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✠ Holy Week ✠

Palm Sunday

April 1, 2007

8:30AM Worship in the Chapel

9:45AM Bible Study

11:00AM Worship in the Sanctuary

Processional of the Palms

A luncheon and Bible drama for children and families will follow the worship service in the fellowship Hall.



Maundy-Thursday

April 5, 2007

7:00 PM Service of Holy Communion with Tenebrae
(Fellowship Hall)



Resurrection Sunday

April 8, 2007

8:30AM Worship in the Sanctuary

9:45 AM Bible Study

11:00 AM Worship in the Sanctuary

Please note: No Wednesday evening programs will meet this week except for Sanctuary Choir and Festival Singers



The March 31, 2007
Newsletter of the
Smoke Rise Baptist Church

Prime Time News

Prime Time meeting April 3 at 6:00 p.m. Entertainment will be humorist Nancy Burgess. She is the wife of the Pastor of Lucerne Baptist.

April Prime Time Day Trip will be to the Wild Animal Safari at Pine Mountain on April 19. We will also take a drive through Callaway Gardens to see the beautiful flowers and eat in the Gardens Exact information should hit the newsstand and website within the next week. Please call Linda at 770-469-5856 to make reservations.

Give to Missions Offerings Through Easter

Our church goal is \$10,000 this year for the Annie Armstrong, SBC Easter Offering and the Global Missions, CBF Spring Offering. Please designate on your check which offering you are giving to. Money will be collected through April 8.

Spring Break

Because of spring break, we have planned no dinner, prayer meeting or children's activities on Wednesday, April 4. The Sanctuary Choir will meet. For everyone else, we'll see you again for Wednesday activities on Wednesday, April 11.

New Members

Emily Bennett (daughter of Greg and Christy Bennett), 1942 Musket Court, Stone Mountain, GA 30087; Telephone 770-496-5995. Deacon: Penny Stovall.

Ed Hosier, 2316 Deville Street, Snellville, GA 30078; Telephone 770-978-1420. Deacon: Alan Burton.

Watson Martin (son of Walter and Sarah Martin), 632 Larchmont Circle, Lawrenceville, GA 30044; Telephone 678-344-6237. Deacon: Fredolyn Stitt.

Danielle Richards (daughter of Trudy Richards), 5785 Silver Ridge Drive, Stone Mountain, GA 30087; Telephone 770-469-2201. Deacon: Laura Smith.

Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy (Carole) Turner, 3982 Station Way, Suwanee, GA 30024; Telephone 678-714-5107. Deacon: Marc Beaver.

Why I Participate in Relay for Life by Bess Burkett

As an ovarian cancer survivor for 39 years, I walk to give hope to others who are fighting the disease. When I was diagnosed, the survival rate for my cancer was extremely low. Today, through research like that funded by Relay for Life/The American Cancer Society, the cure rate is much higher. I walk in memory of my mother-in-law and friends who lost the battle with cancer. I walk with the hope that the money raised by Relay for Life will help find the cure to eliminate cancer in my lifetime.

Wednesday Nights Have Grown!

The Nursery and Preschool departments have been blessed with regular high attendance in our two, three, four and five year old classes on Wednesday nights and we need additional helpers.

If you can help on Wednesday nights, please contact Amanda Coe Burton at aburton@smokerisebaptist.org or Kellie Denton at kdenton@smokerisebaptist.org.

Faith & Issues

Sunday at 9:45 am; Room A125

April Schedule

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| 1 | The Historical Jesus: Session One |
| 8 | The Historical Jesus: Session Two |
| 15 | Understanding the faith of our young people |
| 22 | Understanding other Christian traditions: Who are the Quakers? |
| 29 | Understanding other Christian traditions: Who are Episcopalians? |

Deacons' Lunch/Meeting and Quarterly Church Conference

Deacon Lunch/Meeting and Quarterly Church Conference will be on April 15. Please make your Church Conference reservations for lunch with the receptionist and deacons make your lunch reservation changes with Bobbie Wade. You are all invited to make a special effort to join us for the Quarterly Church Conference. Valuable information is shared at that time. You will be through with lunch and the meeting by 1:00 – 1:15 p.m. Hope to see you there.

Uth News

- Register now for summer camps.
- **BIG STUF CAMP** June 6-10 for grades 6-12
\$300 to Panama City Beach
Get you name on the waiting list.
- **WORLD CHANGERS** June 30-July 7
for high school only – a few spots remain
\$260 to New Orleans

Can You Go to Appalachia?

Come and join us on April 1 after the 11:00 Worship Service for an Informational Meeting on the Appalachia Mission Trip. The trip will be June 16 – 23, 2007. We have a great team so far, but would like for you to join us. This meeting will be in the Parlor and will be very brief.

Needed: 1 Cook and a Few Good Men

An extra team is needed for construction work in Tijuana, Mexico, July 14 – 21, 2007. This will be the week following the scheduled Mission Week of July 7 – 14. The church building needs to be enlarged to accommodate the growing number of people. Check your calendar and pray about this important opportunity. We need 5 or 6 men and 1 cook to contact Wilson Echols or Gary Prophitt.

Births

Congratulations to Andy and Ellen Beaver on the birth of a son, Samuel William, born January 6; grandparents are Marc and Janice Beaver; to David and Tiffany White on the birth of a daughter, Kennedy Suzanne, born March 3; brothers are Austin and Carson, grandparents are Paul and Gloria White; and to John and Marti Newcomb-Thompson on the birth of a daughter, Grace Elliot, born March 17. sister is Mackenzie.

Deaths

We extend our sympathy to Cathy Hicks, on the death of her father, Andrew M. "Buck" Hancock. Buck had been a member since 1985; and, to Gloria White, whose father died.

We also extend our sympathy to Norma Harris, whose sister died; and to Maxine Goins, whose mother died.

Notes from the Pastor

“The Sweet Scent of Gratitude and Encouragement”

John 12:1-8

I'm not sure what she had been saving it for, but without a doubt it was her most valuable possession. After all, it was worth over a year's wages. Perhaps she was keeping it to sell in case of an emergency or to take care of her when she was old. Maybe she was going to use it sparingly for special occasions or mix it with burial spices when loved ones died.

Whatever she had in mind changed the evening Jesus came to a dinner given in his honor six days before his crucifixion. As he reclined to eat with his disciples and Mary's brother, Lazarus, Mary entered the room carrying this sweet smelling offering. She opened it and poured all of it on Jesus' feet. Quickly, the room was filled with the sweet smell of perfume and the foul odor of criticism.

“Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages?” Judas asked this question, according to John, not because he had such a sensitive social conscience, but a selfish heart. John accused Judas of pilfering in the disciples' treasury, and as a result, attributes his discomfort to his greed.

What was Jesus' reaction to Judas' bold criticism and suggestion? “Leave her alone. It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me” John 12:7-8. Jesus saw into Judas' heart and recognized his motives. As a result, he reprimanded Judas, not Mary.

What are the lessons we can learn from this story? Let me share some for you to ponder.

Be careful about judging others' decisions. They may have reasons completely unknown to you for what they do. Mary certainly did.

Her heart was filled with love and gratitude for Jesus. Most recently, he had raised her beloved brother, Lazarus, from the dead. How could she let him know what was in her heart? Words were inadequate; only the most lavish generosity could express her feelings.

In addition, I think Mary sensed the danger that Jesus faced by coming to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover. She knew that he was taking a great risk and might not survive. Perhaps she had heard that the authorities were searching for him as well as her brother, Lazarus. Both represented threats to their control and exploitation of the people.

How could she encourage Jesus and let him know that she appreciated his sacrificial courage? She found a way, didn't she?

Can you imagine how her act of lavish generosity made Jesus feel just days away from being crucified? It had to move and inspire him, giving him the confidence he needed to be faithful all the way to the cross. As a matter of fact, this humble act of devotion may have given him the idea for washing the disciples' feet the following week in the Upper Room.

Who needs your encouragement because they are going through the valley of the shadow of death? What could you do to lift their spirits?

What peacemaker needs encouragement? Who is on the front line speaking truth to power that needs to know you appreciate their courage? Follow Mary's lead and get in touch with him or her. Do something that clearly demonstrates your support, even if others don't fully understand.

There is another lesson in this story that speaks clearly to me.

When faced with a decision between two good choices, ask God to help you to be sensitive to what is needed at the time.

Choices between good and good are agonizing, aren't they? These are the ones that keep me awake at night. Choices between good and bad are much easier to make, not that I always do what is right. However, choosing between competing good choices is tough. How do you decide?

I believe you ask God to help you decide what is needed at the moment. You might not have made the same decision a month prior or may not make the same decision a month later. That's all right. Assess what is needed under current circumstances and do it.

Who can argue with giving to the poor? Matthew reports that even the other disciples voiced their support for Judas. They were on board with him, but surprisingly, Jesus was not.

“Leave her alone. It was intended that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me” John 12:7-8.

Was Jesus justifying selfishness? Was he ignoring poverty? Was he absolving his disciples of their responsibility to help the disenfranchised? Certainly not. No one could accuse him of being insensitive to the plight of the poor or overlooking their needs. His words should never be misconstrued to imply this. The emphasis is on the final part of the sentence, not the first. “You will always have the poor among you, **but you will not always have me.**”

Timing is everything. Knowing what to do in the moment is the sign of a wise person. Mary knew. The disciples did not.

How did Mary get so wise? Do you recall the time she was criticized by her own sister, Martha, for sitting at Jesus' feet listening to him instead of helping in the kitchen? I think she became wise because she was a good listener and student. She spent time listening to Jesus teach about God, relationships, love, affection, encouragement and hope. When it came time to decide what was needed from her less than a week before the crucifixion, she knew.

I hope you are a good student, also. What you learn will help you make wise decisions, too, especially when faced with competing choices that are good.

I see a final lesson I want to share. **Don't let a critic have the final word. Jesus did not.** “Leave her alone,” Jesus replied.

There is no shortage of people ready to spoil special moments with God and others or rain on a parade. You can't prevent them from doing this, but you don't have to let them have the final word.

How do you think Mary felt after Judas' criticism? Embarrassed. Guilty. Confused. After all, how could twelve men be wrong and one woman be right? There was certainly no precedent for this.

No doubt she began second guessing her decision, wondering if she had made a horrible mistake. That is until Jesus quickly spoke up and came to her defense. He wanted everybody in that room to know that Mary got it right, not the disciples. Can you imagine what this did for her self-esteem? It gave her another reason to love him even more.

Don't let a critic have the last word when someone is doing a good deed. Follow Jesus' lead. Commend that person for making a wise decision. Let the final word be as kind as the deed.

This week, I challenge you to listen to your heart. Seize the day. Spread the sweet scent of gratitude and encouragement everywhere you go. What a difference you will make. Ask Jesus and Mary.

Until Sunday,
Bob

The church office will be closed on Good Friday, April 6.

Finance Committee Meeting

April 12 at 7:00 p.m.
Room S223

Smoke Rise Summer Camp May 29 - August 3

Camp is available from 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and every enrollment of 2 weeks or more includes a Six Flags and a White Water season pass.

Visit and enroll on-line www.smokeriseministries.org/camp.

Field trips, swimming, music, crafts, academics, and a Christian setting define our 6 - 12 year old "Spirit" group. Teens focus on growth through team building, creative academic challenges, and community service. Rock climbing, Six Flags and a program of recreation, academics, study and service create an active and challenging experience.

GREGORY BURDETT, Director: SmokeRise Summer Camp at 678-469-1377 or e-mail to: gburdett@bellsouth.net.

International Night

April 18

Dinner begins at 5:15 with a Foreign Flair! See the International displays created by our Wednesday Night Children's Mission groups and witness a special presentation by our Acteens. Come experience the food, costumes and customs of our world neighbors!

Car Show

The 7th Annual Smoke Rise Open Car, Truck and Motorcycle Show will be held May 5. Please visit www.smokeriseministries.org/carshow for details and contact information.

Motorcycle Ride

The 2nd Annual Brotherhood Motorcycle Ride is planned for May 19. Please visit www.smokeriseministries.org/motorcycleride for details and contact information.

FINANCIAL STATISTICS

As of March 16, 2007

Three hundred sixty-nine families have pledged \$1,883,535.20 to date for the 2007 Budget.

	YEAR TO DATE (THIS YEAR)	BUDGET TO DATE
INCOME		
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	\$ 448,161.67	\$ 631,251.00
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	<u>7,351.55</u>	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 455,513.22	\$ 631,251.00
EXPENSES		
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 377,032.44	\$ 487,959.00
TOTAL MINISTRIES – WORSHIP	6,926.38	7,925.00
TOTAL MINISTRIES – EDUCATION	22,109.74	38,710.00
TOTAL MISSIONS	37,215.31	57,814.00
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	13,674.64	16,250.00
TOTAL EQUIPMENT	<u>225.00</u>	<u>4,458.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 457,183.51	\$ 613,116.00
MORTGAGE BALANCE:	\$ 417,418.37	

FAITH, FAMILY & FUTURE CAMPAIGN:

Four hundred forty-nine families have pledged \$2,689,784.00 to the Faith, Family & Future Campaign.

Funds designated by Finance Comm	\$ 30,000.00
Add'l Funds from Finance Comm	+ 163,972.14
Contributions	+2,567,822.31
Expenses	<u>-2,759,976.95</u>
Cash Balance	\$ 1,817.50
Outstanding Commitment	\$ 19,575.50



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OUR STAFF

Church Office: 770-469-5856

Robert F. Browning, D. Min.	Pastor
Linda Cummings	Interim Administrator/Senior Adults
Kathy Dobbins	Minister of Adult Education/Outreach
Danny Vancil	Minister of Music
E. Ernest Forrester, Jr.	Minister of Youth
Kellie Denton	Interim Minister to Children
Tim W. Adcox	Minister of Recreation/Missions
Amanda Burton	Nursery Director
Truett Gannon, D. Min.	Pastor Emeritus

Smoke Rise Counseling Center
Affiliate of Care and Counseling Center of Georgia
770-469-6547

Gloria White, M. Div., LCSW	Counselor
Rene Ely, M. Div., LMFT	Counselor
Gina Campbell, M. Div., LCSW	Counselor

Stone Mountain Coop Needs Volunteers

Smoke Rise has been asked to work at the Stone Mountain Coop food pantry from Monday, May 5, through Friday, June 29. For those eight weeks, we need two volunteers from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. each Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Please contact Becky Seay at 770-381-6865 for more information or if you are interested in volunteering.