

# Facets of Fellowship

MAY 2008



THE NEWSLETTER OF FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH

## Pastor's Perspective — Mixing Politics and the Pulpit

By Ron D. Lindholm, Senior Pastor

Every now and then we have an example of what happens when one mixes politics and the pulpit. More often than not, the message of the gospel is lost and the politics takes center stage. Barack Obama's pastor is a case in point. Given the opportunity to set forth the gospel that has the power to liberate sinful people from the shackles of sin, Dr. Jeremiah Wright's politics won't let him. If you doubt that, try to find anything in his published speeches, sermons or interviews that even remotely resembles the gospel, the content of which is defined by the Scriptures (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-4) and is the same for all. The Scriptures are clear: *There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by [God's] grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus* (Romans 3:22b-24).

In his search of the Scriptures, Dr. Wright has observed that Jesus was a champion of the poor, the disadvantaged and the oppressed (Luke 7:22) and that we as Christians should follow in His steps. In keeping

with that, Dr. Wright's church has become a beacon of hope for many of these people in its community. Its ministries of help and advocacy are reportedly legendary. But what Dr. Wright has seemingly missed (as reflected in his rhetoric) is that the ultimate concerns of Jesus were not temporal—whether of politics or socioeconomics. The ultimate concerns of Jesus were eternal—even though the ministry of Jesus was to and among a people who were politically oppressed and often physically needy. Indeed, it is instructive to note that when Jesus was given the opportunity to lead a populist liberation movement, He refused (see John 6:14-15).

What's often lost to those who mix politics and the pulpit is that even when their objectives are achieved (if that day ever comes), they've done nothing to set forth the hope of the gospel. Alas, the people to whom, for whom and among whom they've advocated are without a clue as to the personal sin that resides within them, enslaves them to selfish desires and destructive habits, and threatens to separate them eternally from God—and that's tragic.

### Congratulations!

Pastor Lindholm will graduate from Baptist Bible Seminary with a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) on Friday, May 9. We thank the Lord for this accomplishment, as it reflects valuable preparation for the work of the ministry. Pastor's dissertation project produced a manual of "Thirty Bible Lessons for Teaching in an ESL Setting," which is benefiting our own ESL ministry at Fellowship and is also being passed along to other churches who desire to develop a similar ministry.

## Able to Do Immeasurably More than We Imagine

Thirty-one people attended the Evangelism Seminar taught by Fellowship's missionary, Paul Briggs, on April 18-19. We believe this reflects a serious commitment on the part of our people to reach our community for Christ. We are eagerly looking forward to the Lord's powerful working in wonderful ways as we use what we have learned through the seminar to tell others the truth of the gospel.

A love offering for the Briggs family was received on Sunday, April 20. The goal was \$1,600.00, which would have allowed Fellowship to cover the Briggs' shortfall for two months while also covering the honorarium and travel reimbursement for Paul's ministry. The Lord provided above and beyond our expectations, bringing in \$4,905.00 and enabling Fellowship to cover the Briggs' shortfall for almost eight months.

**We Need You...** to help with Fellowship's 3rd annual Spring Festival on Saturday, May 17 (12:00 to 4:00 PM). Broad participation by our church family is crucial to the success of this outreach effort. Please use the sign-up sheet in the church foyer. Please also pray for good weather, and for many visitors from our community—that some would come to Christ through the gospel presentations and literature distributed, and that the Lord would open doors for further ministry in the lives of many of those who attend.

## Wrapping Up Another Year of Ministry



### **Thursday Night ESL**

Thursday night ESL classes will conclude on May 15 with an end-of-year party (8:00 to 9:00 PM). Everyone is invited to come and help us demonstrate Christ's love for our students.



### **Awana Clubs**

An Award Ceremony will be held on Sunday, May 18 (5:30 PM) to recognize our clubbers' achievements in studying God's Word. This is also an opportunity to reach unsaved family members.

# Getting to Know Our Church Family

## Donald and Laurie Cuddington

Donald was born in Wilson, NC and grew up in Goldsboro, NC. His father was a state employee and worked in law enforcement his entire career. Donald's mother worked part-time as the secretary of the church the family attended, and she is still serving in that capacity. Donald has one brother, who is 10 years younger.

Laurie was born and raised in Rochester, NY, where her father worked as a research chemist for Kodak. Her mom cared for her 5 children in the home. Being much younger than her two brothers and two sisters, Laurie almost felt like an only child. Her family was extremely active in church, but their church lacked a strong biblical foundation.

As a child, Donald enjoyed school and sports. His fondest memories are of time spent with family. Laurie had an active childhood including church, girl scouts, lessons of all sorts, and summer camp. One favorite of hers was the puppy she received for her 9<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Donald accepted Jesus as Savior when he was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. His Sunday school teacher at that time was instrumental in helping Donald see his need for Christ. Laurie made a decision for Christ in junior high, during a youth retreat, then later fell away from that commitment. But the Lord patiently drew her to Himself, and

*Serve one another in love... Galatians 5:13*

in 1994 Laurie really came to know the truth of the gospel and embraced Jesus as her personal Savior.

After high school, Donald attended the University of North Carolina and went on to a career in the US Navy. He was recently promoted to Captain, and many of us had the privilege of witnessing that ceremony. Laurie attended Duke University and worked in banks before getting married. She has also worked overseas as an English teacher. Her current work is as mom and home-school teacher.

Donald and Laurie have five children. Sarah is attending the University of North Florida. Amy (15), Carrie (11) and Walter (6) are still at home. Donna was born and then died in May 1999.

Donald's service in the Navy brought the Cuddingtons to Northern Virginia. They began attending Fellowship in August 2007. The Cuddingtons have helped with church cleaning, and Donald is considering service as an Awana leader. Laurie teaches ESL and will help with Vacation Bible School this summer.

Donald enjoys spending time with his family. Laurie's interests include reading and building relationships with international people—learning their language or teaching them English as a means of evangelism.

Donald asks for prayer for wisdom in raising their children to love and serve Christ. Laurie says, "I am very thankful that God has (again!) placed us in a church where we can join in serving Him in many ways and be members of a church family that seeks the Lord and honors Him."

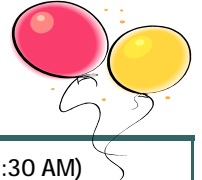
## Money Matters



The record below demonstrates the awesome way in which the Lord continues to provide for Fellowship. One area that is particularly exciting is our progress toward eliminating the church mortgage. 50@1 giving for the first 4 months of 2008 is over 70% of the total for all of 2007, and generous General Fund giving has enabled extra mortgage payments to be made. The result is a decrease of about \$33,600 in the mortgage principle from the first of the year to the end of April.

April Giving Per Week (General Fund)	\$6,029
Weekly Need	\$5,568
Year-to-Date Giving (General Fund)	\$101,064
Year-to-Date Need	\$94,656
Year-to-Date 50@1 Giving	\$7,115

## Calendar



May 10	Mother's Day Luncheon (11:30 AM) Youth Sugarloaf Mountain Hiking Trip
May 13	Nursing Home Ministry (2:00 PM)
May 15	ESL End-of-Year Party (8:00 PM)
May 17	Spring Festival (NOON-4:00 PM)
May 18	Awana Award Ceremony (5:30 PM) No Other Evening Ministries
May 25	Memorial Day Sunday Potluck Luncheon (NOON) No Evening Ministries
May 31	Women's Mt. Vernon Trip (10:00 AM)