

Good News from Good Hope!



Day after day... they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ. ❖ Acts 5:42
Good Hope Reformed Presbyterian Church ❖ The Presbyterian Church in America ❖ March 2004

Learn to Live a Life of Usefulness

In the New Testament, there is a brief personal letter from Paul to Philemon. Paul writes on behalf of Philemon's runaway slave named Onesimus. In his overture, Paul uses a play on words. He writes, "I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me." The name Onesimus means "useful." Paul plays on the definition of Onesimus. Before he met Paul and became a Christian, Onesimus was useless. His life did not contribute much. He was wasting it in the art of trivial pursuit. Having become a Christian, his heart was changed by the Lord, and he now wanted to live a life of usefulness. Before his conversion he did not care whether he was useful. Now he longed to return to Philemon so that, as a Christian, he could serve him usefully.

In Paul's second letter to Timothy, he illustrates the subject of usefulness. He pens these words: "In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master, and prepared to do any good work."

Like Onesimus, we were once runaway slaves. We did not care whether we were useful. We may not have had another human being ruling over us, yet we were dominated by our sinful nature, following its desires and thoughts (Ephesians 2:3). Now that we have been redeemed, we have been called by our Lord Jesus, our Gracious Master, to become useful. We are encouraged and exhorted to adopt a noble purpose, to be useful to the Master, to be utensils of fine china instead of discarded plastic. We are called to be instruments of good, serving Him and others to the glory of His Name! Tarnished silver can yet be cleansed by the polishing hand of His Spirit. Gold can yet be extracted from the remnant stones of our hearts. Let us pursue usefulness in the hands of our Savior and King. ❖



Building Project Pace Accelerates But Tough Decisions Lie Ahead

by Ian Macdonald, Building Committee Chairman

At the February building committee meeting, we learned that our negotiations with Howard County have moved to Real Estate Services. **Bill Davis** has been led to believe that he will receive a package of "developer agreements" within the next week or two. When those are completed, a building permit should be issued. Four surety bonds will be required in an amount now estimated to be in the neighborhood of \$130,000, exactly the amount that was earlier pledged by members as loans. Bill has begun collection of these monies, which will be held in escrow by Sandy Spring Bank, which will issue the bonds.

The building plans are finally complete and in the hands of **Matt Malanoski**, who will submit a construction bid as soon as he can get all of his subcontractors to respond (hopefully within the next month). **Steve Gerwin** has received only one site development bid, but he is pursuing two others and hopes to have final details worked out and a contract signed within the next few weeks. **Rob Vogel's** final bill has been paid, and the final invoices are in for architects and engineers.

Financially, we own the land, we have about \$27,000 in our building fund (enough to pay all current bills), and we've drawn down \$160,000 on our \$1 million loan. Now for the not so good news... This project is going to cost more, significantly more, than we originally anticipated.

At a bank meeting this week, I learned why Bill likes the bank guys so much (and vice versa). Basically they said that there is no problem with loaning us more money and on more favorable terms than originally agreed upon because of the property's high value. They also suggested that they would post the surety bonds for Howard County without touching the \$130,000 that we are collecting to cover the surety bonds. The problem is and will be how much of a mortgage can the congregation afford or be willing to assume?

When the final bids are in, another bank meeting will take place and, following that, a congregational meeting to show the plans, discuss the budget, and make decisions. If all goes well, we will be digging dirt by the first of April and in our new home for Easter 2005. Pray for guidance. ❖

Focus on Our Missionaries: Good Hope Four Visit Showalter Family in Burkina Faso



Good Hope Reformed Presbyterian Church
 Post Office Box 164
 Burtonsville, MD 20866
 (301) 236-4151
 Current Meeting Location:
 Briggs Chaney Middle School
 1901 Rainbow Drive
 Silver Spring, MD 20905

Join us for Worship at 9:30am and Sunday School at 11:00am each Sunday
www.goodhopepca.com

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March 2004

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|-----------|---|---|--|---------------------------------|---|
| 29 Worship Service - 9:30am Sunday School - 11:00am Ron Higgins GG - 6:00pm Youth Group GG - 6:00pm | 1 | 2 Macdonald GG at Tim & Beth Rowan's 6:30pm | 3 Rowan/Whitehead GG 6:30pm | 4 Men's Basketball at Briggs Chaney Middle School 8-10pm | 5 French GG - 7:30pm | 6 |
| 7 Worship Service - 9:30am Sunday School - 11:00am Ron Higgins GG - 6:00pm Youth Group GG - 6:00pm | 8 | 9 Macdonald GG 6:30pm | 10 Rowan/Whitehead GG 6:30pm | 11 Session Meeting at Waller's House 7:30pm | 12 French GG - 7:30pm | 13 |
| 14 Worship Service - 9:30am Communion to be served Sunday School - 11:00am Ron Higgins GG - 6:00pm Youth Group GG - 6:00pm | 15 | 16 Macdonald GG 6:30pm | 17 Rowan/Whitehead GG 6:30pm | 18 Men's Basketball at Briggs Chaney Middle School 8-10pm | 19 French GG - 7:30pm | 20 |
| 21 Worship Service - 9:30am Sunday School - 11:00am Ron Higgins GG - 6:00pm Youth Group GG - 6:00pm | 22 | 23 Macdonald GG 6:30pm | 24 Rowan/Whitehead GG 6:30pm | 25 Info for April newsletter due to Kate Haber today! | 26 French GG - 7:30pm | 27 Building Committee at the Macdonalds' House - 7:30am |
| 28 Worship Service - 9:30am Sunday School - 11:00am Ron Higgins GG - 6:00pm Youth Group GG - 6:00pm | 29 | 30 Macdonald GG 6:30pm | 31 Rowan/Whitehead GG 6:30pm | 1 | 2 French GG - 7:30pm | 3 |

Spring Growth Group Schedule

All Growth Groups will resume this month. The Middle and High School groups will be discussing teen issues. The Higgins, Macdonald, and French groups will be studying Galatians. The Rowan/Whitehead group will focus on strengthening the bonds of marriage. If you would like more information about any of these groups, please contact **Jack Waller**. The spring schedule will be:

Sundays at 6:00pm - Ron and Amy Higgins' House
 Sundays at 6:00pm - Middle School Group at the Wallers' House
 Sundays at 6:00pm - High School Group at the Wallers' House
 Tuesdays at 6:30pm - Mac and Bobbie Macdonald's House
 Wednesdays at 6:30pm - Randy and Kari Whitehead's House
 Fridays at 7:30pm - Ed and Bonnie French's House

New Communicants Class Begins

A communicants class will be held during Sunday School throughout the month of March (Sundays, March 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th). Any parent or child interested in information about this class, please speak with **Jack Waller**.

Church Roster To Be Updated

It's time for the church roster to be updated. If your contact information (address, phone number, e-mail, etc.) has changed since the last edition in July 2003, please contact **Kate Haber** at (301) 317-0250 or katehaber@comcast.net.

New Look for Church Website

Our church website, www.goodhopepca.com, has recently undergone a facelift. Please check the site out, and send any comments to goodhopepca@comcast.net.

Men's Golf Tournament

Please mark your calendars now for the 2004 "Good Hope Masters" men's golf event. It will be held on **Saturday, May 8th** at Patuxent Greens in Laurel; shotgun start at 1pm. This year's tournament will again be played as a scramble, so start gathering your four-man teams now! Further details will follow, or contact **Mark Hegerle** for more information.