

REFLECTIONS

Sunday, January 18, 2009

“Fulfillment of Prophecy?” by Rev. Dr. James G. Macdonell (Moses generation)

I do honestly believe that there are many poignant, dramatic aspects involved in the impending Inauguration that are so historically significant that all Americans ought to be able to celebrate them irrespective of personal, political beliefs or preferences!...so whatever your personal political persuasions and choices might be, I hope there are exciting, positive aspects about the upcoming Inauguration that we can all agree upon. For instance...next Tuesday’s historic Inauguration will be an event which most of us would have thought to be an absolute social and political impossibility just a few years ago.

...when I marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. in Selma, Alabama back in 1965, I never dreamed that I would ever live long enough to see the United States of America elect an African American President!...Tuesday’s Inauguration would have defied the wildest thoughts and expectations of our country’s Founding Fathers and also the thoughts and beliefs of a lot of us here today!...

[It]is an amazing indication that while our nation has not yet totally overcome its long, historical flirtation with bigotry and racial intolerance, the Inauguration of Barack Obama suggests that the United States has certainly made significant progress in its long, painful struggle with racism. Clearly the American people have come a long, long way towards fulfilling our too-long-untested but still precious American claim that “All men [and women in this country] are created equal.”...

I firmly believe that the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the election of Barack Obama as our nation’s first African American President are inexorably linked to one another! The latter could not have taken place without the former...someday our nation’s most respected historians and social scientists will declare that last November’s election could never have occurred in our lifetime without the preparatory, social, moral and ethical contributions made on behalf of our nation a half century ago by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.!

This morning, in the face of great new opportunities and scary new challenges, let us pray that Almighty God will guide and protect our new President and also help us to do our part in making this nation the best it can possibly be!

“A Glimpse of What is Possible” by Brandon Dennison (Joshua generation)

A reading from 1st Samuel 3. Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread. The Lord called Samuel a third time and he got up and went...and said Here I Am. And indeed Samuel was there for God, becoming one of the great prophets of our faith.

“Visions were not widespread,” reads the text for today. Such a statement could be made for our nation. America has been wondering in the wilderness for quite some time now. ...Maybe we entered the wilderness when dreams collapsed along with the twin towers. Some would point to the 60s and Vietnam. An African American would say we’ve been in the wilderness ever since the first slave was shipped across the Atlantic in shackles. Regardless of when it started, we have failed to thwart disturbing trends of poverty, war, and environmental degradation....

In the wilderness it’s hard to hold onto the vision of what good things are possible....Every now and then, however, we get a glimpse, a glimpse, of what is possible....“We are one nation. We are one people. And our time for change has come.” These were then Senator Obama’s words after winning the Iowa Caucuses.

[From his famous speech in New Hampshire] “We have been told we cannot do this by a chorus of cynics...Yes we can.”...

Let the chorus of cynics sing on. For they sing the same song of those who told Moses his people would never make it. Let the chorus of cynics sing on. For they sing the same song of those who told Martin Luther King Jr. a black man would never be president. Let the chorus of cynics sing on. No more complaining, no more grumbling, no more “I can’t.” This is the Joshua generation. Now is the time to say “Here I Am.” Now is the time to fulfill our purpose. Let us take this glimpse of what’s possible, translate it into visions of hope, and make those visions reality. The more people start to say “Here I Am” the more we start to believe we can. The more we believe we can, the more we do, and the more we do the closer we get to the promise land.

REFLECTIONS

Sunday, January 25, 2009

“Yes, I, too, Have a Dream” by Rev. Pat Donohoe

First of all, let me say that I voted for Obama and that I am overjoyed that he will be our 44th President. As we celebrate the inauguration of our first African American President, on the heels of Martin Luther King Day, I hope that, amid all the celebrations of this historic occasion, we will not forget that we have many dreams still to be realized. For instance—

I have a dream that one day we will not only talk about the Moses or Joshua generations, but will lift up the Miriams and Rahabs to designate generations that have seen and claimed the promise for all.

I have a dream that some day we will not need to lift up the examples of any one religious or philosophical tradition over another in order to make a point.

I have a dream that soon, very soon, a woman will not have to choose between having an outstanding career or being a good mother because support systems will be in place for enabling her to be both.

I have a dream that we are on the eve of a universal health care system that enables all women and all men to choose the kind of work they really love because they are not handcuffed to the health care benefits of a particular job.

I have a dream that sooner rather than later it will not be unusual for women to occupy most seats in the U. S. Senate and House of Representatives or to sit in majority on the U.S. Supreme Court—or on any ruling body anywhere in the world.

I have a dream that it will one day be in the natural course of events to celebrate a woman who is being sworn in as President of the United States.

I have a dream that our daughters and granddaughters will no longer need to ask why the leaders of the world’s religions and spiritual traditions are almost always male (Jesus, Mohammed, Krishna, Confucius, the Buddha, the Dalai Lama, the Pope).

I have a dream that our language—and all the languages of the world—will honor the feminine as much as the masculine and will one day transcend the use of gender-specific norms.

I have a dream that the God we worship, in whatever form or shape, will never again be the province of any one gender or creed.

And, last but not least, I have a dream that our hopes and dreams will transform the world into a more compassionate and caring place for all and we will truly walk together on sacred ground.

Mark Your Calendars...

WINTER 2009 ADULT EDUCATION FORUM, “Praying Around the Communion Table: Cultivating a Spirit of Thanksgiving.” In a series of events led by Dr. Paul Galbreath, we will explore together ways that the prayer of thanksgiving at the Lord’s Supper provides a shape and vocabulary to guide us in lives of gratitude as well as connect our practices in church with the actions in our daily lives.

Our conversations will begin on **Saturday, February 21** at 10 a.m. and we will finish the morning around the table together (please bring a bag lunch). On **Sunday, February 22**, Dr. Galbreath will continue our dialogue about the links between worship and service at 9:30, as well as being our guest preacher at both services.

Dr. Galbreath is Associate Professor of Preaching and Worship at Union Theological Seminary and School of Christian Education, and author of numerous articles and books including *Doxology and Theology* and *Leading from the Table*. He served previously in the Office of Theology and Worship as part of General Assembly staff for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and as a pastor for 10 years in the Pacific Northwest.

SHEPHERDSTOWN FIRE DEPARTMENT “Annual Super Bowl Sunday Buffet Dinner” on **Sunday, February 1**. The menu includes fried chicken and roast beef and all the trimmings with homemade desserts. Cost is \$9.00 for adults, \$5.00 for children, and free under the age of 5. The buffet is served from 12 noon until 4:00 p.m.

Plan to attend and support your local volunteers so that they may provide emergency services to Shepherdstown and the surrounding communities. Questions, call the department at 304-876-2311.

LENTEN PROGRAMS **Sundays, March 1, 8, 15, and 22.** Soup and bread supper at 5:45 p.m., Fellowship Hall. Program, “Other Christian Traditions,” at 6:30 in the sanctuary.

SPC Monthly Activities...

FIRST THINGS FIRST SUNDAY Coins for relief of hunger and non-perishables for JCCM (see list under **Notices: JCCM**). **Next: February 1.**

CHURCH 101 A six-part series for new members begins **Sunday, March 1** in Classroom No. 1, 9:30–10:20 a.m.

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| March 1 | Introduction |
| March 8 | The Practices of SPC. |
| March 15 | The Roots of SPC and Presbyterianism |
| March 22 | The Bible |
| March 29 | Jesus and the Trinity |
| April 5 | Polity and Programs |

TAIZE SERVICE First Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. A Service of Prayer in song, silence and candlelight. **Next: February 4.**

WOMEN'S CIRCLE First Thursdays, 10:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall. All women of the church are invited to join us. **Next: February 5.**

COLLEGE STUDENT FELLOWSHIP including dinner and discussion with Pastor Tremba. First and Third Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. **Next: February 5 and 19.**

ROUNDTABLE WITH PASTOR TREMBA First Saturdays, 9-10:30 a.m. Any and all questions and topics related to faith and the church discussed. **Next: February 7.**

SUPPER GROUP Moveable Feast, **Saturday, February 7, 6:30 p.m.** at Becky Phipps' home, 304-876-0298.

CHURCH 201 with Pastor Tremba & Ethel Hornbeck. Discussion of *Quest for the Living God* by Elizabeth Johnson. Books (\$25). Pay what you can. Second **Wednesdays** at 7:30 p.m. **February 11, March 11, April 8.**

CANTERBURY SERVICES, second Thursday of the month at 10:30 a.m. **Next: February 12.**

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER Third Sundays, balcony, 7:00 p.m. **Next: February 15.**

ROUNDTABLE WITH ETHEL HORNBECK Conversation and reflection with and around scripture, poetry and other selected texts. Third Thursdays, 10:00–11:00 a.m. in the balcony. **Next: February 19.**

MEN'S BREAKFAST Third Saturdays. Breakfast by John Burns at 7:30 a.m. Discussion on "Understanding and Surviving Economic Hard Times" led by Chris Swisher and economist Jeff Hornbeck 8:00–9:00 a.m. **Next: February 21.**

Notices...

THE FELLOWSHIP HALL will be cleaned and sealed Thursday afternoon and all day Friday, **January 29-30.** There will be no access to the room during this time.

SPC MEMBERS appreciate the generosity of Jefferson Security Bank for our use of their private parking lot on Sundays. It is important to remember also that JSB's spaces are reserved for bank customers and staff during regular business hours.

NEEDED: USED COMPUTER Does anyone have one (5 years old or newer) you no longer need? I have a good home for it! Chris Kaye 304-876-1497.

PAPER RECYCLING 4-H group at Christ Reformed Church, 8–9:15 a.m. Paper, cardboard, magazines, books. Place in paper bags, boxes, or tie securely. **NO PLASTIC BAGS. Next: February 7.**

JCCM (Jefferson County Community Ministries) is experiencing many more requests for help. Current pantry needs: jelly, pancake syrup, pancake mix, saltine crackers, canned fruits—all varieties, instant hot chocolate packages, coffee—instant & perked, regular & decaf, diapers—sizes 1-5, toothpaste, clean baby food jars or tubs w/lids, clean pint size jars w/lids.

Place items in the baskets at the bottom of stairs on the way to the nursery.

SHENANDOAH WOMEN'S CENTER Most urgent ongoing needs include: pre-paid long distance phone cards, Martins/Walmart/Food Lion/Sheetz gift cards, *used cell phones (with or without charger)*, laundry detergent (powder), shower gel, ACT Fluoride rinse, waxed dental floss, pain relievers for adults and children, cold/flu medicine, cough syrup and drops, lice treatment kits, baby wipes, and diapers.

Place items in the red basket at the bottom of stairs on the way to the nursery. Please do NOT donate clothing!

HISPANIC MISSION FOOD OUTREACH Most requested items include: rice; dry (not canned) pinto beans, potatoes, salt, sugar, cooking oil, and coffee.

Place items in the baskets at the bottom of stairs on the way to the nursery.

PROPERTY PLEA FOR PARTICIPATION We are trying to share the job of Volunteer Property Manager to make it more manageable. Below are a couple of requests for volunteers to handle small, manageable tasks.

Building Security Coordinator: Devise and oversee a plan for securing our building when unoccupied. Loretta Krogstad has nobly locked up our building at night. But recent events require someone to revise our overall system of locks and their use.

Contractor Coordinator: Oversee contractors other than lawn maintenance and snow removal. This is a great on and off job with some degree of freedom in scheduling your time.

Grounds Coordinator: Oversee the paid mowers; snow shovelers and gutter cleaners; and coordinate volunteers to maintain gardens. This does not include exterior building maintenance, but does include making recommendations for exterior repairs. Scheduling is usually up to you.

Susan Pritchard has graciously volunteered to be the Custodian Liaison!

Can you help? Contact John Burns, 304-876-9146 or JohnBurns211@frontiernet.net.

COFFEE TEAMS needed for the 8:30 service (first and fourth Sundays) and 10:45 service (second Sunday). Contact Melinda Schmitt (Melinda_Schmitt@nps.gov or 304-876-6157) if you can help out.

WEATHER-RELATED CANCELLATIONS Check web page or call the church 304-876-6466 for a message.

Non-profit Organization
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SHEPHERDSTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Post Office Box 268
Shepherdstown WV 25443
office@spcworks.org

Snippets of Old Shepherdstown...

*That which is forgotten returns to the circling wind.
~ Navajo Wind Chant*

At Sallye's funeral, Randy noted that Sallye married into a family that was steeped in Presbyterianism. In 1996, J.R.K. Armstrong, of London, England, contacted me about an ancestor of his, who had been married in SPC in July, 1857. He stated that his ancestors were Presbyterians from Ballynahinch, County Down, Ireland. What a coincidence; that's where my Ulster-Scot ancestors immigrated from. Further investigation revealed that in 1740 one John McKee was on the membership roll of that little church. His grandson, John McKee, settled in Unionville (Uvilla), Va. in 1800. I am a direct descendant of both John McKees.

—Jim Price

Keeping up with Members and Friends...

TERRY LINDSAY, a Deacon at SPC, retired on January 2 after 32-1/2 years of Federal service with the National Park Service. He began in 1976 right out of Clemson University. Terry relates that "Helping people make connections with the immediate landscape around them [was] the most gratifying part of my job." He's particularly proud to note that on January 2 his son began his own permanent career with the National Park Service as a law enforcement ranger at Amistad National Recreation Area.

ANNA BALTZER, a young Jewish woman, has made two presentations at SPC on her mission of recording eyewitness reports on civil rights violations in occupied Palestine. She hopes US citizens will engage with their Senators about the Israel-Palestine conflict. Her website is www.AnnaInTheMiddleEast.com.

Thank You...

Thank you for all you have done for the Hispanic Community. 2009 will be a special year of blessings and grace, especially for our experience of working together. Thank you for the food you sent. It helped provided 10 families with a food package. (Translated by Jeff Hornbeck)

—Gracias, Sr. Judith

Financial Corner...

GENERAL FUND through January 25. Expected to date: \$21,808. Actual giving: \$21,176. Building Fund pledged for 2009: \$34,400. Submitted to date: \$2,845.

PRESBYTERIAN INVESTMENT & LOAN PROGRAM (PILP). You get a good return on your investment while helping SPC (rebate on our mortgage) plus other Presbyterian churches. Visit: www.pcusa.org/pilp/.

NEXT NEWSLETTER: March 2009. Announcements, articles or news on our members? Contact the office, 304-876-6466 or <office@spcworks.org>. Copy deadline **February 25**.

Visit www.spcworks.org on a regular basis for all the latest news, podcasts (new), calendar events and much more.