



Vienna Presbyterian Church PC(USA)

The Vienna Press

A Disciple-Making Community

March 2008 (Vol. 49, No. 3)

As I See It



Photo: Kim Jackson

by Pastor Pete James

When the Washington Monument was being refurbished years ago, workers removed marble wainscoting from its lobby. In the process, they uncovered graffiti dating back to the 1800s. It read, "Whoever is the human instrument under God in the conversion of one soul erects a monument to his own memory more lofty and enduring than this." It was simply signed BFB. Not exactly the type of graffiti you might find on D.C. buildings or subway cars today!

Evangelism has fallen out of favor in our day. Author Rebecca Pippert says it well:

(Continued on page 2)

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Deadline for April issue:
March 10

Missions Sunday: Apr. 20

by Sheila Breuer, Director of Missions and Outreach

VPC is a community dedicated to planting new churches, so this year on Missions Sunday, Apr. 20, we will be welcoming to the pulpit Elizabeth Brookens-Sturman, pastor of Brambleton Presbyterian Church in Virginia.

The Missions Sunday theme, "Witness to the ends of the earth," is inspired by scripture in Acts 1:8: "...and you will be my witness in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Beginning at 9:00 am, all are cordially invited to Missions Marketplace activities in the Great Hall. VPC-supported missionaries and missions organizations from the United States and around the world will be present. The Missions Marketplace will have something for everyone, such as a Missions Marketplace Catalog for adults who want an opportunity to give to specific projects/missions or other needs to which our church has a partnership, and food for all. Enjoy our cookout from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm, featuring complimentary hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and drinks. We invite everyone to come for an enjoyable Sunday of meeting and talking with people serving around the world.

VPC's Commitment to Church Planting: "Out of the Pews and Into the World"

VPC is a leading light for new church development in the PC(USA). Over 130 years ago, VPC was one of several new church 'plants' started by Lewinsville Presbyterian. Of course, in 1870 Vienna was the 'new frontier' of the Presbytery. For the last two decades, VPC has been helping to extend that frontier as Fairfax and Loudoun counties grow.

VPC was instrumental in starting Centreville and Riverside Presbyterian churches, which are now among the largest in the Presbytery! These 'new' churches are strong and healthy and are committed to helping VPC start a new congregation in the community of Brambleton, west of Dulles airport.



Pastor Elizabeth

Elizabeth Brookens-Sturman is the organizing pastor at Brambleton, and they are celebrating their second year of ministry. Elizabeth and her leadership team are reaching large numbers of unchurched young families who are experiencing the amazing grace of Jesus Christ for the first time.

Elizabeth is a 'local missionary' and will be preaching at VPC on Apr. 20 as part of our annual Missions Sunday celebration.



As I See It

(Continued from page 1)

“Evangelism is the one thing that Christians and non-Christians alike agree on. We both hate evangelism!”

Maybe what people hate is people’s aggressive evangelistic approach. We despise the efforts of zealous evangelists to ram religion down our throats and recoil when TV preachers spew fire and brimstone from their pulpits. Someone has said, “Televangelists are the pro wrestlers of religion.”

Evangelism is a perfectly good word. It originates from a Greek word meaning good news. Matthew tells us, “Jesus preached the good news of the kingdom of God” (4.23). Good news is what God offers us in Jesus Christ.

Late one night some years ago, I was visiting someone acutely ill in the hospital. As I left the room and walked down the darkened hallway, a stranger ran up to me. “She’s gonna be all right. My daughter is going to be all right.” This man didn’t know me, but he couldn’t contain himself. Good news is for sharing.

Our Evangelism Team desires our church to increasingly become a good news community. We are searching for an Evangelism Director to lead in this effort. After all, good news is for sharing.

Daylight Savings Time begins Mar. 9

Log on to www.viennapres.org at any time for the most recent information about VPC and community events.

Holy Week

Holy Week is the most important week in the life of the church. It is when we remember the final week of Jesus’ life. Our temptation is to fast-forward to Easter, but Jesus invites us to journey with him day by day: from the excitement of Palm Sunday, to the poignancy of Maundy Thursday, to the utter despair of Good Friday, to the emptiness of Holy Saturday, and to the joy of Easter.

All are welcome to the following worship and music events:

March 16

**Palm Sunday Services at 8, 9:30 & 11 am
“Triumphant Sounds of Easter” Concert, 7 pm**

March 20

Maundy Thursday Service, 7:30 pm

March 21

**Good Friday Combined Service at
First Baptist Church, 7:30 pm
(450 Orchard Street, NW, Vienna; cross-street: Nutley):
Peter James, preacher**

March 23

Easter Services at 8, 9:30 & 11 am

A Lenten Resolve

On Feb. 3, Pastor Pete introduced his Lenten sermon series, which centers on “being Kingdom people.” He closed his sermon with an invitation to the congregation to join him in committing to this Lenten Resolve. Many of you have asked for a copy.

Today, I’m crossing the line. I’m going God’s way. I’m living the rest of my life for God’s kingdom and God’s glory.

From this time forward, I declare Jesus Christ as Sovereign Lord and acknowledge that I am not. I commit to live as Jesus’ disciple. I promise to follow his teachings, cultivate his character and live his life of love.

From now on, I endeavor to invite the Holy Spirit to fill me and use me.

I pledge myself to this body of believers. I will resist idle gossip, stupid controversies and hurtful slander. I will thwart back-stabbing and back-biting. I promise to build up and encourage. I will speak the truth in love and hold fast to what is good. I will love extravagantly, forgive freely and live faithfully.

I will live this way until God calls me home.

The sermon is available in its entirety as a written or audio file at <http://www.viennapres.org/sermons>.



All-Church Events in March

- **Young Adults Luncheon:** Mar. 2, after 11 am service
- **Men's Fellowship Dinner:** Mar. 5, 7 pm
- **PITS Fun Friday Dinner:** Mar. 7, 5 pm
- **"Everything Must Change" Conference:** Mar. 7, 6 pm and Mar. 8
- **SWATT Potluck Luncheon:** Mar. 12, 12:15 pm
- **Piece Makers:** Mar. 12, 1 pm
- **Club 56:** Mar. 14 & 28, 7 pm
- **PITS Easter Egg Hunt:** Mar. 15, 10 am
- **Widows & Widowers Lunch:** Mar. 15, noon, offsite
- **Holy Grounds Coffeehouse:** Mar. 15, 7-10 pm
- **Book Discussion Group:** Mar. 19, 7:30-8:30 pm

Weekly Offerings:

- **GriefShare:** Sundays, 6 pm
- **Lose It For Life:** Mondays, 7:30 pm
- **Jesus 101:** Tuesdays, 7-9 pm
- **Young Adults Bible Study:** Thursdays, 7 pm, offsite

For Holy Week services, see page 2

To announce an all-church event here, phone 703.938.9050 ext. 105

Photo: Kim Jackson



Keeping Up With the Changes

by Dick Eagan, Executive Director

One great thing about living in Virginia is that when March comes you know winter is over, spring is near and it is time to get back outdoors. We really do spend so much more time indoors when we are cold. With spring, we open our doors and windows again and breathe the fresh air. We warm up, spend time outside and reintroduce ourselves to our neighbors.

One of the changes we committed to last year was being a more **Inviting** church. Following the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19—"Go and make disciples..."—our commitment to disciple-making starts with introducing folks to the love of Jesus here at VPC. So the winter is over and it's time to Open the Doors. It is time to invite our family, friends, neighbors and colleagues to meet Jesus and experience our Joyful, Contagious, Christ-centered Community. It is time to fill the sanctuary with worshippers, not because it is Easter but because we are inviting people to join us. It is time to fill the Holy Grounds Coffeehouse (next opportunity: Saturday night, Mar. 15). It is time to fill our New Members Seminar. It is time to fill our CenterPoint and Sunday morning classes, not because we are marketing more but because we are committed to attending and to inviting someone to join us. The Medical Center Parking Lot on Park Street

NW is open with plenty of available parking. It's Spring! Let's commit to opening our hearts to invite all the people for whom God is offering the opportunity to experience the love of Jesus through you here at VPC.

Over the past year, Julie Kim, editor of this newsletter, has been changing the distribution of *The Vienna Press* from being printed and mailed to being received via e-mail so that you can experience the impact of it in color. We are now ready to have everyone by default receive it by e-mail and read it online. But please remember: If you want to receive your newsletter in the mail, we are still printing and mailing. We realize that not everyone reads online, and we want to make sure that everyone gets the version that is most convenient for him or her. If you have not already renewed your subscription for a printed newsletter to come via U.S. mail, e-mail vpcmail@viennapres.org (subject line: "U.S. Mail only") to request this or phone ext. 105.

We are also transforming our weekly worship bulletin into a more info-friendly weekly newsletter. The bulletin now includes our weekly prayer list, our weekly Word, Share, Prayer daily devotional scripture reading that follows the sermon series, and church life opportunities and activities. The bulletin is already available online at www.viennapres.org, but if you would like to receive it weekly via U.S. Mail, you can subscribe via www.viennapres.org/signups or ext. 100. We will continue to work on how we can best produce the different communication mediums—web site, weekly worship bulletin and monthly newsletter—to be more effective at keeping you up with all God is doing here at VPC.



SPRING AT VIENNA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Play Ball!

Interested in playing softball this spring? Join the VPC men's team for fellowship and fun. We will be playing in the Reston Church league on Tuesday nights, April through June. If you would like to play or want more information, please contact Tim Donaldson (703.242.6253 or whisdonald1@yahoo.com).

Below: Members of the 2007 spring league.



Photo: Anna Whiston-Donaldson

Passages

For 10 Thursdays, from Apr. 3 through June 5, VPC will offer another session of Passages to anyone from VPC or the larger community who is facing separation or divorce.

For information about enrollment, room location, fees and available scholarships, contact co-leaders Romey McPherson (703.478.9794) or Joni Thomas (703.319.1979), or e-mail passages@viennapres.org.

“Everything Must Change”

Besides Holy Week events listed on page 2, we encourage you to attend the “Everything Must Change” seminar with internationally-regarded local author and pastor Brian McLaren. To be held at VPC beginning at 6:00 pm on Friday, Mar. 7 and continuing on Mar. 8, this “participatory experience” will feature dialogue and conversation groups about faith, art, justice, mission, spiritual formation, worship and community. Registration is \$79; for information and to register, visit www.deepshift.org.

“Open Doors, Open Hearts” Capital Campaign

by Catherine Dehoney, Financial Giving Coordinator

In 2002, our church answered God's call to a new sense of purpose by developing a nine-year capital plan to: 1) Improve and expand VPC's facilities; and 2) Fund important missions and outreach, such as planting a new church in Brambleton and providing special funding for Haiti and other exciting missions programs.

This spring, VPC will launch the final three-year phase of a nine-year capital funding plan. God has blessed us every step of this journey, and we are grateful to him that we have arrived at

this point on target with our plan. We must remain faithful and finish the race He has marked out for us.

Now that we have new balconies in the sanctuary, a renovated space for our youth and a beautiful and highly functional Ministry Center, we have new ways of inviting people into our church family and sending us all out into the world, better equipped to do God's work. That is why the theme of this next campaign is “Open Doors, Open Hearts.”

The campaign will run from 2008–2011 and will focus on

paying down the remaining \$8.2 million in construction loans and meeting the commitment we made to special missions funding (There is \$425,000 left to raise of the \$1,033,800 committed.)

In the coming months, there will be opportunities for our entire community to celebrate how God is at work at VPC and how he has blessed us through the capital funding process. Each of us will be invited to prayerfully consider our commitment to this exciting push to the finish. More to come...watch this space!



SPRING AT VIENNA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

U.S. Army Chorus

On Thursday, Mar. 27, at 8:00 pm, the U.S. Army Chorus will perform with many of their distinguished alumni in VPC's sanctuary. The program will also feature the University of Virginia Men's Glee Club.

Conducting the Chorus will be Professor Allen Crowell of the University of Georgia (at right). From 1959-1964, Professor Crowell served in the U.S. Army as bass soloist and enlisted leader until receiving a direct commission to Second Lieutenant. He then became Associate Bandmaster of The U.S. Army Band and Director of The U.S. Army Chorus until July 1979, when he retired as Executive Officer and a Major. After retirement from military service, he taught and conducted at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey for 20 years before being appointed to the endowed position at the University of Georgia.



This event will be free and open to the public. Bring friends and neighbors for a wonderful evening.

Parenting Seminar

Could you use some parenting insight, support and encouragement? Then mark your calendar for a Parenting Seminar, Apr. 4-5, in the Great Hall.

The featured speaker will be Steve Cort—Christian, former VPC youth director, father of three children, director of Krislund Camp in Pennsylvania, hiker of the Appalachian Trail and very engaging communicator.

Steve will use principles from the *Parenting With Love and Logic* series and from books by Kevin Lehman, all available in VPC's Grapevine Books, which will be open.

A Friday night session for parents of adolescents will be offered on Apr. 4, 7:00-9:00 pm. On Saturday morning, Apr. 5, a session for parents of young children (geared towards elementary-aged children but with principles that apply to even younger ones) will be offered from 9:00 am until noon.

Cost is \$5 per participant and covers one or both sessions. Registration forms are available in the narthex, Children's Ministries office (3rd floor) and Student Ministries office (L-level).

Childcare is available on Saturday morning. Please phone ext. 351 at least 48 hours in advance. For questions, call Daryl Wright at ext. 126.

2nd Annual International Potluck Dinner

by Dick Hildreth, ESOL Volunteer

Each week there are 150-300 adult students from 49 countries who come into our church to learn our language and our culture. They have a broad range of needs.

Some can't read our street signs or pronounce our alphabet. Others have studied English for many years and want to learn our idioms and expressions. All want to learn

our culture and make friends with Americans.

Our International Dinner on Apr. 19 is a great way to interact with the international community.

Beyond the dinner, the ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) ministry is a wonderful venue in which to volunteer. If you can't do that, please come to the potluck dinner and connect with some

internationals right in our own church. Share food from around the world on Saturday, Apr. 19, 6:30-8:30 pm, in the Great Hall. Entertainment will focus on our ESOL students.

Contact Dick Hildreth (Richard.Hildreth@cox.net or 703.560.1857) for information. Childcare will be provided; phone ext. 351 as soon as possible but no later than Apr. 6.



Estate Planning Resources Now Available

by Elaine Cudney

Have you put off writing a will or updating your estate plan? Now is a great time to get to it! The VPC Endowment Board is offering some great resources to help you get started.

- The “Personal Record Book” is a tool to help you document your possessions. You may wish to provide a copy to a family member and your executor as a safeguard against loss.

- The “Guide to a Christian Will” gives insight into the ways you can give and offers ideas, solutions and alternatives to reach your charitable goals.

Copies of these publications can be found on the information wall in the Gathering Space or by contacting the Endowment Board at 703.938.9050 ext. 311 or endowment@viennapres.org.

If you already have created an estate plan and have made provisions for a future gift to VPC, thank you! The Endowment Board would love to hear from you in order to discuss the legacy gift you are providing. Please contact us as detailed above and a member of the Board will get back to you.

Thank you for your thoughtful planning!

Sharing the Light

Restoring Hearts as Well as Homes in Mississippi

VPC is looking for more volunteers to help with the restoration work still going on in the Mississippi Gulf coast region devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Whoever might decide to go will have a great example to follow—VPC member Myrna Ives’ volunteer work there. She made seven trips to Long Beach on the Mississippi coast, ten miles west of Biloxi—her longest stay, May through October of last year. She returned home for the holidays but then went back for another month.

During her time in Mississippi, Myrna stayed at the Long Beach Presbyterian Church, living in one of the long-term mission trailers on the church grounds, sleeping on one of the air mattresses in bunks. She also ate at the church along with other volunteers, some of whom did the cooking.

Myrna’s job during most of her time in Long Beach was as facilities director for the church, helping to find housing and cooking for work groups that arrived. She also served as

liaison between the church and the Mississippi Presbytery.

Myrna says she was awed by the number of volunteers who came to help, week after week. She estimates there were more than one thousand of them from 25 states and 28 churches during the time she was there. She also believes there were more Presbyterian volunteers working in the coastal damage area than from any other denomination.

She found great spiritual renewal through the constant, day-to-day challenge of helping homeowners make their houses livable again. Skilled workers had to be found, and when they weren’t available among the volunteers, money had to be found to hire an electrician or plumber, for example, who was needed. And it sometimes took weeks to get the repair work inspected by local officials.



“The homeowners,” Myrna found, “were incredibly patient and full of heartfelt thanks for the work we did. I couldn’t go into a grocery store without people stopping me to tell me their stories...about how Presbyterian volunteers had fixed their houses.”

Those volunteers were easily spotted; they often wore blue T-shirts

with “Presbyterian Disaster Assistance” printed on the front. Myrna thinks those T-shirts were what prompted a woman to pull up in her car just as Myrna and some VPC college volunteers were about to enter a fast-food lunch place in Long Beach last month. The woman handed Myrna \$120 in cash as an expression of gratitude and then drove off without even giving her name.

College students and other young people aren’t the only folks who can help with the restoration work in Long Beach. Myrna is 66, living proof that age, indeed, is merely a state of mind.

—rds

Photo: Romiejean Irvin



Missions Work: Sports Outreach Institute

by Russ and Sue Carr

The ministry of Sports Outreach Institute, Inc. (SOI), under the leadership of Russ and Sue Carr and colleague Rodney Suddith, continues to expand rapidly in spite of numerous challenges. The work in Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda is touching hundreds of lives through our multi-faceted programs that include the following components: 1) Sports Activities; 2) Feeding Program; 3) Community Service; 4) Vocational Training, including HIV/AIDS program and a new initiative in micro-enterprises; and 5) Education.

KEY FACTS:

Targeted Areas: Slums in Nairobi, Kenya, Kampala, Uganda and the war zones of northern Uganda, Rwanda, Mexico and the U.S.

Population of the nine slums in East Africa where SOI is ministering: 2.5 million.

Sports Activities: In one Nairobi slum, we have 41 teams and over 1,200 children registered. Recently, 176 from this one league accepted Christ and are involved in our discipleship program. Several hundred other slum kids compete in leagues in the other eight slums. Scores of children and adults have become followers of Christ through this evangelistic outreach.

Feeding Program: SOI now feeds over 2,000 children each day in the slums. During this time, one-on-one mentoring and discipleship takes place. Instruction in hygiene, AIDS prevention and challenges to remain sexually pure also are discussed. Our Christmas outreach to the poorest slums provided family food packs to over 500 families and kids kits (clothes, shoes, Bible, etc.) to nearly 700 children.



Community Service: Each slum schedules a community service day at least once a month, when homes are repaired, water sources cleaned and restored, sewage ditches cleaned out, rubbish collected, weeds cut, etc.

Vocational Training, HIV/AIDS Programs and Micro-Enterprises: SOI has now trained dozens through our vocational training programs.

Nearly 100 HIV mothers enrolled in our weekly meetings, which involve counseling, training, evangelism and discipleship. In Dec. 2007 alone, 27 women gave their lives to Christ. Through our micro-enterprise program, 1,200 individuals (mostly women) have been able to initiate a small business providing them with survival income.



Education: Many slum children could not read or write due to lack of funds needed to attend school. SOI provides tuition scholarships to help the most needy and best qualified children. In addition, SOI has established two schools in Nairobi and Gulu, northern Uganda. Unemployed Christian teachers were hired at a minimal salary, a state-approved curriculum with a Biblical base was devised, and before long, over 600 children were enrolled. Nearly all of the children are believers and can now study the scriptures, in addition to developing basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic.



Please pray for this ministry, which is supported by VPC.

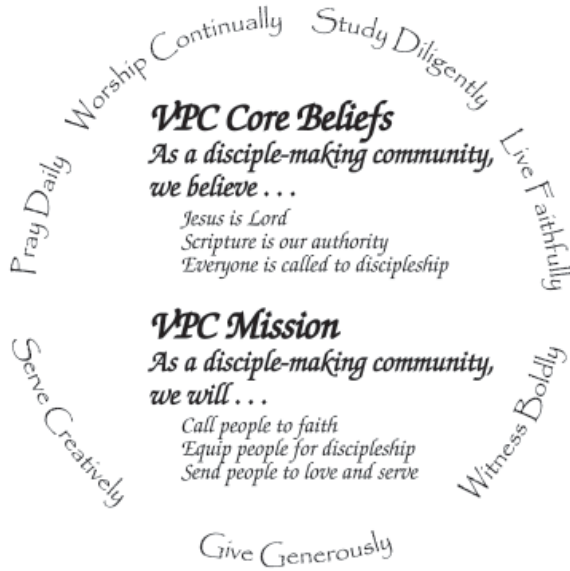


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Grapevine Books,
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ext. 135

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Deadline: Mar. 10

Send articles to: newsletter@viennapres.org
or bring to the VPC Office (Ministry Center, 2nd Floor)

Vienna Presbyterian Church

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Phone: 703.938.9050

Web Site: www.viennapres.org

Sunday Live Audio Webcast: www.viennapres.org/worship

Sermons (audio and print) are available at www.viennapres.org/worship