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Pastor's Letter

Remember returning to school in the fall and having to write a "What did I do on Summer Vacation" paper? Well, here's mine...

Here at Lyall so much planning and doing has been going on. Sunday School has really come into focus and the result has been a complete overhaul of our curriculum, the desperately needed clearing and organizing of the Sunday school rooms, and a teacher-training approach using our own master teachers here in the congregation. We've had sobering discussions regarding what sort of world our children are entering and our response to them as they become citizens of God's kingdom and also of this world. Lynn Grainger, and others, have virtually transformed our ability to offer the finest of teaching environments for our children, those here and those surely to come.

Thanks to Jan Miller, president of our congregation, we are engaged in an exciting exploration of our core identity and purposes as a congregation. This may have implications for us in terms of how we administer the many rhythms here at Lyall, perhaps even altering our by-laws somewhat. We will need your help to clarify this important initiative. We want to tailor God's core character and our own stories, no easy thing but possible, we think. We want to be able to answer it simply and clearly: What is Lyall Memorial Federated Church?

This summer also found Lyall Lunch taking off in terms of wider community involvement. Bob Tierney, our chef and chief, has whipped up a happy crew and fabulous soups, one after the other. Not a finger has been lost thus far. And we have zero botulism scares to date. Our work has earned kudos from the wider community in the form of two generous grants just this year. Way to go Bob and everyone involved.

Brad Roeller, who presides over the Board of Trustees, and much else, has produced a fix-it list that would rival any "honey-do" list you have ever seen (yes, we have the money for it all, thanks to another grant bestowed on us). Thanks Brad for being so ambitious for us, and to all who give so selflessly.

For the first time in my memory I will pastor a congregation that has an actual Office of Outreach. This is the incredible brain-child of Sue McGinnis, Kristen Reid and Lynn Grainger. Together, and with the help of others who feel called to this ministry, they will initiate and nurture merciful ventures for our neighbors in Millbrook and beyond. It's an incarnational approach to ministry and this trio has already brought to life a marvelous program: Homework Help which is gaining in focus and traction for local students in need of tutoring on a variety of subjects.

Attendance in Sunday worship has been phenomenal, some have offered that they have not seen so many in summer worship for a very long time 15-20 years. No doubt this is because of our tremendously talented musicians, and Dan Koch, our magnificent Choral Director, who throws himself pellmell into his vocation. Bless you Dan and so many others.

And we have had numerous deep and significant discussions over core biblical texts, this summer we are entering the vast waters of the book of Genesis to much effect. People have been generous in thought and heart. Another reason why life is so worth living, being with friends talking over weighty matters.

I could go on like a shameless politician, but I will restrain myself. I will finish by simply saying how proud I am to be your pastor. You are magnificent. Let's get the word out that all persons are welcome here, to become their own one-of-a-kind saint.

Thom Fiet, pastor at Lyall

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Special points of interest...

- Calendar of Events September 2015
- Prayers and Joys
- Birthdays and Anniversaries
- Operation Christmas Child
- Hudson Valley MADD Walk

Mississippi Newsletter

Going on a service trip with Evelyn has had its challenges, but taking my first service trip solo was harder than I thought.

I met up with the other four members of my team, field director, a visiting photographer and an intern in the Memphis airport. We began our week with our excursion in Memphis with authentic southern barbecue, a stroll down Beal Street and a visit to The Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Hotel. I stared with disbelief at the balcony where Martin Luther King was assassinated. I recognized the buildings along Beal Street from photographs of sanitation workers carrying signs "I am a Man". I had never heard the word terrorism to describe the crimes of the 50's and 60's against black people, but it resonated with me. I had just read on the plane *I am Malala*, a book about the Pakistani girl who was shot in the face by Muslim fanatics. I found my thinking shifting to better understand the issues from a broader human perspective, not just a white female educator from the northeast

As we dined, saw the sights and processed the presentations in the museum we began to get to know each other and my mind was put at ease. Conversation flowed in the two-hour ride to Glendora. The two men and two teenage boys were there to construct the first Partners in Development house.

Due to jury duty commitments here, I was unable to travel to Glendora until August, just before the kids went back to school. Some kids did the prep work, but they didn't come to the project days because they were savoring their last days of summer vacation, so enrollment was 15 kids. The project was cut short by the first day of school on Thursday, but the children accomplished great storytelling in those days. Eight movies and an ABC book were produced. I also came to understand the great challenges of education in this community. Most of the children I was working with are 3-4 years older than my incoming third graders, but they struggle more with reading and writing than my students in New York.

After seeing the kids off to school at 6:30 a.m. Thursday, I had the opportunity to work with the school year tutors. They gave me list of concerns and I tailored the training to their needs and met with each of them to ensure understanding. I cleaned computers and reorganized books and supplies. I also helped sort clothing in the thrift store.

On Friday I worked construction with the men. Once they found out I could swing a hammer, there was no down time from eight to noon and then from one until I declared I had had enough around four. I pushed trusses onto the roof. Hammered plywood in place and reclaimed two by fours that had been used for bracing by hammering out the nails. The mercury reached 112 degrees

that day. I have never soaked a shirt so thoroughly in sweat in my life.

Saturday was the awards ceremony for the children. I hand delivered invitations to the families and the mayor. Nearly all attended and award certificates were given. I also had the chance to visit the Emmett Till Museum that morning.

The need is great in Glendora. They have electricity, water and sewer. That's the only significant differences between the Haitian and Guatemalan projects. Child sponsorship, health, housing and jobs are the same issues in all three communities.

Thank you for your donations of clothing. Special thanks to Jan and Susan for the ride home from the airport and for listening that allowed me to start to debrief.

Lynn Grainger

A Visit to the ETHIC Museum

Emmett Till Historic Intrepid Center

Glendora, MS

By Lynn Grainger

August 2015

BANG! Bang! bang!

The muffled rhythm of hammers

Drowned out periodically by the passing train

Echoed through the metal structure of the museum

On the same site that Emmett Till was murdered long ago.

Today five volunteers from the Northeast toiled on in the blazing August sun,

Directed by a local seasoned builder

Hammering the roof on Lady's new home, the first new home.

The sixth long day of construction from slab to house.

I sought to understand community history at the museum.

Descriptions vivid, story recounted in detail

Artifacts, timelines, first person narratives, reconstructed scenes

My emotions boiling over, but calmed by

BANG! Bang! bang! from the other side of the tracks.

Tortured and killed for a Jim Crow law infraction?

Relatives begged to ship Emmett home to Chicago immediately.

Gruesome murder, failed justice

Lives in this community altered forever

It became the start of the Civil Rights Movement,

However change happens ever so slowly.

Problems still exist in Glendora:

Poverty, lack of education, joblessness, disenfranchised people

But today there is hope for Glendora.

BANG! Bang! bang!

There is a chance for another dream.

That hammering is part of Partners in Development's commitment.

PID is affecting change,

Bit by bit.

Side by side with the people of Glendora.

Hope is growing,

Honesty, Integrity, Respect, Responsibility, Hard Work

The Partnership will yield:

Better education, jobs, satisfaction and healthy families.

From the Pastor....

- Lyll Cheer! To Kathleen and Dave Foster for the "Blueberry Fundraiser" to help secure the special speakers in the choir loft so our choir members can hear more clearly those speaking during the service. Thanks Kathleen and Dave for this fantastic, imaginative effort.
- Gratitude - We would like to express our gratitude to those who provided such moving, inspiring music and dance during our worship services. Stewart Anderson, Louise Roeller, Christine Horihan, Alicia Paist; Rob Murphy, Morgan Nalesnik; Donna Castaner, Harley Pickles, Carolyn Reid, Helen Lomangino; we thank also Bob Tierney and Maria McCabe for their contribution to the gathering music prior to worship. Thank you all ever so much for your generosity of talent, we've had really great attendance throughout the summer months and we thank you for making each Sunday such a worshipful event. Bless you!
- The 60 Necessary Stories of Faith - The pastor has taken on this project to frame up the needful stories in the bible that every Christian might find helpful as we live out our faith (this does not include the Christmas or Easter stories, these will be handled separately).
- Watch for Podcasts to be coming soon!



Other News and Happenings...

- Do you Tweet? We are on the brink of beginning a Twitter Account, just to reach out to give the congregation a little encouragement during the week. More information to follow.
- Touch Screen update-Touch screen #2 has been installed just outside the main kitchen, and the 3rd will be installed soon.
- Audio System update -All monies have been received! Work to complete the audio system will commence forthwith.
- Update on Denominational Assessment -We want to thank the congregation for their generosity regarding our denominational assessments. Checks will be sent out forthwith. Blessings to you all, this was a terrific help.
- Lyll Lunch Update.
We want to thank the congregation for their generosity in response to our Lyll Lunch Program. \$200.00 was received with a single request. God bless you, dear ones. Wow!
- Food for Folks! For more information please contact Diane Moretti at 845-242-6508.
- Community Day -Saturday September 12th! We will have a table with brochures highlighting the activities we currently have going on here at Lyll.
- Chickens for Haiti - Congratulations to Evelyn Grainger on raising \$1600.00 for Chickens in Haiti. Please go to Evelyn's blog at <https://whereintheworldisevelyn.wordpress.com/2015/08/16/chicken-little-haiti/> for all the details!
- Dinner and Homework - Our homework help and supper evenings will restart September 16th. Each session will run from 5-7 p.m. We are in need of volunteers to get the program off the ground and to support it throughout the year. Monthly Cooking Crew: Meet one Sunday per month and cook 3 supper meals that can be frozen and reheated. It would be great to have a volunteer coordinator that will do the shopping as well. Servers and Clean Up Crew: Arrive at the church around 5:30 to prepare for serving the meal at 6:00 and cleaning up. Readers and Learning Coaches: Kids will come and go throughout the two hour period. Some are younger and need someone to read with them. Many of the kids don't need tutors, they need encouragement and guidance. Bakers: If we have some frozen desserts on hand like cookies or brownies, it's great to share a sweet after homework is done.

For information contact:

Lynn Grainger

266-8178
lynn125@optonline.net

Sue McGinnis

677-6273
suscginnis190@aol.com



Electronic Giving

In July we set up a bank account that our members can use for their giving if they wish to use automatic electronic deposits. There was an email that went out the week of 7/12 that included a document with all the instructions. If you need to see that email again feel free to contact Kristen Reid at lyall-churchtreas@gmail.com. If you need a hard-copy there will be some copies in the church office. You will also see in the instructions that there are other ways to automate your giving. Many banks offer some kind of automatic bill pay - this kind of system has a paper trail where an actual check is cut and mailed. The information you would need to set that up is also included in the same set of instructions. Susan Tirante and Kristen Reid will help you with any questions you may have about setting up automatic giving.

Operation Christmas Child

The Shoeboxes will be given out in October and collected in November, but now is the time to watch for school supply sales. Also, we would like to make up 10 extra boxes like we did last year. If you would like to contribute extra school supplies and hygiene items for those boxes in addition to your own, a collection box will be outside the office. Nancy Greer will answer any questions about the project that is a part of Samaritans Purse.

Hudson Valley MADD Walk

The Hudson Valley MADD Walk will be held on October 24th. A Team will again walk on the Fishkill Rail Trail in honor of Carolyn Reid's long recovery after being hit by a drunk driver. Please sign up early so Nancy Greer can coordinate plans. Also, if you would like to contribute to MADD and be a "virtual" walker, that would be appreciated. The money is used for victim services, and to work for more public awareness of the problem of DWI, which claimed over 300 lives in NYS last year.

Floral Arrangements

If you would like to donate a floral arrangement for one of our Sunday services, there is one open date of November 1st. The cost is \$45.00, payable to Lyall Memorial Flower Fund, and remember to include the acknowledgement to appear in the bulletin. If you have any questions, contact Dawn Blackburn, 266-3650.

Choir News

Have you ever enjoyed singing with a choral group, perhaps in your former church, school, or community? Do you play an instrument, and would you like to share your talent with others? You have an opportunity to do that in our church's music ministry. We are always looking for new talent to join our ranks, and September is the perfect time to join. How about "trying us out" when choirs begin rehearsals? We have a wonderful choral director, Dan Koch, and a talented, friendly, and welcoming group of singers waiting to include YOU in our fun-filled rehearsals and activities!

CHANCEL CHOIR: Adults rehearse Thursday evenings, 7:30-9:00, beginning September 10th, and Sunday mornings, 9:15-10:00 beginning September 13th.

JUNIOR CHOIR: Grades 1 through 5, will rehearse Wednesdays, 4:30-5:15, beginning September 16th.

At present, there is no Middle/High School choir. If there are singers this age that would like to start a singing group, we will be glad to get one going!

If you have any questions, see Dan or any choir member after church, or call the church office.

Healing Habits of the Heart - Workshops

Using the Circle of Trust®
Approach

Five sessions, every other week for two hours
(Wednesday evenings, 7 – 9)

September 23, October 7, October 21, November 4,
and November 18

We will contemplate five "habits of the heart" described in Parker J. Palmer's *Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit*.

- understanding we are all in this together
- appreciating the value of "otherness"
- holding tension in life-giving ways
- generating a sense of personal voice and agency
- and strengthening our capacity to create community

Parker Palmer is a Quaker, an author, a lecturer, and the founder of the Center for Courage & Renewal (www.couragerenewal.org), which developed The Circle of Trust® approach, based on specific principles and practices that nurture personal and professional integrity, and the courage to act on it. Participants experience a trustworthy space, explore their inner lives, and share voluntarily with others, who are practicing openhearted listening. Everything in a circle of trust is invitational. People leave more in touch with their "inner teacher" – a Quaker term for the quiet inner voice, the better self, the soul. They gain greater clarity about what they value in their lives and work, what they must change, and how to go about it individually and within our community.

Cat Greenstreet, a facilitator prepared by the Center for Courage & Renewal and a member of Lyall Memorial Federated Church, will facilitate the circles. She was an educator for over 25 years.

It is important that you commit to 5 sessions. You will need a journal and a pen.

September 2015

Schedule of Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
		Board of Spiritual Life	Bible Study	Lunch @Lyll		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Special Congregational Meeting	Labor Day		Bible Study	Lunch @Lyll Adult Choir		Community Day
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Worship Committee	Bible Study		Junior Choir Bible Study Dinner & Homework	Lunch @Lyll Adult Choir Historical Society		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	Bible Study	Board of Trustees Mtg	Junior Choir Healing Habits of the Heart Dinner & Homework	Lunch @Lyll Adult Choir		
27	28	29	30			
	Bible Study		Junior Choir Bible Study Dinner & Homework			

- **Lunch at Lyall**
Thursdays 11:30-12:30pm
- **Board of Spiritual Life Meeting** 9/1 7:00 pm
- **Board of Trustees Meeting** 9/22 7:00 pm
- **AA**
Meets in the Gathering room
Weekdays 12:00 pm
Saturday's 7:30 pm
Sunday's 8:15 am
- **Bible Study**
Monday 11:00am
Wednesday 7:00pm
- **Dinner & Homework**
Wednesdays from 5:00 - 7:00. Assembly room
- **Choir**
Adult Thursdays 7:30
Junior Wednesday 4:30
- **Historical Society**
Gathering room 7:30
- **Healing Habits of the Heart** - meets every other Wednesday evening beginning September 23rd

*A Church whose only label is Christian
and whose only Head is Christ. A
federated interdenominational
congregation*

That welcomes all Christian traditions.

Pastor's Office Hours:

Monday-Friday 9:00 am until Noon.

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Find us on the web...

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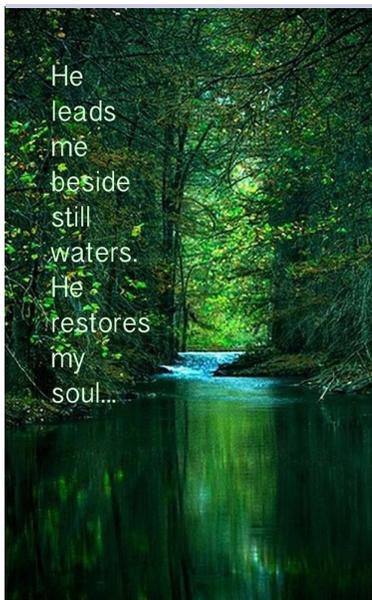


Birthdays

- 1 Elizabeth Hicks
- 5 Genevieve Edmonds
- 7 August Schumacher
- 9 Richard Cole
- 10 Thomas Maybar
- 13 Megan Pickles
- 15 Gary King
- 16 Hali Wack
Michael Castaner
- 17 Carolyn Dommreis
- 18 Sandy Beaumont
Megan Myler
- 19 Kerry Weller
- 20 Muriel Verdibello
- 24 Tara Adams
- 25 Thom Fiet
- 26 Myra Lanuyer

Anniversaries

- 4 Stan & Shirley Benham
- 17 Bob & Kristen Reid
- 25 Thom Fiet & Maria McCabe



He
leads
me
beside
still
waters.
He
restores
my
soul...

Prayers and Joys

Prayers for:

- Glen Herman, Brother of Mary Jane Tierney
- Missionary Sarah Zagami
- Shirley, friend of Maria Bauries
- Maria Bauries' sister, Margie
- Nancy Cole
- Shirley Benham

- Harold Armstrong, recuperating from lung surgery in Bridgewater, VA
- PVT Matthew Fauci, 5th Platoon Executioners, E-Co. 3-60th Infantry, 5500 Marion Ave, Fort Jackson, SC 29207.

Joys!

- Christopher Jasmine is home from Afghanistan

Prayers

And

Joys