

the Beacon

The LORD is my light and my salvation.—Psalm 27 Volume 1, Number 4

Lighthouse Lutheran Church
501 Third Avenue, Freedom, PA 15042
www.lighthouselutheran.org

The Reverend Dennis R. Whalen, Pastor
Morning Worship 9:00 A.M.
Sunday School 10:30 A.M.

Rally Day for Lighthouse Lutheran's Sunday School is September 11. Three levels of instruction will be offered—preschool through sixth grade, seventh grade through twelfth grade, and adults. Those interested in teaching, team teaching, or substitute teaching should talk with Pastor Whalen.

Lighthouse Lutheran's website, managed by Julie Whalen, offers materials to aid Christians in growing in the faith. In addition to other interesting material, two edifying articles by Pastor Whalen, "But I Tell You" (contrasts between Jesus' ethical teaching and Pharisaic legalistic traditions) and "Law and Gospel" (a Lutheran understanding) can be found there, as well as several back numbers of *CORE Connection*, the newsletter of the Lutheran Coalition for Renewal. PDF files of past issues of *The Beacon* are also available.

On those days when Holy Communion is celebrated at Lighthouse Lutheran, our congregation is blessed by the bread prepared by Julie Whalen and the wine made by Tom Kuny. Julie and Tom are

also blessed, knowing that their efforts have contributed to our partaking of the Body and Blood of our Lord.

On Wednesday, August 31 and Friday, September 2 our church participated in this year's Big Knob Fair at the pavilion of the New Sewickley-Freedom Ministerium. Volunteers greeted fair-goers, offering cross-shaped silly bands for the kids, cross-shaped key holders, brochures describing our ministry, tracts explaining God's plan of salvation, and an opportunity to win a huge stuffed bear through a free raffle.

Although plans are not finalized, serious consideration is being given to celebrating an Oktoberfest in Freedom which will help to publish our presence in that community.

A directory is being prepared in the format of a loose-leaf binder. Each Lighthouse Lutheran family will have a separate sheet in the directory. Information which the members wish to share, such as post office addresses, e-mail addresses, and phone numbers will be available there, as well as photos of the members.



Be a Faithful Lighthouse Keeper

In this issue of The Beacon, we are honored to have the Reverend William Beck share his insights with us concerning our Christian commitment to the Church, which, as Pastor Beck points out, our Savior built and bought and of which He is the chief Cornerstone.

High above the skyline of Alexandria, Egypt stood Pharos Lighthouse, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The lighthouse was designed as a safety mechanism for the sea-going traffic. It also became a famous landmark for the city.

Located on prime beachfront property on the harbor, the 45-story, multi-shaped lighthouse was an engineering marvel. Its silhouette was the dominant feature on the local skyline.

Because, at the time, it was the world's tallest building, the lighthouse served as the crown jewel for the city's marketing plan. In fact, its famous likeness was engraved on coins as far away as Rome. The Pharos lighthouse was the crème-de-la-crème of the world's lighthouses.

However this lighthouse was more than an artifact. It was also practical. It housed a large curved mirror in its beacon chamber that could project a beam of light many miles into the dark Mediterranean night to assist distressed, searching sailors. This famed lighthouse was built two centuries before Christ and lasted for more than a thousand years beyond His lifetime on earth.

Yet, with all of this notoriety, the lighthouse's builder might have been forever forgotten had it not been for some quick thinking and brave maneuvering.

Sostrates was the tower's architect and chief builder. He surrendered 20 years of his life to complete the project. As is true with many architects, Sostrates wished to leave his mark on his life's work. He petitioned Ptolemy II, king of Egypt, for the right to inscribe his name in the marble base of the lighthouse.

Ptolemy was no dummy and would have nothing to do with Sostrates's request. In fact, Ptolemy wanted the lighthouse to bear his own name so history would remember him, instead of the builder. Ptolemy demanded that Sostrates chisel the in-



scription to honor Egypt's king and no one else. The order was final. The words were scripted and approved. Ptolemy was to be remembered forever on the walls of Pharos lighthouse, while Sostrates was relegated to be the inscriber of Ptolemy's self-proclaimed tribute. Sostrates was ticked-off. He had done all the work, yet the king wanted all the credit.

Sostrates returned to the job site and devised a plan. Hanging a large curtain to hide his work, he chiseled into the marble these words:

**BUILT BY SOSTRATES, SON OF DEXIPHANES OF KNIDOS
ON BEHALF OF ALL MARINERS AND TO THEIR SAVIOR GODS**

Then he covered the inscription with a thin layer of plaster. In the plaster he wrote the entire text of Ptolemy's self-serving announcement. As years passed, wind, rain, and pounding surf chipped away the cheap plaster, revealing the name of the true builder.

In a wonderful way, Sostrates lighthouse is a parable of the Church, which belongs to Christ and always will. It has His name written all over it. After all, He built it, He bought it, He is the Head of it, and He serves as its chief Cornerstone. In fact, He has constructed His Church to be so strong that, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Today, in the 21st century, we are the lighthouse keepers of His beloved Church. We are commissioned to keep the warning light lit and to build upon His foundation faithfully.

How are we to do that? What are the duties of lighthouse keepers? What activities has He required for His Church? Actually, there are only three:

- Be committed to the world through evangelization and caring – strive "to make disciples of all nations." (Matthew 28:19)
- Be committed to fellow believers through nurturing – aid "the building up of the Body of Christ." (Ephesians 4:12)
- Be committed to God through worship – exist "for the praise of His glory." (Ephesians 1:12)

Take ownership of your church, your local lighthouse. Claim it as your own. Carve your name just below His name. Leave your indelible mark for future generations to see. Let it be known that you were there!

Getting Acquainted

This is the third in a series of articles about our members, offered to help us learn more about our fellow Christians at Lighthouse Lutheran Church.

JANET AND TOM MCCLINTICK

Tom and I have resided in New Brighton, Pennsylvania for the fourteen years we have been married. We have a wonderful blended family of four children and six grandchildren. We met while working for Tuscarora, Inc. in Beaver, and after dating for three years decided to marry in June of 1997.



Tom grew up in Wurtemberg Heights, Ellwood City. He has three children—Candie, Chrissie, and Robert (North Carolina and Florida vacation spots). Tom worked more than forty years in the steel-making industry; was an active volunteer firefighter and ambulance driver/EMT for Harmony Volunteer Fire Company, Butler County; and Emergency Management Coordinator for Jackson Township, Butler County. He also served as Chief Emergency Coordinator for the Zelienople-Harmony Area Emergency Management Team.

Now that he is retired after forty-plus years in the steel-making industry, he has become an avid hunter, fisherman, vegetable gardener, and grass cutter. He spends his spare time riding his motorcycle, playing on his fishing boat, plowing snow, and going to camp near Lake Wilhelm. He always says, "Retirement is not as much fun as people say. It's ten times better!"

I grew up in New Brighton and am a graduate of West Virginia University. After graduation, I lived in Virginia and New Jersey, returning to New Brighton in 1993. My daughter, Jackelyn Rae lives in San Francisco, California and is pursuing her Masters in Social Work.

I am currently working for ANH Refractories in Moon Township in Resale Purchasing. My spare time is spent cooking, reading and watching the Steelers.



JANET'S COLD PACK PEPPERS

- 6 stalks of celery sliced (small bite-size)
- 1 quart cider vinegar
- 3 cups water
- 2 cups canola oil
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cups canning salt
- 3 large cloves garlic, diced fine
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup oregano
- 1 peck hot and mild peppers cut into rings (16 cups)

Mix first 7 ingredients in a very large bowl.

Add peppers and stir.

Let stand out of the refrigerator for 8 hours, stirring occasionally.

Pack peppers in canning jars or clean pickle jars and refrigerate.

These will keep 9 months in the refrigerator, if you don't eat them first.

You can reduce the number of pepper rings and substitute thin-sliced carrots.



I take, O Cross, thy shadow for my abiding place;
I ask no other sunshine than the sunshine of His face;
Content to let the world go by, to know no gain or loss,
My sinful self my only shame, my glory all the Cross.

Only two of Elizabeth C. Clephane's poems are familiar to-day—"Beneath the Cross of Jesus" and "The Ninety and Nine." They are enough. What Christian, upon reading either, does not recognize in the words that Elizabeth Clephane uses to express her relationship to the Savior, echoes of his or her own experiences of grace and love?

She was born in 1830 in Edinburgh, Scotland, the third daughter of Andrew Clephane, sheriff of Fife and Kinross. For most of her life she lived in Melrose, Scotland, about thirty miles from Edinburgh, where the people called her the Sunbeam. Her money was spent mostly on charitable causes. She is buried at St. Cuthbert's in Edinburgh.

Nearly all her poems appeared for the first time posthumously in the *Family Treasury* under the title, "Breathings on the Border." "Beneath the Cross of Jesus" is included in the United Methodist hymnal which we use every Sunday at Lighthouse Lutheran Church. "The Ninety and Nine" is offered below for your enjoyment.

There were ninety and nine that safely lay
In the shelter of the fold.
But one was out on the hills away,
Far off from the gates of gold.
Away on the mountains wild and bare.
Away from the tender Shepherd's care.
Away from the tender Shepherd's care.

"Lord, Thou hast here Thy ninety and nine;
Are they not enough for Thee?"
But the Shepherd made answer: "This of Mine
Has wandered away from Me;
And although the road be rough and steep,
I go to the desert to find My sheep,
I go to the desert to find My sheep."

But none of the ransomed ever knew
How deep were the waters crossed;
Nor how dark was the night the Lord passed
Ere He found His sheep that was lost. through
Out in the desert He heard its cry,
Sick and helpless and ready to die;
Sick and helpless and ready to die.

"Lord, whence are those blood drops all the way
That mark out the mountain's track?"
"They were shed for the one who had gone astray
Ere the Shepherd could bring him back."
"Lord, whence are Thy hands so rent and torn?"
"They are pierced tonight by many a thorn;
They are pierced tonight by many a thorn."

And all through the mountains, thunder-riven
And up from the rocky steep,
There arose a glad cry to the gate of Heaven,
"Rejoice! I have found My sheep!"
And the angels echoed around the throne,
"Rejoice, for the Lord brings back His own!
Rejoice, for the Lord brings back His own!"



Harvest on the Farm

It is the autumn season.
The sky is bright and blue.
The apples, wearing cheeks of red,
Intensify the hue.

The cornstalks in the meadow,
Have turned to gold from green.
The rustling stalks now sing a song,
A melody supreme.

The grasses on the hillside
Stand proud and tall and strong.
Their golden grain sways in the breeze,
As if to join the song.

The harvest is ongoing
With tractors in the field.
Oh, we must work with haste today
So God can give the yield.

For now the geese fly overhead
To find a warmer clime.
We see the leaves of red and gold
And grapes upon the vine.

The winter snows are coming soon.
Our harvest has been won.
We thank God for His bounty now
And for a task well done.

—Dolores Fruth

Written in 1968 at Passavant Memorial Homes

Aflame!

The story of William A. Passavant, Lutheran pastor and editor, tireless founder of hospitals, orphanages, and schools.

Part 2

In the spring of 1842, William Passavant had agreed to take over temporarily in Baltimore the duties of Dr. Kurtz, chief editor of the *Observer*. Upon Dr. Kurtz's return, Passavant continued to do editorial work at the paper. He was busy in other ways as well. He organized a congregation in the Baltimore neighborhood of Canton—the English Evangelical Lutheran Church, his first pastorate. He also took on pastoral duties at Luther Chapel in another neighborhood and ardently worked for revival in his churches, in the sense of the “new measures,” of which he was still a strong advocate.

When Dr. Kurtz permanently resigned his position as editor-in-chief of the *Observer* late in 1842, Passavant was offered the position. He decided against such a move following a lengthy letter from his mother. An excerpt:

[I]f they saddled you with it, it is a charge which you will not easily be able to shake off. You [would] have the whole responsibility on your shoulders. . . . [I]t would certainly be more pleasant to become the beloved pastor of a church . . . and . . . you would retire with honor from a place where a longer occupancy would probably betray your deficiencies.

His agreed-upon six-month commitment as pastor to his two congregations ended in April, 1843, but he continued to participate in their activities, giving guidance to the new pastor at Canton and preaching and teaching in the Sunday school at Luther Chapel. He worked on his *Sunday School Hymn Book*, attended the General Synod which met in Baltimore, visited the East Pennsylvania Synod in Philadelphia, made a Christmas visit to Lancaster, and was occupied with organizing Sunday schools in the Baltimore area. In a letter to his mother:

Our new Sunday school is now fairly under way. We are only a few weeks old and yet the number of scholars amounts to seventy-five. I have given it the name of Muhlenburg Sunday School and confidently believe that before many years we will have a Muhlenburg Chapel in that section of the city.

In March, 1844 he received a call to the pastorate of the First English Lutheran Church in Pittsburgh, which he declined. Letters from leading members of the Pittsburgh church

as well as from fellow ministers urged him to reconsider, pointing out the desperate condition of the Pittsburgh congregation and also the opportunities for the advancement of the Lutheran Church in the West. When the second call came in April, he accepted. It was very difficult to leave his beloved work and people in Baltimore, especially his six hundred Sunday school pupils.

Pittsburgh's First English Lutheran Church was in great difficulty when young Passavant began his pastorate there. There was a debt of \$14,000 (over \$300,00 in today's money), the interest on the debt could not be paid, and the congregation was demoralized. Many years later Thomas Lane, a prominent member of the church, remembered:

Confronted by such obstacles, a young man, not far advanced beyond his twentieth year, in the name of the Lord set up his banner. He aroused the fainting courage of his people, he counselled them and encouraged them by his stalwart faith. He added greatly to their numbers, and developed to the utmost their growing strength.

He was able to inspire the young people to activity in many directions, the growth of the Sunday school was phenomenal, there were "mite societies" and other means to raise revenue, the sick and otherwise needy were looked after, and the despondent attitude of the congregation evaporated. In the first nine months of his pastorate, seventy-nine communicants were added to the church. His sermons, especially those delivered at evening services, were heavily attended by members of other congregations, and he was beloved by the pastors of the other churches. He and Dr. Herron of the First Presbyterian Church were especially close. In addition to the work with his congregation, Passavant held regular worship services at the city jail. The membership of Passavant's church was spread out over several suburbs, and Passavant began a campaign of visitation. The Reverend G. H. Gerberding writes:

Along the streets and lanes of the city, across its hills and valleys, through rain and mud, heat and dust, trudged the young pastor. . . . With that gentle and kindly tact which was part of his nature, he knew how to approach all classes and conditions of men, women, and children. . . . [T]hese calls and conversations were not merely social visits. They were pastoral calls. He left behind him some word or truth of God, the impression that a man of God had been in the house.

In June 1844, Passavant's sister Virginia died following a short illness. Her share of the estate was divided equally among the other heirs. Gerberding again:

Mr. Passavant set apart his entire share of her estate for a special use. From the proceeds of this he helped poor students, needy ministers, and special cases requiring succor. The principal of that fund has been sacredly kept, and he never used a cent for himself.

In late August, 1844, Passavant called together at Butler five or six pastors for the purpose of taking steps for the formation of a new synod for the scattered Lutheran people in western Pennsylvania. Following this meeting, he was busy traveling and corresponding, stimulating interest in the idea. The consecration of the English Lutheran congregation's new church building at Zelienople in September, at which Passavant preached, was a further indication of the need for such a body. The synod's first constitution was adopted at the Leechburg convention of 1847.

William Passavant and Eliza Walter of Baltimore had planned to be married on May 1, 1845, but the wedding had to be postponed because of the great fire of April 10 which devastated the business section of Pittsburgh leaving many members of the First English Lutheran congregation homeless, and reduced some of the church's business people to bankruptcy. For several weeks the church's people worked together relieving the distress of the destitute, and soliciting money, furniture, food, and clothing from those able to provide them.

Finally, William arrived in Baltimore accompanied by his brother Sidney. At age eighty, Eliza remembered:

The wedding was a quiet home affair with a few friends of the family. . . . The bridal trip was by rail to Philadelphia, the General Synod being in session in St. Matthew's church, New Street. . . . [We] returned to Baltimore to bid farewell to dear relatives and friends. [Traveling to Pittsburgh], the Baltimore and Ohio railway ran to Cumberland. From there the stage, whose four horses were changed every ten miles, went over the Allegheny Mountains to Brownsville. . . . We arrived in Uniontown early in the morning, at Brownsville at noon, and boarding the boat arrived at Pittsburgh about six o'clock.

On behalf of the synod and its missions and churches, he often made long trips to distant places, often dealing with difficult situations within congregations. His obligations to his home church continued unabated, and he took on an increasingly large correspondence, giving counsel and comfort in hundreds of cases. So it was that a year after his marriage, Passavant's family, friends, and parishioners became so concerned about his constant work that the church council insisted he take a long rest from his duties.

To spend a summer in Europe had long been a dream of Passavant. In August, he served as the delegate of the Pittsburgh Synod to the Christian Alliance in London, England. While out walking one day he discovered quite by accident a beautiful building of stone with the following inscription on the shield:

JEWISH ORPHAN ASYLUM
ERECTED BY ABRAHAM M. LYON, TO COMMEMORATE THE VIRTUES
OF HIS DECEASED WIFE, ABIGAIL LYON
"Within the Orphan shall find Compassion"

This institution would provide inspiration for Passavant's orphan homes in America.

From England he traveled to Switzerland, France, Belgium, and Germany. At Kaiserswerth he visited the famous institution of Protestant deaconesses and met with its founder, the Lutheran pastor, Theodor Fliedner, an experience which would later prove of great importance in the founding of Passavant's hospitals.

Late in 1846, Passavant returned to his duties in Pittsburgh, much refreshed by his European travels. It was shortly thereafter that the young couple suffered the death of their first-born, a sorrow which was somewhat mitigated by the birth in 1847 of a second child. Eliza continues the story:

Sometime after this event, the pastor moved his family from the center of the city, quite out into the suburbs. The streets were not paved nor were there any paved sidewalks; it was very much like living in the country. In this neighborhood in several houses within sight of each other, our family lived for fifty years. In one of these houses, two children, a daughter and a son were born.

The area to which the Passavants moved was Lacyville, the middle part of what today is known as the Hill. Predominately Germans and Scots-Irish lived here and on the upper hill (Minersville) until the 1880s.

It was at this time that Passavant's approach to evangelism underwent a dramatic change. Upon his return from Europe, he had been confronted by the disintegrating situation in his church and its missions, as well as in the Pittsburgh Synod, brought about by the lack of guidance during his short absence. He was now convinced that the "anxious-bench revivals" on which he had so confidently relied were insubstantial, and that what was needful was the proper grounding in the faith which historic Lutheran practice could provide. He was now unalterably opposed to the views expressed in the *Observer*, and in the curriculum promulgated by the professors at the Gettysburg Seminary. He could see, as Gerberding writes:

the laxity and liberality that prevailed in so large a part of the English Lutheran Church. With his renewed strength, he was at it early and late, in his own church, in the missions, on the streets, and among people wherever he could find them. It was a heavy, laborious campaign of regathering, restoring, reorganizing, and reviving the workers and the work.

In 1848, Passavant launched the monthly magazine, *The Missionary*, to serve as a counterpoise against the views being promoted in publications such as the *Observer* and *Hirtenstimme*. In the April, 1848 issue of the magazine, Passavant explained the workings of the order of deaconesses in Germany and his plans for the introduction of the order into America. He states that the deaconesses must be willing to be servants of Christ alone, not to look for monetary rewards or any other worldly comfort, doing the work of charity and self-denial out of gratitude to Christ.

To Be Continued . . .

Church Council Meeting Highlights

July 28, 2011, 7:30 P.M.

as taken from meeting minutes.

Pastor Dennis Whalen, Norman Amsler, Tom Kuny, Cindy Morris, and Carol Nicoletti were present.

Following devotions, the minutes of the June 23, 2011 meeting were presented and accepted.

Pastor Whalen presented the June financial reports. The treasurer's report will be filed for audit.

Pastor Whalen presented his report for 6-24-2011 through 7-28-2011, a copy of which will be attached to the council minutes posted on the bulletin board. He mentioned in his report that he has begun his visits to the homes of our members.

The Constitutional Steering Committee has completed its review. Following finalization of the constitution and bylaws, they will be presented to the congregation for a two-week review. A meeting will be scheduled for ratification by the congregation.

Council continues to give thought and prayer to a mission statement for Lighthouse Lutheran.

Following discussion, the following divisions for Sunday School classes were approved: Kindergarten through eighth grade; ninth grade through twelfth grade; adults. A teacher sign-up sheet will be posted. Pastor Whalen and Cindy Morris will review Concordia and Sola Publishing curricula; teaching materials on Luther's Shorter Catechism are sought. Tom Kuny has used a website which might be helpful in satisfying the United Methodist Church's background-check requirement for teachers. Rally Day is September 11, 2011.

The worship service on the day of the church picnic will be held at the church. Possible sites for the picnic—Economy Borough Building, the Whalen home. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be provided, and the congregation will be asked to bring side dishes.

Tom and Lorrie Kuny will put together gift bags for visitors to Lighthouse Lutheran Church. Suggestions for items in the bags: Lighthouse Lutheran magnet, pen, pencil, brochure. To receive the gift bags, visitors will be asked to fill out name, address, and phone number cards.

Cindy Morris explained the prayer shawl ministry. If conceived as a group project, the different steps in the shawls' creation could be divided among the participants—rolling the yarn, handing off to those crocheting and knitting, making the tassels, making the wrapping paper. There is constant prayer for the sick throughout the process. Pastor Whalen will publicize the prayer shawl project in the worship bulletin.

Church Council Meeting Highlights

August 18, 2011, 7:30 P.M.

as taken from meeting minutes.

Pastor Dennis Whalen, Norman Amsler, Tom Kuny, Cindy Morris, and Carol Nicoletti were present.

Following devotions, the minutes of the July 28, 2011 meeting were accepted as presented.

Pastor Whalen presented the July financial reports. The treasurer's report will be filed for audit.

Pastor Whalen presented his report for 7-29-2011 through 8-18-2011, a copy of which will be attached to the council minutes posted on the bulletin board. He has received a second logo from Sarah Insull. She is working on one more. Pastor will send council the logos for their review.

Council would like for the congregation to vote on the logo at the congregational meeting. Most of the guests attending Lighthouse Lutheran worship enjoy the service and congregation, but are not interested in becoming members. For Pastor Whalen, sharing the Gospel is of much greater importance than increasing membership.

The Constitutional Steering Committee met on August 4 and 13, 2011. The review is complete and waiting the final approval of all committee members. Distribution of the constitution and by-laws to the congregation for its review is planned for no later than September 30. The vote for approval is planned for the congregational meeting on October 30.

The first meeting of the Evangelism Committee was held August 9, 2011. Members of the New Sewickley-Freedom Ministerium have been invited by Burry's Church to share its tent at the Big Knob Fair. Lighthouse Lutheran will host the booth on Wednesday, August 31 and Friday, September 2, both days from 4 P.M. to 10 P.M. Distribution of cross clip key chains with scripture and church contact tags and religious fun bands is planned. It was moved by Carol Nicoletti, seconded by Tom Kuny, and passed to give the committee a budget of \$350 for implementation of these plans.

The Fellowship Committee met on August 9, 2011. Many events are being considered.

Council approved Mel Roush's proposal for a loose-leaf membership directory. It was moved by Pastor Whalen, seconded by Norm Amsler, and passed to reimburse Mel for the cost of the binders.

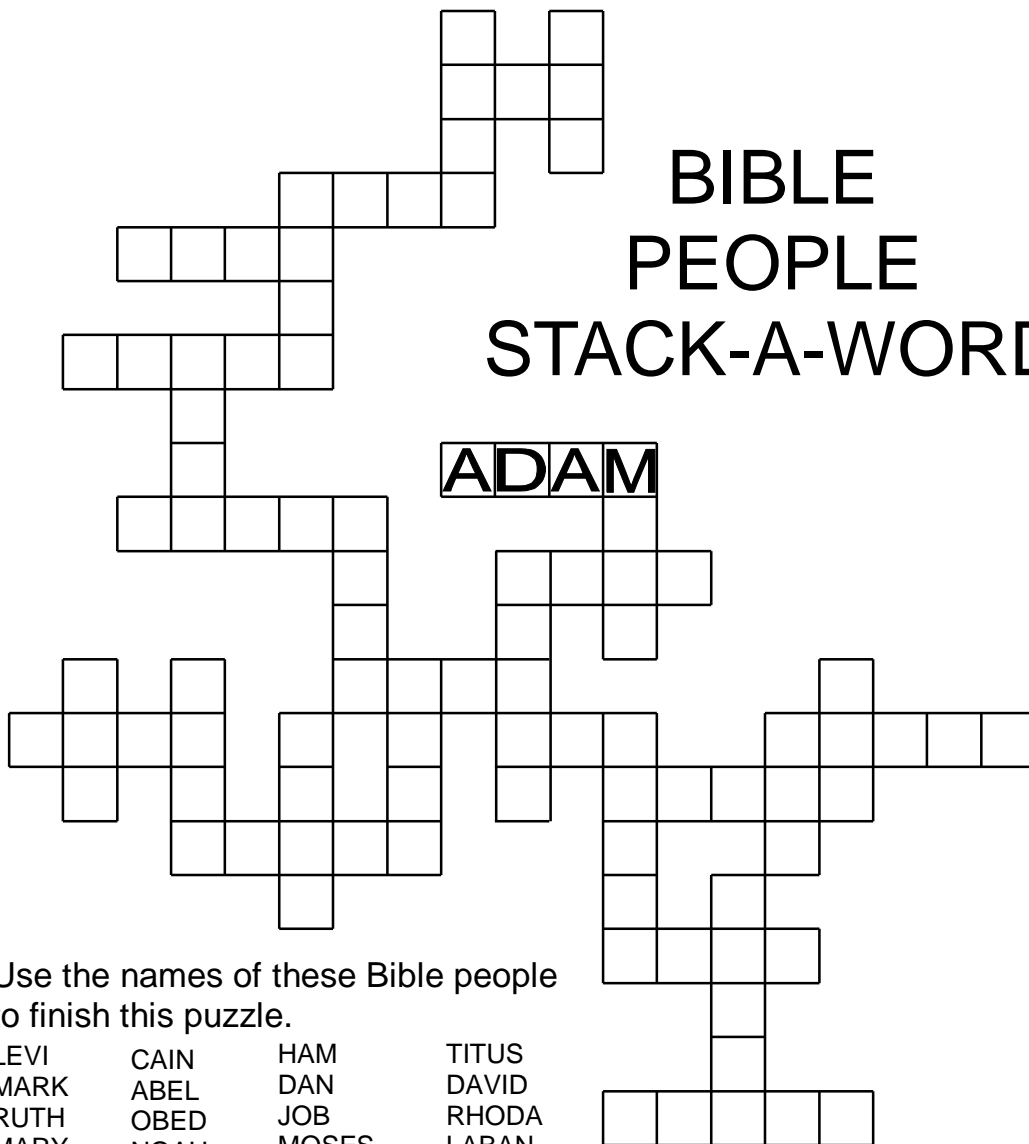
Following a recommendation by Amos Eppihimer, it was moved by Tom Kuny, seconded by Norm Amsler, and passed to donate \$100 from the general fund to the Freedom Volunteer Fire Department.

The 2012 budget was discussed by line item. The congregation will vote on the budget at the October 30 congregational meeting.

Cindy Morris reported that many volunteers are working on a prayer shawl for Lil.

Tom Kuny should hear soon from a company he has contacted concerning Sunday School teacher background checks.

BIBLE PEOPLE STACK-A-WORD



Use the names of these Bible people to finish this puzzle.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------|-------|-------|
| LEVI | CAIN | HAM | TITUS |
| MARK | ABEL | DAN | DAVID |
| RUTH | OBED | JOB | RHODA |
| MARY | NOAH | MOSES | LABAN |
| ADAM | EHUD | ABRAM | SAUL |
| PAUL | ASA | ISAAC | LOIS |
| SETH | LOT | SIMON | SHEM |
| | ELI | JESUS | |



MUSINGS

Many years ago, a TV tour of the country music scene featured Dolly Parton showing Carol Burnett around the new Grand Ole Opry House outside of Nashville. Looking at a circular patch on the stage which had been cut from the Ryman Auditorium floor and set into the new venue, Carol remarked that she felt ashamed to sing on the same spot where so many great icons of country music had previously stood. Dolly replied that she *should* feel ashamed, at which remark Carol let out that familiar high-pitched yelp of surprise, which led me to suspect that at least part of the exchange was unscripted. Either way, it survived the editors, and so we have testimony from one of their own that the accomplishments and reputations of those country music stars do matter, and matter greatly enough to risk offending the sensibilities of a fellow entertainer.

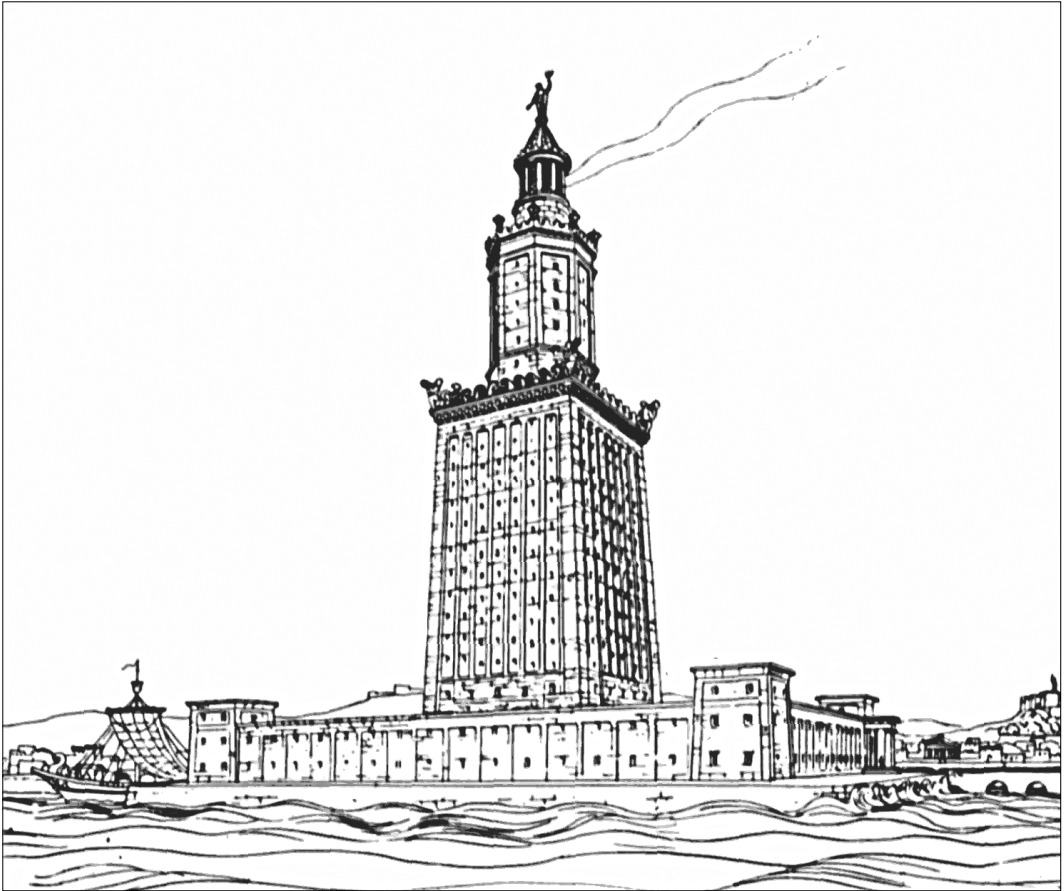
I've been wondering lately how much it matters to us that the great Christians of antiquity stood firm in the face of certain death for the offense of refusing to throw a bit of incense onto the altar of the Emperor (only a little incense, and only once, and you can even go back to worshipping this Jesus person afterward). They suffered sometimes horrible deaths for their commitment to the truth of the Gospel. Are we humbled by their example? Let us pray that we will be willing, even eager, to speak out for that truth today. Let us not fear a raised eyebrow more than they feared the claws and teeth of the arena. Let us not be so cajoled by the notion of the primacy of unity, that we feel it inconvenient and unnecessary to talk to those nice young men who come to our doors with the message that we can be gods and populate the planets. Let us not ask, "Who are we to try to change them? After all, they lead 'good lives' and sing the same hymns we do." How about those friends who need to be freed from harmful elements of worship in their church which limit their joy in Christ? How about those neighbors down the street? Although they mind their own business, keep their grass cut, and seem happy enough as they are, shouldn't we look for opportunities to share the Gospel with them?

Does it matter? Modern education lets us off the hook by telling us that what is true for one person may not be true for another—that each of us needs to decide for himself what is true and right for him and let others do the same. Toleration then becomes the operating principal. That is, unless one should be so crass as to think that his truth makes opposing views false. Of course, we wouldn't tolerate *that*!

Well, let's consult the Bible. Proverbs 16:25—There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death. The words of our Lord—For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. St. Paul—If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

It matters.

Mel Roush



In 1909, the German archaeologist Hermann Thiersch drew the above representation of the Pharos lighthouse. Showing a multi-storied structure with three hundred rooms, there is much speculation in this image. Present-day underwater archaeologists seek a more reliable version based on pieces of the lighthouse itself. One of the Wonders of the Ancient World, the lighthouse was quite impressive. Built about 280 B.C., it was between 393 and 450 feet high. Sunlight reflected from a mirror was its beacon during the day; at night a fire served the same purpose. As a bulwark against the surf of the Mediterranean Sea, the masonry was interlocked and held together with lead. A statue of Poseidon stood at the pinnacle. The effects of three earthquakes, 956, 1303, and 1323 A.D. so badly damaged the structure that it was no longer usable as a lighthouse.