

March 2008 Newsletter

Fellowship Presbyterian Church

1105 Old Spartanburg Road ~ Greer, SC 29650

Rev. Martin H. Martin, Pastor

Phone: (864) 877-3267 Fax: (864) 877-0564

Email: office@fellowshippres.org

Website: www.fellowshippres.org

“Bless Your Enemies”

by Martin H. Martin



What do you do when you run into somebody (or somebody runs into you!) who is hard to get along with? What about someone who really treats you unfairly? Whose sin has consequences not just for them but for you? Who directs at you the contempt they hold for God?

If we are honest, we realize that our first reaction to mistreatment is to respond in kind, even to “ratchet up” a bit in our response, just to make sure that others learn their lesson and don’t try to do such a thing again. Sometimes it even seems we are just “hoping they will” so we will have an excuse to give them what they really deserve. But is this Christ’s way...?

Some in the history of the church, the Quakers for example, have said that the Christian is to be a pacifist. Pacifism stresses turning the other cheek and non-retaliation. Such a person, when insulted, doesn’t respond; when harmed, doesn’t retaliate; when invaded, doesn’t resist.

So are you a pacifist? Do you believe this is how the Christian must behave? Is this the way you respond when bullied, cheated, defrauded or wronged? Is it easy for you to respond in these ways? Of course, I already know the answer to that last question. Nobody finds it easy to choke their pride or endure mistreatment.

The Bible doesn’t actually teach that we are to be pacifists. Perhaps you find yourself breathing a sigh of relief! But before we comfort ourselves, what God commands is actually something far more extensive and difficult!

Looking at the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 12:14 and 21, we read:

“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse...
Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

You notice God is not just saying we should endure mistreatment; rather, He is saying that when we are mistreated we should actually do the opposite! It is important to see God’s goodness in giving us this command for two reasons: blessing our enemy, by the enabling of the Holy Spirit, is more “doable” than pacifism; and overcoming evil

with good is a much more powerful demonstration of God’s character and power in our lives.

First, realize that blessing and doing right toward someone who is sinning against us is active rather than passive. Our minds and bodies abhor vacuum and inactivity, so even if we refrain from lashing out, our mind still boils in resentment and we want to lash out. But when we set our minds to positively treat an offender the way we wish he would treat us, we are actively applying our hearts and minds to do something rather than to not do something. This is the way we were designed to function. Christians are not called to abstinence and non-retaliation, but to purity, service and blessing. So pray to God, and set your mind, to do rather than to not do. Do the right things and you will have no time to do the wrong ones.

Second, blessing and service is a far greater testimony than mere silence and non-retaliation. Non-Christians are silent all the time – because they are at a loss for what to say, because they are too weak to fight back. But service to your enemy has no other explanation than the power and work of Christ in your life. And few things show the character of Christ more starkly than blessing the very ones who loath and despise you.

What impact would we have if Christians, rather than longing for the day when we will have the power to finally suppress our adversaries, made it our business to actively serve and bless them?

Pastor Marty

Sunday Evening Fellowship Supper with the Smallings!



Sunday, March 2nd

We look forward to having our missionaries, **Roger & Dianne Smalling**, with us on Sunday evening, March 2nd; following evening worship, we will have a

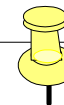
**Fellowship Supper (sandwiches, chips & desserts)
and time to visit with the Smallings!**

Please bring a tray of sandwiches or your favorite dessert.

Thank you!

The sacrament of the **Lord’s Supper** will be celebrated (and a special **mercy offering** received) on Sunday, March 2nd, during evening worship.

Sheryl Farquhar will give an update on **Bethany Christian Services** on Sunday, March 9th, prior to evening worship.



Church Notes:

FROM THE DIACONATE: for everyone’s safety and the security of our facilities, please keep all exterior classroom doors shut/ locked at all times (except in case of an emergency), enter/ exit the building through the front or side doors only, and please **do not prop open/ block the side door.**

Thank you for your cooperation!

WEDNESDAY SUPPER & ACTIVITIES

5:30 PM: Supper (catered meal cost: \$3.50/adult, \$2.50/child, \$10 max/family)

3/05: Make your own taco salad, tea & cheesecake with cherries



3/12: Fried chicken, macaroni & cheese, mixed vegetables, rolls, tea & pie

3/19: NO SUPPER

3/26: Italian chicken, brown & wild rice, green beans, rolls, tea & red velvet cake

6:00 PM: Choir Rehearsal

6:40 PM: Devotional & Prayer Time (adults); Catechism (children grades k-4 thru 6th)

Adult Choir Rehearsals: Wednesday, 3/9 & 3/12 (6 PM); Sunday, 3/9 (4:45 PM).
Contact Annette Stubbs (288-3066) for more information.

CATECHISM TEACHERS FOR MARCH:

3/05: Pamela Farmer & Carolyn Root

3/19: NO CLASSES

3/12: John Way, Jeff & Susan Wayne

3/26: Pamela Farmer & Carolyn Root

A Session meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 11th, at 7:00 PM.

Ladies’ Bible Studies:

The Ladies’ Tuesday Morning Precepts Bible Study (an inductive study of 1 Peter) meets Tuesdays, from 9:30-11:30 AM at the church; nursery is available. Please contact, Wendy Richards (877-3267 or 399-9276) for more information.

The Ladies’ Thursday Evening Bible Study, “Walking with God-Learning Discipleship in the Psalms”, will not meet this Thursday, 3/17 but will resume Thursday, March 13th, 7:00 PM at the Wilders; For more information, please contact Barbara Wilder (848-6434 or bwilder220@bellsouth.net).

The March edition of **TABLETALK** is available (free of charge) to all members and visitors; pick up your copy (in the narthex) today!



APRIL NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, MARCH 14th.

The office will be closed Monday, March 24th, for Easter holidays.

SERVING IN MARCH:

Elder of the Month: Larry Poole 268-5514

Deacon of the Month: Bill Wilder 848-6434

Greeters of the Month: Edith Shelley

Ushers: Troy High & Bill Wilder.

Family and Youth Corner: “Faith that Works”

James in his Epistle wrote that “Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.” (James 1:27)

The Bible calls all believers, all those who have been saved to live a life of good works. Many have confused the order and claimed that the works are necessary for salvation. We understand that salvation comes by grace through faith in Christ alone. Once we have been saved by God we are called to good works.

Recently we had a very good opportunity of serving the kingdom of God by our work day at Calvary Home for Children. This is a Christian foster home where children and youth have a haven to live, study, experience family life and receive biblical training and discipline. The kids at the home attend church regularly, have daily Bible studies and learn the daily aspects of Christianity as in any other home. We had a good sized group of all ages, and had the privilege of spending time with the kids, and of helping the Home by cleaning houses and carrying construction material. Some of our kids had the great experience of helping those in need. I want to encourage you to look for ways in serving those in distress, and early on to instruct your children in this path.

Calvary Home for Children is open for those who want to help in several different ways, and certainly there are many other needs around us that can be addressed by Christians willing to exercise their call to godliness.

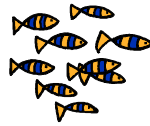
~Emilio

*If you would like to help at Calvary Home for Children,
please contact Demetrius at 864-314-1984.*

Upcoming Events at GPTS:

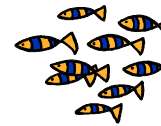
Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary's 2008 Spring Theology Conference will be held Tuesday—Thursday, March 11th - March 13th. The conference, on the topic of Eschatology, will be held at Woodruff Road Presbyterian Church. For more information please contact the seminary at (864) 322-2717 or visit the website at www.gpts.edu.

The Seminary's new building will be dedicated the evening before the conference, March 10th, at 7:00 P.M. Tours of the new building will also be available beginning at 6:00 P.M. All are invited; please RSVP to info@gpts.edu.



MISSIONARY MISSIVE *Peru Mission*

by Carolyn Root



The vision of the Peru Mission is to co-labor with the Holy Spirit, building faithful, vibrant, self-sustaining, and multiplying parish churches in northern Peru. Missionaries minister among Reformed Churches in Peru in order to establish new parish-communities who will faithfully serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

Summer camp was held January 1-4, the beginning of summer break in Peru – perfect timing for kids who just finished the stress of final exams. A 27-member Twin Lakes team from Jackson, MS showed up in full force to provide this New Year's experience which many Peruvian children will not soon forget. Along with over 30 Peruvian volunteer counselors and translators, they ran a weeklong camp for over 150 children from church communities and a partnering orphanage – teaching activities, playing with kids, sharing the testimony of God's work in their life, meeting the families, and helping the churches reach out to the neighborhoods.

Brad and Jennifer Ball are originally from Jackson, MS. After serving as Peru Mission team administrator for five years, Brad took a 2-year furlough to complete his MBA degree at the University of Tennessee. During that time he developed the business plan for the team's economic development project. A founding member of Peru Mission, Brad has just returned to implement a very important economic development project, including a door and furniture mill/training facility to employ local carpenters and business people. Grace Bateman of Jackson, MS, who just arrived for her third internship with the mission, is using her economic development training to implement a new micro-savings program in the Arevalo church-parish, and to develop a small business project which employs women in the Larco church-parish, Peru Mission Cards.

The medical clinic in Wichanzao is in its new building, constructed by visiting short-term teams. The facility has been approved by the Peruvian Ministry of Health, ensuring that it will be integrated into the local health care system and will be running for many years to come. With a dynamic new pastor in Wichanzao, Juan Marquina, who worked with the university ministry some years ago, the church there is growing and more active than ever. In Larco the church is starting a new discipleship program, which hopefully will increase involvement and develop spiritual life. The churches in Arevalo and Cajamarca are seeing fruit from new programs they have recently implemented as well.

Let's continue to support the Bakers, Balls, and the entire Peru Mission Team through our prayers and love offerings. You may contact them at:

The Peru Mission Team

www.perumission.org

ebulletin@perumission.org



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

FELLOWSHIP PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
1105 OLD SPARTANBURG ROAD
GREER, SOUTH CAROLINA 29650