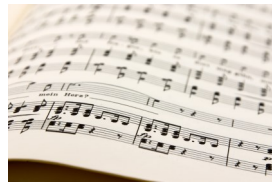


Junior and Cherub Choirs

by JoAnn Mattson, Lynne Sarich

We hope you all had a great summer. Both choirs will begin September 12, at 3:45 every Thursday. Junior Choir will end at 4:45 and the Cherubs will end at 4:30. Our aim is to praise the Lord with music in a joyful, fun time. I know that the Lord will be happy to hear their joyful voices praise Him again.



PrEParing for Marriage

by Al and Nancy Strong

Now is the time to register for the Fall semester. Brochures describing the class and registration forms are available in the Church Office or on our website, epannapolis.org. The course begins Sunday, September 8 and continues through December 8, 2013, excluding Thanksgiving week-end. Preparing for Marriage is a pre-marital course for couples who are seriously dating or engaged, or those married less than one year. Classes are held at the church from 9:00 to 10:30AM.

In addition to attending the weekly sessions, each couple is paired with a trained mentor couple to work with them closely throughout the course. The most beneficial time to participate is from six months to a year prior to the wedding. Please take advantage of the opportunity to grow your relationship and to build solid foundations for the future. For more information, call Al and Nancy Strong or visit the church website at www.epannapolis.org.

EPistle

September / October 2013

Worship and Our Children

by Pastor Bruce O'Neil

This month many of our five year old children will be joining us for worship on Sunday mornings. Most of them have been in the loving care of our preschool teachers and have now graduated to join us. We are glad to have them.

Much of what these children will see and hear will be new to them. In the beginning, the worship service, including the sermon, may not be understandable to them. But we should not get too concerned about this because God does not require us to understand everything going on in the worship service. For most of us, it was because we attended worship, that we grew in our understanding of what was going on and we learned how to worship by watching others. To help people understand, those who are leading worship in our church try to explain what is going on and why we have the different elements. The goal is to be understood and to encourage participation in worship.

We are getting help from some of our parents to help our younger children understand worship and to fully participate. Parents are the most influential and most effective teachers of their children. One of the best ways they will learn how to worship will be by watching their parents worship. This way they will understand what is going on by discussing with their parents what happened and what was said. What they see you do as parents in worship and what you talk about over lunch regarding the service is informative for your children.

But parents of the children don't shoulder the responsibility to train their children alone. Everyone in worship is helping. We all take a vow at their baptism to assist the parents in nurturing their child in the faith. Sometimes that happens when we teach them in Sunday school. Yet all of us teach them as they watch us worship every Sunday morning. That is both a wonderful privilege and a sobering reality. Let all of us be aware of the children in worship.



EP Homecoming Picnic & Praise Celebration

by Tom Beall

God has blessed EP church for 49 years with Godly men and women who have worshiped and served Him here in this place. His people have been the impetus to start 12 different churches in and around Anne Arundel County to take the good news of the Gospel to thousands (over 3,000 worship each Sunday Morning in these 12 churches). His vision for us is to continue planting churches in the Annapolis Area. Hundreds have gone from EP onto the mission field throughout the world.

On **Sunday, September 15th**, 4:30-8:00PM we will celebrate together what God has done in the past, what he is doing among us now, and the vision He is giving us for

the future, and to honor the people who have been faithful to God's call over the past 49 years here at EP Church.

Come join us for a great time to:

- Hear testimonies of those who have faithfully followed our Lord.
- Look forward to God's vision for where He is taking us. God's plan for EP is not done yet.
- Praise our Lord together at an "evening service" of *Celebration and Praise*.
- Enjoy a picnic of Fried Chicken, potato salad,

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Jesus calls us to be “salt and light” (Matthew 5:13-16), living to reflect Christ and glorify our Father in heaven. He calls us to do this continually - not only when people are nice to us in response, but also in the face of disapproval and rejection. There are faithful stewards of God’s Word, abroad and at home, facing threats to their personal freedom, or their lives, as they proclaim the Gospel. We know to expect this, as 2 Timothy 3:12 states, “Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” The Salt and Light Committee (SLC) helps encourage Christian discipleship by stimulating the “hands and feet” of EP members to exalt Christ as we intersect with the culture, particularly in areas that are in conflict with the Church. Areas especially relevant to the 21st century American Church include the sanctity of life, marriage, and religious liberty. The SLC will focus this year on **religious liberty** as it relates to the persecuted church - internationally, domestically and locally. Beginning in October, we will sponsor a 5- 6:00 PM session each third Sunday to include an educational example of Christian persecution and response, followed by a time of prayer. We will also provide information in Fellowship Hall monthly, and assist in observance of the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted

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I Didn’t Think I Needed GriefShare

by Terry Norman

“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” Isaiah 55:10-11

My family has attended EP Church for 15 years. I was drawn into God’s kingdom 23 years ago. I was humbled, when, after my mother passed away, I found myself quite unexpectedly with a messy ball of grief that I was unable to untangle. I had lots of loving friends and family around me but no one seemed to be able to help me untangle my gnarled mess of grief. I knew that I could not go on that way so, in spite of thinking that I was “too mature” for Griefshare, I signed up for the 13-week program.

I was pleasantly surprised to see the truth of the above verses from Isaiah play out. You see there were some in the group that had walked with Christ for more years than I and there were some who probably had not yet been introduced to the gospel. The group members came from many different churches, many different social communities, many different educational backgrounds, many different age groups. We all gathered in a safe place to learn how to process our grief. I fell in love with the ministry of Griefshare. I was so thankful for the quiet servants of the church who led this program and helped my peace and joy come back to me. I learned that even my “mature Christian self” had some sorrow- producing misconceptions about God’s character and His work in my life. I also learned that I had said hurtful things to others because I did not really understand until that moment in my own life the nature of grief, my role in processing my own loss, and how to minister love to people in grief.

We have been speaking a lot of late about reaching our neighbors with the gospel. I know of no more tender place than the place of grief. I know of no other place where the hope that we have can be gently and carefully shared with those that don’t have that hope. I was astounded to see how the same scriptures met and ministered to the diverse members of my group just where they needed to be touched. If you know folks who are mourning the loss of a loved one, take the time to invite them to Griefshare. You might even offer to attend with them. If you are mourning the death of an important person in your life, give yourself the gift of working through it and not avoiding it.

The next session of Griefshare begins on October 2nd in The Parlor. There are brochures in the Church Office and there will be a table in the Fellowship Hall so that you may get your questions answered. For more information, or to reserve a spot in the next GriefShare, contact Paul and Carolyn Woodie 410-626-8430 - carolyn.woodie@verizon.net or Walt and Karen Asplund 410-923-3285 - asplundmd@yahoo.com.

Angel Tree

by Dee Chalfant

One of the missions of our church is to seek the renewal of Annapolis. Our church vision is to be a “community of grace”. Those of you who have helped with Angel Tree either through gift-giving, prayer, or phone calls do this—although in most instances you may not see the end results.

Being the coordinator, I can see a larger picture than those of you who deliver gifts, pray, or make phone calls. After 10 years, I have seen results. Did you know that through our Angel Tree ministry one family began going to church? Our church is becoming known because of this ministry. After Christmas, notes are sent in the name of our church letting inmates know that gifts were given in their name. These notes also include a brief gospel message. Prayerfully, they and their families will see and feel God’s love through families from our church. Several of the inmates have written to our church thanking us for what we did for their child/children. You may have seen some of these as we post them on the bulletin board.

God IS good, and He uses us as His messengers! Please continue to pray that we make a difference in lives as we serve our Saviour. We will again be setting up the Angel Tree in the Fellowship Hall this year. Please be on the lookout for further information on this wonderful mission. May God bless you.

(Continued from page 1)

- coleslaw, and biscuits. Each family bring a dessert to share.
- Compete in the *Dessert Bake Off Contest* – Bake your best dessert and submit it for judging.
 - Fellowship – Invite your Bible Study, Small Group, Sunday School class, Ministry team, and friends to join you. If you know folks who have moved out of the area or are currently attending another church, invite them to come back for the homecoming.
 - Meet some new people who are a part of the Body here but do not regularly cross your path.

Cost: \$5.00 person or \$25 family. Sign up on our Website, under resources then Church Life. Call Tom Beall 410-266-8090 ext. 117 for more details.



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Church on November 3rd. The SLC invites you to participate, to learn, and to pray with us. We also invite you to consider becoming a member of the SLC this year. Please contact Gaile Jones, gailejones@verizon.net, for more information.

My Church Family
by Lynda Smith

It has been over two years since my accident that sent me on a very tough, long journey...and it's not yet over. Though I am still facing what the Shock Trauma Doctors refer to as another major surgery, I am thankful. Thankful that I am never alone. I have the Lord and the wonderful extension of Himself in the Body of Christ and the ongoing prayers of the Saints of God.

I am so grateful for the prayers, the cards, the meals, the visits, the LOVE of our church body, that my heart is filled to overflowing. I could not do it without your love and support and Praise His Holy Name I don't have to. So, thank you my brothers and sisters in Christ. I am forever touched by your love.