

June 14, 2017

From the pastors' Heart & Soul

## COMING UP

Wednesday, June 14

6:30p Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Sunday June 18

9:30a Deacon Prayer, Chapel

10:00a Worship

Deacon of the Week: Anne Woolley

11:00a Sunday School for Children;

Youth Discussion Group;

Sermon Talkback-Chapel

Wednesday, June 21

6:30p Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

Friday, June 23

Noon: Fun Food Friday

Lunch at the Deans' House

Sunday June 25

9:30a Deacon Prayer, Chapel

10:00a Worship

Deacon of the Week: Kay Thornburg

11:00a Sunday School for Children;

Youth Discussion Group;

Sermon Talkback-Chapel

Tuesday, June 27

PRBC Night at Knights' Baseball

Ballpark 7:05 Game time

Remember in Prayer

June 19-24: Youth Mission Trip  
to Monroe County, WV

Remembering

Our Friends at Home

Ann Norton

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Indian Trail, NC 28079

704-882-0829

Preaching is not the most important part of what we do, but it may be the most obvious, hence a minister often becomes known as "Preacher." That's a little like calling the carpenter a "Demolisher" or the chef a "Chopper", but I'll take it, because most people say it with affection: "Hey, Preacher!" not "Hey, Long-Winded-Bag-of-Useless-Religious-Anecdotes!"

It's a really amazing vocation. The thought that anyone shows up willing to listen to something I have to say still blows my mind a little. The task is a huge privilege and an even more huge responsibility. Because Baptist Christians regard themselves as "people of the book," our guide for each sermon is consistent. Though some of these words are nearly 3,000 years old, and though many people have basically "thrown the Bible out with the bathwater," we still find scripture current, challenging, inspiring, still worth studying and interpreting for a 21<sup>st</sup> century American congregation.

It's time you got a chance to TALK BACK!

We preached our first sermon at Park Road on October 22, 2000. I first heard, nearly 17 years ago "Why Have You Come Here?" Since then, we've probably preached 47 times a year (allowing for guest Preachers and vacations). That's almost 800 sermons. We generally write five pages, double-spaced, so we've written about 4,000 pages. (My *Oxford Annotated Bible*, including the Apocrypha, is about 2,000 pages!) The last sermon I preached was 1,979 words (carefully chosen, beautifully articulated, life-changing!). If you take that as an average, we've spoken about 1,583,200 words from the Park Road Pulpit. Oh my!

Notable about sermons, for us who have spoken those million-and-a-half words, is how little we actually have to say! When I write, I'm keenly aware of how one sermon connects with so many others. While I cannot always remember precisely, I frequently allude to other sermons I've written—sometimes quoting directly from them. And if you have listened even casually – but have listened for almost 17 years – you know we have our own recurring themes. You've heard a lot from Amy about peace and the poor, inclusion and finding something sacred in the most ordinary. You may know that I'm always fighting a battle with those atheists who think they're so much smarter than we, the sentimental and shallow-minded "believers." I probably don't need to tell you that the intersection of science and religion is a pre-occupation, and I hope you've noted the constant refrain of community and a consistent call to a social gospel. (Note: community = social, not individual which, fortunately or not, means the gospel is always political, though not specifically partisan.)

Years ago, after preaching enough to begin to feel the rhythm of the discipline and to notice all of the cross-connections in my messages, it occurred to me that I don't preach a new sermon every other week, a 5-page, 1,979-word, 25-minute message (now x 47 weeks x 17 years = 800 sermons), but that since our sermons derive from the same wisdom and since they all connect, and since they all connect in this place – to YOU – it's really just one sermon. It's one, 1.5 million-word sermon. One, almost-14 day-long sermon!

It's about time you got a chance to TALK BACK!

Amy's sermon on Sunday and the "Talk Back" in the Chapel were really wonderful – and we'll do it again this week.

I hope you'll join us – because I can't wait to hear what you have to say!

## Sermons for Talking Back

With our altered summer worship schedule, "Sermon Talk Back" follows worship each Sunday at 11:00a in the Chapel.

Most of these sermon topics were requested by the congregation. We look forward to the dialogue.

- June 11 – "The Nearness of God," a sermon in response to the question: Where does God live, Amy Jacks Dean
- June 18 – "What Can I Believe and Still Be a Christian: Navigating the Gray," Russ Dean
- June 25 – "Principalities and Powers," a sermon on Systemic Evil, Russ Dean
- July 2 – "You Is Kind. You Is Smart. You Is Important: How to Make a Difference in this World," Amy Jacks Dean
- July 9 – "Three Times Is the Charm," a sermon on the Holy Trinity, Russ Dean
- July 16 – "One Is the Loneliest Number," a sermon about Aloneness, Amy Jacks Dean
- July 23 – "The Myths That Define Us (and the Myth That Should)," Russ Dean
- July 30 – "What Does It Mean to Be Baptist?" Russ Dean
- August 6 – "And Yet She Persisted: Queen Esther," Amy Jacks Dean
- August 13 – "Preach the Gospel Always. If Necessary, Use Words." Dan McClintock
- August 20 – "And Yet She Persists, Still..." Amy Jacks Dean
- August 27 – Kick Off Sunday. Resume Regular Sunday Schedule

*T. Dean*



Park Road Baptist Church  
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Charlotte, NC 28209

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### Community Garden

The seventh season of the Al Wilson Memorial Garden is up and growing. Our wood-constructed raised planting beds are beginning to deteriorate since untreated lumber cannot be used for garden areas.



Nonetheless, the planting beds have served us well. We have grown and harvested more than 1,800 pounds of produce for Loaves and Fishes.

After tilling and enriching the soil this spring, we continue to tend our planting of squash, tomato, peppers, cucumber and okra. Many of the squash and peppers were planted as seeds in small pots by Joey and our youth, then gardeners transplanted them.

Our Burmese partners from Chin Bethel church have also begun their seventh year utilizing 6 of the garden's 14 beds.

Our tasks for the summer include watering, weeding, harvesting, delivering to Loaves & Fishes, then replanting for our second crop. We just harvested and delivered our first squash, peppers, cucumbers and tomatoes.

We hope to use children harvesters from CDC as we have in the past. We can always use more volunteers so, please contact the church office or call Johnny Doyle, 704 488 2394 or Alan Eakes, 704 421 5921. Thank you!



While the many Meeters and Greeters snacked and talked in the Narthex on June 4, Barry and Anne Marie Burke proudly introduced their granddaughter, Ada.

### Sedgefield Book Drive

*"My students really love the books. They are excited!"*

*"The children were VERY happy receiving books!"*

*"The students were so excited to receive the books today."*

These are some of the responses received from teachers after we distributed the books to the classrooms at Sedgefield on June 1. We gave books to 515 kids (including 18 at the NC Pre-K at our own CDC). Each child in Pre-K received 2 new books, each child in Kindergarten 4 new books, and each child in Grades 1-5 received approximately 3 new books and 3 used books. This is twice what we did last year! You should have seen the faces of the kids as we carried in the boxes of books!

Thanks to your generosity, we raised over \$1,100 for the purchase of new books recommended by the teachers (with over \$300 coming from our friends in the "For the Love of Reading" program at Myers Park UMC). We also used some money from the Sedgefield Missions budget to purchase the new books. Our own CDC donated a big box of new books. Thanks to all of you who cleaned shelves at home – and searched flea markets and garage sales – for good used children's books. Thanks particularly to the "heavy" book donators (that I know about): Shannon Bone, Tara Brittain, Karen Burgess, Linda Hefner and Eleanor Helms. Thanks also to those who helped classify and then bag the books: Allie Blum, John and Sue Paris, and especially Rosemarie Burton, Netta Moseley and Ann Miles. Together, we ARE making a difference in the lives of children at Sedgefield!



Two more thoughts from teachers:

*"I gave the books to the students today, and they were so excited. They all wanted to read them during DEAR ("Drop Everything and Read") time. I hope that excitement continues through the summer, and from the looks on their faces I am certain it will."*

*"The students were so excited to receive the books today! They pulled them out of their bags as soon as they got them and wanted to read them! Thank you for providing an opportunity for these kids that they may not get at home!"*

-George Miles