

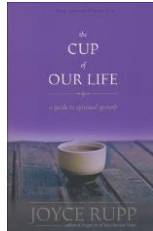
First Baptist Church, Littleton

"Journeying to God's Sacred Beat"

March - April Newsletter 2014

Devotional Study for Lent

All are invited to a Lenten devotional practice with the book *The Cup of Our Life* which is for anyone seeking a more intimate and disciplined life of prayer. Author Joyce Rupp illustrates how the ordinary cups used each day can become sacred vessels which connect us to God.



This is a beautiful and gentle devotional practice that you may do entirely on your own during Lent, beginning on the first Sunday in Lent which is March 9 and/or you may want to join a group for discussion and reflection on one or more of four dates.



All you need to do is:

- Get a copy of the book from Pastor Debbie or order it on Amazon. If you are able to donate \$10 towards the books that would be appreciated but is not required.
- Find your favorite mug or teacup, or buy a new one! You will use this mug every day for the series.
- Find a quiet spot every day, preferably in the morning, for your devotional time.
- The book will guide you with a short reading, a breath prayer, a reflection, scripture, a space for journaling, prayer, and a thought to take you through the day.

There will be four group gatherings led by Pastor Deb that are optional. Come if you are able and bring your cup.

1. Sunday March 16 following worship at 11:45am.
2. Saturday March 22 Breakfast at Kimball Farm.
3. Monday March 31 Evening Tea at church.
4. Sunday April 6 following worship at 11:45am.

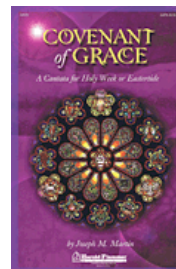
Sunday, March 9 Pancake Breakfast (Shrove Tuesday on Sunday)

9AM for all ages during the Sunday School hour.
Lenten games, fun and food!



You are invited to our Palm Sunday Cantata April 13, 2014

Covenant of Grace A Cantata for Holy Week
By Joseph M. Martin - Shawnee Press



This significant work is intended to celebrate God's faithfulness and his everlasting promises to his people. Incorporating new anthems as well as familiar hymns, the work is appropriate for Holy Week or post Easter presentations. From the promises made to Abraham and David, to their fulfillment in Christ Jesus, *Covenant of Grace* is a testimony to God's plan of redemption for all humanity. Titles include: The Paean of Promise; Covenant of

the Lamb; For God So Loved the World; Hosanna, Loud Hosanna; The Promise of the Kingdom; An Invitation to Grace; Cry of the Crucifixion; Here is Love and We Are God's Love.

An Update and Invitation from the Welcoming and Affirming Study Group

At the Annual Meeting on May 19, 2013 this proposal from the Diaconate Board was approved unanimously: As we faithfully seek to follow Jesus Christ we propose a year of prayerful study about what it means to become a WELCOMING AND AFFIRMING CHURCH for all of God's people. We propose the formation of a committee that will provide opportunities for the entire church to ensure we are a welcoming community to a diverse population. The original proposal was amended and approved unanimously to capitalize the words "WELCOMING AND AFFIRMING CHURCH" to clarify that the intent is to welcome and affirm those who are gay and lesbian.

The committee appointed following the annual meeting has been gathering throughout the year. In order to further educate ourselves as we endeavor to discern God's leading for our family of faith, we invite you to these two important events:

Sunday, March 23 at 10AM Rev. Robin R. Lunn, the Executive Director of the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptist Churches (AWAB) will preach at Littleton and we will gather for a discussion following worship. More information about AWAB can be found here: <http://www.awab.org/>

Sunday, March 30 A Day of Discernment beginning with worship at 10:00AM we will spend time in prayer as we seek to understand what it means to be

welcoming and affirming to all people including those who are gay and lesbian. Immediately following worship we will join together for a pot luck lunch and the Rev. Michael Harvey, the Executive Director of the Conference of Baptist Ministers will facilitate an afternoon discussion with an invited panel of guests. Babysitting will be provided for the children. All are invited to this day of listening and sharing of stories. Bring a main dish or salad to share!

Children's story on Science & Faith Sunday Photo by Caroline Poser



Pastoral Daze

"You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows." Psalm 23:5

I love the images that have come to my mind as I anticipate journeying through Lent with the devotional *The Cup of Our Life*. I love the symbolism found within the metaphor that my life of faith is similar to a cup and am very glad we aren't trying to find meaning in a waste basket, a boiling teakettle or a pin cushion! Can you imagine? We won't go there.

Of course I love coffee and tea and especially enjoy sitting down with good friends and a cup of hot steaming black coffee or a calm decaffeinated cup of tea. It is true that I love my Starbucks but I also love, love, love a cup of calm Tazo® tea.

Now that I think of it my day seems to be framed with a cup of caffeine and a cup of calm. Hmm...I wonder what that might mean?



Currently my cup of choice is a smooth white cup with a paw print on it. It is a comfortable cup to hold especially the first thing in the morning. Above the paw print is the phrase "Onward, by all means" and below the paw print is the signature of Atticus M. Finch. It is the cup sold by Tom Ryan, author of the inspirational book *Following Atticus*, which tells the adventures and story of Mr. Ryan and Atticus, his small miniature schnauzer as they climb the mountains of New Hampshire. They keep on climbing and moving forward through life's challenges and their learnings are full of meaning for me. I also love the metaphor of the mountains and I know that their story is wrapped up with my own story as I hold my morning cup in my hands.

I look forward to learning more from the cup that I will choose to use during the six weeks of Lent. I look forward to beginning my day within the stillness and silence of the early morning. I look forward to the insights and learnings that are ahead as I journey onward one day and one step at a time.

I pray that you will join in on this devotional journey using *The Cup of Our Life*.

Blessings,
Pastor Debbie



**Former pastor
Rev. Dr.
Wallace Reid,
passed away
February 21,
2014 in Tucson,**

Arizona. He was born July 15, 1931 in Melrose, MA, the first of four children. After High School he attended New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, where he majored in Voice and Violin. He then attended Acadia University in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, graduating with a B.A. with a major in Sociology and Psychology in 1954. While there, he organized The Acadia University Men's Quartet which subsequently performed throughout the Maritime Provinces. Upon graduating he matriculated at Andover-Newton Theological Seminary graduating from there with a M.A. degree in Counseling and a Doctor of Divinity he began his work on behalf of Christ, pastoring at several churches in Beverly, MA, Chester, VT, Littleton Commons, MA, and McCrawville, NY.

"Wally" reached out to all ages with his sense of humor, his musical abilities and his message of Salvation. In retirement in Sahuarita, AZ, he continued to lead Bible Studies and assist as an Outreach Pastor for the Elderly in Tucson. A celebration of his life will be held at Rancho Resort in Sahuarita on March 7. He sings with the angels in heaven now! He will be missed.

Cards or notes may be written to Dr. John R. Reid. If you would like his address please send me an email at pastordeb@fbclittleton.org

More about Joyce Rupp

the author of *The Cup of Our Life*

<http://www.joycerupp.com/cupofourlife.html>

Joyce Rupp is well known for her work as a writer, a spiritual "midwife," and retreat conference speaker. She led retreats throughout North America, as well as in Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Joyce has a B.A. in English, a M.R.E. in Religious Education, and a M.A. in Transpersonal Psychology. She is a member of the Servites (Servants of Mary) community and a volunteer for Hospice. She currently resides in Des Moines, Iowa.



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Thoughts from the Author...

"...I have found **the cup** to be a powerful teacher for my inner life. The ordinariness of **the cup** reminds me that my personal transformation occurs in the common crevices of each day. The cup is an apt image for the inner process of growth. The cup has been a reminder of my spiritual thirst. As I've held it, filled it, drunk from it, emptied it and washed it, I've learned that it is through my ordinary human experiences that my thirst for God is quenched. In the cup I see life, with its emptiness, fullness, brokenness, flaws, and blessings.

A cup is a container for holding something. Whatever it holds has to eventually be emptied out so that something more can be put into it. I have learned that I cannot always expect my life to be full. There has to be some emptying, some pouring out, if I am to make room for the new. The spiritual journey is like that--a constant process of emptying and filling, of giving and receiving, of accepting and letting go.

Also Upcoming

Ham & Bean Supper

April 5 Mission/Music



Women's Ministry Events

Fri., March 14 - PMS Party

(Popcorn, Movie and Sundae) 7:00 PM

Sat., May 24 - Canon Theatre, Littleton

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way To
The Forum 7:30 PM



Our American Baptist family has a profound heritage as a compassionate, engaging and benevolent people. Since 1824 ABHMS has been declaring and heralding the gospel of our Lord. Today, ABHMS remains rooted in that Word and committed to responding to the changing needs of our ever-changing world. The Theme for the AFC offering is "SEEK JUSTICE." It is based on Isaiah 1:17 which states:

"Learn to do good: seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow." (NRSV)

Dr. Aidsand F Wright-Riggins III Executive Director of ABHMS wrote the above word as an introduction to our Offering. We continue to be faithful to the call of justice as exemplified across our history by those who bore witness to the God who had transformed their lives ... and continues to transform this world.

John Mason Peck traveled on horseback to distribute bibles

Joanna P. Moore responded to the plight of freed slaves ministering in their camps and starting fireside schools.

Santiago Soto-Fontanez served as director of Spanish work for the Baptist City Society of NY.

William J Simmons – born a slave, after his conversion experience led a struggling school in Louisville Kentucky.

Jitsuo Morikawa born into a Buddhist family, learned of Christ from a Christian Neighbor. He was the head of National Ministries for evangelism from 1956 to 1966 (and a great influence on this writer).

Dr. Martin Luther King captured the attention of the world with a dream of equality and justice for all.

Will we carry on the tradition? Will we live our lives to be influence for justice? Will we help fulfil Dr. King’s dream that one day, every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low... and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed.”?

Please give generously to the America For Christ offering to be taken during the month of March 2014.

In Christ our Lord who calls each one of us to act in His name and for His sake.

Bob Stetson, for the Board of Missions of First Baptist Church of Littleton.



*Photo by
Caroline Poser*

Boy to the World!

By Caroline Poser

*Show me your ways, Lord,
teach me your paths. Psalm 25:4*

The Many Paths to Success

Is that what you wanted to be when you grew up, Mommy?” my eight year old asked me at the breakfast table after I told him exactly what it is I do on the computer and phone all day, until 5:30 – when, if they are home, they are allowed to turn on the TV – and sometimes later at night when they are supposed to be sleeping.

“Oh, gosh, no! I didn’t have the words for what I do when I was a kid. What I do now wasn’t even possible then.” (I manage a corporate marketing program – remotely – for a technology company.)

“What *did* you want to be, Mommy?”

“Well, when I was about your age, I thought I would like to be the President of the United States. But I didn’t like the risk of being assassinated so I decided I might rather be a jockey because I loved horses so much. But then I got too tall, so I thought maybe a veterinarian. Or an artist, or a hairdresser... I *really* wanted to be a hairdresser...”

“Why don’t you go to school to be one?” my oldest chimed in.

“Well, hon, I can’t just drop out of the workforce and go to school...how would I afford school, never mind anything else?”

“You could save up a lot of vacation time...” my middle son suggested.

“Well, that sounds like a good idea but in our company you have to use it or lose it by

the end of the year, so that wouldn't work. And besides, when you take vacation, you're expected to return to your job afterwards..."

We all sat in silence for a few moments and I wondered exactly when it is that our childhood career dreams die and we have to get practical. Certainly not everyone's die: there really are plenty of veterinarians, hairdressers, policemen, doctors, nurses, and firemen in the world, as well as numerous professional athletes, musicians, and actors. And, of course, I will encourage my kids' dreams as long as they have them. However, dreams do change as we move along our life path. I thought about one time in the car when two of my sons were playing the Game of Life on one of their electronic devices. One had asked the other to "spin" for him and he wound up being a salesman. He wanted to quit the game because it wasn't fair: he had wanted to be a doctor or lawyer. I listened to them argue in the back seat before I said, "Sometimes your career takes a detour that you might not have imagined, but it winds up being the best thing for you."

My oldest will be going to high school next year, and there are choices that have to be made. The reason we were having this discussion in the first place is that some of his classmates had gone to tour our local technical school the day before. My middle son had perked up when we started talking about the technical school. He's familiar with it because I have taken both his brother and him to different open houses there and they have friends from church who are enrolled there. He likes the idea of



learning a trade such as carpentry and having a choice whether to go on to college right away or not. I like the idea of him doing something creative with his hands, something that cannot be offshored, something that will always be in demand and around which his own business could be built.

My oldest, however, has made the informed decision to choose the traditional high-school-as-a pre-requisite-to-college route and is applying to a private, Catholic school. Why, I do not know, since our public school system is among the best, but perhaps it's because one of the Catholic school's cardinal rules is "it's cool to be smart" (my son has been called a nerd because he reads on the school bus and he's planning to participate in an after-school math competition).

I wrote about this in my first book, *MotherMorphosis*, more than ten years ago: I hope and pray my children are the people God wants them to be and that they are happy and productive members of society. I can encourage, nurture, socialize, care for, teach, and love them, but ultimately who they become is not up to me.

There are many paths to success.

<http://boytotheworld.wordpress.com/2013/1/16/the-many-paths-to-success/>

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Harriet's artwork this month is from the church archives and we continue to be grateful for her sharing her creativity and faith through the work of her hands and heart!

Be Fair and Just and Walk
Humbly with your God

