

The Christian Chronicle



Boones Mill Christian Church

6/1/2017

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LETTING THE SPIRIT OUT OF THE BOX

The celebration of Pentecost is upon us. As members of the church, we tend to take this feast for granted. It is the one day we change the vestments to red but more than that, it could be the time we pause to contemplate what Pentecost means to each of us, the gift as well as the expectation involved.

In the world of AA there is a saying, “**The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.**” It makes me think of the church. Program after program but nothing has stopped the decline. Joe and I once visited a church in Texas. The building was large and as we walked through the building, we could see evidence of every program offered that was designed to “**Save your church!**” They even had a preschool. There was a time when having a preschool was seen as **THE** way to “bring young families

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AN ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS SAYING

into the church.” Indeed, many young families dropped off and picked up their children each weekday, yet never appeared on Sunday. When we got into the sanctuary, there was a very small congregation of 12 or so. They had technology, so they played a very old video of the Gaithers and sang along. The preacher preached (kinda). He was clearly uneducated and likely not paid much if anything at all. The sermon made little sense because it seemed he had copied and pasted several sermons together, not understanding when he was contradicting himself at points in the same sermon. The people were nice though, they invited us out to lunch. We could feel the vacuum of desperation. Joe and I left feeling very sad. You see, this church added

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

...

- 5TH: JERRY EVANS**
8800 Grassy Hill Road
Boones Mill, VA 24065
540-334-5546
- 7TH: ROGER PETERS**
8071 Grassy Hill Road
Boones Mill, VA 24065
540-335-5486
- 10TH: JIM BISHOP**
jjjbishop@fuse.net
- 10TH: CHRISTOPHER COLLINS**
2250 Oak Ridge Farms Rd.
Danville, VA 24541
- 10TH: ADAM MOORE**
611 S. Jefferson St. #706
Roanoke, VA 24011
540-586-4564
- 11TH: MARSHA WAGNER**
5400 Bernard Dr. #C202
Roanoke, VA 24018
540-650-0807
- 12TH: CAROL AMOS**
621 Orangewood Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23456
804-463-8169
- 16TH: DONNA LEWIS**
3628 Green Level Road
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-334-5425

HAPPY BIRTHDAY Y'ALL!

programs and ministries but never **TRANSFORMED** themselves or more accurately, they never

JUNE BIRTHDAYS



- 16TH: JESSICA NICHOLS**
110 Ikenberry Road
Boones Mill, VA 24065
540-580-9449
- 18TH: TAMEY CONNER**
182 Ikenberry Road
Boones Mill, VA 24065
540-312-2322
- 18TH: CHERYL MAUS**
650 High Meadows Drive
Wirtz, VA 24184
540-721-2474
- 20TH: CHUCK RIGNEY**
100 Little Mountain Circle
Rocky Mount, VA 24151
540-420-9745
- 26TH: LISA WORKMAN**
1665 Webb Mountain Rd.
Boones Mill, VA 24065
540-797-3415
- 28TH: BETHANY CONNER**
110 Ikenberry Road
Boones Mill, VA 24065
540-312-2455
- 29TH: AUBREY COLLINS**
2250 Oak Ridge Farms Rd.
Danville, VA 24541

HAPPY BIRTHDAY Y'ALL!

opened themselves up to the Spirit who wanted to and could **TRANSFORM** them! Playing music from the 1970s was not inspiring to young people who visited. It seems as though the decision had been made that satisfying the people in the pew was more important than bringing new members to the church. It wasn't working for them.

When I was a pastor, I traveled to General Assembly one year with the Chair of the Elders. We arrived early to take part in a seminar on Church renewal. The seminar itself was wonderful, as were the workshops. All of them focused on renewal and didn't offer a "program" to fix the church. But unfortunately there was an exception. I was so inspired and filled with ideas from the seminar. Unfortunately, the elder missed the message altogether and latched on the one program and immediately wanted the church to invest the couple of thousands of dollars to buy the program. She wanted the band aid. She didn't consider that we did not have anyone to run the program. Our people were too old and burned out to add another band aid to their wounds.

The twelve disciples were devout Jews facing a dilemma. The Jesus they knew had died. They spent some time with him before he ascended into heaven. Yet they were left behind and the world in which they lived had not changed at all. However, they had changed. In their confusion and grief, their hearts were open. Then, unexpectedly, the book of Acts tells us...

"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability." ACTS 2:1-4

In Jerusalem, people were going about their business, just like any other day. The 12 disciples had been busy sharing the resurrection of Jesus. People gathered to hear Peter, wondering what the ruckus was about. Remember, these were devout Jews and Jerusalem was a major city filled with many people from many lands. They came into the city to trade, they

came for their religious feasts. Then the scripture continues...

"Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and

visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.’ All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, ‘What does this mean?’ But others sneered and said, ‘They are filled with new wine.’ “ Acts 2:5-13

Note that these were not believers in Christ. It says nowhere that any of them were even interested in Jesus on any level. Yet each person there heard the words of Peter in their own language. The good news was no longer confined to those who spoke Aramaic. Each person heard in their own language. Peter and the Disciples were not gifted in the ability to speak in other languages, instead, the miracle happened in the crowd—each could **HEAR** in their own language. Still, even with the miracle, there were some who refused to change, refused to see the miracle that they had witnessed. “Yeah, it was just the alcohol.”

The birth of the church in this passage is not a one-time experience. We too are challenged to recognize the Holy Spirit within each other. We must be open to new ways to be church. We must recognize it is about embodying the idea and life of church instead of doing church. Adding programs doesn’t work because programs never address the fundamental problem. That problem is usually that a church had become more interested in keeping church members satisfied than reaching out to others and bringing them into the fold. How many times is an entire church held hostage by one naysayer, who says of any new idea, **“That is crazy! You must be out of your head! We tried that once and it didn’t work!”** or **“I don’t like it, I want it this [my?] way.”**

If the new believers had listened to the naysayers at the time of Acts, we would not be here today! Pentecost today is a gift, because we, as believers have the power of the Holy Spirit. It is a shame that we sometimes do our best to contain the Spirit. Pentecost is a responsibility because we have been tasked with the duty to transform. We can only transform if we allow the Spirit into our lives. This portion of scripture concludes with a transformed community of believers:

“All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.” ACTS 2:44-47

The challenge to us not so simple but necessary. The question this scripture really demands that we ask of ourselves is, **“How do we become a church transformed?”** so that people are attracted to us by our love and not the newest and latest gimmick? We have the power – God gives it through the Spirit. The bigger question is can we open our hearts and turn off our automatic disbelief? Can we trust the Spirit to translate our feeble words as we reach out? Can we let the Spirit out of the box to live through us? A gift and a challenge. Thanks be to God for Pentecost!

Pastor Pat

DON'T FORGET!!!

BMCC VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

JUNE 3RD SATURDAY FROM 8:30AM TO 2:00PM

Our theme this year is **"DOWN ON THE FARM WITH JESUS."** Please see the Bulletin Board at the building or our FaceBook page for details. Please contact Faye Evans at 334-5546 to volunteer or to contribute. Homestead Creamery is going to bring a calf and we could use visits from other farm animals if you could arrange that or if you know someone for us to contact. Thanks and Blessings!

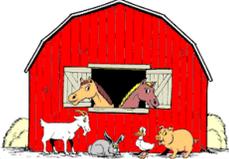


BMCC

JUNE

2017



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1		3 8:30 AM – 2:00PM BMCC VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
4 DAY OF PENTECOST STUDY @ 9:15 AM WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM	5	6	7	8	9 	10 APPLEBEE'S PANCAKE BREAKFAST BENEFITTING HELPING HANDS OF FRANLIN COUNTY
11 TRINITY SUNDAY STUDY @ 9:15 AM WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST STUDY @ 9:15 AM WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM FATHER'S DAY	19	20	21	22	23	24 BMCC FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST THE ROANOKER 9:00 AM
25 THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST STUDY @ 9:15 AM WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM	26	27	28 SUMMER CHOIR PRACTICES 7:30 PM JULY 5 TH & AUGUST 2 ND	29	30	