



GOVANS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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JANUARY 2006

The Bellringer

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Interview with the Captain

John Kinnier has recently stepped down from the position of Clerk of Session of Govans Presbyterian Church, having served in that position from March 2002 to November 2005.

John joined Govans in 1997, has served the church in a number of leadership capacities, and has been a member of Session from June 1998 to November 2005.

John is a Captain, U.S. Navy (Retired), having served for 26 years prior to retiring in 1985. He was a weapons-systems specialist, and during his service he commanded three ships, had four tours of duty in Viet Nam, commanded the Navy's largest Weapons Station, and was the Navy Program Manager for several weapons systems, including the ship-launched Tomahawk missile system.

He agreed to share with the Bellringer some thoughts on Govans at this critical juncture:

Bellringer: John, you've served an especially long term as Clerk of Session - more than three years - and have overseen a remarkable period of change for Govans. Assess, if you would, the state of Govans Presbyterian as of December, 2005.

John: Govans is a strong and healthy church, going through a period of transition and adjustment with remarkably little trauma or disruption. Some of our members have experienced some expected angst and concern following the retirement of our long-term pastor, the beloved Jack Sharp, but in general we are moving forward with verve and confidence as we face a bright, albeit challenging, future.

Bellringer: What are the most enduring strengths of Govans, that the congregation can draw upon in the coming year?

John: Of course we have a number of inherent strengths.

First and foremost is our membership, our people. We are blessed with a congregation that truly likes one another, we love our church and its ministry, and are unified as we go forth. We just don't have cliques or factions. Inclusiveness and friendliness are hallmarks of Govans!

We have a large number of people who give of their time and talents to the church and its mission.

We tend to be "forward-leaning", i.e., we try to look ahead prepare for the future.

We are blessed with our heritage. Not only do we have the strength and structure of the Presbyterian Church at large, but we have the strength and traditions of our individual church, Govans, founded some 160 years ago. Our predecessors have passed to us a strong church, and they had the foresight and generosity to establish a sizeable endowment which supports us financially today.

Bellringer: We've undergone a change in interim pastor this year. Do you think this will set us back, either as a viable congregation or in our search for a successor to Jack Sharp?

John: In the largest sense, no, I do not believe the change in interim pastoral leadership will be a setback, and will not cause any delay in the process of searching for our next "permanent pastor". The process of calling a new pastor is a long one, but we have progressed well in the last year, and Neta contributed to that progress. We have now demonstrated that the church continues to be strong and vibrant in spite of Jack's departure, and continues move forward. (That we continue to be strong is, in part, a real tribute to Jack!) We have conducted the mission-study and self-appraisal, and have elected our Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC). The PNC is proceeding on its task, without disruption.

Bellringer: We see from the updates in the church bulletin each week that our financial situation appears under pressure. How serious is our shortfall in contributions and how will that affect us as we go forward?

John: Our budget deficits are of concern, and we must come to grips with "paying our way" soon, but in due course. I am convinced that the way to solve our budget shortfall problems is through growth and stewardship education of the members of our congregation.

Over the past few years, we have lost a number of very faithful and very generous contributors to Govans as they were "called to their reward". Our present and new membership have not been contributing at a rate to make up for those losses.

We consciously decided that we should not cut programs or staff, but would borrow from our endowments to see us through this period of financial shortfall. It is important that we maintain our programs and our ministry, and as we move forward with new pastoral leadership, we should seek to welcome new members to our congregation. With new members, and with each of us doing what we can with our financial gifts, I am confident we will grow our way out of deficit spending, and repay our debts to our predecessors.

Bellringer: What can each member of the congregation do now to help the church through this transition.

John: The main thing is that we stick together, with collegiality, and rededicate ourselves to maintain and grow the church. We need to hold together, and pull together. It has been so very heartening to see so many of our members step-up and assume more responsibilities in the church in the last year. But there is always more to do.

(Continued on page 3)

My ordinances you shall observe and my statutes you shall keep, following them: I am the Lord your God.
- God (Lev. 18:4)

From the Pastor's

I wish every member of Govans could have witnessed the preschool Christmas Chapel program. It was a delight. During and after the program I noticed many children and even several adults getting up close and personal to the beautiful crèche. Attention seemed to be fixed on baby Jesus!

Do you remember the brief story in John's gospel that tell of several Greek visitors in the Holy Land who seek out the disciple Phillip and say, "We wish to see Jesus." (John 12:21) Often unexpressed and unrecognized, that desire is the real reason most of us worship and work at Govans Church. The array of services, programs, activities and groups that together reveal the extraordinary breadth and depth of the congregation's ministry and mission are established, promoted, and supported with our money, time, talent, and prayer for one important reason: to help ourselves and others see, feel, touch and understand the love of Jesus Christ.

When we receive the gift of God's love, the only way to keep it is to give it away. Every time you and I are to-

gether in worship; every time you bring a child to church school; every time you invite someone to come with you to a worship service; every time you contribute financially; every time you pray for Govans you are answering those asking us "We would see Jesus."

During this season of Christmas revelation and New Year's resolution, let's resolve to help others see Jesus. It's been my experience, and I suspect, the experience of many of you, that when we are about the gospel work, our Lord becomes a more clear and certain presence to us and in us. Leslie Weatherhead once wrote, "We don't need a picture (of Jesus) that is ecclesiastical and conventional of the stained glass variety; not a picture thrown on the screen of the mind by the language of creeds and confessions of faith. Rather, we need to picture Jesus among the kind of people we know; and the kind of people we are." Indeed!

Grace and Peace
Roger Shoup, D. Min.
Interim Pastor



Reaching Out

By Marilyn Forbes

Congratulations to Ellen & Heath O'Laughlen on the birth of their daughter Micaela Elizabeth on November 21, 2005. Best wishes to grandmother, Donna O'Laughlen



Our church looked lovely for the Christmas Season. A special thanks to Jean Richardson, Diana Sugiuchi, Carol Frigo, Jane Page, Bobbi Seabolt for the decorations which we all enjoyed.

Special thanks to Jimmy Love, one of our sextons, who helped with the trees and garlands.

Adult Study Options

Sundays at 10:00 a.m. In Sharp Hall

Adult Study Options: Introduction to the Old Testament:

Dr. Richardson will continue to lead this basic introduction of the Old Testament through January 15, 2006. Come join us at 10:00 a.m. on Sundays in Sharp Hall. This study is designed for anyone wanting an overview of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Laugh Out LOUD!!



No Answer

A new pastor moved into town and went out one Saturday to visit his parishioners. All went well until he came to one house. It was obvious that someone was home, but no one came to the door even after he had knocked several times. Finally, he took out his card and wrote on the back: Revelation 3:20 and stuck it in the door.

The next day, as he was counting the offering he found his card in the collection plate. Below his message was the notation Genesis 3:10.

Revelation 3:20 reads: "Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice, and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with me."

Genesis 3:10 reads: "And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked."

LECTIONARY FOR THE LORD'S DAY: NOVEMBER

1/1 *1st Sunday after Christmas*
Isa. 61:10-62:3; Ps. 148; Gal. 4:4-7;
Luke 2:22-40

1/8 *Baptism of the Lord*
Gen. 1:1-5; Ps. 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11

1/15 *2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time*
1 Sam. 3:1-10 (11-20); Ps. 139:1-6, 13-18;
1 Cor. 6:12-20; John 1:43-51

1/22 *3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Jon. 3:1-5, 10; Ps. 62:5-12; 1 Cor. 7:29-31;
Mark 1:14-20

1/29 *4th Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Deut. 18:15-20; Ps. 111; 1 Cor. 8:1-13;
Mark 1:21-28

JANUARY WORSHIP LEADERS

- 1/1 Drew Andersen
- 1/8 Edith Brown
- 1/15 Alice Read
- 1/22 John Kinnier
- 1/29 Lois Boyd



Deadline for Bellringer Articles is the 15th of every month. Please send them to gpcoffice@yahoo.com.

(Continued from page 1)

Each of us in Govans family can contribute with our time, talents, as well as financially. Govans is a very active church, engaged in many endeavors in support of our mission. We try to serve God by serving humankind, knowing that collectively we can be much more effective than individually. We have twelve identified Ministry Areas, and there are opportunities for everyone of us to participate and contribute. As we all give something of our time and talents, the synergistic effect ensures that the total works of our church is far more than the sum of our individual efforts.

Bellringer: *Any parting thoughts?*

John: Looking back over the 7 ½ years I have had the honor to serve on the Session, 3 ½ years as Clerk, it has been a remarkable period. The changes during this relatively brief period have been significant, and seeing how the church has adopted and adapted to the changes, certainly attests to our strength and should give us confidence in the future of Govans.

During this period,

-we formally declared ourselves to be a "More Light" church, clearly showing our inclusiveness and opposition to discrimination within our church.

-we conducted an extensive long range planning study, and developed a long range plan.

-we streamlined our governance, adopting a Unicameral Session, combining the functions of the Board of Trustees and the Board of Deacons into a restructured Session.

-we instituted the Ministry Area system, and now have more people than ever before working in and supporting the overall ministry of the church.

-we established the Heritage Fund and embarked on a program to perform some long overdue major maintenance and repair to the facilities and equipments.

-we celebrated the 160th anniversary of the founding of Govans.

-we celebrated Jack and Dotty Sharp's 25th anniversary with Govans

-we celebrated the completion of Jack and Dotty's 27 year ministry with Govans, and Jack' retirement, getting Jack honored as our Pastor Emeritus.

-we have completed our mission study and formed our PNC.

We clearly can accommodate change, and can move with confidence and vigor, and with God's grace, our future will be even brighter. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve with this wonderful group of people, the Govans family!

- Jon Morgan

For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them.
-Paul 1 Cor. 9:19



JANUARY

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1st
Jane Owoh
Carol Sharp
Stephanie Frantz | 16th
Jessica Sarver
Ruth Draper |
| 2nd
Jennifer Mauric | 18th
Harrison Jozwiak
Albert H. Bright III |
| 4th
Jayne Kelly | 19th
Amy Bryant
Deanna Williams |
| 5th
Matthew Pamfilis
Ryan Busick | 20th
Julien Colvin
Nicholas Zito |
| 6th
R. Wayne White | 22nd
Kathryn MacDougall |
| 9th
Graham Richardson | 24th
Evan Bush
Geneva Flores |
| 10th
Sebastien White
Pamela Jozwiak | 26th
L. Michael
Casey White
Maura Pannebecker |
| 11th
Kaley Shipley
Lydia Field | 27th
Caitlin McElpatrick
Rebecca Bryant |
| 12th
Lisa Beacham
Justim Conrad | 30th
Jessica Wilson
Bryan Sharp
Katy Field |
| 13th
Daphne Sugiuchi | 31st
Julie McDill |
| 14th
Jacob Meck | |
| 15th
Grace Venable | |

Preschool Press

Eleven teachers attended the Annual conference of the National Association for the Education of Young Children in Washington, D.C. in early December. Despite the snow and the traffic, the teachers who attended came back energized and excited about what they had experienced. Teachers were able to attend six one-hour workshop sessions per day. These sessions covered topics that included literacy, math, science, professionalism, child development, challenging behaviors, and curriculum. Teachers were given handouts or took notes and we all be gathering all this information into a booklet for the teachers to share with one another so that this valuable information is put to good use. We also purchased some great science equipment and some unique musical instrumentation to use in the classrooms. We are looking forward to attending the conference when it returns to Washington. Hopefully some of us will get to go to the conference in Atlanta in November 2006!

Ed Richardson and Roger Shoup led our annual Holiday chapel service on Wednesday December 21. The children learned how Advent, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa all use candles in their traditions. The children sang several songs for their parents and ended their concert with "Jingle Bells" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." Everyone was then invited back to the classrooms for Christmas lunch and parties.

The Preschool will reopen on Tuesday, January 3rd after our winter break. January is a busy time for the Preschool as the teachers are getting ready for annual conferences with parents. They have been making observations, taking photographs, and saving some of the children's art work so that they can share with each parent how their child is developing.

Registration will also take place during January. Families of children currently enrolled in the program and their siblings and children of church members will be able to register during January. In February, registration will be open to other families. Some families have already pre-registered in hopes that the Preschool will have space available for them in February. If you are interested in learning about the Preschool and wish to schedule a tour, please call the Preschool office at 410.435.8189 and we will be happy to make an appointment for you.

The Preschool and Extended Care will be closed Monday, January 16 in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday.

**Govans Presbyterian Church
5828 York Road
Baltimore, MD 21212**

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Please Deliver Between
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**WE'RE ON THE WEB
WWW.GOVANSPRES.ORG**

GOVANS SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:15 a.m.

CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICE

With Contemporary Music

Coordinator: Mike Kirkpatrick

10:10 a.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

ADULT OPTIONS

11:00 a.m.

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP

with Organ and Chancel Choir

Director of Music, William Wisnom

BARRIER FREE

CHILDCARE IS PROVIDED FOR

BOTH SERVICES

ALL ARE WELCOME

**The Ellen Morriss Memorial Labyrinth
is open from dawn to dusk daily**