

# Good News!

The Quarterly Newsletter of  
**South Chatham Community Church**

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. Ps. 119:105*



**Winter 2013**

**Volume 4 Issue 4**



## Joy

by Pastor Colby Olson

Joy is something all of us need to discover.

This time of year we sing songs like "Joy to the World" but do we know what we sing? Are we experiencing true joy? Many people have adopted a temporary happiness instead of joy. When we do this it deteriorates our faith because it becomes a faith based on circumstances, feelings, and emotions. This is not at all the joy that the Bible speaks. It is far deeper and much more beautiful than happiness.

**Joy is the settled assurance that God is in control of all the details of my life, the quiet confidence that ultimately everything is going to be alright, and the determined choice to praise God in every situation.**

As we reflect on Jesus' first coming, my prayer is that you will be able to discover the profound joy that only the Holy Spirit can bring.

*"We're depending on God; he's everything we need. What's more,  
our hearts brim with joy since we've taken for our own his holy name.  
Love us, God, with all you've got – that's what we're depending on."*

*(Psalm 33:20-22 MSG)*

# Winter Celebrations!

## For unto us a Child is born,

Unto us a Son is given;  
 And the government will be upon His shoulder.  
 And His name will be called  
 Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,  
 Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
 Of the increase of His government and peace  
 There will be no end,  
 Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,  
 To order it and establish it with judgment and justice  
 From that time forward, even forever.  
 The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.  
 -Isaiah 9:6-7

## He came not as an unapproachable conqueror,

but one whose first cries were heard by a peasant girl and a sleepy carpenter. God tapped humanity on its collective shoulder, "Pardon me", he said, and eternity interrupted time, divinity interrupted carnality, and heaven interrupted the earth in the form of a baby. Christianity was born in one big heavenly interruption.

-Max Lucado

## SCCC Birthdays

### December

12 Pauline Sullivan

### January

1 Rick Vachon  
 5 Jean Small  
 13 Mary Belyea  
 19 Laureanne Horne  
 20 Ginna Smith  
 24 Kay Paff  
 24 Nicole Barry  
 25 Sandy Burgio  
 26 Mary Catherine

### February

3 Sienna Towns  
 18 Dorothy Dilts



## Right or Wrong? Wrong Question!

By Kathy Wimberly

I caught some parts of a radio interview the other day. The speaker was a man who had apparently become the caregiver for his mother in her last years, although he himself is blind. He spoke about how he learned to test her blood sugar level, give her medications, and do many other jobs that are often left to professionals. He did this while also caring for his own young son.

After his mother died, he was haunted by doubts about the choices he had made during those years. Had he done the right things? Should he have made different decisions? Had he done the very best for his mother in her last years?

As he voiced his fears to a friend, his friend replied with these wonderful words of wisdom: There is no right or wrong in this situation; there is only faithful or unfaithful.

Wow. Doesn't that just bore directly into the heart of the matter? Only faithful or unfaithful. I was so struck by this insight that I posted about it on my facebook page. The first response I got was from a friend who pointed out that this is the essence of our actions in every important thing in life. Are we faithful or unfaithful?

Somehow that had not yet occurred to me. I sing with a group that brings the beauty and peace of song to people in

hospice care, and so I was just thinking narrowly about people near the end of their lives, like the mother in the radio story. But my friend was so right: it is the essence of our interaction with every important thing in our lives. We are not perfect, and we may not always be right, but we can be faithful.

We may not always have enough information to make the best decision. We may not have enough brain power left at the end of a difficult day to carefully consider all of the options to solving a problem, let alone have the energy to implement the most creative solution. We may sometimes fail to have the right attitude. If you've been a follower of Christ for any length of time, you know the one we should have: that attitude of Christ-like submission and love, walking in the beauty of holiness and the joy of servanthood. We may have even wept and raged in private, letting our ragged cries of "Why?" and "I can't do this anymore!" echo in the dark. And then the waves of guilt, and the accusations of the enemy of our soul, wash over us. "You're a failure. You're not helping, you're making things worse. You should just give up. You can't do this."

But have we been faithful? Have we continued on anyway, through the tough times? Putting one foot in front of the other, walking along the path He has set for us? Doing the thing that must be done next, and then next, and next?

God wants our faithfulness. He wants to show us that He will be our strength. He wants us to continue to do the thing He has called us to do. He will help us make good choices, and guide us on the path, but above all He wants us to walk faithfully. In John chapter 4 Jesus tells the Samaritan woman that if she knew to whom she was speaking then she would ask of him and he would give her living water, and she'd never thirst again. When our well of strength is empty, God wants us to toss the bucket down again, and pull up a full bucket of life. He has the power we need to be faithful in our lives; we just need to ask for it.

*God, give us that living, life-giving water. The water that revives, that gives us strength to go on, calms our soul, and clarifies our vision. God, help us to continue to walk faithfully, whatever the circumstances you have placed us in. Because, no matter how much we might want to please someone here on earth, what our hearts really, truly desire is to hear You say, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Lord."*

*Holy God, help us be faithful.*

## Believer's Baptism

The initial step of a faithful heart.



Just as a wedding celebrates the fusion of two hearts,  
baptism celebrates the union of sinner with Savior.



School House Pond  
September 2013

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## Blessings in Disguise

by Shannon Neal

*"Well, your age, coupled with your symptoms tell me that what we are likely dealing with here is a brain tumor... We are going to have to inject a contrast dye during your MRI so that we can really get a good, detailed look at your tumor."*

These are the words that, in seemingly slow motion, rolled so frivolously off the tongue of my doctor nearly 3 months ago. My peripheral vision vanished on the cadence of his declaration, and all I was able to perceive after that was a tunnel of fog and muffled sounds as I approached the receptionist for scheduling. Did he really just say, "...your tumor?"

I had been experiencing symptoms for some time that I had ignored, partially out of fear, but primarily due to the epidemic of complete self-neglect that plagues so many mothers. I had finally mustered up the strength and prioritized the appointment, completely unprepared for this potential diagnosis. It was three prayer-filled weeks before I received that fateful call from the doctor... "Much to my surprise," he said nonchalantly, "your MRI is clean. There is no tumor present. I'm relieved to see that the worst case scenario has been ruled out, so now we can move on and test for the other possibilities."

Now, I would have expected myself to harbor the desire to reach through my phone and physically shake this otolaryngologist for stating his hypothesis so definitively at my previous appointment. How could he put me and my family through so much hypothetical trauma, knowing that my symptoms could easily have indicated something else? Rather, my instinct in this moment of unexpected revelation was to sincerely say *thank you* to him. *Thank you* for waking me up 3 weeks ago and forcing me to fully comprehend the concept of not knowing what tomorrow might bring. *Thank you* for being that messenger who jolted me into living my life with a truly grateful heart. *Thank you* for offering me an opportunity to see tangible proof that, in a state of potential crisis, my faith would overcome my intellect and that God would lay a blanket of peace over my soul when I turned to Him. *Thank you*, because my symptoms have now become a daily reminder to "rejoice always, pray continuously and give thanks in *all* circumstances."

Thank you, God, for sending that foolish doctor my way...

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Christ has no body now  
on earth but ours.

Ours are the only hands  
with which he can do his work.

Ours are the only feet with which  
he can go about the world.

Ours are the only eyes  
through which his compassion  
can shine forth upon a troubled world

Christ has no body now on earth but ours

Teresa of Avila

1515-1582

## Lighting the Fire of Hope

*This story speaks of the healing effect of words of encouragement spoken by a man of God. It is just one of many such stories coming from the shelter and nurture provided by Pilot House in Hyannis.*

Paul sat quietly talking to a man around a kitchen table. The man was new to this home. He had been on the streets during the day and in the local shelter at night longer than he could remember. Life had beaten him down. He had learned to view his circumstances through the fog of addiction. Anesthetized and numbed he stumbled through his days. But, then one day his life intersected with Paul's; and he was offered a place to heal within a small community of men seeking to

find their way back.

At first, the young man was slumped over and was not able to look Paul in the eyes. That is until something touched him deep down in his soul. It was these words: "I know that you are a good man." Nobody had ever said that to him - ever! As he breathed them in, he looked at Paul and his shoulders visibly straightened. He was being called to find something so deeply buried that he had forgotten that it was there - that "good man" within.

For the first time in his memory, he dared to hope.

# LETTERS

## Finding Redemption

I just want to take a moment to thank all of you at South Chatham Community Church. You have given my family a strong Christian community in which to grow. On Easter Sunday my fiancé Krista and son Steele and I, attended service here. Nothing short of a miracle happened to me that morning.

As I sat and listened to this young pastor give a simple message of redemption, I prayed with all the honesty of a frightened child. A child who had strayed far from God's light. I prayed to Jesus for help, to strengthen me. I prayed for help, to break the chains of addiction that bound me for more than half my life. That was eight months ago. My life has changed so much since then. Steele and I moved to Chatham from Fairhaven. Krista and I are getting married here in April. God has provided me a good job and a fresh start. I have been reborn in this life, and I believe that I have a mission to stay strong through prayer and fellowship and to give back what has been so freely given to me. I love my church so much and I know that God's been working his perfect works in my life all along. On Easter Sunday I was right where I was supposed to be, home with Abba Jesus at SCCC with the Wimberlys and the Neals and the Olsons.

I am so thankful for this church, and just want to close with scripture that spoke to me early on in this amazing journey with the Lord...

*Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you*

*know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind." (James 1:2-6 NIV)*

**Jimmy Ponte**

## Free to Fly

Since the time I heard Myrna White sing her butterfly song, I have liked butterflies. Here are some of the words:

I'm free  
Just like a butterfly I'm finally me  
There's complete transformation  
Jesus made a new creation...of me  
and this butterfly called me  
is finally free.

I have always had faith in God, but it wasn't until now that the words "I can do everything through him who gives me strength" really sunk in. I think that a part of my courage comes from my new church family at SCCC. The love and caring that I have found here has made me stronger. I applied for a job with Capeabilities - and I got it! It is the first work that I have had outside of my family's business many years ago and babysitting. Thank you God and SCCC for helping me be free.

**Alison Spencer**

## *Thank you*

to our contributors who have freely shared their beautiful faith with us.

If you have been helped or encouraged by their witnessing, please tell them so personally:

**Kathy Wimberly, Shannon Neal, Jimmy Ponte, Alison Spencer, Colby Olson and Pam Ryan**

Your story could make a difference in the next issue - March 2014

Contact Pam (774)237-0515 [djpcryan@verizon.net](mailto:djpcryan@verizon.net)



**South Chatham Community Church**

**P.O. Box 52**

**2555 Main Street**

**South Chatham, MA 02659**

**Attention: Pam Ryan**

Place  
Stamp  
Here

To:



Philippians

1:3

[www.chatham-church.com](http://www.chatham-church.com)

## A New Year's Prayer

May God make your year a happy one!  
Not by shielding you from all sorrows and pain,  
But by strengthening you to bear it, as it comes;  
Not by making your path easy,  
But by making you sturdy to travel any path;  
Not by taking hardships from you,  
But by taking fear from your heart;  
Not by granting you unbroken sunshine,  
But by keeping your face bright, even in the shadows;  
Not by making your life always pleasant,  
But by showing you when people and their causes need you most,  
and by making you anxious to be there to help.  
God's love, peace, hope and joy to you for the year ahead.

Anonymous