

The Visitor

First Baptist Church, DeWitt Park, Ithaca, NY 14850
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www.FirstBaptistIthaca.org
July, 2007

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The 2007 ABC Biennial in Washington DC, I'm pleased to announce, was a positive and heartening experience for me. I really enjoyed the car ride with Dave, Grace and Bronwyn Evans and Linda Nicholson – yes we were all in the same car for seven blissful hours each way! The gathering itself was a peaceful and productive. The recurring themes in the many sermons and talks that we heard were of justice and peace. In particular the “war” in Iraq was questioned repeatedly. A. Roy Medley, General Secretary of the ABC/USA, summed up this sentiment by questioning the reality that we as a nation always have enough money for war, but never enough to adequately address poverty or education.

It was also quite heartening to learn that the Statement of Concern entitled *Democracy in America* (see related Biennial article) was adopted by a majority of church delegates. Additionally, two proposed Statements of Concern entitled: *Abolish D.C. Taxation Without Representation* and *A Call to Conscience and Community in a Time of War*, are on the table for consideration by the General Board of the ABC/USA.

Unfortunately the Statement of Concerns Committee at the Biennial chose to prevent these Statements from going to the floor for a vote by the delegates. Nonetheless, I do believe we have hope for the future of American Baptists. Voices crying for justice and peace are well pronounced and growing louder as we look forward to the work yet to do.

Peace be with you,
Rich

Bible Study goes from Prime Time to Day Time

The Tuesday evening Bible Study led by Rich Rose is moving to Wednesday mornings at 9:30 am. Please join us in the library for these lively and necessary discussions.

First Baptist Church e-mail is: fbde Witt@verizon.net

YOUR VOTE COUNTS!!!

Circle your choice, either Shiphrah or Puah,
and place it in the jar by the South door of the Sanctuary.

Shiphrah	Puah
9:30-10:30 Adult/Youth/Children's Education	9:30-10:00 Choir Rehearsal
10:30-11:00 Choir Rehearsal/coffee/fellowship	10:00-11:15 Worship Service
11:00-12:15 Worship Service	11:15-11:30 Coffee/Fellowship
12:15 Coffee/fellowship	11:30-12:30 Adult/Youth/Children's Education

American Baptists observe centennial, Baptist unity at quiet biennial meeting

By Robert Marus, Robert Dilday and Marv Knox

WASHINGTON -- American Baptists both observed and made history during an otherwise-quiet biennial meeting June 28-July 2 in Washington. Delegates and guests of the American Baptist Churches USA's largest national gathering celebrated their centennial as a denomination and observed their kinship with other Baptist groups during the meeting. The gathering began with a special joint communion service, held in conjunction with participants at the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's General Assembly.

"This is an awesome God moment," ABC General Secretary Roy Medley told a crowd of almost 4,000 participants, divided almost evenly between representatives of both groups. "It gladdens the heart of God. It makes God happy to see us working together. ... What an awesome moment. It gladdens our hearts too." The service at the Washington Convention Center marked the end of the Fellowship's annual general assembly and the beginning of ABC's 100th anniversary celebration. Program organizers noted the joint ABC/Fellowship session had been five years in planning. Actually, it was 162 years in the making.

Baptists in the United States first united to support missions in 1814, but they divided acrimoniously in 1845. Baptists in the North, who later reorganized as the predecessor to the American Baptist Churches in 1907, opposed slavery. The Southern Baptist Convention split from them because of their support for slavery. The Fellowship formed out of the SBC in 1991 after more than a decade of conflict between moderates and fundamentalists in the SBC. Although some Fellowship churches still relate to the SBC and some do not, almost all of them trace their roots to the Southern convention. A large presence of members of the Progressive National Baptist Convention -- a historically African-American denomination with which many ABC churches are dually aligned -- added to the atmosphere of unity.

Such unity was more present than at the 2005 ABC Biennial, where a potential split over homosexuality loomed. Some delegates from conservative churches and ABC regional groups disagreed with the way the denomination, with approximately 1.5 million members in more than 5,800 churches, relates to gay-friendly ministers and congregations. Even though American Baptist leaders approved a 1992 resolution opposing homosexual conduct, some ABC conservatives have asserted the wording and the enforcement of the motion on denominational agencies and personnel are not strong enough. Progressive and centrist American Baptists, meanwhile, have tried to defend what they see as traditional Baptist stances on congregational autonomy and individual conscience in opposing the ouster of pro-gay churches and leaders. One region -- the American Baptist Churches of the Pacific Southwest -- ultimately left the denomination in 2006.

There was little controversy during the 2007 meeting, however. Delegates passed mildly-worded "statements of concern" -- the ABC equivalent of resolutions -- on the denomination's polity and identity and on "Democracy in America." The polity statement cited the classic Christian doctrines to which American Baptists adhere as well as the particular doctrines -- such as the priesthood of believers and separation of church and state -- that have distinguished the Baptist tradition. The statement noted that the delegates "are concerned that with so many Baptist denominations existing in the United States our members will be confused as to what makes us distinctively American Baptists."

It also registered concerns that some ABC churches "are hiring pastors and other leaders who do not come from American Baptist ... backgrounds and who have not received education and training in the history and polity" of the denomination. It continued, "We are concerned that our members may be confusing theological convictions with the role our polity plays in making us distinctly American Baptists." The "Democracy in America" statement registered concerns over the "tyranny of terrorism and the consequent actions of the federal government [that] have dramatically curtailed some of the freedoms that have defined our collective lives for generations, such as dissent, peaceful assembly and the right to privacy."

The several thousand ABC Delegates and Biennial attendees met only two blocks from the location -- Washington's Calvary Baptist Church -- where the Northern Baptist Convention was formed a century before. It later changed its name to the current ABCUSA designation. In other business, delegates elected Mary Hulst, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Denver, as president. They elected civil engineer Frank Christine Jr., a member of Second Baptist Church of Los Angeles, as vice president. The next ABC Biennial is set for June 25-29, 2009, in Pasadena, Calif.

[Associated Baptist Press]

Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard NEWS

THANK YOU!! from Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard for your generous contributions of dollars and food throughout March and April in response to the Feinstein Challenge. The Cupboard's two-month total (over \$12,000 and almost 5,00 food items) is the highest ever for this challenge!

CALLING ALL GARDENERS AND FARMERS! Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard would be pleased to distribute any excess fresh vegetables, greens, or fruits that you can bring to us. You might even plant an extra row for this purpose. Drop off contributions any weekday morning at the Cupboard, located in The Salvation Army, 150 North Albany Street, Ithaca.

A NEW WAY TO GIVE: Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard now has an account at K& H Redemption Center, 900 West State Street, Ithaca. Just return your deposit bottles and cans to K& H and tell them the money should go to Ithaca Kitchen Cupboard's account.

Help with the Kitchen Cupboard is most welcome. Contact Amanda Ufford, 273-8719 or Sue Hemsath, 272-8619.

Appreciation of Linda Caughey

Linda Caughey has retired as church secretary as of the June 1st, 2007. Most of us do not remember another church secretary, and don't know how we'll get along without Linda. She has been a wonderful steward of First Baptist Church—the people, the building and the program. Linda did many, many things—many that were not visible to most of us. However, we are now learning of some of those things. She remains a wealth of information about the church (and the building), and about our various interactions in the Ithaca community. There's no one else with such a magnificent institutional memory. In early September, we wish to celebrate Linda's wonderful contribution to all of us over the years and to thank her for being such a wonderful steward.

Watch this space for specifics about the "Linda Caughey Celebration" in the next *Visitor*.

*A Special "thank you" to all
who have volunteered
to provide special music
for the Summer months.*

Summer means... flowers brought from our gardens, doorstep receptions of juice and snack, more children at the children's table, looking for those who can usher or serve communion... If you are able, why not sign up for one of these many summer blessings on posters in June. **And Don't forget First Baptist!** Summer is a good time to rest from the heavy school year work and head to a park, but don't forget that First Baptist needs to pay bills during the restful time. Please keep pledging up to date!

How to Make Announcements Sunday Mornings --- Please write your announcement on a 3 x 5 card (available from the ushers) and put it on the pulpit to be announced by Rev. Rose. And please send information to the office for the Visitor.

Congratulations to Lars Mudrak! Lars graduated from Ithaca High School this month. He will take a year off to work at the YMCA International Go Global Program in Peru before going to SUNY Geneseo in the fall of 2008.

From Gil Rosenberg... "I am spending 10 weeks as a Summer Youth Ministry Intern at First Presbyterian Church in Allentown, PA. I will be helping with Sunday School, weekly fellowship, "Mission Mornings", a work camp in Buffalo, and a weekend Beach Retreat. I will also spend time in informal relationship building with the youth (miniature golf, movies, meals, etc.). My mailing address for the summer will be 1727 Creek View Drive, Fogelsville, PA 18051-1716."

Sort it! Save it! Give it! Work it!
First Baptist Church Garage Sale
August 18, 2007, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Please gather and *save* items from around your home (those that are clean and in very good repair) for this annual event! Space in the church building is limited (and currently jammed,) so please bring things down after July 15! *The sale is not only our biggest fundraiser, and it is a fun, social and community event! If you can help a few days before and/or during the sale on August 18, please contact Andrea Mooney at ajm31@cornell.edu*

We need YOUR help to make it work!

WHAT WE NEED

Donations: **CLEAN!!! Items that work.** Things you would give as a gift buy for yourself.

Go easy on plastic containers, mugs & baskets – we always have zillions.

Please NO paint, toy guns, war games, shoes, computer or electronic equipment purchased before 2004 or luggage without wheels or broken locks.

What sells well: furniture, antiques, bicycles, household items, sporting goods, infant & children's clothing.

NO Adult clothing this year – will not be accepted.

Baked Goods for the sale (Sue Eymann, coordinator)

Plants for Sale start clippings to root & plant (Barbara Fry, coordinator)

Publicity take fliers around town (Francesca Crannell, coordinator)

Coordinators needed for: Café, Cashiers, Drivers & vehicles (pick up & dispose of items)

Volunteer schedule is as follows:

Sunday, August 12 after worship to bring up items from the basement and put up signs

Wednesday, Aug. 15 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 16 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 17 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, Sale 8:30 a.m. to Noon (upstairs & downstairs)

Noon to 2:30 p.m. (upstairs & downstairs)

Clean Up

Contact Andrea Mooney if you have special items that would help in advertising (bikes, sail boats, sofas, desks, antiques, etc.) Sign up: call the church office, put your name on the Sanctuary poster, or use a bulletin insert.

July-August Calendar...

The following weekly events are not listed in the calendar. If new to these gatherings, please call to confirm dates & times. For New Creation Singers summer rehearsals call David 273-7864. For Morning Meditation call Tony 277-1158 (Wednesday at 8:15 a.m.). For Morning Bible Study call Rev. Rich Rose 273-5800 (Wednesday 9:30 a.m.). Choir Rehearsals are Thursday, 7:00 p.m. Call Jennifer for more info.

Sunday, July 22	10:30	Worship
Sunday, July 29	10:30	Worship
Friday, August 3	7:30	PCS Board & Breakfast
Sunday, August 5	10:30	Worship with Communion
Tuesday, August 7	7:00	ACT
Wednesday, August 8	7:00	Southern Tier Gender Alliance
Saturday, August 11	7:30	Keuka College BYS Baptist Men's Summer Retreat
Sunday, August 12	10:30	Worship

IACC Daycare Closed August 13-24

Saturday, August 18		First Baptist Church Garage Sale Gospel Music Extravaganza at St. James AME Zion Church (First Baptist Choir is participating!)
Sunday, August 19	10:30	Worship
Sunday, August 26	10:30	Worship
Tuesday, August 28	7:00	Book Group (The Space Between Us)
Sunday, June 17	10:30	Worship & Picnic at the Park (details elsewhere)
Tuesday, June 19	5:30	12 Step Meeting
Sunday, June 24	10:30	Worship
	11:30	Door Step Reception
Tuesday, June 26	5:30	12 Step Program

Welcome to Ms. Bethany McGee, The New Church Secretary

Beth McGee of Trumansburg has joined the church staff as the church secretary. She started in late June. Beth comes very highly recommended and she also has had church secretary experience. She has a strong spirituality and is a very contributive member of the Trumansburg Community. Beth is very energetic, has two children and a husband, and several jobs, including owning her own business. She is particularly skilled in computer and web-based applications. We look forward to working with her. Beth's hours during the Summer are 9:00 a.m. until Noon on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

The process by which Beth was selected involved a search committee consisting of Julie Costie, Andrea Mooney and Bill Fry. The committee received many different applications, and conducted both phone and in-person interviews. References were consulted for the finalist applicants, and Rev. Rich met with the finalists. All persons involved with the search process are delighted that Beth has agreed to take the job.

Welcome Beth!!

"The message of the Good News is of the liberation of human beings from everything and everyone that keeps them enslaved."

~ Theologian Elsa Tamez

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First Baptist Church
Box 254
Ithaca, New York 14851

{ Return Service Requested }

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Ithaca, N. Y. 14851

Garage Sale Information Enclosed

SPECIAL NOTICE!!

In recent weeks we have noticed doors and windows being left open. If you use the building for ANY reason, PLEASE be sure to secure any windows and doors that you use. The NORTH DOOR ENTRANCE IS NOT TO BE USED AT ALL DURING THE WEEK (unless in the case of a fire emergency). There is signage to indicate this but it has not always been heeded. If you use our great church building, please be a good steward and keep it safe and secured. Thank you.

FBC Collects... for Springbrook: Making the difference for People with Disabilities (was Upstate Homes for Children & Adults) collects Campbells labels and Box Tops for Education. While a new list of items carrying the Box Tops coupons is on the south hall bulletin board, the following are a few of the couple of hundred items that carry the Box Tops coupons:

- most cereal boxes including Cascadian Farms,
- Pillsbury and Betty Crocker products,
- Hamburger Helper,
- snack foods including Nature Valley,
- storage bags and wraps including Ziploc
- paper products including Scotts, Cottonelle, Kleenex
- and some disposable items by Hefty

Watch for these coupons, cut them out, and drop them at church to help earn cash for our ABC upstate school.