

NATIONAL X PRESS

THE NATIONAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

JULY/AUGUST 2005 | VOLUME 3

SUNDAY SERMON SERIES

**Stories of Genesis:
When God Shows Up**
Worship at 9 and 10:45 a.m.

Sunday, July 3
Dr. Gareth Icenogle
Prayer for Success
Genesis 24:34-67

Sunday, July 10
Dr. Gareth Icenogle
The Gift of Difference
Genesis 25:19-34

Sunday, July 17
Dr. Gareth Icenogle
The Place of Presence
Genesis 28:10-19

Sunday, July 24
Dr. Gareth Icenogle
No Guarantees
Genesis 29:15-28

Sunday, July 31
Dr. Joel Baker
Whose Strength?
Judges 7:1-25

Sunday, August 7
Rev. Elizabeth Brookens
Sturman

Sunday, August 14
Rev. Eunice T. McGarrahan
Hold On
Genesis 32:22-32

Sunday, August 21
Dr. Harry Winsheimer
For What Do You Live?
Matthew 6:19-21, 25-33

Sunday, August 28
Dr. Gareth Icenogle
Dreams and Nightmares
Genesis 37:1-4

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Two Guest Preachers Come to NPC This Summer

by Richard Armstrong

The so-called “dog days” of summer can be an interesting and engaging time for loyal NPC members. That’s when the annual vacations of our senior pastoral staff give us the opportunity to hear new and different voices from the pulpit. This year will be no exception as NPC is pleased and proud to welcome two experienced and dynamic guest preachers to our sanctuary.

Dr. Joel David Baker will kick off the summer season on July 31 with a sermon entitled “Whose Strength?” based on Judges 7:1-25. Joel is currently serving as the Vice President of Jim Riley Outreach, Inc., a ministry for people with substance abuse

addictions. Prior to accepting that call, he served for nearly 25 years as the Senior Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Edmond, Oklahoma, a congregation of more than 2,000 members, which, during Joel’s tenure, was considered one of the fastest-growing Presbyterian churches in the country.

The community of Edmond received nationwide attention in 1986 when fourteen employees of the Edmond Post Office were murdered by a co-worker who later turned the gun on himself. Dr. Baker played a key role bringing healing to the community during the aftermath of that tragic event. He also was instrumental in starting the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity and has been extremely

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NPC Seminarians Near Completion of Their Candidacy

by Richard Armstrong

Hey, being a pastor looks like a cushy job, doesn’t it?

All you’ve got to do is come up with a sermon once a week. Splash some babies with water. Tell a few jokes at weddings ... before you hit the buffet line, of course. Nothing to it, right?

Wrong!

Other than being an on-call physician, there are few jobs in our society that come as close to being a 365-day-a-year, never-ending commitment as being the pastor of a church.

But the responsibilities and labors of being a Presbyterian pastor begin long before you even get the job. Because the road from hearing the call to pastoral ministry to actually being ordained as a “Minister of the Word and Sacrament” in the Presbyterian Church is a long one. Getting a degree from a seminary is the easy part.

The Book of Order contains more than fifteen pages outlining the complicated process that takes someone from being an “inquirer” (someone who is considering the possibility of becoming a pastor) to a “candidate” (someone who is actively engaged in

the process), to becoming an ordained minister with a pastoral call.

Fortunately, candidates for pastoral ministry do not have to face this daunting process alone. According to the Book of Order, the inquirer or candidate continues to be an active member of his or her particular church and receives oversight, advice, and counsel from the session and pastorate of that church along the way.

“The inquirer or candidate shall be encouraged to engage in some form of service to the church with the approval and under the guidance of [his or her] committee on preparation for the ministry,” says the Book of Order in its characteristically dry manner, which belies how emotionally intense and physically draining those works of service can be.

“Why is it important that NPC support these candidates?” asks Associate Pastor Harry Winsheimer. “It’s important because they are our members. NPC contributed to their sense of call and their preparation to be ministers. By supporting them, we contribute



Harry Winsheimer

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A Stellar Class of Future Christian Leaders Graduates



Another class of promising young leaders completed the Center's Fellows Program in Leadership. From September to May, the Fellows engaged in a program of intellectual inquiry, spiritual discipline and committed service. Front row: Doug Steele*, David Simons, Amelda Beluli, Sarah Godby, Doris Pierson**, Carolyn Weimer*, Melissa Snow. Second row: David Chao*, Kelli Ross, Yvonne Hutchison, Tiffany Pertillar, Alyson Auton, Edwin Machine. Third row: Patricia Steele*, Nathaniel Milazzo, Hunter Weimer*.

**Director * Team Leaders

Guest Preachers

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active in their Presbytery, including serving twice as a commissioner to the General Assembly.

The following week, on August 7, NPC will welcome Rev. Elizabeth Sturman to our pulpit. Elizabeth will be preaching on the subject of "Divine Improvisation" as inspired by the words of Philippians 3:17-4:1.

If you've ever said to yourself that you'll sign up for missionary work as soon as they put together a mission trip to someplace nice, you may be interested to know that Rev. Sturman has served as a missionary in both Amsterdam and Paris. She describes these missions as working in "post-Christian cultures to share what we believe to be true about faith in God's grace revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ."

And speaking of hardship posts, she also has worked in Berkeley, California. She was the Director of College Ministries at the First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley and had the pleasure of serving with Dr. Earl Palmer and Dr. Mark Labberton.

What's it like to minister in Berkeley? "Never dull!" she says.

Nor was it dull to serve as an associate pastor under Dr. Gareth Icenogle at the First Presbyterian Church of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. She considers Dr. Icenogle to be an important mentor in her career as she reached out in Bethlehem "to engage the hearts and minds of people influenced by our secular culture in ways that were unhealthy to their spiritual life."

What's next for Rev. Sturman? Shortly after delivering her guest sermon at NPC, she will be moving from Bethlehem to join us in the National Capital Presbytery as the organizing pastor of a newly-emerging faith community in our area called Brambleton. While serving in the Washington area may be considered by some to be yet another hardship post, we're happy to have her here and eager to hear her message. X

Seminarians

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to God's work going far beyond the walls of The National Presbyterian Church."

NPC is currently engaged in this role of oversight and guidance with three young seminarians: Corey McLellan, Darryl Evans, and Elisa Owen. And when you hear their stories, you'll never think that being a pastor is a "cushy" job again.

Take Elisa Owen's current assignment, for example. She's spending her last summer before ordination working as the trauma chaplain at the Robert Wood Johnson Hospital in New Brunswick, New Jersey. She writes, "In the first few weeks, I can say that this is the most difficult and rewarding thing I've done since seminary. God keeps beckoning to me through these hard and meaningful things."

Like what?

Like staying on call for 24 hours straight with only an hour's catnap in between emergencies. Like dealing with patients who arrive at the trauma center maimed, wounded, wondering if they'll survive, wondering why God would let it happen to them.

"I am in awe most of the time," Elisa writes. "I had the privilege of holding a man's hand and praying with him while he died. Nurses were around to make him comfortable and to keep his heart beating. But I was quiet and humble before the mystery, except for the sound of our prayer."

Life is intense in a different way for Corey McLellan, who is currently making his way from the Princeton Theological Seminary in New Jersey to Houston, Texas, where he will help start one of ten new churches that are being "planted" by the Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church of Houston. "From day one," he writes, "I will be the organizing pastor for a new congregation that is coming together in center-city Houston in an urban area between downtown and Memorial Park. It is an amazing position about which I am both excited and terrified."

But perhaps Darryl Evans faces the most terrifying task of them all: He's looking for a job! He writes to us from Fuller Seminary in California that he is eager to get back to the East Coast, preferably North Carolina, and find a position there as an associate pastor. Much of his experience so far has been with youth ministry, but he's hoping to branch out and discover new strengths in his next position.

Splashing babies? Telling jokes? Hitting the buffet line? Now you know there's much more to being a pastor, and becoming a pastor, than that! All three of these dedicated young servants of the Lord could use your prayers as they near completion of one of the most daunting and rewarding commitments any human being can make. X

Club Beyond—Reaching ‘Out There’ with the Gospel

by Keith Patman

Imagine spending several weeks lounging peacefully on a quiet beach along the coast of Italy. That’s what NPC member John Wagner is doing from June 14th through July 9th. So what makes John’s vacation different from those taken by dozens of other NPC members this summer? Well, for one thing, he’ll have 250 high school kids with him each week from Camp Darby, the U.S. military base located nearby. Come to think of it, maybe there won’t be much lounging involved, and certainly no peace and quiet!

John, DC area Young Life Director, is taking part in a high-energy ministry called “Club Beyond,” a summer camp outreach to military youth, who fit the category of Third-Culture Kids. They are Americans with more experience living abroad than most of their peers have, constantly uprooted, never quite at home either in their overseas or their stateside culture. In addition, they may have a parent serving in a high-risk place such as Afghanistan or Iraq. According to MCYM.org, there are approximately 300,000 such American teenagers on U.S. military installations around the world, and in a typical week probably less than 2% of them receive any exposure to the things of God. These are young people who need to hear of Christ’s love for them and to experience it through caring people, such as the staff of Club Beyond.

In fact, NPC has a number of connections with the organization behind Club Beyond—Military Community Youth Ministries (MCYM). Dick and Junior McGarrahan were co-founders of this outreach in the early 1980’s and directed it for several years. In the mid-1980’s, NPC member Jim Meredith took over from them as Executive Director, and the McGarrahans have since continued their involvement in an emeritus role.

Rev. Eunice “Junior” McGarrahan recalls that in the 1970’s, as she travelled to different Army posts with her husband Dick, they would help with the base’s youth outreach wherever they went. But



Gae and John Wagner with David, Jessi, and Michael

they found that the quality of ministry was uneven from place to place, and they dreamed of starting an organization that would insure a good program everywhere. Around 1980 this dream became a reality with the help of Young Life, Youth for Christ International, and several Catholic youth ministries. MCYM now has 65 full-time staff members and hundreds of volunteers, ministering to over 14,000 teenagers annually in 40 military communities around the world. Club Beyond is more than just a summer outreach. There are weekly club meetings throughout the year where high schoolers can have fun and hear the gospel, and there are weekly Bible studies for those who want to grow in their faith.

Nowadays, MCYM has been around long enough history that people who benefitted from the ministry during their teen years are returning in leadership roles. The organization also launches mission outreaches, with youth and professional

participants doing such projects as laying a water pipeline and doing medical work in Kenya’s Rift Valley or rebuilding an orphanage in Romania.

In Italy, John Wagner, along with 5 other Young Life staffers and 20 volunteers, bring their skills and experience this summer to a program similar in many ways to Young Life camp here in the States. The base has a pool and gym, and the beach is nearby. There are trips and activities each day, and in the evenings there is club time, which includes a gospel presentation.

John asks that we at NPC uphold this ministry in prayer. His two older children, Michael and Jessi, are participating with him in Club Beyond while his wife Gae is home with their youngest, David. For more information about the ministry of John and Gae Wagner, please contact the NPC Outreach Office, (202) 537-7483 or hweimer@natpresch.org. X

Visit www.NationalPres.Org For the Latest News and Events

Visit www.National.Pres.org to learn what’s coming up at NPC: services, events, concerts, classes, and much more. Dr. Icenogle’s sermons in audio and text files can be easily downloaded. You’ll find a contact directory to help you reach our pastors and staff by telephone or e-mail.

NPC Fund for Charitable Giving Provides "Energy and Education"

The NPC Fund for Charitable Giving was introduced to the congregation at the second and third Services on Sunday June 19 and officially began operations that day. Board Member and President Chuck Petty introduced the Fund as a 501(c)(3) corporation with broad powers to engage in planned giving transactions and to operate a Donor Advised Fund. "Planned giving transactions," said Petty, "combine a charitable gift with the payment of financial benefits to the donor or his or her family." If properly structured, such transactions can reduce or eliminate otherwise applicable income, gift, and/or estate taxes and increase the overall benefits of the transaction to the donor, the family, and the charity.

"One example," said Petty, "is the Charitable Remainder Trust, in which the donor typically receives tax benefits in connection with a transfer of cash or property to the Fund as Trustee; the beneficiaries receive a partial tax shelter on income received from the Trust, and NPC or another charity receives a transfer of the assets of the trust at its termination." A Donor Advised Fund can accept transfers of cash and securities to be invested and held for gifts to NPC or other public charities in a future period as recommended by the donor or his or her family. The Fund can also facilitate transactions with real property assets.



John Reich

Elder John Reich, Chair of the Fund's Board, makes it clear that the primary focus of the Fund is not fundraising, but service to the congregation in family financial and retirement planning matters. "Of course, we expect our members, in the course of planning for the future, are likely to want to include the church in their plans. If we can make that process easier and provide a way to offer tax-advantaged planned giving transactions and the creation of Donor Advised Accounts, then it is likely that the ministry of Christ

at National will benefit." Reich notes that the Fund Board is broadly experienced in law, business, investment banking, and the financial markets and has particular knowledge of the needs of our own congregation. The Board is prepared to address issues of family business succession, transfers of commercial and residential real estate, and the retention of a life estate in a primary residence or vacation home with a remainder interest to the Fund for designated purposes.

"I am delighted that this very well-qualified Board will be available to assist our Congregation," remarked Dr. Icenogle. "This is an important step for the future ministry of National Presbyterian Church and other charities and ministries supported by our members and friends. It will give us increased opportunities to take advantage of well-accepted planned giving techniques and a Donor Advised Fund in family financial planning."

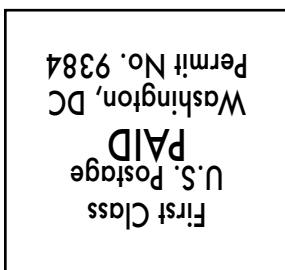
When asked about the ultimate objectives of the Fund, Chuck Petty "hopes that the Fund will be a source of energy and education on charitable giving opportunities at NPC for members and friends not only of the Church but also of NPS and the National Leadership Center. We hope to schedule events which will expand



Chuck Petty

our understanding of Christian Ministry, and Community Service, and give particular recognition to those who support the Church and other ministries and charities."

The Fund has mailed a brochure on its activities to the congregation, plans to host a seminar on planned giving and the activities of the Fund this fall, and is looking for opportunities to appear before small groups in the church and in partnership with the National Presbyterian School and the National Center for Leadership. For more information, e-mail NPCFund@NatPresCh.org, or call 202/537-7485. X



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