

Faith Report

Reconciliation and Summer Fun by Pastor Stan Long

The gospel writers show us that Jesus and the disciples took time away to be restored. Sometimes they went to the mountains, sometimes to the shore. During a particular vacation, in Matt 16:13ff, Jesus taught them the most important lesson ever: as their Messiah he would die for them, and they must take up their cross and follow him to the end. The kingdom about which he preached involved suffering and pain, not instant glory and fame.

August, our church sabbatical month, is now upon us. We have only minimal meetings scheduled so that you might rest and be refreshed for the fall. Having said that, as some of you might know, I took some time off in July. Accordingly, I thought that I would write every teacher's favorite assignment, the classic essay on "How I spent my summer vacation!"

Terri, my wife, works for Baltimore Christian School. BCS staff were off in July and so I also took off two consecutive weeks in July. Among some of the interesting things Terri and I did was to watch a lot of movies together! Here are

two that we enjoyed:

"Our Family Wedding": One of the best ways to cut tension around any subject is through humor. Many of us remember the old classic show "All in the Family" which dared to address never-before-seen issues on television through humor. "Our Family Wedding" addressed that dicey topic of interracial marriage that we preached on from Nehemiah 13 this past June. Although we had never heard of the movie, we took a chance and were definitely not disappointed. In fact, the movie was over the top hilarious! A Latino gal brings home her new man to meet the family. The family sees instantly that he is African American and learns pretty quickly that the couple plans on getting married in three weeks before heading overseas together! As the two culturally proud fathers meet and interact with one another, the couple, and the rest of the family, it becomes clear that this clash of cultures will be quite messy.

"The Blind Side": We also finally watched this story of Ravens' left tackle Michael Oher. Yes, it is a football movie so I loved it! (Actually, Ravens fans will enjoy it but Skins fans will flinch at the beginning.) This was much more than a football movie. It addressed the clash of cultures in the South as the rich, white family wanting to do good is confronted with the

purity of their motives. It addressed the motives of big time college athletic programs and Christian private secondary schools that often take advantage of highly skilled athletes rather than making a commitment to educate them. It addressed the need for those who 'have' to reach out to those who 'do not have.' It addressed the need for black men to be present, strong and active in the lives of their families.

Both movies were good stories that reminded me again that, unfortunately, the world is sometimes ahead of the church in matters of embracing reconciliation. It was great seeing this important value profiled on the screen.

What about your well-deserved summer down time? As you kick back a bit and take a break, don't take a vacation from God. We can still experience powerful messages from the Lord even while disengaging from the regular routines of our lives. ♦





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*United that the
world would
know*

³Make every effort
to keep the unity of
the Spirit through
the bond of peace.
⁴There is one body
and one Spirit—just
as you were called
to one hope when
you were called—
⁵one Lord, one faith,
one baptism; ⁶one
God and Father of
all, who is over all
and through all
and in all.
Ephesians 4:3-4

New Hires at Faith

Pastor Craig, Pastor Stan, and the leadership of Faith Christian Fellowship are delighted to announce the following staff appointments:

Faith Urban Works:

We welcome **Gary Coiro** back as the part-time **Interim Executive Director (ED) of Faith Urban Works (FUW)**. Gary replaces Kevin Feldman, who had hoped to move his family to Baltimore but returned to Chicago to be with his wife and five children. Gary is no stranger to FCF, having partnered with us in several strategic ways over the last few years. He will be a great asset as we seek to strengthen the FUW framework and structures. **Karen Bullard** will continue as the FUW Development Associate.

Kaitlin McGrath (nee Strine) is to be the BCS/FUW Development Director and will begin training under Gary's tutelage this month. Kate is a member of FCF and taught 4th Grade at Baltimore Christian School for the last three years. She previously taught in Baltimore City for two years. Kate recently married Steve McGrath, who is the drummer in the FCF Praise Band. Her previous direct involvement in BCS, which is one of the two components of FUW, and her understanding of BCS issues will be a vital asset in her new role.

Eileen Hill is the new **Director of the Pen Lucy Youth Partnership (PLYP) Learning Center** and **Blake Scheidt** is the new **PLYP Sports Director**.

Youth Ministry:

We welcome **Phillip Davis** as the new Director of Youth Ministry (in training). Army Arnold will continue to serve as Interim Director of Youth Ministry through the rest of 2010 to provide strong transition and training. Phil comes to us with significant youth focus vocation and life experience and will be further equipped in the gospel ministry through seminary training starting in 2011 as he serves as Director of Youth Ministry.

Congratulations and welcome to these new servant leaders and to spouses Leeza Scheidt and Bethany Davis. We thank God for graciously providing leaders for these key positions. More details will follow in the September Faith Report. ♦

Bits and Pieces

Congratulations to

- Tiffany Odum, who was baptized, and to Tiffany and Sun Young Lee who were received into church membership in July.

August is sabbatical month at FCF and we look forward to hearing from familiar guest preachers Chris Garriott and Thurman Williams. We also hope that our readers and their families will enjoy some time of refreshing during the month. ♦



CALENDAR

Aug 11 No Faith Leadership Night

Aug 22 One service only at 10 a.m. FCF Picnic at Woodberry Crossing, Parkton.

Sep 12 HEADS UP—FCF Ministry Fair