

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 2006*

The Office of Elder and Deacon—A Noble Calling

by Jim Haber, Good Hope Ruling Elder

Wife, kids, work, and the other responsibilities of life; long commutes, screens full of demanding e-mails, and the omnipresent communications network; personal devotions, exercise, and watching what you eat. A run-on sentence is necessary to express life as many of us experience it.

So, what is your reaction when the pastor, speaking for the Session, makes an announcement that solicits nominations from the congregation for the offices of elder and deacon? If you literally wouldn't wish it on a friend, or if you yourself might shrink from such a thing, let us recall some thoughts from the Scriptures.

To Titus, Paul writes, "The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you." (Titus 1:5) The idea is clear from this passage that the church needs elders (and deacons) to be properly established and prepared to fulfill its responsibility of bringing honor to the name of her Lord.

Paul begins his statement to Timothy on the qualifications for elders and deacons with, "Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task." (1 Timothy 3:1) What a high view of church leadership Paul displays in this passage! Is being a leader in the church something to be avoided? No, on the contrary, it is something one should set his heart on. Paul states here that serving the Church of Christ as an elder or deacon is noble.

But why should one set his heart on serving when life is already so demanding?

Perhaps an analogy from Joshua supplies the answer: But to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said, "Remember the command that Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: 'The LORD your God is giving you rest and has granted you this land.' Your wives, your children, and your livestock may stay in the land that Moses gave you east of the Jordan, but all your fighting men, fully armed, must cross over ahead of your brothers. You are to help your brothers until the LORD gives them rest, as He has done for you, and until they too have taken possession of the land that the LORD your God is giving them." (Joshua 1:12-15)

The context of this passage is that before the full conquest of the Promised Land, a few of the tribes of Israel received land, inheritance, and rest. But in granting that early blessing to these few tribes, simple fairness demanded that they set aside their rest for a time until all of God's people entered into rest. Has the Lord blessed you with rest in Christ? Has He given you the blessing of a Christian home and the provision of what you need? Has He led you along the path of sanctification with its attending comfort? If so, consider helping others enter into the rest, blessing, and comfort that is found in our Savior by leading your brothers as the fighting men of those few tribes did.

Finally, included on the newsletter insert are the full statements of the qualifications for elder and deacon. Please consider the men of our congregation in light of them, and submit your nominations to **Craig Higgins** today. Good Hope has been blessed with willing leadership—as we look to the Lord to expand our usefulness, we should look for Him to expand our leadership. ❖

Focus on Our Missionaries: The Brown Family in Cary, North Carolina

Greetings from the Browns, church planting in Cary, North Carolina. We are glad for this opportunity to update you on the progress of Christ Our Redeemer Mission and to thank you for your prayers and support. Thanks!

We began Sunday worship on August 21, 2005, after meeting for about three months with fifteen folks in our home on Friday nights. It was wonderful to see God bring folks to us who could assist with music in worship—a great need for a church plant! We also are grateful to God for providing a place for us to meet that was in our target area and at a very reasonable rent!

This past Sunday, February 19th, we had about 60 people attending worship. We just completed our first directory for Christ Our Redeemer with 60 people listed. A number of college/career individuals are with us on Sundays, as well as young families with infants and toddlers. Our worship has been sweet, with a number of visitors returning and commenting on being blessed by worshiping with us. I'm currently preaching from the book of Acts as we consider a young church in action. **Ask the Lord to make our worship pleasing to Him.**

One of our goals as a church is to reach unchurched folks who are not believers and also those who have left the church for various reasons. God is graciously sending us people from both categories! One young lady who is not a believer recently commented that she was "blown away by the honesty in worship." We are grateful that she continues to worship with us. So far we have had one profession of faith and two other people who may have come to faith in Christ. Please continue to pray for us—we cannot do what God has called us to do without His gracious help. The battle is His, and the glory is His alone. **Pray that we will be faithful coworkers, grow in love for Jesus, and see the lost come to know Him and His grace.**

Christ Our Redeemer has also been participating in ministry to the poor. We live in a prosperous area, so we feel even more of a call to work with those who have less than we enjoy. Around Christmas, we passed out about 600 grocery bags to homes in our target area on behalf of the Food Bank of North Carolina. The bags had information attached to them about Christ Our Redeemer. The Food Bank is a "secular" institution, and we wanted to express to our neighbors that Christians can work with others. We are also involved with a ministry called With Love From Jesus. It's a ministry that helps many Hispanics in our area. Every third Saturday, a team from Christ Our Redeemer goes to help this ministry serving the poor. **Pray that we will continue to remember and serve the poor with a cup of cold water in Jesus' name.**

Our family is doing well. Gail is teaching piano in our home, which she enjoys. Our daughter, Katie is in her third year at East Carolina University. She cleans houses for spending money and is busy with Campus Crusade for Christ. Alan will finish high school this year and is looking into training programs in Africa for work with wildlife. (Never a dull moment!) We as a family are grateful for God's good care to us and for using you at Good Hope Reformed as part of that care. **Please ask the Lord to increase our love for Him and each other and to continue providing our daily bread.**

Gratefully,
Eddie for the Browns

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.goodhopepeca.com

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March 2006

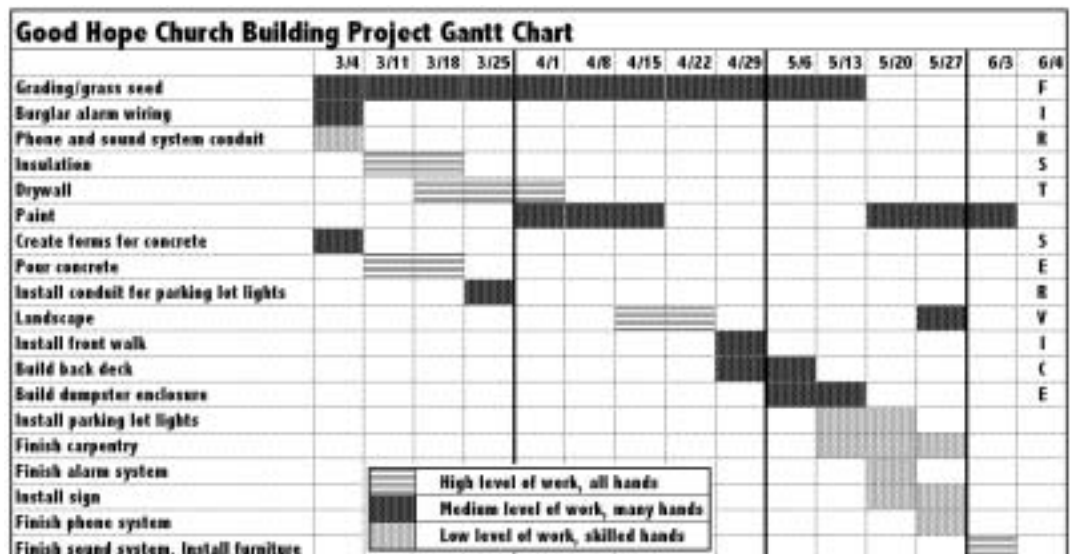
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 Musical Ensemble - 8:45am Worship Service - 9:30am Sunday School - 11:00am Youth Group - 6:00-7:30pm Rowan Growth Group - 6pm	27	28 Macdonald GG 6:30pm	1 Rowan/Whitehead GG 6:30pm	2	3 Session/Deacon Retreat at the Macdonalds' House	4 Session/Deacon Retreat Work Party at 216 Property - 8:30am
5 Musical Ensemble - 8:45am Worship Service - 9:30am Sunday School - 11:00am Youth Group - 6:00-7:30pm Rowan Growth Group - 6pm	6	7 Macdonald GG 6:30pm	8 Rowan/Whitehead GG 6:30pm	9	10 Haber Growth Group 7:30pm	11 Work Party at 216 Property - 8:30am
12 Musical Ensemble - 8:45am Worship Service - 9:30am Communion To Be Served Sunday School - 11:00am Youth Group - 6:00-7:30pm Rowan Growth Group - 6pm	13	14 Macdonald GG 6:30pm	15 Rowan/Whitehead GG 6:30pm	16	17 Haber Growth Group 7:30pm	18 Building Committee Meeting - 7:30am Work Party at 216 Property - 8:30am
19 Musical Ensemble - 8:45am Worship Service - 9:30am Sunday School - 11:00am Youth Group - 6:00-7:30pm Rowan Growth Group - 6pm	20	21 Macdonald GG 6:30pm	22 Rowan/Whitehead GG 6:30pm	23	24 Haber Growth Group 7:30pm	25 Work Party at 216 Property - 8:30am
26 Musical Ensemble - 8:45am Worship Service - 9:30am Sunday School - 11:00am Youth Group - 6:00-7:30pm Rowan Growth Group - 6pm	27 Info for April newsletter due to Kate Haber today!	28 Macdonald GG 6:30pm	29 Rowan/Whitehead GG 6:30pm	30	31 Haber Growth Group 7:30pm	1 Work Party at 216 Property - 8:30am

Countdown to June Occupancy at Our New Church Home

by Ian Macdonald, Building Committee Chairman

Our future home could accurately be called a beehive. A trip to the site is likely to reveal plumbers, electricians, stone workers, carpenters, HVAC workers, and the usual, of course—**Matt Malanoski**, our faithful contractor. On weekends, **Steve Gerwin** and his crew of volunteers are busy. Things are happening, and they are happening fast! In the yard, the steeple stands ready for elevation to its post atop the roof. The usually very muddy ground is largely ignored. Hallelujah, the time is rapidly coming!

In church last Sunday, **Jack Waller** (another regular fixture at the building site) announced that, Lord willing, we could consider ourselves in a 14-week countdown to the move! To help everyone follow the progress, Steve has prepared the Gantt chart that is printed here. Please let Steve know if you are available to be involved in any of the remaining activities, as all hands are welcome and needed! Continue to give thanks and to pray for a safe, speedy, and long-awaited June celebration! ❖



Biblical Qualifications for the Offices of Elder and Deacon

I Timothy 3:1-13

Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Jesus. ❖

Titus 1:5-9

The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. ❖

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