

## September 2007

Issue 9

### Ministers

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### *On Our Prayer List:*

Sue Ann Laughlin is scheduled for surgery September 4<sup>th</sup>.

Doug Gummere will have surgery on September 6<sup>th</sup>.

Continue to remember:

George and Edith Teeters  
P.D. Kirby  
Sandy Malsom's parents  
Jim Crofts

### **Sympathy**

We extend our sympathy to Jane Newman Smith and family on the loss of her father.

	Attendance	Offering
8/5	362	\$12,944
8/12	421	10,765
8/19	371	6,834
8/26	433	12,112

### **Back to School Time**

Welcome to our new and returning college students.



We would appreciate having your contact information. Please call the office or email to [Debbie@friendlyave.org](mailto:Debbie@friendlyave.org).

If you are a parent of a student going away to school, please let us know when you have your student's school address.

### **15 Minutes Added**

Our Wednesday night Bible Classes are now meeting a full hour instead of 45 minutes.

### *New Intern at Friendly*

We are pleased to announce that Betsy Stratton has joined our staff as a part time Children's Minister. She will be working with parents and children ages 2 through grade 6. Please see Betsy's note on page 3.

### *Coming In October*



Friendly Avenue will host a World Missions Workshop October 27 – 28. Watch for more information in the coming weeks.



# Peter's Ponderings

September, 2007

**Pondering** - consider, think about, think over, contemplate,  
wonder about, brood over, mull over

"Most of the time when we think of church, we think of Sunday. But Sunday is really about Monday. If our job as Christians was simply to get together and worship God, we could do that in Heaven. But our job is more than that: that's why God has us strategically placed right where we are." - John Ortberg, "The Church on Monday Morning"

"The great tragedy of life is not unanswered prayer, but unoffered prayer." - F. B. Meyer

"Much is required from those to whom much is given, for their responsibility is greater." - Luke 12:48 (LB)

"Your baptism in Christ was not just washing you up for a fresh start. It also involved dressing you in an adult faith wardrobe – Christ's life, the fulfillment of God's original promise." - Gal. 3:27 (MSG)

"Baptisms, like weddings, are a celebration. They are as much an encouragement to those who witness the event as they are to those who are being baptized." - John Koessler

"We are products of our past, but we don't have to be prisoners of it." - Rick Warren

"Why do bad things happen? I don't know. Why did Jamie die? I don't know. But I do know that God has the answers, I know he loves me, and I know he has a plan – whether it makes sense to me or not. Rather than asking *why*, I'm asking *what*. What can I learn from this? What can I do for God's glory and to help others?" - Tony Dungy, talking about his son's 2005 death in *Quiet Strength* (Tyndale House, 2007)

"When we seek out that which is lost, we are loving our neighbor as we love ourselves and valuing people as God values them. If we as the Church keep this as our core focus and mission, we will never become an empty building or mere tourist attraction. We will be so occupied and fulfilled with doing what the Church was placed on this earth to do – taking what is inside the Church out into a broken world – that our doors will never close. The lost will be drawn to us because of our open arms and our loving, safe environment." - Christina Caine, *Stop Acting Like a Christian, Just Be One* (Regal, 2007)

Studies show that visits to religious websites in the United States are declining rapidly. They declined more than 30 percent within the last year and are down 35 percent over the last two years. - Source: Christianitytoday.com

"The decision to grow always involves a choice between risk and comfort." - John Ortberg

"The test of a preacher is that his congregation goes away saying, not, 'What a lovely sermon!' but 'I will do something.'" - Billy Graham

"It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference." - Tom Brokaw

"God has someone for each ministry he initiates, so don't force pieces into the wrong slots by not doing your homework. Guard yourself from the temptation to fill a position with a warm body." - Wayne Cordeiro, *Doing Church as a Team* (Regal, 2004)

Keep the Faith!!



# Children's Ministry Intern



I am so excited about the opportunity to work with the Children's Ministry! I believe that God is already working through the parents, volunteers, and ministry teams here at Friendly Avenue. My hope is that I can be an asset to the work that is already happening. For those of you who don't know, I graduated from Harding University with a degree in Youth and Family Ministry. I believe that God has given me a passion for working with families. I am excited to use my training and the gifts that I have been given to serve the families at Friendly Avenue. I am looking forward to working with each of you. Please let me know if there is ever anything I can do for your family. And please keep the Children's Ministry constantly in your prayers!

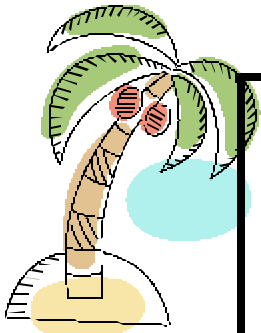
In Christ,  
Betsy Stratton

*"My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."* Colossians 2:2-3

If you have questions or want to volunteer in the Children's Ministry, please contact Betsy at [betsy@friendlyave.org](mailto:betsy@friendlyave.org).



## Ladies Beach Retreat



Ladies, the annual beach retreat is just around the corner! The dates are Nov. 8 - 11. We will begin sign-ups for this year's beach retreat this Sunday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>. Because we have limited spaces money will be due when you sign-up. The cost this year is \$55 for Fri-Sun and \$65 for Thurs-Sun. We look forward to another great beach retreat!!



## The Romanian Mission Report from three perspectives:

Following is an abbreviated version of mission reports from Bryan Brown, Joe Kaplan and Peter Rode/Leonard Uitenham.

### Bryan Brown:

Bryan's responsibility was to assist Pavel and Monica in every way possible in laying the foundation for a youth ministry. He felt that he would have been successful if:

- When he had a meeting to discuss the philosophy of Youth Programs.
- When Pavel, Monica and others have a basic understanding and primary purpose of a Youth Group.
- When they have enough knowledge about a youth ministry to begin building on the foundation laid during the trip.
- When Bryan can leave behind written outline of what a youth ministry entails and examples of possible activities.

### The Challenge:

I found it very challenging to meet the responsibilities mentioned above. The reason being is mentioned below.

There were numerous conversations with Pavel about the youth. Most centered around the fact that there are no more youth (teens) in the church. When the request was made by Pavel & Monica, there were several youth in the congregation, but at present there are no active youth in the body that fit within youth ministry age. Pavel expressed frustration and discouragement over the loss of not just the youth but their families as well.

Monica and Ramona, both share the same frustrations and discouragements. Here are some of the challenges that I heard and saw:

- The youth are gone. There are no youth.
- Pavel and Monica lack the skills, energy, time and leadership to effectively reach out to youth
- There are no capable adults to help in the effort of reaching out to the youth
- People come from different social and economical backgrounds which cause some issues with cohesion and unity.
- Both Monica and Pavel feel that the youth, as well as many adults, lack a sense of commitment. They know what is required of them but they choose not to follow Christ.
- Again and again I heard both the adults and youth are being consumed by the world's enticements (money, work, TV, computers, music, entertainment in general, boyfriends/girlfriends etc...) This is not very different from what we have to deal with here in the states.

Monica and Pavel feel that the solution is to have a youth minister. However, my feeling is that they don't need to focus on the youth until they get things situated within the body.

### Information Shared:

Several key points were shared with the leaders, the primary points were:

- Pray that God will provide support and unity within the body. Also pray that God will open doors for outreach and specifically that God will give you the heart to reach out to youth
- The individual adults and the overall body are the representatives of Christ in this community.
- You have to first be solid as a body before you can ever attract the youth of your community.
- Your ultimate goal is to bring youth to Christ.
- The Gospel is timeless but the method of presenting it is not. Be creative! Use your story, illustrations, object lessons etc... Youth tend to be more experiential than logical, but both are sometimes necessary.
- Continue to spend time with the youth even after they have entered the body.
- Look at ways to include them in the body.
- This is going to take the effort of more than one person
- Remember, God is the Master Builder.

### KEY BUILDING BLOCKS (Youth Ministry in Small Churches)

Love – look at paraphrase in the book. Sincere love and care is an essential part of a healthy ministry.

Involvement – kids need to feel apart of something. Include them. It is important that the adults (plural) get involved with the youth.

Fellowship – kids want to be accepted by adults and peers. These are purpose driven opportunities that are geared towards developing closeness. It's important that you as well as the youth learn to love and accept people different from yourself. Provide creative opportunities to bring youth and adults together.

Education – youth ministry can't be built on entertainment. The kids need to learn and grow. They need to be fed. Kids desire meat. You need to find out how to feed them that meat. If there is nothing more than surface entertainment and no meat then the ministry will fade.

Bryan's report is much more expansive than space allowed, however it is available upon request.

### Joe Kaplan:

I spent a lot time with the deaf people in Sibiu... They would really like to learn more about the Bible and want to study more. However, I only stayed there for one week... not enough time.

There are about 200 deaf people in the city. I know if I had the time to stay with them a little longer, I would be able to start a church for the deaf there in Sibiu with Pavel's help. There were 2 of the Deaf who wanted to be baptized, but I left that responsibility with Pavel to study more with them and baptize them.

Right now there is no Deaf Ministry there. Currently, Pavel only meets with them 3 times a month. I see that it is not enough and he needs to meet with the deaf, more often.

What I would like to do is, get Pavel to focus on a deaf ministry there and start with that group that currently meets with him three times a month... We need to somehow, get Pavel to be more involved more with deaf, which, I believe, will cause the deaf ministry grow there.

For me, I would like to go there next year with 4 to 6 deaf members from FACC and two more from other states to join us. I would like to stay there 3 weeks and have a 3-week workshop, in doing so, we can help Pavel start a good deaf ministry. Maybe need to get me to go there 2 time a year till the deaf ministry with Pavel will grow and have deaf leaders to run themselves.

I pray that the missions Steering Team will allow and support me going back to Sibiu next year and beyond.

If you have any questions of Joe, please address them directly to him. His email address is:

[joedeafpreacher@sprint.blackberry.net](mailto:joedeafpreacher@sprint.blackberry.net)

Thanks for allowing me to go there last month, it was a good trip and the deaf there was really excited and learned more about Jesus and the Bible.

in HIM,  
Joe Kaplan

### Peter & Leonard:

Leonard & Peter's primary mission was to contact and visit delinquent church members, make an assessment of the state of the church in Sibiu and Sura Mica. They were also given the responsibility to assess the probable future of the congregation, discuss these items in detail with Pavel, ask for an accounting of the funds we send and visit the other congregation in the city.

Leonard and Peter will be successful in their mission:

1. When they are able to determine and explain the reason(s) so many people have left the church. In reviewing and discussing with Pavel the situation regarding the loss of membership there are several reasons.
  - 1) Many members have move away to other cities and countries in Europe.
  - 2) Some have fallen back into the world and are currently living in sin.
  - 3) Several have died.
  - 4) One of the founding member remarried and her Orthodox husband will not let her attend. She has now gone back to the Orthodox church.
  - 5) Another's bad health keeps her from attending
  - 6) Didi left because of disagreements about certain doctrinal issues and meets in home in Sura Mica with a small group of people. Some of those who might have attended in Sibiu now meet with this group.

2. When they understand what would be required to happen and/or change to get people to come back. Members who have moved away will probably not be returning. We can only hope and pray that those who have moved away are attending church some place. Those members living in sin will have to make a change in heart. Pavel has made several attempts to reach out to these members, without success. We visited one (girlfriend and kids present), but in the final analysis it's up to the individual to make the change with the help of the Holy Spirit.
3. When they have made and can explain their assessment of the Romanian COC and the future on the same. Pavel continues to preach the truth and welcomes all that will listen. He is very troubled and frustrated by the current state of the church as well as the culture. He is discouraged by the lack of receptivity of the people.  
Evangelizing people in Romania is going to be difficult and a lot of effort and hard work will have to be put forth to make any sort of headway in the prevailing cultural milieu. People have been freed from the shackles of communism and have seen the "light" of democracy and capitalism. Because it is such a novelty to them people want to revel in their new found opportunities and freedoms. These are more important to them than God.
4. When they have discussed and understand Pavel's assessment of the state of the congregation and his view of her future.  
Pavel indicated to us that he realizes that he was putting too much effort into trying to keep those who were members. Trying to keep the peace and placating members was taking a lot of time. Benevolence also took time and was draining their financial resources. He realizes that he was not doing enough to reach new contacts. With this open, verbal, realization, and with both our tacit and explicit approval, he is going to spend less time pastoring and more time evangelizing.

Because of a change of personnel, we see a lot of cooperation between the "other" COC and "ours." We had lunch with Lee Skelton, the missionary at the "other" church, and he expressed a willingness to cooperate with Pavel in a number of endeavors. In fact, "our" group participated in VBS with the "other" church, and with the follow-up the next Wednesday.

We suggested to Pavel that he should focus on the deaf group that he meets with on Sunday afternoons – the ones that Joe was able to communicate with and gather into a cohesive group. Pavel can sign very well.

5. When they have had a very open, honest and compassionate discussion with Pavel about the inevitable future of the congregation if the current trend continues.
  - a. Our financial support will cease
  - b. The congregation will die out completely
  - c. Explore the feasibility & possibility of recommending that our members begin attending the other congregation in town.

Abandoning the work that Friendly started in 1992 is the wrong thing to do at this time. Romania needs the positive influence of the church more than ever, we need to focus on continuing to provide a spiritual light in this community and let the numbers rebuild themselves. The church needs help in overcoming the battle with the culture. Coordinating and working with the other congregation to battle the culture will be a must.

I think that Lee Skelton can be a good resource of ideas for Pavel and someone who will be able to encourage Pavel. He has no one at this time to talk to about church matters and when the church loses members, it is easy to become discouraged. This is one of Satan's tools.

# CHURCHES OF CHRIST @ CAROWINDS :: C3

***Our World :: Our Plight :: Our Role***

**September 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Cost: \$39**

**Grades: 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> (Families Welcome)**

**Sign-up sheet is in the Youth Room**

**Deadline is September 5th**

**Speaker: Taylor Plott      Worship: Matt Elliott**

It's time to worship and play! C3 2007 is here! If you are interested in going please make payments to Friendly Avenue Church of Christ and turn your check into me. The cost includes the use of the worship facility and park entrance. No passes can be used this year. **Money will also be needed for lunch and dinner.** We will meet at the church at 7:15AM. I know that is early but it is well worth it! Please be on time. We will return to Friendly at 10:00PM.  
If you have any questions please call me at 253-2508 or send an email.

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## Deaf Ministry News

We, the Deaf Ministry, are excited to let you all know that We will host a National Workshop for the Deaf in 2009 in Greensboro, NC. We will have more information about this later and need your help with Fundraiser to host this workshop. If you have any questions about this, see me about this.

Also a few members contacted my father Ron Kaplan about some handy man repairs unfortunately he was un-able to remain here in Greensboro at this time, he was able to accept a position in New Orleans that was better able to meet his needs at this time. We have tried to contact those of you who had been interested and let you know of this development. We would also like to thank you for the opportunity to work with you that was offered.

Joe



## Please Join Us

### Sunday

Bible Study 9:00 AM  
Worship 10:00 AM

### Sunday Evenings

Small Group Bible Studies meet in homes at various locations. Please call the church office for a group near you.

### Wednesday

Bible Study 7:00 PM

## Our Ministries

Assembly Management  
Audio – Video  
Benevolence  
Deaf  
Drama  
Education  
Fellowship  
Finance  
Financial Peace University  
G.E.M.S. (Women's Ministry)  
Hospitality  
Interior Design Coordination  
Interfaith Hospitality Network  
LASC  
Leadership Training for Christ  
Maintenance (Building, Grounds)  
Marriage and Family  
Missions  
Man to Men (Men's Ministry)  
Music  
Nursery/Children's Worship  
Rainbow of Christians  
Small Groups  
Spanish Ministry  
Super Seniors  
Worship  
Youth

## Announcements...

### Baptisms

Ellen Harris, daughter of Adrian and Michele Harris, was baptized August 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Ayla Kuneff, daughter of Tammy and Terry Kuneff was baptized August 26<sup>th</sup>.  
Fortino Miranda was baptized on August 27<sup>th</sup>.

### Items Needed in the Pantry:

Our pantry shelves are empty. Please help us restock by bringing some nonperishable canned and boxed foods. We need canned vegetables, soup, meats, fruit, cereal, pasta products, cereal, gelatin, and bar soap.

### Items Wanted

Sample size or hotel bottles of shampoo, bars of soap and other toiletry items are needed for the next GEMS service project. Please drop them off at the office by September 16<sup>th</sup>.

### Friendly Red Hatters

Come for Tea at the O'Henry Hotel on Saturday, September 15<sup>th</sup>. Tea will be served at 3 PM. Please let Mary Litchford know if you plan to attend.

### 20/20s Camping Trip

September 21-22. Please contact Holly Barrett

### Baby Shower

A shower is planned for Anissa Jones on Sunday, September 16<sup>th</sup> from 2 – 4 PM. She is registered at Target, Walmart and Babies R Us. Trish Gilbert is coordinating.

### Girl Scout Award

Congratulations to Julia Litchford who has completed her Girl Scout Gold Award. Her project was designing and landscaping a garden at Murphy Traditional Academy. The project included building wooden park benches and planting an iris garden.

### Music Ministry

The music ministry leadership like to invite all those interested in being part of this exciting ministry to please come to the chapel on September 9th at 6:00PM for more information on the goals of the ministry and how they might be involved.

On September 30th, we will be having a special praise and worship gathering at Friendly Avenue at 6:00PM. There will be a few short devotionals and we will sing both old and new hymns and it will be a great opportunity to learn our praise songs.

### Small Groups

Our Sunday evening Small Group Bible Studies will begin again on September 16<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Adrian Harris for sign up information.

