

Words of Faith

THE NEWSLETTER OF FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Faith Family Tree

Dawn Darby

If you've been at Faith Presbyterian Church for a year or ten, depending on how well you get to know others, you begin to realize that there are a fair number of people who are related to each other. When you've been at Faith Presbyterian Church as long as I have (34 ½ years), you know who they all are and how they're related.

Occasionally people will ask me about a relationship (biological, that is) between people, or I'll mention that so-and-so is this other person's sister and receive shocked reactions. One day either during the women's Bible Study or during the Mothers' Encouragement Group, someone said, "I sure wish there was a chart showing who was related to whom in this church." I happened to have a free moment shortly thereafter and with a yellow pad and the church directory, I quickly drew out a "family tree" of sorts. Then I began thinking of other people, either former members/attenders or people within our community, who are related to members here and I added them as well.

My yellow pad scribbles were quite unwieldy, but the ladies at Bible Study and in the Moms' Group liked it. Lesley Pollack saw it one day and said she could make a chart on her computer and that's how it came to be in the form it is today.

When Pastor Rayburn speaks about the covenant going through generations, I see that in this chart. When I look at heads of families, like the Kvaales or the Gronewolds for example, and see how many children and grandchildren they have produced, it is awe-inspiring. It's like seeing what faithful

parenting can do, before your eyes. Obviously many others not on this chart are faithful parents or have been produced by faithful parents. I wonder at the joy the Lord feels, who sees all our family charts—some of us in the middle continuing what our parents and grandparents have done and some of us just beginning that Christian heritage. Some families like the above mentioned have the blessing of several of their children attending Faith with their children. These families get mentioned on this chart because it describes our church specifically. Others have children or relatives elsewhere, doing the work of the Kingdom in other church bodies and don't get mentioned. Obviously the scope of this family tree is very small in the eyes of the Lord.

Lesley and I revised this chart recently, taking 2014 weddings into account. We also had some trouble deciding who to include or exclude. Adding adult children of members was helpful at times and other times seemed to make the chart confusing—and we wanted it to stay on one page. So this certainly isn't a complete chart of every family member. Since neither Lesley nor I are included in this chart, we hoped that people wouldn't take offense at being excluded, and if you're offended at being included, well, you can't always choose your family.

As the disclaimer on the Faith Family Tree states, "We greatly apologize for any errors, both of commission or omission . . ." The purpose of this is for fun and interest. Enjoy.

(Please see the center spread for the chart!)
online version will have no chart

“People I Have Known”

Installment No. 5 “My Teachers” Rudolph Schmidt

The Reverend Doctor Robert S. Rayburn

Most of the subjects in this series have been ministers and professors who shaped my life and thought in their role as my pastors and teachers. But by no means have all of those who have exerted a profoundly positive influence on my life been ministers or scholars. Rudolf Frederick Schmidt – “Uncle Rudy” since my boyhood – was one of the fixtures of my life until his death in November 2005. He was virtually a member of our family from the time he arrived in Pasadena, California in the early 1950s to serve as the Registrar at Highland College, where my father was the young and newly-minted president. I was myself born in August 1950, so you can do the math yourselves from this point forward. After troubles in the church and at the College led to the formation of Covenant College in 1955, Rudy became that College’s registrar, a position he would hold until his retirement in 1991, moving with the school first to St. Louis and then to Lookout Mountain, GA.

Rudy was of German Reformed stock, born and raised in the church in Colfax Center, Iowa that is now a member congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America. Rudy’s life was changed, as many lives were in those days, by the influence of Max Belz, himself not long a Christian, who proved to be something of a natural spiritual genius. Max was trained in theology at a PCUSA seminary that was by no means fully committed to historic Christianity and saw immediately the peril that liberal theology represented to the Christian faith. He realized, long before most of the evangelical world, the looming crisis facing Christian belief in our culture and the corresponding necessity of Christian education. He was eventually to establish one of the earliest Presbyterian Christian K-12 Schools in our land. His eight children were all the products of that school and along with many others of its graduates the proof of how much can be accomplished when Christian minds and hearts are cultivated from an early age. Rudy worked first for Max Belz in his grain elevator business – watching carefully the way the man’s faith shaped the way he treated both his customers and his employees – but upon his boss’ recommendation was soon on his way to California to help with a fledgling Christian college.

Rudy was a bachelor until Collyn Franzenburg (coincidentally also hailing from an Iowa agribusiness family; some of you may remember the famous Franzenburg Hams of years ago) arrived from medical missionary work in Jordan to become Dean of Women at the College. They married in 1961. Theirs was the first wedding of which I retain vivid memories. Having no children of their own, they became parents pro tem for scores, then hundreds of Covenant College students. Theirs was always an unusually open home, first in a typical suburban subdivision in St. Louis County and then a small stone house situated below the College on the western bluff of Lookout Mountain with a spectacular view of the valley below and the rolling hills beyond. They fed students (especially popcorn Sunday nights after evening church [Rudy was a popcorn connoisseur, importing his from Vinton, Iowa!]), counseled them through the thick and thin of the college years, and loved them, a love demonstrated by the fact that they kept in touch with so many in the years that followed their study at the College.

As I said, Rudy was a fixture in my life from as far back as I can remember. He taught me in Sunday School as a little boy, he was a regular in our family home, my brother and I stayed with him and “Aunt” Collyn one summer when my parents were traveling in Europe (I remember his taking us to a day/night double-header at the old Busch Stadium, the former Sportsman’s Park, fortified with a paper grocery bag filled with popcorn), and, of course, his was my home away from home when a college student. For years as a member of the College’s Board of Trustees I stayed with the Schmidts when visiting the campus for a meeting. It was a great happiness to me that my children came to know and love Uncle Rudy and Aunt Collyn, and to be loved by them, as I had before them. Such deep and loyal friendships are surely one of the Lord’s most precious gifts and to know well believing folk who are so worthy of admiration is, I think, more important to our confidence in the truth of our Christian faith than we may at first realize.

Rudy was famous for being meticulous, an excellent quality for one whose job it was to keep records! He also had beautiful handwriting – something that seems to be disappearing in our world – so it was no surprise that he tended to be elected clerk or secretary of virtually every organization to which he belonged! He was the Clerk of Session in several churches to which I belonged as a boy and then a young man. He was a quiet man but was universally admired because he did everything so well. He was only the College's registrar, not its president or the dean of its faculty, but generations of students, faculty, and trustees came somehow to think of him as one of the founders of the College!



But there is more to his story. Rudy, as did I, came from a white middle-class world. He worked at what was, especially in the earlier days, a white middle-class college. He was an elder in a white middle-class church. But in Chattanooga in the 1970s he came face to face with the black inner city, a community into which Presbyterians had virtually never ventured. In some respects, I suppose, he was the least likely man to be a pioneer in inner-city ministry, but, as it happened, he was instrumental in founding a Sunday School in an African-American neighborhood which, these many years later, is the PCA's largest genuinely multi-racial congregation that also transcends the socio-economic barriers that

ordinarily divide American Christians: New City Fellowship in Chattanooga, now numbering over a thousand, the largest PCA church in Chattanooga, which has a number of large PCA churches. Anyone at New City, including its founding pastor Randy Nabors, will tell you that this large congregation would not exist were it not for the perseverance and the loyalty of Rudy Schmidt. Notwithstanding all the rest that he accomplished, his vital role in the development of Covenant College, and the deep personal affection he and Collyn earned from multitudes of Covenant students, those who knew him best and loved him most would probably unanimously agree that New City – now also a network of inner cities churches across the United States – was his life's work, his magnum opus. Iowa farm boy to inner city ministry entrepreneur: what a journey!

Rudy was what Christians mean when they describe someone as a "good man." Considerate, kind, loyal, cheerful, faithful, gentle yet sturdy in his convictions; a man who lived his Christian creed. I remember two occasions when I disappointed him, and such was the authority of his character in my life that his disappointment served immediately to alter my judgment as to my behavior. If Rudy disapproved, I must have been in the wrong! How good must a man be to become a fixed point of moral and spiritual reference for many others! His was a happy and faithful life. He was loved by multitudes and I among them. He lived so as to be missed and he is missed.

News Bits

Another Successful Music Symposium

Ron Bechtel

The 8th annual Church Music Symposium in mid-October 2014 featured Mr. Ken Myers, founder and producer of the acclaimed Mars Hill Audio Journal, and Dr. Max Rogland, professor at Erskine Seminary and PCA pastor near Greenville, South Carolina. Myers has long had a solid following of listeners within the FPC congregation, and Max, son of Dr. Bob and Mrs. Sharon Rogland, was coming home to the church of his boyhood.

Myers lectured on music and meaning. With adroit insight on history and culture, he discussed how our culture's priority on choice and personal freedom is impacting musical choices within the modern church. In his discussion, he explained how music is a gift from God that "has a unique capacity to express through the body matters that are far beyond the body."

Max Rogland entitled his lectures "Stammering Lips but an Attentive Ear: Moses and Biblical Discernment for Making Musical Choices." In three Bible-based lectures he considered lessons from the life and teaching of Moses: Moses as Lyricist (writer of songs), Leader (in holy war) and Lawgiver (for life and worship). In application, these lectures drew out the wisdom and guidance of the Scriptures for considering key issues of music and worship, Christ and culture, and the making of culture that honors God.

Each session was preceded by music from various adult and youth musicians. During Friday lunch, Ross Hauck, professional tenor, and Maddie Lee, pianist, presented several songs. On Friday evening the ACM Festival Choir presented three beautiful anthems under the direction of Margaret Eby. As in past years, Martha Alford, flutist, aided Sunday evening worship with her own solos as well as a flute quartet.

Videos of all six lectures plus the question and answer period and Pastor Robert Rayburn interview of Ken Myers are posted on the ACM website, acmusicians.org.

All Hallow's Eve 2014

Chris Comis

This year Faith Presbyterian Church held an All Hallow's Eve bash at the beautiful Wells Hall, stuffed full of fun for the whole family. It was a night delivering something for everyone – costumes, food, a candy treasure hunt, a picture booth, pie contest, pumpkin carving contest, music and dancing – not one person left that building without having a good laugh and a belly full of good things.

Our lovely hosts for the evening, Shari Roland and Crystal Comis, welcomed us to the fall-themed venue, made possible with decorations generously donated by the Nichols' Farm. Some even bailed in hay to set up a treasure hunt which will be remembered by every child involved. (Thanks to all you out there who pitched in the gobs of candy). We dressed up, played games, and best of all, danced with great laughter together.

The number "three" was our creative costume theme this year, eliciting some imaginative outfits, ranging from the Secondary Colors (worn by Ethan & Dolly Larson, and Dolly's mother Susie Vanderhoff), to the Matrix Triad (Andrew Milton's crew). But the greatest costumes to behold, and winner of the grand prize, were the Sullivan boys as our three pastors – Rayburn, DeMass & Nicoletti.

Chris Comis brought us a homily proclaiming the glory of Christ's victory over death, and how from the garden onward, God's people have been taking dominion throughout Church history – And how this is all the more reason to celebrate with music and dancing...

When all was said and done, the grandest festivity of the night was the dance, for which the band brought us out onto the floor for a wonderful time of foot stomping, arm grabbing, and hand slapping. Though Pastor Rayburn reserved his energy for his upcoming sermon, Mrs. Rayburn gave it a whirl, and we all enjoyed laughing and swinging around the hall together.

As would be expected, our young people out-danced us all, and made it all the way to the end with calls

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for “Just one more!” as we older and tinier folks slowed to a halt. It was so good to see a floor filled with the family of FPC, young and old, but particularly the young people, enjoying themselves with deep joy. What a great night.... We are already looking forward to next year.

2014 WIC Ladies’ Christmas Brunch

Rachael Gary

The annual Ladies’ Christmas Brunch, hosted in early December by Faith Presbyterian’s Women in the Church, is a festive time of fellowship as the women of the church gather together to sing, pray, and reflect together on the past year—and of course, play queen-for-a-day while the ever-chivalrous gentlemen of the church wait on us. This year, the entire operation was a well-ordered machine from start to finish, thanks largely to the efforts of the supremely talented Lesley Pollack and her crack team of volunteers. The food was bountiful and delicious (the blue-cheese stuffed dates wrapped in candied bacon were so good as to be almost sinful) and our servers looked extremely dashing in their suits—and they obviously enjoyed showing off for their sisters and mothers and girlfriends and wives, clearing our plates with much appreciated flair. Highlights from the program included a solo from Greta Hayter in her angelic soprano and the testimony of Sarah Scott, who shared her stories of Christmases past and how dramatically the significance of the holiday changed for her after coming to faith as a teenager in Great Britain.

But you can’t talk about the Christmas brunch without mentioning the tables. And those tables! They were stunningly pretty, sparkling with crystal glasses and Christmas china and silver coffee spoons, but the personal touches capture the attention and captivate the heart. Each table had it’s own distinct style, expressed by a vase of graceful lilies, the dramatic plume of a feather, an army of wooden dolls, or a candle-powered nativity scene spinning like a cheerful top. Lovingly decorated, these tables were as varied as the women who made them.

One table, however, stood out – a green and white table with bright pink candlesticks decorated by Stacey Sheridan. Perusing the tables before the program began, admiring vintage teacups and blue and white porcelain cats, a small note perched at the end of the table gave loving perspective about the arrangement and, indeed, the whole event:

“This china was Amy Hartin’s. The set was left at the house where we moved in, and I didn’t think I wanted it. I offered it to Amy, and she wanted it indeed! Amy loved matching dishes. I found out from her family that they did not have matching dishes growing up. She never did use this china. Florence Rayburn provided the Christmas green runner and napkins. The centerpiece and candlesticks were gifts that Amy gave Florence for her birthday. Amy loved pink. She loved this church, and loved this type of event. We celebrate her today!”

Christmas Celebrations at Faith

On December 11th and 12th, Covenant High School presented their 22nd annual Christmas Concert and Art Show. The concert theme was “Love was Born at Christmas” and featured Christmas songs originating in England, Germany, France and the United States. Preludes included pieces performed by Noelle Roberts, Abraham Sullivan, and Nicholas Shelden. Spencer Gross served as an accompanist and soloists/quartet members included Haylee Darby, Noelle Roberts, Hannah Lawty and Nicholas Shelden.

FPC’s Fellowship of Philosophers

Steven Nicoletti

For me, there are few things that get a Saturday night going like a room full of Presbyterians with mugs of coffee, glasses of wine, and plates of sweets in hand, engaged in an animated discussion on the latest philosophical thought coming out of Canada on secularization, and its implications for our everyday lives. The youth of our church have informed me that I am a nerd. They may be on to something.

So, when I was approached about starting a group that would meet monthly for fellowship, food, and philosophy, I was very excited – and I have not been disappointed.

After an initial meeting in September we began working through a different topic each month. In October we talked about what it means to live in a “secular age.” In November we considered how our Christian liturgy on Sunday mornings, and the “secular liturgies” we experience the rest of the week each shape us. In December we gathered for a pot

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Calendar

- Israel Tour, Jan 10-22
- Pacific NW Presbytery Meeting,
Covenant Presbyterian Church, Issaquah, Jan 22-23
- Annual Meeting and Dinner, Jan 28
- Youth Group Snow Retreat, Jan 30-Feb 1
- Ash Wednesday, Lent Begins, Feb 18
- Evangelize Today Conference, Feb 20-12
- Rev. Ian Hamilton, Cambridge Presbyterian
Church, Preaching, Mar 1
- Couples' Retreat, Mar 5-7
- Covenant High School Drama Production, Mar 27
- Palm Sunday, Mar 29
- Good Friday, Apr 3
- Easter, Apr 5
- Alliance of Christian Musicians
Recital Competition, Apr 11
- Family Fun Luncheon, Apr 19

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luck and then reflected on the implications of the incarnation. Each month a video lecture was sent out beforehand which we discussed when we got together.

What has made this group better than any book or lecture series by itself is the wonderful range of people who have joined us: men and women, younger and older, longtime students of philosophy and those for whom philosophy is completely new – all join in discussion together. The more abstract-minded help us question our assumptions and ask big questions, while the more practical-minded keep our feet on the ground, always asking “So then what does this mean for our everyday lives?” Every participant has contributed something unique to our meetings, and it has been a joy for me to get to know others through these gatherings – to hear their thinking and be challenged by their reflections.

New Members

- Caleb Bestvater, reaffirmation, 10/26
- Dolan Burton, child profession, 11/2
- Daniel & Julia Roberts with Noelle & Nicolas,
reaffirmation, 11/9
- Paul Schmucker, reaffirmation, 11/16
- Calvin James, child profession, 12/7
- Andrew Larson, child profession, 12/14
- Alyson Morse, communicant member to
voting member, 12/21

Baptisms

- Dolan Burton, child, 11/2
- Isaiah Hill, adult, 12/14
- Jacob Vu, adult, 12/14
- Elena Papadopoulos, infant, 12/28
- Norah Kvale, infant, 12/28



The Dawn Treader, ready to set sail at the Narnia Family Fun Luncheon.