPC, the first Protestant church in Levitt Bowie, was born from a passion for Christian mission in the local community, and this focus continues.

*Our Mission: To worship God, to grow in faith and community,  
and to place our gifts in the service of Jesus Christ.*



## Belair Cooperative Nursery School

The school is a non-profit, non-sectarian, and non-partisan organization. It's located in the CE Building of Christian Community Presbyterian Church.

Call 301-464-5782 or Email [info@belaircoop.org](mailto:info@belaircoop.org)

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



## Imagine - Yoga & Wellness Center



Located in the CE building, offers yoga and a variety of wellness programs to CCPC members and the community. For more information, visit [www.ImagineThePlace.com](http://www.ImagineThePlace.com), call 443-510-6308, or e-mail [Ann@ImagineThePlace.com](mailto:Ann@ImagineThePlace.com). Scholarships available.

