

MEDITATION

Twenty-five years ago, a young man was walking by the old log Muskego Chapel that was on the campus of Luther Seminary in St. Paul. When he looked inside the chapel, he noticed a beautiful chalice that was sitting on the altar. The young man broke into the chapel and took the chalice, not even realizing the real value of what he had stolen or how it was used in worship.

In October of 2006, Pastor Glenn Berg-Moberg of St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church, who lived next door to the seminary, called the seminary president and asked for a meeting to discuss what he described as "an interesting matter." The boy who had stolen the chalice was by then a grown man and he was dying of cancer. Before he died, though, there was one task that he wanted to accomplish; he wanted to return the stolen chalice to the seminary chapel.

As the years had passed, the man had kept the pewter chalice in perfect condition. He had actually displayed it on his mantel for over two decades, but with the passing years the chalice had become for

Meditation



Dr. Jeff Hensley
Pastor
Kings Mountain Baptist Church

him a source of discomfort and guilt, so he had determined that he wanted to return it to its rightful owner. The seminary president received the gift of the chalice with both surprise and delight, and several letters were written to the dying man to express appreciation and to offer forgiveness for his deed. The lost treasure had finally been found, and the sinner had been forgiven. The man received the letters with gratitude and comfort, and then he died quietly and in peace.

For all who heard the story, this chalice then become doubly special because after it was returned it took on a dual character. On the one hand, it was a tool that enabled worshippers to praise and honor God, but on the other hand, it became a means of proclaiming the gospel of forgiveness.

My family and I were out for supper in a local restaurant one night, and as we got up to leave at the end of our meal, we overheard someone at a nearby table talking critically about Christian faith. The reason this person was talking that way was apparently because he could only connect Christianity with what he called "right-wing radicals."

Once we were outside of the restaurant, my son, who had overheard the man's critical comments, said, "Dad, why do people think that way about Christians?"

That was not an easy question to answer, for even though I believe there are many reasons why people assume that all Christians are critical "radicals," I suspect that one major reason is because too many Christians would probably have attacked that young man who stole the chalice rather than forgive him for his deed. It made me wonder just how different would be the perception of Christian faith if we who call ourselves "Christians" would more readily practice the forgiveness of Jesus Christ?

CHURCH BRIEFS

Bynum Chapel Movie Night Friday

"Movie Night" will be held on Friday, April 30, at 7 p.m. at Bynum Chapel Family Life Center, Ellis Street. Everyone is invited to attend for an evening of enjoying a movie, fellowship and refreshments.

Homecoming Sunday at Bethea UMC

Betha United Methodist Church, 605 E. Maryland Ave., Bessemer City, will celebrate Homecoming Day and the 115th year as an organized church Sunday at the 11 a.m. worship hour with fellowship luncheon following. Allan Camden will be guest speaker and special music will be presented. The public is invited.

Tent revival underway at Midpines

Sunrise Baptist Church and Pathway Baptist Church are hosting an old-fashioned tent revival through Sunday, May 2 at 6 p.m. nightly at the ballfield at Midpines Community. Two speakers featured and special music feature the services. The public is invited.

Camp Mostly Smiles Saturday

Hospice Cleveland County, 951 Wendover Heights Dr., Shelby, will be hosting Camp Mostly Smiles for children ages 6-16, who are grieving the loss of a loved one, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, May 1. This one-day retreat will give participants the opportunity to express their grief through writing, crafts, play activities and group discussions. Professionals, trained in grief and loss, will facilitate the retreat. For more information, call 704-487-4677.

Fellowship & Faith



Featured Church of the Week:

Kings Mountain Baptist Church

Shady Grove Baptist Church
339 Shady Grove Road
704-739-8920

St. Paul United Methodist Church
N. Cansler Street
704-739-1256

Solid Rock Baptist Church
1908 Shelby Road
704-739-4186

Sunrise Baptist Church
208 Mail Road
704-692-3007

Temple Baptist Church
612 N. Cansler Street
704-739-4716

True Gospel Holiness Church
1608 Shelby Road
704-739-6764

Unity AME Zion Church
948 Unity Church Road
704-228-0328

Vestibule AME Zion Church
2175 Vestibule Church Road
704-739-7961

Westover Baptist Church
114 Westover Drive
704-739-2187

GASTONIA
Bethesda United Methodist Church
3714 S. New Hope Rd

Grace Community Advent Christian Church
206 West 3rd Avenue
704-739-9230

GROVER
Bethany Baptist Church
423 Cleveland Avenue
704-937-3010

Carolina Praise and Worship Center
201 N. Main Street
704-937-7541

Proclaiming the Word Ministries
7011 Cleveland Avenue
704-937-7390

New Life Family Worship Center
428 Oak Grove Road
704-739-9371

New Way Missionary Baptist Church
105 Waco Road
704-724-0414

Oak Grove Baptist Church
1022 Oak Grove Road
704-739-4833

Oak View Baptist Church
1517 York Road
704-739-7831

Pathway Baptist Church
3100 Parkdale Circle
704-734-0852

Patterson Grove Baptist Church
301 Oak Grove Road
704-739-5826

Peoples Baptist Church
1010 Groves Street
704-739-0398

Progressive Church of Our Lord
1001 Cleveland Avenue
704-734-1070

Resurrection Lutheran Church
600 Crescent Circle
704-739-5580

Saint Matthew's Lutheran Church
201 N. Piedmont Avenue
704-739-7466

Second Baptist Church
120 Linwood Road
704-739-4216

KINGS MOUNTAIN

Long Creek Presbyterian Church
701 Long Creek Road
704-629-4406

Love Valley Baptist Church
2032 Bethlehem Road
704-730-0075

Macedonia Baptist Church
1101 S. Battleground Avenue
704-739-6811

Midview Baptist Church
703 Margrace Road
704-739-6711

Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church
220 N. Watterson Street
704-739-8354

Mountain View Agape Church
506 Sparrow Springs Road
704-739-0160

Mt. Olive Baptist Church
Compact School Road
704-739-4516

Mt. Zion Baptist Church
220 N. Watterson Street
704-739-8354

New Beginnings Church of Jesus Christ
541 Crocker Road
704-730-9507

New Bynum Chapel Zion Church
N. Cansler Street
704-739-2606

New Camp Creek Baptist Church
863 New Camp Creek Ch. Road
704-487-7128

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Notice
In order to accommodate the number of churches in our communities, we will print two alternating lists of churches each week. If you don't see the church you're looking for, be sure to check next weeks paper.

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