

August 2, 2017

from Russ's Heart & Soul

COMING UP

August 3
 Men's Bible Study

Sunday, August 6
 "And Yet She Persisted: Queen Esther"
 Deacon of the Week: Barry Burke

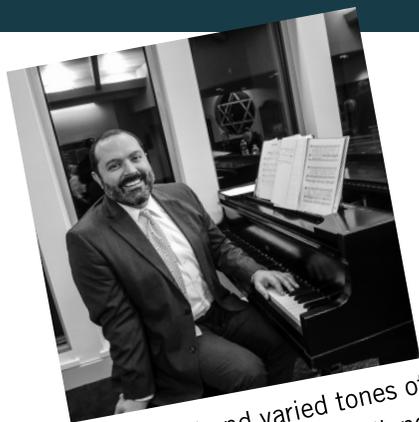
August 8
 Needlers

August 6-10
 Host for Charlotte Family Housing
 (See Dan about details.)

August 12
 Men's Shelter Lunch

August 15th
 Coffee and Kibitz

Remembering
 Our Friends at Home
 Marjorie Walker
 19 Kaylor Drive



The beautiful and varied tones of the organ...Monty treated his audience to a wonderful concert Sunday evening.



All week the sounds of music filled our campus! Thank you band camp participants for being here.

Starting last October, once a month until May, Bennett traveled to Atlanta as part of an audition for Spirit of Atlanta drum and bugle corps. It is the most interesting and exciting – and grueling thing he has ever done. But it's just marching band, you say? Well, not exactly...

Drum Corps International represents the most competitive, world class corps on the planet. It's marching band on steroids! Using four brass instruments (no woodwinds), marching percussion, a full front ensemble (synthesizers, marimbas, timpani and other interesting percussion), and color guard, DCI corps are limited to 150 members. After the 24/7 practice season, competition begins. Spirit members will see 30 venues across 16 states from Florida to Texas to Indiana, where the championship is held every August at Lucas oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

With every text he sends us, we shake our heads, and mama consistently reminds her baby that she can bring him home from this insanity anytime he would like! But he has never been happier.

That month of practice began every day at 7a, after a comfortable night on the gym floor of an Atlanta high school. There was a four-hour morning session, a four-hour afternoon session, a four-hour evening session, rain or shine, seven days a week in the Atlanta heat. At 9:00 one night that first week, they finished band practice with a 3.5 mile run. And every night, back to the cozy and comfortable gym floor.

I thought the competition schedule would be better, that traveling would provide some rest, and scenery of the US countryside... but they travel only at night so they can still practice 4-6 hours every single day. Typically, they board about 11p and drive until about 4am. They unload and get a couple more hours on a new gym floor before practice starts, wrapping up just in time to load, travel to the new stadium, unpack, dress, compete, undress, repack, load the bus... repeat.

And the fans... are just as crazy! At every competition, we sit shoulder to shoulder in packed football stadiums. This past Saturday night in Atlanta, the top corps performed and fans around us could name the years the Blue Devils or Santa Clara Vanguard or Carolina Crown had won the championship and what their props, uniforms and theme music were for those shows. Crazy.

It's another complete subculture we have discovered. We're not really involved in any of the ones we know, but there's a Ski Nautique subculture, a Harley subculture, a convertible sports car subculture, all with equally-fanatic fans. We have heard there's even such a subculture for people who go to church on Sundays. Imagine! Week in and week out showing up to sit in straight rows of hardback pews, singing songs (having memorized many of the words), praying together, listening attentively to a choir and preacher, giving money, giving time for mission projects... Crazy.

We are proud of Bennett and happy he is having such a great time with this insane passion, and we're happy to be in the fan club with nice folks in a healthy environment enjoying wholesome competition. But it does make me wonder about all those subcultures. Should we really be crazy about boats and cars and marching bands – or tending our souls and caring for our neighbors?

Russ

LAST CHANCE...

Call TODAY for the Intergenerational Retreat Sept 1-3!

Men's Shelter Lunch – Saturday, August 12
 Help us prepare and serve lunch from 10:45-1:30 for 200.
 You can sign up online at
<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0944adaf2ba46-mens>.



Park Road Baptist Church
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Charlotte, NC 28209

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Marching to the Beat...The children learned about Jesus the Storyteller at VBS Blast last week! Thank you to all our volunteers and all the children!



Two Upcoming Mission Opportunities...

August Mission Offering to Help Fire Victims: When a three-alarm fire ripped through the Woodscape Apartments on Farm Pond Road in Charlotte two weeks ago, 139 residents and 41 families were left homeless. Ninety-four percent of them are low-income, 113 are non-English speaking and 37 are children. They were devastated. Many lost everything, and their lives were destabilized. Because these families were not prepared to pay rental or utility deposits, they've needed financial assistance in finding new places to live. Beyond housing, the goal is to help them transition into their new homes as well as replace personal items. For instance, one resident works construction and lost his tools. He needs those to earn a living. In coordination with the Red Cross, the Charlotte Clergy Coalition for Justice, of which our pastors are a part, has been raising money to help them secure new housing and return to normality as soon as possible. As part of this fundraising effort, Park Road has committed \$1000 to the cause, and we will attempt to raise that amount through our August Sunday Mission Offering. The funds will go directly to the families. Monies not used for new housing will be given to the families in the form of gift cards.

English Conversation Class with the Burmese: A one-hour conversation class will [start August 6](#) at 1:00 and will run for 4 consecutive Sundays. The goal is for our English "teachers" and our Burmese students to get to know each other and learn some of the simpler English tenses. In reading the book, *Orphan Train*, Twila Broadway, who is organizing this effort came across the word- portaging. The Wabanaki Indians "portaged from one river to another to carry their canoes and all other possessions" across bodies of water. In doing so, they had to decide what to take and what to leave behind. We will use this imagery and have the Burmese remember what they had to leave and what they took with them as they traveled to the United States. In the process of either telling or writing down their stories, we will work with the English tenses. Of course on the first Sunday, we will deal with some basics, and their homework will be to think, and maybe write, about their portaging. There are approximately 15 of our Burmese friends who are ready to begin the classes. If you would like to participate as a teacher, please let Twila or Dan know.

More exciting images from VBS Blast!

