

Mike's Musings

Have you ever denied the Lord? Most Christians – even those nominally so – consider such an idea incredulous. Yet, even Jesus realized the possibility. In Matthew 10:32-33, He declared: "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before men, I will disown him before my Father in heaven."

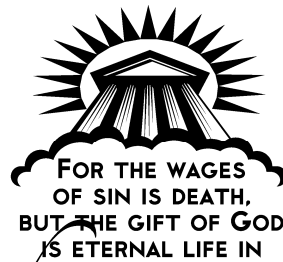
Not only did Jesus see the potentiality for such action, He also was affronted by it by one thought by many to be His closest ally – the Apostle Peter.

You'll recall that it was Peter who, just hours before his denial, declared his allegiance and solidarity with Jesus. The Lord had just admonished the disciples with predictions of His betrayal by one of them. Confused and hurt they began to argue about who it would be. Peter, turning to Jesus, said, "Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death." (Luke 22:33) Jesus answers him with a disconcerting reply: "I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me." (Luke 22:34)

A continued reading of Luke 22 reveals that Jesus was betrayed, by Judas. He was taken away to stand before the Sanhedrin. And where was Peter all this time – he who so bravely and boldly declared His undying loyalty? Verse 54 reveals

that he "followed at a distance." If he was true to his resolve, wouldn't he have been beside Jesus?

The word for "deny" in verse 34, implies a previous relationship. In other words, only those who have a relationship with the Lord can disown or deny Him. This must have caused our Lord much grief to know that his trusted friend – someone he loved and who loved Him – would forsake Him.



Christ Jesus
O U R L O R D .

ROMANS 6:23. NIV

From our third person perspective, it's easy to judge Peter; easy to condemn him for this unthinkable crime. Yet have we not all found ourselves in denial of our Lord at some level? Remember the day you joined the church? You said (in so many words), "I will love the Lord and serve Him to the best of my ability. I will forsake this world and it's sin and satiate my appetites by hungering and thirsting after righteousness." We promised to put to death our old self and to lead a godly life. Unfortunately, many with such resolve find themselves "falling short."

Think of it this way: We deny the Lord whenever, as believers, we

choose to live like pagans. We deny Him when we serve mammon (money) rather than God. We deny Him when we live more for sensual pleasure than for the kingdom. We also deny Him when we seek revenge rather than love and are preoccupied with ego gratification rather than honoring Jesus.

Our denial also become evident when we indulge in coarse joking or rough language. We deny Him when we engage in sexual immorality or any kind of impurity or when we allow any form of idolatry in our lives. We deny the Lord when we go along with the crowd instead of standing up for what is noble and right and pure and lovely and admirable. Any hesitation on our part to affirm our faith or "hide our light under a bowl" is a form of denial.

I guess we're more like Peter than we'd like to admit. And, like him, we more often than not fail in our good intentions; especially when we try to fulfill them in our own strength. Peter's story is a good reminder that our words and promises can be faithless, vacillating and disloyal.

The good news is, God has promised to all who are in Christ to be faithful. When Peter realized he'd done exactly what the Lord had predicted "he went outside and wept bitterly" (Luke 22:62) He shed tears of repentance and confession. He wept because he realized he was no less culpable

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than Judas Iscariot. And as he confessed His sins, the Lord faithfully forgave Peter.

It is wrong to deny the Lord, as Peter did, because the Lord wants His followers to confess Him before men. It is even worse to not repent, as Judas did. Peter denied the Lord. But he repented. So, by grace, he was forgiven. The good news I share with you today is, we too can receive this unfailing forgiveness – by grace through faith – as we repent and seek His grace and mercy.

It is my prayer that, in the coming Lenten Season, we will find ourselves on our knees pleading for God's grace and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. Never forget, Christian, that the Lord "is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

"What wondrous love is this, Oh my soul!"

See you Sunday!

Pastor Mike

Faith Circle News Secretary, Barb Tuma

Faith Circle met on February 17, and finished a project of making lap blankets for nursing home patients during the meeting.

Hedy Pflug, our president opened the meeting. Devotions and prayer requests were read by Elva Harley. The secretary and treasurer reports were given and approved.

A monetary gift was given to the Women's Center. Proceeds from the Silent Auction and Spaghetti Dinner will be donated to the Burry's Church Garage Project. There will be a preview of Silent Auction items on Fellowship Sunday, March 8th.

Faith Circle will also, once again, sponsor Easter flowers.

We closed with prayer and desserts provided by Hedy Pflug.



Spring

Bible Conference



Mark your calendars for the 2009 Spring Bible Conference on April 24-26 at Burry's Church.

This year's conference is entitled:

"Being a Person of Influence"

Our keynote speaker will be Dr. Bruce Bickel, from Pittsburgh, PA who is President and Founder of Transformational Leadership Group.

The conference will begin on Friday, April 24, with a covered dish dinner at 6:30 pm and will continue on Saturday morning. There will be a fourth session during Sunday School on the 26th. The conference concludes with Dr Bickel preaching in our morning worship service.

A love offering will be collected to cover the costs of the conference.

Please watch your bulletins and newsletters for more information and for registration forms.

The members of a small country church took turns having their pastor over for dinner. At one meal, the pastor asked the family's small son what they'd be eating for dinner.

"Buzzard," the boy said.

"Buzzard?" the pastor asked, smiling. "What makes you think we're having buzzard?"

"Because Mom said, 'We might as well have the old buzzard and get it over with.'"

~ Reminisce Magazine

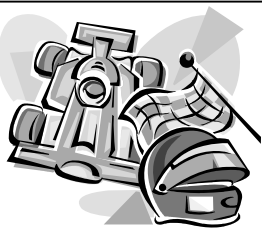
January Box Score Averages

Sunday School	113	General	\$2,884.78
Worship	205	Benevolence ..	\$1,282.00



Mission Report - March 2009

Tiger Pause, now in their 21st year of reaching out to the youth and families of Beaver County, has added "The Beez Café" at 1300 8th Avenue, Beaver Falls (Judge Mancini's old office). They are open Monday - Friday from 7 am - 1 pm and 3 - 6 pm. They have memorabilia on display from their 21 years in the form of photos, and issues of both old and new newsletters to show how many youth have been reached by Christian volunteers. Come in, have a hot cup of coffee or tea and help out Tiger Pause youth ministry at the same time. They also have a furniture bank (including appliances), and are in need of donations and will "sell" items in exchange for community service. "Tiger Pause Scrappers" will pick up old appliances or scrap metal and the proceeds will help fund Tiger Pause. Call Matt Nance at 724-630-9383.



This year's Pinewood Derby will be held on March 28, 2009, 2:00 - 5:00 PM, along with the silent auction. The car "weigh-in" will begin at 2:00 PM with the race starting at approximately 2:30 PM.

Everyone is welcome to participate, grand-parents, parents, young people, family teams, anyone looking for some good, clean competition.

Those wishing to participate this year in the Burry's Church Pinewood Derby are asked to please build a new car and only use the Boy Scout car kits. This will ensure that everyone has an equal chance to win. The entry fee is \$10 per car. This will cover the cost of the car and the proceeds to benefit our youth program.

Sign-up sheets along with the derby rules will be passed in the classes and are also in the back of the educational building. We will have several "help" days in March for those who may need some assistance in building their cars. If you would like to race and do not have the registration fee, a car will be made available for you to work on.

The cars are now available. Any questions, contact Mike Bernd at 724-538-5400.

Easter Egg Hunt



The Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Saturday, April 4, for children in Pre-school through 6th grade.

Donations of cookies would be appreciated. Please place your donations in the kitchen.

Oriental Chicken Salad by Eileen Bernd

4-5 chicken breasts, cooked & chopped
1 med. head cabbage, chopped
1 onion, chopped
2 pkgs. Remees Noodles (Oriental flavor)
1 pkg. slivered almonds, toasted
7-8 tbsps. sesame seeds, toasted

Dressing:

1/2 c. vegetable oil
2 pkgs. Remees seasoning
6 tbsps. sugar
7 tbsps. vinegar



Put dressing on 2 hours before serving.

Refrigerate until you serve.

Get to know Pastor Tom...

Back in the July 2007 newsletter, I wrote my column from General Assembly in Memphis about a man who has been a significant mentor to me. He is Dr. David Ludwick, president of ITEM. In 1991, Christ for Russia, Inc., received an influx of requests to the Back to God Hour radio broadcast for advanced training. Because such requests were beyond the scope of the radio ministry, ITEM (The International Theological Education Ministries, Inc.) was established to meet this need.



In the beginning, Christ for Russia supported a tiny effort in western Ukraine and supported the work of an itinerant lecturer between Moscow and St. Petersburg. Dr. Ludwick was brought in to lead ITEM in 1995. ITEM sends professors and pastors with an M.Div. or higher degree to Ukraine, Lithuania, Poland, Latvia, Romania, and Hungary (see www.item.org for more details).

Through the years, I have stayed in touch with Dr. Ludwick and have supported this ministry through prayer and the giving of time and money. This coming May, I plan to travel to eastern Europe (Kiev and/or Vilnius) to do a few weeks of teaching to pastors continuing their pastoral education. I will be teaching ethics, church history, and pastoral theology or evangelism and discipleship. Airfare will cost \$1,100-\$1,300 and other expenses are expected to be about \$1,500. I am trusting the Lord will supply the money through a variety of sources such as friends and family and personal funds.

My interest in Eastern Europe and in missions began as a child. My father was anti-communist and followed events in the USSR. My mother served on the missions committee at church and we often had missionaries eat Sunday lunch in our home. I grew up in a Christian home and heard and responded to the gospel at a young age. In my senior year in high school, the Holy Spirit “turned on the lights” for me one weekend in October after my youth pastor spoke of the “rich young ruler” in Mark 10. Now I know I am His dearly loved child and I am brought near to Him through Christ’s shed blood.

After leaving Penn State, I moved to Richmond, VA in 1989 where I met the Eastern European girl of my dreams, Ana. We married a year later. The Lord has blessed us with three fantastic daughters, Kristina, Katherine, and Evelyn. We live about 2 miles west of Burry’s Church. We enjoy the country life. My favorite routine is getting the girls off to school and then go tramp through the fields and woods with my dogs, to watch the rising sun and pray. Other interests include, hunting, dogs, horses, bicycling, gardening, and cooking.

My favorite Bible verse or passage? I have many, but in light of my interest in missions, Matthew 28:18-20 (the Great Commission) is at the top of the list. Another similar passage is 2 Tim. 2:2, “*what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.*” This is what I work at here and hope to do in Kiev this May.

During Lent: Take a minute...reflect...time with God...time with neighbors

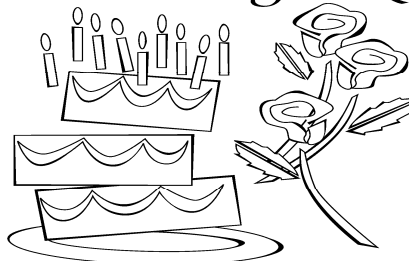
A Community Lenten Luncheon Service will be held every Wednesday during Lent at Grace Church of Harmony. Worship will begin at 12:05 pm including special music and “Insights from the Book of James”. Lunch will follow. An “express lunch” is available for those who cannot stay long.

The requested donation is \$4.00.

March 2009

Barbara Blinn	3
Chuck Horstman	4
Maryann Gutermuth	6
Myron Bonzo	8
Jeri Yeck	9
Jeremy Merriman	11
Dick Graham	12
Thomas Harley	13
Ann Zahn	14
Michael Dengel	15
Richard Chenet	17
Joshua Yeck	18
Braden Dengel	19
Austin Garlitz	19

Birthdays &



Anniversaries

Jim & Christa Harley	5	Diane Calderone	20
Donald & Gladys Young	10	Brittany Yeck	22
Dan & Joyce Brenner	22	Leona DeRosia	23
Glenn & Cindy Young	26	Marian Sullivan	24
Myron & Lori Bonzo	27	Jacob Aland	25
		Cooper Young	25
		Crystal Anney	26
		Glenn Young	27
		Mike Goudas	30
		Jesse Ralston	30
		Logan Shaffer	30
		Bertha Schaub	31
		Denise Sterrett	31
		Jenessa Young	31

Lenten services will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 25 with an evening service at 8:00 p.m. and will alternate with Lenten Lunches at noon, every other Wednesday.

The basis of our study will be material from "Love Walked Among Us," by Paul Miller. Our focus will be "The Journey Through Death and Life."

Please join us for any or all of these services as we prepare our hearts to celebrate our Risen Savior.

To My Church Family,

My deepest thanks for all of your prayers and cards. Each day gets a little easier and I know that with all you supporting me, my journey will be much easier.

God has been with me through all of this and I'm glad he has given me such good friends and family.

With Love, Marjorie Anderson

Directory Update

Blake & Shannon Lowe
2509 W. Madison Avenue
Athens, TN 37303
423-453-7475

One day, a man went to visit a church. He got there early, parked his car and got out. Another car pulled up near the driver, got out and said, "I always park there! You took my place!"



The visitor went inside for Sunday School, found an empty seat, and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him and stated, "That's my seat! You took my place!" The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome, but said nothing.

After Sunday School, the visitor went into the sanctuary and sat down. Another member walked up to him and said, "That's where I always sit! You took my place!" The visitor was even more troubled by this treatment, but still he said nothing.

Later as the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them, the visitor stood up, and his appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on his hands and on his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed him and called out, "What happened to you?"

The visitor replied, as his hat became a crown of thorns, and a tear fell from his eye, "I took your place."



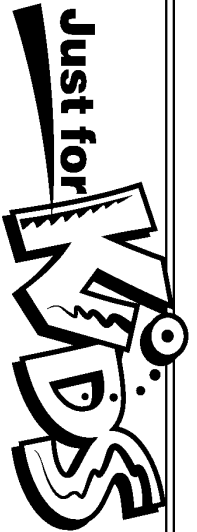
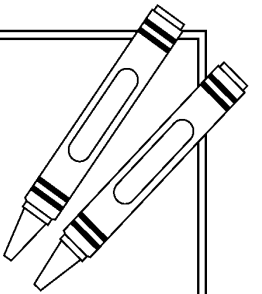
BURRY'S CHURCH

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info@burryschurch.org

"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God. And that is what we are!" 1 John 3:1a



A FAMILY OF PRAYER

The book of Acts tells about a man named Cornelius. He was a Roman centurion from Caesarea who worshiped God. Through his encounter with Cornelius, Peter learned that God accepts everyone who fears him and does what is right.

Use the code below to see the example set by Cornelius and his family. Solve the math problems by using the grid. Then use the key to find the letter that matches each answer. Write the letter on the blank.

KEY: a=7 e=8 i=10 o=9 u=11 y=6

GRID	
A	B
2	4
C	D
6	5

"He **e** nd ll h s f m l
A+C A+D A+D B+C A+D B+C A+B

w r d v t nd
A+C A+C A+C B+D C+D A+D

G d - f r ng; h g v
B+D A+C A+D B+C A+C A+D A+C

g n r s l t th s n
A+C A+C B+D C+D A+B B+D B+D A+C B+C

n d nd pr d t G d
A+C A+C A+D A+B A+C B+D B+D

r g l r l . " cts 10:2, NIV
A+C C+D A+D A+B A+D

Answers: He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly." Acts 10:2, NIV