



THE SEARCH IS OVER!

The Senior Pastor Nominating Committee is thrilled to announce that our search is over! After reviewing 145 resumes and meeting candidates by phone and in person, a unanimous vote was reached by the Nominating Committee. We have remained in constant communication with the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry throughout. They have been a critical piece in the process and of great help, particularly Dr. Leon Lovell-Martin, our COM Chairman.

Our choice amazingly found us in the beginning of our search. He patiently waited, knowing that God was calling him and his wife to Delray Beach, while we spent months of proper diligence in reviewing all of the candidates. He and his wife have been married for 25 years and have two children in college. He is a wonderful preacher, teacher and published writer. During

his Doctoral work, he produced and published a Small-Group Curriculum. You will get to see for yourself why the Pastor Nominating Committee feels his gift of ministry is the right fit for this congregation.

The Session has called a Special Congregational Meeting to be held on Sunday, May 6, 2012, immediately following the 10 a.m. worship service. At that time, you will have the opportunity to meet him and to hear him preach. We are honored and humbled by this new opportunity to welcome the future leader of First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach for years to come.

Your Pastor Nominating Committee

Ben Antal, Chris Del Mastro, Fred Devitt, Bill Earnhart, Kari Shipley, Mary Jane Sickel, Kathy Smith and Rob Tanner ❖



**Immediately following
the Special
Congregational
Meeting**

**Join us for a Reception
in Fellowship Hall
Meet your new Senior
Pastor and his wife.**



Youth Group Bibles



by Rev. Aaron Janklow
Associate Pastor

This month, youth group participants will be given Bibles. These are not the big study Bibles we use for Confirmation, but thinner Bibles that can be taken on youth trips, vacations, to Bible studies, or carried with them wherever they go in life. I have a Bible very similar to the ones that the youth group will be receiving and it is very important to me. I hope to have it forever, and in fact, if someone were to go through this Bible they would learn a lot about me. It has years' worth of underlining in it, signifying all

of my favorite passages. Particular books such as Isaiah and Hebrews have been so well thumbed through that you can tell where these books are located simply by looking at the side of the book. It is my hope, that with these new Bibles, our students will become increasingly familiar with the Bible. We'll certainly be doing some specific things to encourage them to do so along the way. We'll be using them all the time in youth group and on youth trips, and other times when we get together and dive into the Word! ❖

INSIDE . . .

Katrina Mission Page 4

Vacation Bible School. Page 5



Mack's Message

by Rev. Dr. Mack Sigmon

Interim Pastor

“Truly I tell you, if you have faith and do not doubt, even if you say to this mountain, “Be lifted up and thrown into the sea,” it will be done. Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive.”
Matthew 21: 21-22

I was blessed to have grown up in Charlotte, NC, which was located almost directly between the beaches of South Carolina and the mountains of North Carolina. In our North Carolina churches, there has been a running joke for many years in response to the typical church question, “How is attendance?” The answer: “It’s up and down – up at the mountains and down at the beaches!”

Either way you travel from Charlotte - up or down - the traveler eventually meets one of two awesome vistas – the ocean, with its awesome power and seemingly limitless horizon, or the mountains, with their towering strength, painted with the brightest sunlight on the mountaintops and contrasting with the deepest shadows in the valleys.

In the gospels we see Jesus preaching, teaching, and healing in both venues – by the sea of Galilee, or in the mountains of the Judean hill country. So much of Jesus’ teaching reflects the scene of where the teaching takes place, and in the verses above from the gospel of Matthew, Jesus has a mountain in view – probably the temple mount – as He teaches this lesson on faith.

Verses 21-22 are two of the most misunderstood and abused passages in all of Christianity, used by unscrupulous preachers and religious charlatans to pile guilt on believers who earnestly seek an answer to prayer. We have seen and heard these false prophets say to their suffering congregations, “You did not have enough faith – that is why your prayers were not answered.” But is that the point of Christ’s teaching?

First, let’s remember that Christ taught us how to pray, and that prayer is very simple: “Our Father, who art in heaven....”. Every aspect of the Lord’s prayer, every petition, can be prayed fervently, with faith, and with a full expectation of an answer: “Thy kingdom come... Thy will be done... forgive us our sins... deliver us from evil...”.

Second, and even more importantly, Christ is not telling us that the purpose of prayer is to move mountains in a literal sense. Why would we even pray for such a thing? There is no reason in heaven or on earth to pray that a mountain jump into the sea. Faith is not a characteristic in which the sole purpose is to demonstrate supernatural power. However, faith is the only characteristic in life that can connect us to the spiritual power and presence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus never once made a mountain jump into a sea, but He did still the storm so that His followers would not be afraid; He did love, teach, forgive, and heal those who came to the seashores and the mountains to hear Him. Our faith in Jesus Christ can do the same things in our lives and in the lives of others – it can heal broken hearts, forgive long-held grievances, set aside old wounds and

Continued on Page 3

Church Staff

Mack Sigmon, D.Min.
Interim Pastor

Theodore A. Bush, Ph.D.
Pastor Emeritus

Aaron Janklow, M.Div.
Associate Pastor

Jo Garnett, M.C.E.
Associate for Senior Ministries

Donald J. Cannarozzi, M.M., J.D.
Organist / Director of Music

James K. Poch, S.M.M.
Associate Director of Music

Jen Buce
Children’s Ministry Coordinator

Nancy Fine
Office Manager

Christine Davis
Accountant

Paula Hare
Secretary

Aaron Strippel
Head Custodian

Rita Avery
Custodian

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If you or a family member are hospitalized, please notify the church office. Even if you give the name of the church upon admission, the hospital will NOT notify us.

“Deacons’ Corner”

by Siena Del Mastro

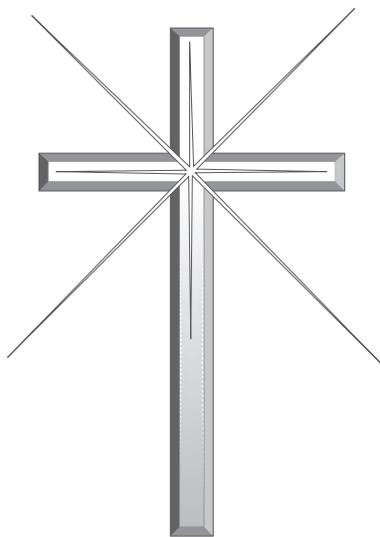
To start off, I just wanted to say that Meet Your Deacon Sunday was a complete success. Thank you to everyone that attended this special day and I hope that everyone enjoyed meeting their new Deacon. We were very excited by the outcome of the event and are hopeful that we can be as successful in the years to come.

As you all know, Meet Your Deacon Sunday is a chance for us to meet the members of our flock and for us to just mingle with other members of the congregation. However, this is also a time to introduce new Deacons to our Deacon family. There are four new Deacons, so I will be introducing two of them this month and two of them next month; just to spread things out.

Let’s begin with Merrill Beveridge. Personally, I have known Merrill since I was very little and I remember seeing her at the 100 foot tall Christmas tree in Downtown Delray on Atlantic Avenue. Getting to have her in my new Deacon family is like a

breath of fresh air and I can’t wait to get to know her even better. In her time as a Deacon, Merrill hopes to gain more knowledge of what it means to be a Christian and become an active and respectful listener to those of her flock. Merrill also loves interacting with children and has recently been tutoring a 10-year-old boy and a 13-year-old girl. She also has a pet Golden Retriever and has had many of them in the past.

The second Deacon is Scott Del Mastro. Now, I may be a little biased since he is my father, but I shall try to relay the information



as best I can. My dad has truly been an amazing blessing in my life and has made such a huge contribution as to who I am today. Several years ago, he was a Deacon. In those first three years, I remember going really early to church in the morning, when he was Head Usher, and helping him count bulletins, getting out the clickers to count everyone in attendance and delivering bulletins up to the choir room. Those are some of my finest memories of the beginning of my church career. Scott wants to be a Deacon because he wants to do his part in the Kingdom of God, to share in God’s calling with his daughter and to serve God’s people. His current occupation is being a tennis coach at Club Med Academies in Port St. Lucie and he gets to work with students from all over the world. I am truly lucky to have my dad in my life.

I am really blessed to know these two people and I can’t wait for the coming Deacon year. Stay tuned for the next Deacons’ Corner article to learn about the other two new Deacons! ❖

Continued from Page 2

regrets, teach those around us about the love of God, and teach us how to love each other unconditionally. Those are the mountains in our own lives that only Jesus can move.

In regard to answering all of our prayers, Jesus never presents prayer as a shopping list of personal desires. Prayer is not meant to give us a check-off list of the things God has

given us as opposed to the things God has denied us. Rather, prayer is like holding hands with God – the feeling and the Presence of the Holy Spirit are far more important than the words.

Prayer is not about moving dirt – it is about the love between ourselves and our Creator, Who knows what we need. That love moves our hearts everyday into undiscovered places of

hope and comfort, places where we need not fear anything that life throws at us. Prayer is not a demand – it is an act of faith. Christ prays with us and for us to the Father, and the Father, Who loves us, moves the mountains that keep us from seeing Him. Have you let God move the mountains from in front of you so that you can see God’s love? That is the true prayer that Jesus taught us to pray.❖

2006 Katrina Mission Trip Update

by Nancy Fine, Office Manager

After Hurricane Katrina, our church sent a crew to New Orleans to help with the recovery efforts. Connie Dwyer and her family owned one of the homes that the crew of nine, Chris Del Mastro, Scott Del Mastro, Jeanne Heavilin, Ed Jessell, Gail Jessell, Cliff Roberson, Mary Jane Sickel, Kellen Smith and Sarah Krebs Smith worked on.

During Holy Week this year, I received a telephone call from Connie, telling me that she and her family were so blessed that she felt compelled to call and let the church know how much the work of the mission team meant to her and her family and how she prays for the team and our church often. By the end of the conversation, we were both in tears. Please read the email that she sent to be published in our newsletter.



Dear Friends:

Please find attached, pictures of the house, etc. Since they were here, Joie and Chris have blessed us with two grandchildren. Steve went to work for the City of New Orleans as a building inspector in October of 2007. Our dogs, Baby and Rusty, are still with us. Holy Cross High School rebuilt across the street from us after being in the 9th Ward since 1863. Ironically, Steve graduated from there in 1968. They have really helped bring back the neighborhood.

We still have your video from the storm and I watch it periodically. It reminds me that there truly are good people in this world and we can never give up on each other. We didn't get back in the house until 2009. Again, the Lord brought someone into our lives just when we were about to give up on it completely, who opened his heart and his wallet. His company came in and seven weeks later, we came home. We pay him \$1,000 a month and will have him paid back in less than five years. We don't have a mortgage.

Again, your hard work and your prayers paid off. I felt compelled to let you know. Forgive me for not letting you know sooner. May God Bless you all for your sacrifices. You will be in our hearts and minds forever.

Sending our love and appreciation, we are,

***Sincerely,
Steve and Connie Dwyer ❖***



Many items are needed to decorate Fellowship Hall for this year's Vacation Bible School, the theme of which is Operation Overboard, "Dare to Go Deep with God". If you have any of the following items that we can borrow, please mark your name on them (so that we can return them to you) and bring them to the church office. We are looking for the following items: bubble machine, small boat, canoe, dingy, artificial plants, coral, shells, driftwood, beach towels, beach balls, fly swatters, laundry bags, fish nets, fake fish, box fans, flashlights, fishing gear, buckets and an anchor. Contact Jen Buce (276-6338, ext. 17 or jenbuce@covad.net) for additional information. ❖

"Go Deep With God" Vacation Bible School

by Jen Buce

Children's Ministry Coordinator

The week of June 11th through June 15th, 2012 from 9 a.m. until noon, we are bringing an underwater adventure to your children at our VBS, Operation Overboard: Dare to Go Deep with God! Your children will become divers-in-training at Operation Overboard as we plunge into God's Word and discover stories of faith.

After a high energy opening at Ocho's Cove, divers make their way to the Underwater Passage. On day one, our divers will learn to Depend on God; on day two, they learn to

Dare to Care; on day three, our divers Claim Jesus. Divers on day four Choose to Follow and on the last day they learn How to Change the World! The children will expand on what they discover as they participate in a variety of activities along the way. Each day they will visit Aquatic Arts, sing music at the Coral Reef, play games at the High Tide Hang Out and enjoy tasty snacks at the Divers' Diner.

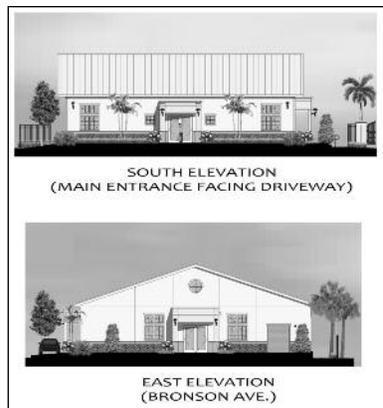
Are you ready to take the plunge? The cost for the week is a suggested donation of \$30. For more information, please contact Paula Hare at 276-6338, ext. 23 or by email paulahare@covad.net. I can't wait to take a swim and Go Deep with God and you! ❖

Church Improvement

by Barbara Vanderkay

On Sunday, April 15th, Bob Teninga, Chair of the Property Committee, brought encouraging news to the congregation about the progress on the new Holly House. He displayed the rendering of the front elevation of the building, as well as other views of the outside. On easels in the Narthex, were layouts of the interior of the building and a site plan showing the landscaping and parking areas.

The dirt piles will soon be leveled out and the cement trucks will roll in to actually put down the foundation. Mow Construction will be in charge. Soon a groundbreaking ceremony will signal the actual beginning of this long-awaited home for the hard-working ladies who have labored for years for the Church Improvement Committee. We expect there will be visible progress each week which may be seen if you drive around the east parking lot. Keep checking it out. ❖



Palm Sunday



by Jen Buce
Children's Ministry Coordinator

On Palm Sunday, April 1st, the children had another stellar performance during their Easter Pageant. Practice for the Pageant began four weeks before. It is very difficult to have all of the children together at each the rehearsals. Jim Poch and I, days before the event, were nervous with, "Are all the children going to be there?", "Will they remember their lines?", "Will they stand still or take off on us?" They are children; we never know what they will do!

But God was with us on the day of the performance and everything they worked hard at practicing came together at once. Again, they are children and very unpredictable. You may see one dancing; one singing at the top of his lungs, but that is what makes it wonderful to see!

After the Pageant we continued the fun with an Easter Egg Hunt, with over 700 eggs to be collected. The day ended with a pool party where the parents finally got to relax a little.

Many people helped with providing eggs and candy, assisting with the children in the pageant, helping out with the children during both services and cleaning up at the pool party. I appreciate all of the efforts that go into making our events so successful. ❖



Celebration of Eternal Life...

Our Deepest Sympathy as a congregation is extended to the family of the following members upon the death of their loved one:

- Lovelle Arnold – March 21, 2012
- Peg Brainard – April 9, 2012
- Lillian Bernhard – April 12, 2012
- Doris Rothang – April 17, 2012



STEPHEN MINISTERS

by David Fellows

It seems the older we get, the faster the time goes by. Here we are, post Easter, entering another spring and Mother Nature is preparing for her own resurrection. Thoughts turn to our Snowbird members' return north, the end of another school year and summer vacations.

In your travels, I hope you will use the internet to stay current with what is happening during this important phase in the life of our church. Both *The Spire* and the Sunday bulletin are available on our website, www.firstdelray.com. You can also view Sunday services either live, in real time, or archived. It is very easy to stay up to date and feel part of our church even though you are at a distance.

Some time ago, the Stephen Ministers designed a leave-behind

bookmark for care receivers and for others we visit at the hospital who may not know of our church. Along with contact information for First Presbyterian Church, the bookmark has the shortened version of James Dillet Freeman's Prayer for Protection. Many people find this to be an especially comforting prayer. Perhaps you may wish to ponder it during your summer travels. In 1969, Astronaut Buzz Aldrin took it along on Apollo 11's first manned moon landing. I get goose bumps when I look at the night sky and envision the astronauts in their tiny craft looking at both the Earth and the Moon and contemplating Freeman's poem. Try it sometime yourself. ❖

Here is the Prayer for Protection in its entirety (the bold sections comprise the shortened version):

The Light of God surrounds me.
The Love of God enfolds me.
The Power of God protects me.
The Presence of God watches over me.

The Mind of God guides me.
The Life of God flows through me.
The Laws of God direct me.
The Power of God abides within me.
The Joy of God uplifts me.
The Strength of God renews me.
The Beauty of God inspires me.
Wherever I am, God is!

Although at times it may feel like it,
we are never alone.

New Study for TnT and The Reason

by Rev. Aaron Janklow

TnT (Twenties and Thirties) and the Reason (Sunday School for 5th grade and up) will be beginning new studies using John Ortberg's latest book, *The Me I Want to Be: Becoming God's Best Version of You*. This is a wonderful book that will take us through Bible studies and self reflection, as we examine the people we feel pushed to be by the world or ourselves, and the people God created and intended us to be. TnT meets the first and third Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. in the Youth House and continues throughout the summer,

and the Reason meets on Sunday mornings at 9 a.m., before the worship service, through the end of May. Both groups always welcome new participants, regardless of whether you've done the readings or not. The conversations and readings are so relevant to life that you should be able to jump right in. It's our hope that maybe after just one session, you will find it so meaningful and applicable to life that you will want to start the readings on your own.

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The Community Church by the Sea

33 Gleason Street, Delray Beach, Florida 33483

This newsletter is available online at www.firstdelray.com. If you are interested in receiving an electronic copy of this newsletter, please email Nancy Fine at nancyfine@covad.net.

Sunday Morning Worship Services

10 a.m.

Please join us on Sunday mornings as we worship the Living God together.

Church School

Adult Church School 9 a.m.

Education Hour Sunday School 9 a.m.

Youth Fellowship 5 p.m.

