



## THE PASTORS' PANE

Several years ago when I attended the University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts, the professor of my screenplay-writing class took pains to warn me about it ahead of time. Knowing that I was a minister attending to study the comparisons of writing sermons and screenplays, she said to me, "Mike, in this seminar there will be a lot of scenes written and read that have profanity in them. I hope you won't be too offended." I responded that I was a guest at the film school, and I fully understood the need for freedom of expression. I also mentioned that I worked my way through college in the oil field, and so had not led a sheltered, ivory tower existence.

I was reminded of that experience last weekend when I went to see Meryl Streep and Julia Roberts in "August: Osage County." I had read several of the movie's reviews and thought I was somewhat prepared for the sad story line. The truth is that I was not. The movie is one of the single most depressing movies I have ever seen. And what made it even worse was the language employed. There was hardly a conversation that wasn't laced with some of the most vulgar profanity you've heard anywhere. Now, I am certainly no prude when it comes to profanity, but I was taken aback by the crudeness of the dialogue. Over the weekend I was haunted by what this has to say about our society these days

I remembered an article that David Brooks wrote in *The New York Times* last year where he talked about how language is changing and what that seems to say about us. Brooks said that a number of recent studies have been conducted based on a Google database of 5.2 million books published between 1500 and 2008. The studies reveal that in the last half-century individualistic words have been much more prevalent than words connected with community. For example, words and phrases like "personalized," "self," "unique," "I can do it myself," were used more frequently than words and phrases like "community," "share," "united," "band together," and "common good." In addition, Brooks noted a study where researchers found that words and phrases associated with moral excellence were on the decline. "Virtue," "decency," "honesty," "patience," "compassion," "faith," "humbleness," and "prudence" have all declined in use, along with words such as "gratitude," "thankfulness" and "appreciation."

At the end of his article Brooks states: "Evidence from crude data sets like these are prone to confirmation bias. People see patterns they already believe in. Maybe I've done that here. But these gradual shifts in language reflect tectonic shifts in culture. We write less about community bonds and obligations because they're less central to our lives." (May 13, 2013)

Mr. Brooks' insights, coupled with my movie experience, have left me a bit unsettled. What does our language say about us? And

in thinking about the church, what does it have to say about our faith? Why have words and phrases like "surrender," "confess," "reverence," "take up your cross," and others diminished in the expressions of our faith? I'm not sure, but I think I'm going to start paying closer attention to the language I use and what it might be saying about me and my faith. I hope you'll join me.

Troubled,

Mike (and Griff)

## Spiritual Formations for the week of February 3 - February 9

**Worship Preparation:** Throughout the week, please set aside time to study the following Scriptures for this coming Sunday:

Isaiah 58:1-9a • Psalm 112:1-9  
1 Corinthians 2:1-12 • Matthew 5:13-20

**The Call To Prayer:** Glory to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, it is now and evermore shall be.

**The Daily Examination:** In the last 24 hours, recall when you most vividly encountered God. Reflect on this experience. Offer gratitude for this.

**The Daily Readings:**

**MONDAY - FEBRUARY 3**

Psalm 37:1-17/Ruth 1:1-18/Philemon 1:25

**TUESDAY - FEBRUARY 4**

Psalm 37:1-17/Ruth 2:1-16/James 5:1-6

**WEDNESDAY - FEBRUARY 5**

Psalm 37:1-17/Ruth 3:1-13; 4:13-22/Luke 6:17-26

**THURSDAY - FEBRUARY 6**

Psalm 112:1-9/Deuteronomy 4:1-14/1 John 5:1-5

**FRIDAY - FEBRUARY 7**

Psalm 112:1-9/Isaiah 29:1-12/James 3:13-18

**SATURDAY - FEBRUARY 8**

Psalm 112:1-9/Isaiah 29:13-16/Mark 7:1-8

## MINISTERS ON CALL

**Week of February 2** - Griff Martin — 281-750-9677

**Week of February 9** - Mike Massar — 903-520-9002

## THE CALENDAR

- SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 2 - COMMUNION & BENEVOLENCE OFFERING  
 9:15 AM Sunday Morning Bible Study  
 10:30 AM \*Worship Service - Sanctuary  
 10:30 AM \*Church of the Nations w/UBC - Sanctuary  
 12:00 PM College Lunch at the Halpins (475 Baird)  
 4:00 PM Children's Bell Choir Rehearsal - Music Suite  
 4:00 PM NO Everlasting Praise Rehearsal - Chapel  
 5:00 PM NO Joyful Noise Bell Choir Rehearsal - Music Suite  
 5:30 PM NO Youth - Transformed - Youth Room
- MONDAY, FEBRUARY 3  
 2:00 PM Keepers Ministry Team Meeting - Heritage Room  
 8:00 PM College Bible Study
- TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4  
 9:00 AM Mom's Group - Education Building  
 9:30 AM Women's Bible Study - Chapel
- WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5  
 10:30 AM Bible Study - Chapel  
 1:30 PM Bells Jubilate Rehearsal - Music Suite  
 4:00 PM Keepers Choir Rehearsal - Music Suite  
 6:15 PM Grace Rising Ensemble Rehearsal  
 7:15 PM \*Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary
- FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7  
 5:00 PM Parents Night Out - Children's Area  
 7:30 PM Church of the Nations - English Conversation
- SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9  
 9:15 AM Sunday Morning Bible Study  
 10:30 AM \*Worship Service - Sanctuary  
 10:30 AM \*Church of the Nations w/UBC - Sanctuary  
 4:00 PM Children's Bell Choir Rehearsal - Music Suite  
 4:00 PM Everlasting Praise Rehearsal - Chapel  
 5:00 PM Joyful Noise Bell Choir Rehearsal - Music Suite  
 5:30 PM Youth - Transformed - Youth Room

\*Childcare

## YOUNG ADULT FAMILY SS CLASS PARTY

Do any of you have "Cabin Fever" yet? You've drunk all of your hot chocolate, cleaned out a closet, read a book or read many books to your young child and you STILL have one more day of hibernation!!! Well that calls for a party!!!

It's PNO (Parents' Night OUT) at UBC on Friday, February 7 and we thought that was a good excuse to have another party. We hope all of the snow and ice will be gone, everyone will be well, back in the state and ready to get together again. This time we will go to **Steve and Starr Kerr's home**. We'll get directions, maps, etc. in the next email and have some on the next two Sundays to hand out. Childcare will open at UBC at 5:30 PM. Party will go from 6 PM-8 PM and then you can go back and pick up children. It's \$10 for one child and no more than \$25 per family. That includes their supper. **PLEASE (very important!)** call or email Deb to reserve your spot for childcare at: Deb McElgin [children@ubc-br.org](mailto:children@ubc-br.org) as soon as possible.

## MOTHER'S DAY OUT

Priority Fall 2014 Mothers' Day Out Registration for UBC church members and current MDO families begins this week and continues until February 7, at which time registration will be open to all families on the waiting lists and the general public. We expect classes to fill quickly, so if your family is interested in enrolling for next fall, pick up a 2014-15 Registration Form in the Preschool Building or on the church website at [www.ubc-br.org](http://www.ubc-br.org). Call Lisa at 766-9524 with any questions.

## GIFTS & OFFERINGS

Financial Report	Current	YTD
Thru 1/27/14 Week 43	Week	Amount
<b>Weekly Budget Requirements</b>	<b>20,372.50</b>	<b>876,017.50</b>
<b>Offering Received</b>	<b>\$7,753.55</b>	<b>763,069.14</b>
<b>Misc Revenues (Includes MDO)</b>		<b>100,313.02</b>
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>863,382.16</b>
<b>YTD Actual Expenses</b>		<b>879,654.20</b>
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>		<b>(16,272.04)</b>
<b>Non-Budget Gifts Received:</b>		<b>\$ 483,857.69</b>
This includes all YTD gifts to the Cap.Campaign, Local Missions, Benevolence, Wager-Margason Scholarship, Misc. Designated & Other Restricted Funds		
<b>Online Receipts</b>	<b>\$369</b>	<b>\$211,900</b>
Revenue received through online donations this week was \$369.		
YTD, we have received a total of \$211,900 through online gifts to Offering, Misc Rev and Non-Budgeted Gifts (included in Financial Report above).		
<b>Financial Summary: YTD January 21, 2014</b>		
We have received \$863,382 this year in offerings & other revenue.		
Our expenses for the year total \$879,654. Our net loss for the year is (\$16,272).		

## CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Through 1/27/2014	Total
<b>Number of Pledges</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Pledges Due</b>	<b>\$414,407</b>
<b>Cash Received to Date</b>	<b>\$442,646</b>
<b>CAMPAIGN TOTAL</b>	<b>\$857,053</b>
<b>FUNDS DISBURSED</b>	<b>(\$332,061)</b>
<b>Capital Campaign Summary: YTD January 27, 2014</b>	
We have received \$442,646 for the Cap. Campaign this year.	
We have spent \$332,061 on repairs and projects.	

## FRIEND OF THE WEEK

**Mrs. Mary Ann Mixon**  
 630 Seyburn Court • Baton Rouge, LA, 70808  
 Birthdate: July 4

## VAN DRIVERS

1st Sunday — Stuart Stigall (757-9877)  
 2nd Sunday — Chuck Rea (343-8466 or 907-8449)  
 3rd Sunday — Glenn Linzer (504-810-7859)  
 4th & 5th Sunday — Chuck Rea (343-8466 or 907-8449)

## ATTENDANCE

Sunday, January 26, 2014	
Morning Worship	197
Guests	8
Sunday School Total	147
Preschool	17
Children	12
Youth	NR
College	12
Young Adults	3
Median Adults	9
Inter-Generational	15
Senior Adults	89
Sanctuary Class	NR
Church of the Nations	30
Guests Friday/Sunday	2/1