



THE CONNECTING LINK



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FEBRUARY 2011

Minor Ministerial Musings

“Six o’clock already? I was just in the middle of a dream. I was kissin’ Valentino by a crystal blue Italian stream.” Ah, eighties girl bands. The line, of course, is from the song, “Manic Monday”, by the Bangles.

But who is Valentino? Rudolph Valentino was an early twentieth century actor and heartthrob, nicknamed “The Latin Lover.” Born in Italy in 1895 (with the last name Guglielmi, not Valentino), he was an actor in the silent film era, and died at the very young age of 31.

And why the trip down memory lane? Maybe it has something to do with the “nostalgia” mix CD my sister made me for Christmas. Every song reminded me of sleepovers, trying out lip gloss, and trading clothes with my best friend. And it reminded me of giggling about the cutest boys in the class, and wondering if I would get any cards stuck into the hinges of my locker on Valentine’s Day.

These days, my take on Valentine’s Day is a bit different. And I started to wonder about the origins of Valentine’s Day. Despite all of the hype, I was pretty sure that Hallmark *didn’t* invent the holiday, and so I started with St. Valentine himself. Turns out, St. Valentine *himself* is the more accurate place to start. You see, there are several historic Valentines, at least two of whom were remembered on February 14! Perhaps it is the ambiguity over *which* Valentine was to be remembered on February 14, combined with the fact that so little is known about any of the “Valentine” martyrs, that led the Roman Catholic Church to remove Valentine’s Day from the Roman Catholic Calendar of Saints in 1969. (It was removed from the General Roman Catholic Calendar, but is still on local calendars, and is still celebrated in some places.) Even for those who do choose to honor St. Valentine on February 14, there is very little evidence that the celebration of St. Valentine has anything to do with romantic love.

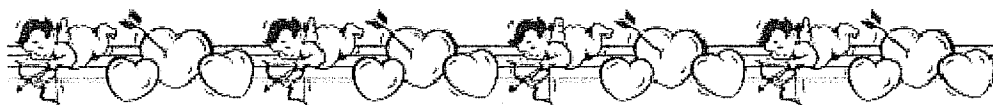
So, where does that leave us in “celebrating” Valentine’s Day? Or should we just leave the word “celebrate” in dubious quotes and relegate Valentine’s Day to a secular holiday stripped of any deeper meaning than chocolate covered cherries and long-stem roses? While the Bible does have much to say in favor of romantic love (ever read Song of Songs?), I would invite you to look at *every* type of love described in Scripture, and reflect on the meanings of *all* of the loving relationships in our lives as we approach Valentine’s Day. I have received Valentine’s Day cards from my parents for years (although I was teased a bit for this when I studied in Scotland during college). I still have the adorable hand-made Valentine I received from my niece a few years ago (she was three at the time), and my freshman year in college I received a huge padded mailing envelope full of hand-made Valentines made for me by one of the elementary Sunday School classes at my home church.

And maybe we can expand our idea of Valentine’s Day even further, by reflecting on our love for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, and the love we are called to have for stranger and for enemy, as well as those we know and love. What about loving those who feel they have nobody to love them at all, or who feel they are flat-out unlovable? What about loving those whom *you* feel are completely unlovable? Not just on February 14th, but every day of the year?

Most importantly, as we reflect on the meaning of Valentine's Day, I invite you to remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ from Mark 12:29-31: "Jesus answered, 'The first is, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." The second is this, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." There is no other commandment greater than these.'" And these words from John 13:34-35, spoken by Jesus to His disciples on the night he was betrayed: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, so also should you love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Happy Valentine's Day!

On an additional note, I want to inform you that I now have a Pastor Blog "Butterflies & Hot Tea" <http://www.hickoryhillspres.org/blog/> on the HHP C Website. You can reach it through the link on the homepage, www.hickoryhillspres.org, or through the link on my Pastor's Page, <http://www.hickoryhillspres.org/welcome.html>. Check it out today, and Enjoy!

In Christ's Love and
In Joyful Anticipation,
Pastor Lara

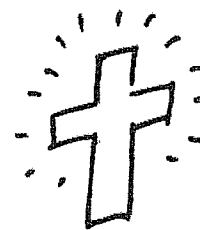


HHPC PRAYER REQUESTS



Darlene Kibort's cousin Lara with leukemia
Mary Davis for health concerns
Toni Kenealy for health concerns
Blanche Barker for health concerns
Zeko family on Mrs. Zeko's passing
Mike Culbertson & family on the passing of his wife
Jeni Vogl's mother for healing and strength
Betty Kitching in Rehab
The Kahn's granddaughter, Alys,
for health concerns
Millie Neil's grandson, Dustin, for health concerns
Alice Gust, in hospice care at home
Gail Larson & family on Richard's passing
Justin Rys for healing
Harry Zimmerman for health concerns & strength
Marisa Rozdilsky for healing &

Jack Rozdilsky for strength
Wally Golema for continuous healing
Gert's son-in-law, Alden, for surgery recovery
Dennis & Mary Tarter for strength & direction & health concerns
Lucy's sister, Delores, for healing & strength
Ivy Taebel's son, Larry, for health concerns & strength
Shannon Bastien for health concerns
John Bredlau for continuous healing
Carol Sack's sister, Ruth, for healing and strength
Kyle Krueger, in Marine Corps
Dorothy Allen for strength
Our service men and women and their families
Our Policemen, Firemen, & their families
DelPrete Family for strength, faith, & hope during Jen's battle



**Prayer Groups meet on Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.,
and Wednesday at 9:00 a.m.
We encourage you to attend this
Vital Ministry of our church.
*PRAYER is the ENGINE of the CHURCH***

TWILIGHT PRAYER

Familiar we all are of the statement:

Prayer is the Engine of the Church. Well folks, the engine is “sputtering.” I looked into the problem and realized we need a few new sparkplugs. I understand to get the right sparkplugs is not easy. I decided to get your opinions on this problem. Do you have any suggestions or remedies for the problem? Are you one of those sparkplugs? If so, please mention it to me. I am sure you would be a perfect sparkplug to get the engine running a little smoother. Thanks for your help on this matter. We are all mechanics, let’s work together and get that engine running at full speed and power!

Regards,
C. Lou Pearson



PRAYER & CARE

“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.” Colossians 4:2

In August of last year, Lou and I saw two rabbits in our back yard. They were white, and tan and black and brown spotted. After a few weeks, we only saw one of them.

What to do? We didn’t see him every day. I began to note in my journal whenever he appeared in our back yard along with the hour.

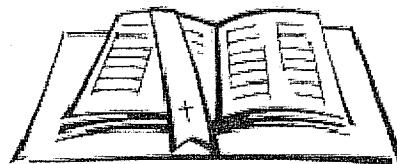
Where does he live? What does he eat? How is he able to survive? Why are we privileged to

marvel at his existence? It is Friday the 14th of January and he is in our back yard once again.

Did I forget to tell you, we pray for him?

Love ‘N’ Hugs,
Arlene

WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY



“O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy creatures.”

Psalm 104:24 (RSV)

We will begin Psalm 105 on January 17th which is praise to a covenant-keeping God. Our time together is so wonderful, words fail me (and that is unusual). We welcome you to join us.

Love ‘N’ Hugs,
Arlene

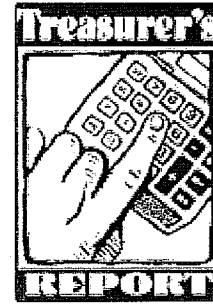
PADS UPDATE

The evening duties at PADS take upon themselves a ritualistic pattern. The activities of the evening vary little from month to month. What varies is our number of guests. We are always surprised by a few new faces. But never surprised with their needs.

We never question, we never embarrass. We just serve. Many of their stories we will never know, but their needs are evident or they would not be here. If we can give a little comfort for a time, and a morsel of food, and a word of concern and love, I do think we have done what God expects of us in serving our fellow man at PADS.

We would expect our numbers to be much higher than they have been, but our number of guests basically remains around 60. Thank you again for the important role “you” play in this ministry.

Regards,
C. Lou Pearson



Save the Date:

Friday, February 11, 2011 -
6:30 p.m.

Valentines Day Gourmet Dinner

\$16.00/person, \$8.00/child.

The Senior High class of Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church will be sponsoring a Valentine's Day Gourmet Dinner on Friday, February 11, 2011 at 6:30 p.m.

The theme for the evening is an Italian Dinner, which consists of a seven course meal to remember. The cost for the evening is \$16.00 per person, \$8.00 per children twelve and under.

The evening's entertainment will be provided by Matt Witek on the keyboard and vocals by Brittany Maranto. A memorable evening has been planned for your pleasure. The attire for the evening is casual. We would be honored if you are able to join us for this festive evening.

Reservations will be taken after every worship service or any time by Andrew Witek at events@hickoryhillspres.org. Please make your reservations now as to how many children and adults.



Dec. 2010 General Fund

Income: \$32,718.00
Disbursements: \$26,816.00



Lose Your Life, Just So You Can Find It: A Reflection on My 2010-2011 Honduras Mission Experience

By: Ryan Brandt

"It's easy for American Christians to forget how Jesus said his followers would actually live, what their new lifestyle would actually look like. They would, he said, leave behind security, money, convenience, even family for him. They would abandon everything for the gospel. They would take up their crosses daily. But who you do you know who lives like that? Do you?"

I wanted to share with you this quote from David Platt's *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith From the American Dream*. This book was the basis of our daily devotionals for our 2010-2011 mission trip to El Toblado, Honduras. The theme of this book revolves around how we live comfortable lives striving to achieve the things that bring us

happiness in this world: money, successful careers, healthy families, good friends, etc. We all think that these are the things that God wants us to have, right? He wants us to be happy and content with few troubles and obstacles that cause pain in our lives, right? If we pray daily and live a Christian lifestyle, go to church every Sunday, and lend a helping hand here and there... then God should answer our prayers and requests and reward us by letting us live our "American Dream", right? But for whom are we working so hard? These are difficult times. People are losing jobs and working hard to find new ones. People are struggling to save money, keep food on the table, and keep their families from falling into poverty. Life is tough, there is no question about that. But what is all of our hard work going toward?

Ourselves. Us. You. Me, Myself, I.

Where did we get this idea that we are so deserving of all kinds of wonderful things if we just work hard for them and maybe say a prayer here and there along the way? We think the American Dream is the best thing we could ever achieve. Platt writes,

"We are settling for a Christianity that revolves around catering to ourselves when the central message of Christianity is actually about abandoning ourselves."

How many of you would get up right this instant and leave behind EVERYTHING that you have worked so hard for if you heard God calling you to follow him immediately? Many of us would be quick to say we would, but I want you to think about this *literally*. In the Bible, Jesus literally asked people to do this. The title of Platt's book is *Radical* because that's exactly what Jesus was. If you look at the Jesus of the Bible and not what we have made him into, you will find that he was very blunt and never sugarcoated anything for anyone. He was demanding and did not settle for just some of you. He wanted it ALL. Get up and go. Nothing you have here on Earth is worth more. Leave behind EVERYTHING. Don't say "goodbye" or "I love you" to anyone you care about. Don't go back to grab a few things you think you might need along the way. Don't even turn around to look at it! GO. NOW! God is calling you. Personally, when I think about it this way, I don't even know what I would truly do in that circumstance and that scares me.

What if I said no? Am I still going to go to Heaven? The way we have been raised makes it hard for us to make small sacrifices, let alone one as large as what He calls us for- our lives. Luke 14:26 says,

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple."

Is he serious? Hate your family? What He means is that our love for Him should be so much greater than any love we have ever known that it would make the love we have for our family look like hate in comparison. Someday, you WILL be asked. You may never actually have to give up everything you have, but God needs to know that you *would*. So how do we show him?

Until that day comes I think that it is important for us to answer his small requests along the way. When I came home from Honduras last year, there was no question in my mind that I would return in 2010. As my year progressed, life changed and priorities changed. On the first day of 2010 my one goal was to get back to this wonderful country and continue God's mission. Toward the end of 2010 it was the one thing I wanted least. I was stressed out with my job, trying to finish my degree, trying to get my money together for a trip that just didn't seem "worth it" anymore. I had too much to deal with at home to just up and leave. We were going to be in a new village this year and it just wouldn't feel the same anyway. I probably wouldn't even like it. The people would be different. Lord knows I hate change! I answered the call and I went... (but probably not for the right reasons or anything other than the fact that I had paid to go!) If there was ever a time that I have been greatly sorry for something it was when I stepped out of the airport in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. I don't know how to describe the feeling to you other than to say it felt like God reached down and gave me a well deserved slap in the face! I had all of these overwhelming thoughts come rushing through me. "Remember how negative you were leading up to this trip? Remember how you didn't want to go? Remember how you cried because you just couldn't do it? You're an idiot. Remember the faces on the children of Los Ranchos? Remember the people who no longer have to sleep on dirt floors? Remember the young pastor who now has a place of

his own to share the gospel with his community? You are supposed to be here. You are needed here. He will show you again.” Sometimes we take the call but not for the right reasons. That’s when that slap in the face comes down and we feel it. But it’s just what we need. We need that reassurance that what we are doing is what we are meant to be doing. I don’t know how to explain it other than you will just feel it... just as I did when I finally got to my destination.

This year we faced many changes and challenges. What worked for us and made this trip so successful was letting God lead and having an open mind. We were all afraid that we wouldn’t get that same feeling in El Toblado as we did in years past from Los Ranchos. Of course it was not the same, but boy was it good! We planted seeds in a village that will now begin to thrive more as we return each year until we are called somewhere else. We built a home for a young woman raising 2 children on her own. We learned all over again how to be grateful that you have half a bucket of water to cleanse yourself at the end of a long day. We shared the gospel with a new group of almost 200 children who were more warm and welcoming than we could have ever imagined coming off such a high from the children of Los Ranchos. For that alone we felt so blessed. Many of those children accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior by the end of the week in front of their community. We had wonderful devotional time with each other that revolved around David Platt’s radical questions. What better time to talk about the meaning of sacrifice than when you have put your life on hold to serve our Lord?

What you should know is that it will *always* be worth it. We walked by faith that God would provide and did he ever- just as we should have trusted that he would. He will never, ever call you where you are not needed. Do you take up your cross daily? Radically and *truthfully* speaking, someday he WILL ask you to leave it all, but until then, we can make those small sacrifices whether it is following his lead to another country or just around the corner.



Food Pantry Collection – First Sunday of the month!

Some old habits are good to re-establish!

Our regular food collection day will be the first Sunday of each month. We certainly will take donations at anytime, but focusing on one specific week will make it easier for people to remember, and give us all a sense of how important each of our participation is. No matter how small, together we are all part of a larger mission.

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church Food Pantry is now open on Wednesdays from 4PM to 6PM at the South East door of the Gym.

Our first week, we serviced one family, but good news, we progressed to serving 5 families the second week.

Thanks to everyone that has helped to get this new mission off the ground. Your donations and continued support are a vital part in this local mission.

Our goal is to maintain a supply of non perishable foods that can be provided as assistance to church members and our local Hickory Hills Community to be distributed on a weekly basis. This assistance largely depends on regular donations which we receive from members, friends and other outside sources. Collect from those you may know that would like to participate.

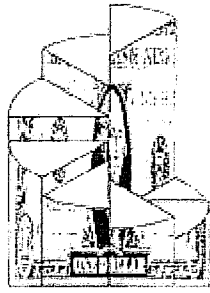
We will be providing regular information via bulletin boards and/or bulletin inserts to let people know any specific needs or items we may be running low on, but all non perishable food donations are welcomed.

Please be sure to check expiration dates as we do not accept any outdated items.

The food collection bin is located near the Main Entrance (upper level North West doors) in the Narthex.

Any questions, please see Debbie Zimmerman, members of the Mission Committee, or Pastor Lara. Thank you!

Help us save on energy costs!



Budget Requests

We have had some large heating bills recently that are unnecessary!

All the church thermostats are programmed to heat at an average comfortable temperature according to the building schedule.

Frequently, they have been changed and put to HOLD on different temperatures.

This results in wasted expenses to heat an empty building. It also is not helpful holding at 60 degrees, because it takes twice as long to bring up to a comfortable place.

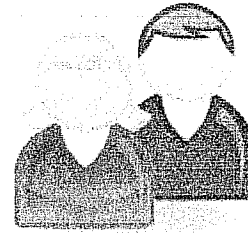
Any adjustments to temperature should only be done by adults and by simply using the arrows up or down, one or two degrees at a time - **that's it!**

No need to press hold or adjust to an extremely high or low number.

The heat will come on and cycle, if necessary another adjustment can then be made. The new temp will be maintained for two hours, then return to the normal scheduled program.

If a meeting or event goes beyond two hours, additional adjustments can be made again. Otherwise this saves a great deal of money for thermostats that might be left turned up to heat all night long when the building is empty!

Anyone that is unsure of this procedure should not be touching the thermostats without assistance. PLEASE DO NOT PRESS HOLD if any changes are made. If you have any questions please ask for help. Thank you for your cooperation in saving on energy costs!



\$\$ Per Capita \$\$

The first envelope in your 2011 box of offering envelopes is "Per Capita". You ask "what is this?" Per capita is a way Presbyterians share equally, responsibly and inter-dependently in the costs of governing the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Per capita contributions are requested from every congregation based on each church's total active membership.

Through per capita contributions Presbyterian churches:

- Help congregations with pastoral transitions
- Train and support interim ministers
- Resource congregational conflicts
- Care for ministers and Christian Educators and their families
- Help prepare people for service as ordained ministers.

The amount of Per capita for 2011 is \$30.31 per active member. We ask that Members contribute their \$30.31 because what we do not receive in contributions has to come from the General Fund Budget. In 2010 the amount for HHPC was \$6988 and of that amount we received \$2362 from the congregation, resulting in \$4626 being used from the General Fund. This is a significant amount that could be used elsewhere in the Life of HHPC. This is why the Stewardship Committee is asking each member to make an effort to pay the \$30.31 to help ease the financial burden on the budget in 2011.



Mission Committee Update

- The Mission Committee has been busy since fall with a variety of mission activities. PADS started back again in October 2010 and will continue through April 2011. We have had a dedicated group of volunteers contributing to this mission each month. We are blessed to have both the Junior High Youth Group and the Senior High Youth Group involved with PADS cooking and serving the meal one month. The Senior High Youth Group has even signed on for a second month this year!
- The final haunted house fundraiser was held in October with proceeds of \$4,005 this year due to great attendance and an increase in the ticket price. Mission Committee voted to distribute the proceeds as follows:
 - ✓ \$1,000 to the St. Vincent Mission in Kentucky. This mission has taken on the work that was previously done by Noreen in Drift, KY. The money was used to purchase needed household items for local families.
 - ✓ \$500 to the HHPC Food Pantry. The food pantry began at HHPC January 5, 2011 for HH residents and church members/friends. The food pantry will on start on a small scale with non-perishable items. It will be open once per week on Wednesdays from 4 – 6 PM. Please see Debbie Zimmerman if you would like to help with the food pantry.
 - ✓ \$750 to the HHPC Carpeting Fund
 - ✓ \$750 to the HHPC Sound System Fund
 - ✓ \$1,005 still undesignated at this time
- Gifts were purchased for all 88 children in the afterschool program at the Jones Center. These gifts were distributed to the children at their Christmas Party on Friday, Dec. 10, 2010.
- Upcoming events that you will not want to miss include the Valentine's Day Gourmet Dinner fundraiser on Friday, February 11, 2011 at 6:30 PM. This will be a Valentine's Day Fiesta serving an Italian meal with proceeds to benefit mission activities. More information will be available about C.R.E.W. again this year which is a local mission activity at Peace Memorial Church.

Looking Ahead to Lent 2011:

Wednesdays in Lent:

March 9, 16, 23, 30

April 6, 13

12:00 Noon Soup Lunch

12:30 p.m. Worship

6:15 p.m. Soup Dinner

**7:00 p.m. Worship/
Children's Programs:**

Jerusalem Marketplace



HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday

Sunday, April 17, 2011

10:30 a.m. Worship:

Our Kids Bring in the Palms

Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 21, 2011

Catered Dinner & Worship

More Details to come

Easter Sunday

Sunday, April 24, 2011

8:30 a.m. Worship

9:30 a.m. Breakfast

10:30 a.m. Worship

5:00 p.m. REV Worship

THE MAGI: WISE MEN, SHEPHERDS, KINGS?

by G. R. Snow

Now that Christmas has been celebrated in all its tradition and legend for another year, and we move on past the coming of the Magi at Epiphany and through the events predating Lent on the church calendar, it may be appropriate to consider a little-known belief regarding the accounts of shepherds and wise men (or kings) coming to worship at the manger. The gospels differ in their accounts, but none of the four gospel writers in our Bible incorporate both Wise Men and shepherds.

However, most traditional Christmas pageants borrow history both from Matthew and Luke, with a nod to John's mystical account, and bring shepherds and Wise Men to crowd into the stable with angels, Mary and Joseph, and a much-beleaguered ox and donkey. Most pageants, likewise, identify the Magi as three kings, sometimes even identifying them in the traditional but non-Biblical names Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthasar, bringing the gifts which *are* identified in the Bible as gold (for kingship), frankincense (a symbol of priesthood), and myrrh (a symbol of sacrifice and death).

There is a belief, though hardly that of the majority, that the reason no account incorporates both groups of worshipers is because they were one and the same. This belief suggests that the shepherds who came were not shivering, roughly dressed humble herders who languished in fields by night, but representatives of the arrogant and immensely magically-powerful Hyksos, the Shepherd Kings, who visited the stable for the purpose of welcoming Jesus into their powerful brotherhood and conferring a measure of their power upon Him.

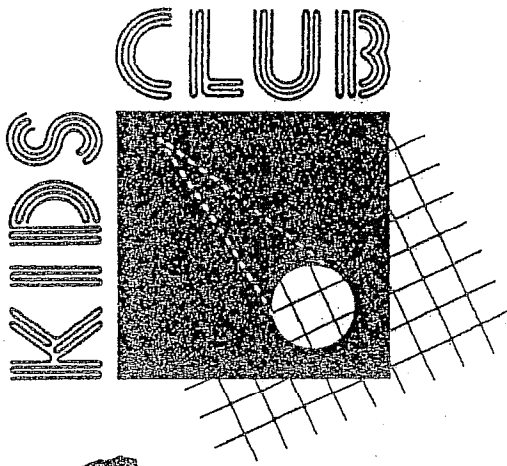
The Hyksos had for many years figured in Egyptian legend, the most well-known example being the popular story of Apophis, king of the Hyksos, and Seqenenre, Pharaoh of Egypt, who warred together over an arrogant message sent by Apophis: "The roaring of your hippopotami (identified with the Egyptian gods) disturbs us! Hunt and kill them, that we may rest; or kill them and feed them to the crocodiles (identified with Set or Seti, corresponding to the Christian Satan, but also a sacred animal of the Hyksos)." Seqenenre defied the Hyksos messenger and set forth in war against them, which conflict he did not survive. To place this in a historical context, it would have been approximately 1550 B.C., at the end of the Seventeenth Egyptian Dynasty and well before the time of Hatshepsut, the princess who drew Moses out of the bulrushes.

The Hyksos' main time of power, in fact, was approximately 1650-1530 B.C., with the land they held

as kings, and of which they even proclaimed themselves the Pharaohs, being in the Middle Egypt and Eastern Nile Delta areas. Apophis, the third of their major kings, had formed an alliance with the kings of Cush (modern Sudan) against the Theban kings to the north, the Egyptian Pharaohs. Scholars differ concerning the reason for the insulting message from Apophis; some say he was protesting the harpooning of hippopotami by the Egyptians because the Hyksos worshiped a representation of Seti which was part man, part hippopotamus. Regardless, Apophis's capital city in Avaris, also the Hyksos capital under his predecessors Sakir-Har and Khyan (ca. 1620 B.C.), was certainly not near enough to Upper Egypt for the king's sleep to be disturbed by roars of wounded hippopotami.

The Hyksos had come into Egypt from Asia (from their etymology, possibly Amorite or Canaanite; according to one authority, descendants of Cain) and suborned a section of Egypt while the Theban rulers were struggling with famine and plague (possibly the time of Joseph's slavery in Egypt). They may have had many unfamiliar tools of warfare, such as the composite and recurve bows, horse-drawn war chariots, metal helmets, mailed shirts, and new kinds of shields, arrowheads, and spearheads. (Archaeologists doubt this, having found no remains of chariots in the Avaris excavations.) Their conquest may have been warlike, or it may simply have been a group entering a region and taking over poorly-held countryside. They held this under four principal kings, losing ascendancy under the king Khamudi when attacked by the Theban Pharaohs Kamose and Ahmose, son and grandson of Seqenenre. Theban pottery is lacking during excavations of this period, suggesting that Hyksos pottery and other trade items were the only items circulated in this area and that Hyksos domination was economic rather than military.

The Hyksos were expelled from Middle Egypt and driven into the land of Canaan and beyond, possibly at the time of the Exodus. The historian Manetho makes reference to an additional exodus at this approximate time period, when 480,000 Shepherd Kings (elsewhere referred to as 'captive shepherds') left Egypt for Jerusalem. They are believed to have retreated into Cush and continued their existence as a nomadic people, becoming the fierce Shepherd Kings of legend. Since history refers to their continued existence through the time of Christ and into the time of Paul, it is indeed possible--and a convincing mythology--that it well may have been these little-known rulers of a nomadic empire who brought gifts and paid homage to the Christ, the unifying figure who redeemed the age-old curse of Cain and made peace between warring peoples whose conflict was begun with Cain's murder of Abel. True or not--it makes a good story!



Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church
8426 West 95th Street, Hickory Hills, Illinois 60457
708/598-3100

Dianne Flynn, *Director*

As I am writing this article, we are enjoying a snowy January day, it is a New Year and we are back in session after a two week break for the Christmas Holiday. On our first week back we experimented making magic pictures using paint and eyedroppers, joined together for recreation in the gym, and talked about God's unconditional love during lesson time with Linda.

We congratulate Lauren N. for her participation in the Snicker Balance. Lauren balanced 8 snicker bars, the most for this year! Congratulations Lauren on receiving perfect attendance for December. Who will participate in January?

Our learning time for the month of February will centered around the topics:

A Castle Cruise - During His ministry on earth, Jesus taught us how to live.

Destination: Australia- Jesus taught how valuable each person is to God.

The Stormy Seas of Unpopularity - Jesus wants us to love our enemies.

Keeping Our Captain's Log - God hears our prayers and is always available to us.

A highlight for this month will be our Valentines's Day Party to be held on Monday, February 14th. The staff has planned a special day for the kids and we hope that everyone will be with us on this day.

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend the upcoming Lenten Series beginning Wednesday, March 9. You will not want to miss this program which has been developed with a focus on the family. More information concerning this can be found in this newsletter. Remember friends are always welcome here and this is a program that you will want to share. I hope you will make it a priority to join us -

Wednesday evenings March 9 - April 13

Soup supper begins at 6:15 with program at 7:00 p.m.

We would like to remind everyone that KIDS CLUB is open to all kids age 5 through the 6th grade. If you know of someone who would like to be a part of this time together, please invite them to join us.

Peace and Joy,
Dianne

KIDS ARE NUMBER 1 AT THE KIDS CLUB

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The **Women's Bible Study** group held the first 2011 meeting on January 3rd. They are studying the book of Psalms. They are always interested in having new people join in since those people bring new ideas and also a new way to look at the passages they are studying. If you have not joined them but are interested in sharing your views on the books in the Bible, you should make it a point to stop in on Monday afternoons. Salads of all varieties are shared for lunch. Further information can be found by contacting Arlene Pearson.

The **Prayer Shawl Ministry** is going strong. We meet in the classroom at the bottom of the stairs after the 10:30 AM worship service. There have been some Sunday afternoons where the room is so full of people that outside chairs needed to be added to accommodate all those interested in visiting. We are still willing to teach anyone interested in learning to crochet or knit. Most of the group has resumed knitting Prayer Shawls. A few are still completing baby blankets and 7"X9" rectangles. Whatever your project, you will be welcomed.

The **Stampers** have resumed their work on creating new designs for cards donated to the Prayer and Care group. We plan to meet again on Wednesday, January 19 at 10:30 AM. We have been creating new designs with materials donated by Fen Taylor, Marilyn Betterton and the Scholefield sisters. Since there is an abundance of materials, we will need new ideas for designing new cards. Please join us.

Stories and More resumed its classes on January 4th. It is a group designed for children ages 4 to 6 years old. This six week program will focus on learning numbers 40-70. We hope to have more children attend so

if there is a family you know with children of this age please do us a favor and invite them to contact Patt Pilgrim the program leader. Brochures with information can be found on the downstairs fellowship table and upstairs on the shelves near the east hallway.

Attention all Parents of children interested in attending the Summer Camp at **Camp Saugatuk**: An informational meeting will be held in February. This meeting will outline new procedures for filing the application, sending in the initial payment, applying for church scholarships, as well as changes in responsibility of transportation. It is a very important meeting which should be attended by all parents who wish to send their children to camp this summer.

Souper Sunday is scheduled for February 6th after the 10:30 AM worship service. Anyone who has experienced this delightful fellowship will tell you that it is a very worthwhile time. Delicious soups will be served and you can test taste more than one or even have multiple helpings of your favorite soup. Plan to stay for lunch on February 6th. If you would like to contribute a soup for this event, please contact Dianne.

Lenten Services are right around the corner. The Lenten Program begins on March 9th. Adults can enjoy lunch and worship at noon and again at 6:00 PM. The dinner will consist of some of the favorite soups provided each year by the various committees of the Church. The worship service begins at 7PM in the sanctuary while children are brought downstairs to experience the Jerusalem Marketplace. This year the children will visit six shops. One shop will be assigned on each new week until the end of Lent. The shops will include the Bakery and Confectioners, JC Woodshop, The Masons, The Storyteller,

Christian Creations, and Colored Creations. The Marketplace will have a tax collector, Roman Soldiers, and maybe entertainers in the street. Join us for the six weeks of Lent and prepare to celebrate Easter with us.

There will be a **Meal and a Movie** held on January 20th. The name of the movie for this date is a mystery that won't be solved until you come to join the group at noon on the 20th. Be prepared to have some fun while you are enjoying the fellowship of the afternoon. Be sure to have some delicious food while you are there.

Mark your calendars for the **Spring Family Night**. It is scheduled for May 6th. As always the night starts out with a catered meal. It is followed by entertainment. Please sign the sign up sheets located in the Fellowship hallway so we know how many people we need to accommodate for dinner.

SENIOR HIGH SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

"Where am I going?" What is my destination? What is my aim? Do I have a road map? A guide? Am I going in the wrong direction? Am I walking down the wrong street? These are all questions of young people who find themselves many times in unfamiliar territory. "Follow me!" I will show you the way not only for this day but for your entire life.

Eph. 6:3 "That it may go well with you and that your may enjoy long life on the earth."

Your guide book for life has all the answers you seek. Seek and you shall find, find and you will be rich.

Regards,
C. Lou Pearson

WE CELEBRATE

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

2 Martin Rutz
20 Alyssia Kommenich
24 Lauren Neputy
28 Kevin Lorenz

DECEMBER PERFECT ATTENDANCE

Gabriella Ciametti
Brittany Maranto
Sarah Swearingen
Andrew Witek
Matt Witek



Sacrament of Holy Communion- Feb. 6, 2011

SUNDAY	USHERS	LAY READER
Sun. Feb. 6, 2011	K. Dritz, C. Pilgrim, R. Raschke	Dave Delaney
Sun. Feb. 13, 2011	T. Brock, T. Lane, H. Zimmerman	Rick Vogl
Sun. Feb. 20, 2011	B. Ambrosat, F. Esparza, M. Maranto	Scott Zimmerman
Sun. Feb. 27, 2011	D. Barker, D. Ciametti, T. Morrell	Terry Brock
SUNDAY	COUNTERS	
Sun. Feb. 6, 2011	Susan Frangella	
Sun. Feb. 13, 2011	Susan Frangella, Karen Hoffman	
Sun. Feb. 20, 2011	Susan Frangella, Sandy Beal	
Sun. Feb. 27, 2011	Susan Frangella, Shirley Brunell	

SOUPER SUNDAY

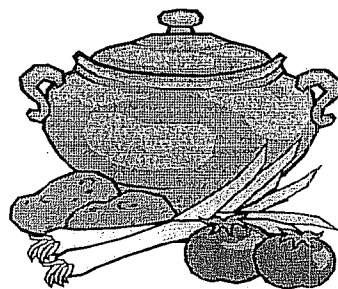
Sunday, February 6

Following Worship Service

A LUNCHEON FEATURING A VARIETY OF HOMEMADE

SOUPS

*Freewill Donations
Accepted*



*Support Our
Kids*

All donations are used to help support scholarships for Camp Saugatuck



NewFire

FREE!

FREE!

Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church
Sunday, February 27 5:00 p.m.

Hickory Hills, IL

A concert to support Bible League International.



**JERUSALEM MARKET PLACE
LENT 2011**

**A BIBLE TIME EXPERIENCE
KIDS AGE 3 THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL
WEDNESDAY EVENINGS
BEGINNING MARCH 9**

“YOU ARE THERE!”

Wednesday evenings during the Season of Lent, we have planned something special for kids age 3 through high school. While adults are in worship, our kids will participate in an age appropriate program that has been designed with learning and fun. It is called Jerusalem Market Place. This is a hands on learning time that will provide the kids with a “YOU ARE THERE!” Bible time experience. They will relive Bible time events while exploring and experiencing occupations and events of that time. During the six week program the kids will participate in six different shops. They will:

- SMELL the aromas of bakeries in the Bakery and Confectioner Shop
- HEAR the sounds of carpenters in the J.C. Woodshop
- SEE the villagers in Bible times attire as you meet the Roman Soldiers and the teachers in our shops
- EXPERIENCE learning occupational skills of the times by visiting the shops; The Mason, Christian Creations, and Colored Creations.
- JOURNEY with friends to visit the great Storyteller
- WRITE in Scribes Journal

We hope that your family will be a part of this Holy Land Adventure.

LENT 2011
Every Wednesday
March 9 - April 13

MIDDAY SERVICE

†

*Soup Luncheon - Worship
12:00 Noon*

EVENING SERVICE

†

*Soup Supper - 6:15 p.m.
Worship - 7:00 p.m.
Jerusalem Market Place - 7:00 p.m.*

FEBRUARY 2011

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
		1 9:30 a.m. Cancer Sewing 1:00 p.m. Stories & More 6:30 p.m. Prayer & Care 7:30 p.m. C.E. Meeting	2 9:00 a.m. Prayer & Care 10:30 a.m. Stampers 4:00 p.m. Food Pantry 7:30 p.m. Choir	3 6:00 p.m. TOPS 6:30 p.m. Jr. High Youth Group 8:00 p.m. Handbells	4	5
6 <u>Supper Sunday</u> 9:00 a.m. Worship & Adult Ed. 9:00 a.m. Developing a Chr. W. V. 9:30 a.m. Youth Choir 10:30 a.m. Worship & Child. Ed. 11:45 a.m. Souper Sunday 11:45 a.m. Prayer Shawl Min. 11:45 a.m. Dev. a Chr. W. V. 3:00 p.m. Praise Team 4:00 pm REY 6:30 p.m. Sr. High Youth Group	7 1:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study 3:30 p.m. Kid's Club	8 1:00 p.m. Stories & More 6:30 p.m. Prayer & Care	9 9:00 a.m. Prayer & Care 4:00 p.m. Food Pantry 7:30 p.m. Choir	10 6:00 p.m. TOPS 6:30 p.m. Jr. High Youth Group 8:00 p.m. Handbells	11 6:30 p.m. Valentine's Day Gourmet Dinner	12 2:00 p.m. Building & Grounds
13 9:00 a.m. Worship & Adult Ed. 9:00 a.m. Developing a Chr. W. V. 9:30 a.m. Youth Choir 10:30 a.m. Worship & Child. Ed. 11:45 a.m. Prayer Shawl Min. 11:45 a.m. Dev. a Chr. W. V. 3:00 p.m. Praise Team 5:00 p.m. REY 6:30 p.m. Sr. High Youth Group	14 1:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study 3:30 p.m. Kid's Club 7:30 p.m. Session	15 1:00 p.m. Stories & More 6:30 p.m. Prayer & Care 7:30 p.m. REY Committee Meeting	16 9:00 a.m. Prayer & Care 10:30 a.m. Stampers 4:00 p.m. Food Pantry 7:30 p.m. Choir	17 6:00 p.m. TOPS 6:30 p.m. Jr. High Youth Group 8:00 p.m. Handbells	18	19 Jr. High Youth Group- Feed My Starving Children Outing
<u>Mar. Newsletter Articles Due</u>						
20 9:00 a.m. Worship & Adult Ed. 9:00 a.m. Developing a Chr. W. V. 9:30 a.m. Youth Choir 10:30 a.m. Worship & Child. Ed. 11:45 a.m. Prayer Shawl Min. 11:45 a.m. Dev. a Chr. W. V. 3:00 p.m. Praise Team 5:00 p.m. REY 6:30 p.m. Sr. High Youth Group	21 1:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study 3:30 p.m. Kid's Club 7:30 p.m. Outreach	22 1:00 p.m. Stories & More 6:30 p.m. Prayer & Care 7:30 p.m. Mission	23 9:00 a.m. Prayer & Care 4:00 p.m. Food Pantry 7:30 p.m. Choir	24 MC8 Dinner, Meeting, Hands On Mission 6:00 p.m. TOPS 6:30 p.m. Jr. High Youth Group 8:00 p.m. Handbells	25	26
27 9:00 a.m. Worship & Adult Ed. 9:00 a.m. Developing a Chr. W. V. 9:30 a.m. Youth Choir 10:30 a.m. Worship & Child. Ed. 11:45 a.m. Prayer Shawl Min. 11:45 a.m. Dev. a Chr. W. V. 3:00 p.m. Praise Team 5:00 p.m. REY 6:30 p.m. Sr. High Youth Group	28 1:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study 3:30 p.m. Kid's Club 7:30 p.m. Deacons					



PIECES OF LOVE



Send special reminders of your love by creating messages that people can assemble and enjoy.

What you need:

- Large wooden craft sticks
- Tape
- Permanent markers
- Scissors
- Zippered sandwich baggies

What you do:

1. Make a rectangle out of seven craft sticks by placing them next to one another, long side against long side.
2. Tape the sticks together.
3. Turn the sticks over and draw a special picture or message. You can include this Bible verse: "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19, NIV).
4. Cut through the tape to separate each craft stick.
5. Put all the sticks in a baggie.
6. Give your special messages to family members, friends or teachers — along with directions for viewing them.



A LOVE LETTER

In the New Testament, John writes a letter about God's love and the love we should show to other people.

DIRECTIONS: Working from left to right, write down all the 1's in the word blanks. Continue with the 2's and finally the 3's. Then read about love, from 1 John 4:11-12, NIV.

lives 3	in 3	us 3	Since 1	and 3	God 1	so 1	loved 1	his 3
us 1	love 3	we 1	If 2	also 1	is 3	made 3	we 2	ought 1
to 1	love 2	love 1	one 1	complete 3	one 2	another 1	in 3	us 3
another 2	God 2							

1 John 4:11-12, NIV

Answers: Since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

February Birthdays

- February 1 – Josh Krueger
5 – Scott Zimmerman
5- Sam Swearingen
5- Mike Swearingen
7 – Julie Witek
12 – Lorraine Cunningham
16 - Beverly Kahn
17 – Barbara Brown
17 – Shirley Fogg
18 – Amy Simone
20 – Al Lewington
20- Alyssia Kommenich
22 – Chris Pilgrim
23- Eva Nestor
25- Austin McKinney
27 – Shirley Dragas
27- Rick Vogl
28- Ryan Brandt
28 – Sandy Beal
28 – Thomas D. Morrell
28- Kevin Lorenz

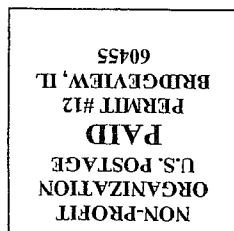
*Any omissions or errors should be reported
to the church office...
708-598-3100 or
HHPC@hickoryhillspres.org*

**If you wish to receive *The Connecting Link*
through email, and no longer receive a paper
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and we will place you on the mailing list.
Thank you.*

*Please recycle this newsletter when you are
finished enjoying it. There are recycling bins
located around the church. Thank you.*

**Do Not Hold
Dated Material**

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



**Hickory Hills Presbyterian Church
8426 West 95th Street
Hickory Hills, Illinois 60457**