

THE BAPTIST SANDLAKE

Monthly Publication of Sand Lake Baptist Church
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MAY 2011



Pastor's Message

May: the Most Beautiful Month

The month of May is truly a beautiful month for all that we celebrate in it.

We have one of the most precious days in our calendar year as a Nation; National Day of

Prayer. This is unique to us, for no nation, country or geographical area has designated a day of prayer for the Nation; this is a Biblical mandate based on the following passage: "I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men..." I Timothy 2:1-5

May is also special because it is in May that we celebrate our mothers. God fearing mothers are a special breed of people, who sacrifice and give without any expectation, or remuneration. They shape our character; they care for us as long as they live, even when we have left home.

My mother was such a woman, she was born and passed away in the month of May; needless to say this makes May even more special to me and my sisters. We miss our mother's late night phone calls; her concern for us and our children who adored her, above all her relentless prayers on our behalf. May their tribe increase!

May is also special because of all the life that sprouts from the ground, the color and beauty of God's creation seem to burst into existence like a breathtakingly beautiful masterpiece of our God, the Creator of everything that exists! Glory to God!

May is also the month we commemorate the heroes of our Nation; all of those fallen men and women in various wars and battles to preserve and protect our incredible freedoms in this great country of ours. Memorial Day is a special holiday for me, for it has provided me with freedoms second to none. No nation or country on earth can boast of such heroism, and freedoms we enjoy in this land of the free and the home of the brave! Blessed be their memory!

On a personal note, I want to take a few lines to thank my friends and loved ones in the family of faith for all their expressions of love and tangible support. We could not have survived financially had it not been for all of your gifts of love towards our mounting medical bills.

Special thanks to our church and sister churches in our area and literally around the country, from California to New York, even in Armenia. Special thanks to Pastors and families who gave sacrificially and raised funds for me from among their constituencies. Words are not enough to express my fondest gratitude for your kindness. Thank you for sharing our burden with us at a time of need, may the Lord bless you abundantly and replenish your supply. Many thanks to our church, and all who have not forgotten us this year, as my treatments continue. Please pray for us, specially, for my wife Annie, my sisters and my children as they continue to give of themselves and minister to my needs. I thank God for all of you! With gratitude,
Rev. Dr. Mihran Kupeyan (mgkupeyan@yahoo.com)

News and Currents Shaping our World **National Day of ... Meditation and Remembrance**

**A look into the past
-- from the future**
by Nikolas Grosfield

Welcome to the future! It is the year 2102, and you are completing a 400-level history class that will fulfill your university graduation requirements. Passionate about spiritual matters and First Amendment rights -- although an atheist -- your senior thesis is on religion in America in the past two centuries.



Your research leads you to write several pages on the first 60 years of the twentieth century. Freedom of religion expanded for Americans of all backgrounds during this period. Although Christianity dominated the religious scene, you are intrigued by the 1950s, when public faith witnessed three important developments.

President Harry Truman signed a congressional joint resolution in 1952 that initiated an annual National Day of Prayer. In two years' time, President Dwight Eisenhower persuaded Congress to add the phrase "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance. And in 1956, "In God We Trust" became the national motto. You ponder that while Christians were the main force behind these efforts, the generic use of the words "prayer" and "God" was acceptably inclusive.

The middle section of your paper focuses on the last 40 years of the twentieth century and the first 20 years of the next century. During this time period, you see what you consider to be progress in the application of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. The famous "wall of separation between church and state," to which President Thomas Jefferson had referred in a letter in 1802, had become a widely approved household term as a result of scores of major U.S. Supreme Court cases, especially in the 1960s and 1980s.

Tension rose between Muslims and non-Muslims in the early decades of the new millennium after the terrorist attacks of 2001. However, debates on the "establishment" -- or "free exercise" -- of the Ten Commandments, the national pledge and motto, the Bible, creationist education, crosses, and prayer continued to dominate the public square. By 2020, many Americans were proud of what they felt was a tolerance for people of all beliefs.

As you begin reading about the last 80 years of your timeline, you learn that the National Day of Prayer seemed particularly resilient to constitutional attacks. In 2030, it became the National Day of Meditation and Remembrance, but it was never outlawed. It was threatened in early 2010 after a federal judge struck it down. But a strong 3-0 appellate court panel vote in 2011 overturned her ruling, a decision that the Supreme Court finally upheld in 2015. By then, the annual prayer day had surged in popularity.

In 2025, its proponents hailed the movement's 250th birthday, citing the First Continental Congress asking the colonies to pray for the struggle with Great Britain. People also recalled that in 1863, Abraham Lincoln -- still the best-loved of America's first 50 presidents -- had declared a day of "humiliation, fasting, and prayer."

However, in the decades leading up to your own lifetime, your historical inquiry takes a strange turn. In the last half of the twenty-first century, special security teams had evolved around the country to find "criminals against the First Amendment." Initially, these were people who were considered radical in their beliefs for "imposing" their faith on others. But soon charities were being closed for "discriminatory" hiring practices, when they refused to employ people of different religious backgrounds. Eventually, a system of "religious quotas" was created, affecting everything from education to health care, immigration to private property, and athletics to media.

You grew up under this system. Yet as you finish your thesis, you realize that those who used to claim that the government was sponsoring a particular spiritual pattern over their lives now have to abide by the religious quotas, too. You recall from your research that 150 years ago, anybody could speak

their minds about the National Day of Prayer, for example. Now, no one critiques the all-fair Day of Meditation and Remembrance.

You consider ending your thesis by calling for stronger religious freedom, where real tolerance – agreeing to disagree and minding one’s own business – ruled the day. You guess that those who peacefully observed a prayer day caused no more harm than those who peacefully ignored such a day, like Independence Day or New Year’s. However, you close your paper by merely affirming that religion in America has changed in the past two centuries. You choose not to rock the boat, knowing you might not graduate if you did.

Please pray that this grim story does not come true. Ask God to grant your leaders, pastors, and yourself the courage to uphold the freedoms you currently enjoy. Praise Him for each of these freedoms. Petition Him to hear His people’s prayers on May 5...and that His people would, indeed, pray!

Nikolas Grosfield edits media reports on U.S. foreign policy and national security. He has a B.A. in History from Cedarville University in Ohio. A columnist from Montana, he has published over 45 articles. He and his bride currently reside in the Middle East.

REPORT FROM THE TRUSTEES

1 John 5:13 These things I have written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may **know** that ye have eternal life,...

It has been a busy spring thus far for the Trustees in the maintenance of the church building and parsonage.

A new door was purchased and installed in the Christian Education building. This door meets code requirements, is attractive and lets the sunshine in.

A new hot water heater was needed and has also been installed.

The parsonage roof has been repaired where it was leaking.

A new ramp has been built and installed leading to the front door of the church. Many thanks to Linda’s sister Joan and her husband Dick in their faithfulness in helping out with many trustee projects.

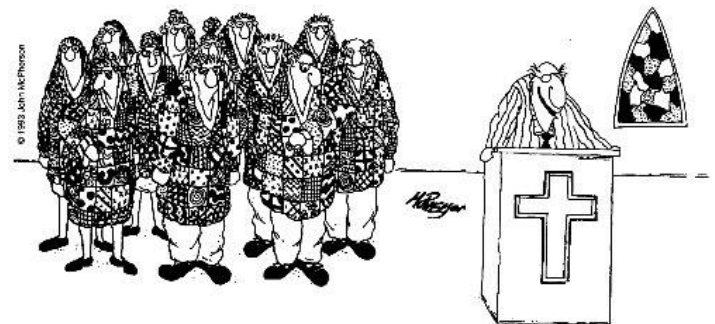
A work day was held in April. We had a great turn out and many helping hands made the work easier. Cleaning was done in the kitchen and education building. The pews were dusted and waxed. Kirk Daniels repaired a broken pew with Hal Shoemaker helping. Joe Fontenot spent hours cleaning the stones from the black topped parking lot with a sweeping machine and Janine used the broom on the parking lot edges. We also want to thank Lynn and Dave Ware, Aline and Annie, June Coyne, Ellie Rescott Mary French, and Art Jacobs for the hard work they put into making the church shine.

We want to thank those who help on work days and those who cannot who through faithfulness in giving provide the funds needed to accomplish the necessary repairs to our church property.

The work on the church roof, new boards and shingles, and the work to be done in and on the belfry will be done as soon as the weather permits.

God is honored when we work in unity for his Glory!

MJ Tiftt, Linda Biittig, Joe Fontenot, and Edie Beach, Trustees



"Many thanks to the Ladies' Quilting Club for the new choir robes."

An Unlikely Friendship Opens a Door to Share Christ

Kary Oberbrunner, author of *Your Secret name*, shared a story about his encounter with an older man named Bob. While Kary was at the local gym, trying to stay focused on his exercise routine, he noticed an elderly man fumbling with an MP3 player and headphones. At first, Kary tried to ignore the man, but as the man was becoming more frustrated with the technology, Kary reluctantly introduced himself and asked if he could help.

The man dejectedly explained, "Hi, I'm Bob, and I love jazz, but I can't get it on this dumb player."

When Kary asked Bob if he had heard of iTunes, Bob shot back, "I' what?"

It slowly dawned on Kary that God had placed Bob in his path for a reason. So they set a date when they could spend some more time unraveling Bob's MP3 troubles.

Kary continues the story:

Against his initial wishes, I visited him at his apartment. Turns out his wife had died a couple years before, and all his earthly possessions were crammed into a small apartment. She had been their main breadwinner, so the bank repossessed his house when he was unable to make payments. Bob and I made a makeshift space in his back room near his desktop computer. One at a time I imported his jazz CD collection onto his hard drive, intending to transfer the MP3s eventually to his player. While importing his music, Bob and I talked about life, his wife, and God.

The weeks following I checked in on Bob often. Kind of funny how two guys who are complete opposites can become the best of friends, all because of an MP3 player.

Bob is 71. I am 32. Bob is black. I am white. Bob doesn't have much money. I have more than I need. Bob is an ex-convict. I've never been to jail. Bob is a widower. I'm married. [In short], we're opposites. A short time later I invited Bob to church, deeply desiring for him to meet Jesus. After a few invitations, he eventually accepted and sat with my wife and me last spring. If he felt awkward sitting in our mostly white church, he didn't let on.

After the service ... [we] knelt near the altar, and Bob told Jesus that he wanted to follow him. Bob confessed that he wanted to stop trying to control his life and invited Jesus to take over Bob wept and when I looked into his eyes I noticed the distinct peace that now defined his face. Bob changed my life and the life of my church. I get more joy from him than he'll ever understand. Whenever I say goodbye to him at the YMCA or hang up the phone after talking with him, he always tells me to "give his love to my family." He wants me to baptize him this June at our next baptism. I'm saddened by the reality that I almost missed Bob simply because I was too engrossed in my own little world.

Kary Oberbrunner, "'What About Bob?': How That Question Changed My Life," New Man. eMagazine (4-14-09)



"Pastor, I'm having a little problem with a friend. I'm wondering if you'd have a chat with him."

Part in the Pageant

Adam, a bright-eyed 3-year-old, had been told of his German heritage. After church in early December, I asked him if he had a part in the Sunday school Christmas pageant. "Yes," he replied, his eyes filling with joy. "I am going to be a German shepherd!"

—Eileen R. Marlboro, N.Y., "Kids of the Kingdom," *Christian Reader*.

Turning the Other Cheek

My friend's four boys were young and bursting with energy, especially in church. But the sermon her minister preached on "turning the other cheek" got their undivided attention. The minister stressed that no matter what others do to us, we should never try to "get even." That afternoon the youngest boy came into the house crying. Between sobs he told his mother he had kicked one of his brothers, who had kicked him in return. "I'm sorry you're hurt," his mother said. "But you shouldn't go around kicking people." To which the tearful child replied, "But the preacher said he isn't supposed to kick me back."

—Jane Vajnar, Tampa, Kansas. "Lite Fare," *Christian Reader*.

Our Nation's Great Heritage

Presidential Quote of the Month Andrew Johnson (1808-1875), 17th President of the United States

"It is a mistake to suppose that democracy may not be advanced under different forms of government. Its own, it should be remembered, is the highest conventional form, that which precedes the lofty independence of the individual, spoken of by the Apostle to the Hebrews, who will need government but from the law which the Lord has placed in his heart." – Inaugural Address, 1865.



Andrew Johnson was born in December 1808 in Raleigh, North Carolina. His father died when he was around three years old, leaving his family in poverty. Johnson's mother took in spinning and weaving to support her family, and she later remarried. She bound Andrew as an apprentice tailor when he was 10 years old. He had no formal education, but taught himself to read and write.

At 16 or 17, he ran away from his indentured position and went to Greenville, Tennessee, where he found work as a tailor. He was 19 when he married Eliza, age 17. His new wife taught him arithmetic up to basic algebra, and tutored him to improve his literacy and writing skills.

He entered local politics at age 21, and became mayor of Greenville. He was then elected to the Tennessee House of Representatives, where he served a single term. In 1853 he was elected governor of Tennessee, following one term of which he was elected to the United States Senate. Nine years later he was selected by President Abraham Lincoln to be his running mate. The following year, Abraham Lincoln was mortally wounded at Ford's Theater, and on April 15, 1865, the morning after Lincoln's assassination, Johnson was sworn in as president of the United States. Johnson was the first vice president to succeed to the presidency upon the assassination of a president, and the third vice president to become a president upon the death of a sitting president.

As President, he presided over the initiation of Reconstruction. His conciliatory policies toward the South and his hurry to reincorporate the former Confederate states back into the union and his vetoes of civil rights bills embroiled him in a bitter dispute with members of Congress. Just three years into his term, articles of impeachment were prepared against him, but he was acquitted by a single vote in the Senate. One of Johnson's last significant acts was granting unconditional amnesty to all Confederates on Christmas Day, 1868.

Johnson and his wife had five children. He was a staunch Bible-believing Christian, but had no denominational affiliation. He died in Tennessee in 1875 at the age of 66. He is buried just outside Greeneville, Tennessee in what is now the Andrew Johnson National Cemetery.

Birthdays

May

Wayde Horton	May 8
Ellie Rescott	May 11
Taber Dean-Valtierra	May 13
Ray Smith	May 23
Joel Kupeyan	May 25
Ruthie Kupeyan	May 26
Todd Smith	May 30
Michelle Lake	May 30

"The length of our days is seventy years- or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away." Psalm 90:10

Shoplifter Comes Clean...Almost

The story is told of a shoplifter who writes to a department store and says, "I've just become a Christian, and I can't sleep at night because I feel guilty. So here's \$100 that I owe you."

Then he signs his name, and in a little postscript at the bottom he adds, "If I still can't sleep, I'll send you the rest."

—Bill White, Paramount, California

Bugs with Flashlights

When my grandson, Billy, and I entered our vacation cabin, we kept the lights off until we were inside to keep from attracting pesky insects. Still, a few fireflies followed us in. Noticing them before I did, Billy whispered, "It's no use, Grandpa. The mosquitoes are coming after us with flashlights."

—Thomas LaMance, Prewitt, New Mexico
Christian Reader "Kids of the Kingdom."

Real Men Love Roses

The night before my wedding, I asked my sister to buy three long-stemmed roses as gifts for my mother, my aunt, and my new mother-in-law at the end of the ceremony. Although this was not a traditional custom, I thought it would be a surprise for my Chinese husband.

The next day, after the minister pronounced us man and wife, my sister handed me the roses, which I gave to my new husband to hold. To my surprise, he proudly passed them out to his groomsmen, who received them with gracious thanks.

—Sharon Co Leong, San Antonio, Texas
Christian Reader "Rolling Down the Aisle."

Lot's Wife

Anthony, my four-year-old grandson, was excited about the story he had learned at Christian day school. "Grandma," he said enthusiastically, "it's about a woman God told not to look back."

"You mean Lot's wife?" I asked.

"Yes," Anthony's face brightened. "And you know what? She looked back and turned into the Statue of Liberty!"

—Lorene Saylor, Hollsopple, Pennsylvania.
Christian Reader "Kids of the Kingdom."



"I assure you I'd make a fine director of Christian education. I've held that position in several previous lives."

Holy Week and Resurrection Sunday services –

We give God the glory for His enabling and special visitation during our Holy week this year.

On Wednesday, we started our week with the prayer and Bible study. We have been studying through the book of Psalms and providentially arrived at the Hallel Psalms, otherwise known as, the Passover Psalms, recited and sung during the Passover meal, even by our Lord the night He was betrayed.

Thursday evening took us to Union Gospel church where a joint crowd worshiped God and had communion together. The choir blessed and uplifted our hearts with a special number.

Friday – Good Friday we had a special service with hymns appropriate for the day with MJ and Diane Tiffit singing a duet accompanied by Annie Kupeyan.

Resurrection Sunday

started with a sunrise service @ 6:30 a.m. on the grounds of Union Gospel church, where Sam Kupeyan delivered a resurrection message; followed by a delicious breakfast prepared by the men of the church. It was beautiful to be up that early and welcome the dawn of such a victorious day, along with the honking of the geese, pecking of woodpeckers and all the birds that have returned from their winter migration. All of this was followed by our services at the respective churches.

Glory be to God for such a full week.

Lenten Service hosted by Women's Fellowship – the ladies of our church hosted the lunch on Friday, April 15, 2011 following a service led by our pastor. Our ladies had prepared so much food which we continued to eat the next day Saturday, during our Work Day, and Sunday following our worship services. The message of the Gospel rang forth, and the love of God displayed through the generous and sacrificial service of our ladies. Many thanks to all our ladies and the men who prepared the food, helped with the set up and clean up of the premises at Church of Covenant; to God be the glory!

Again, thank you Ladies Fellowship; Annie Kupeyan, Edie Beach, Lynne Ware, June Jacobs for planning and coordinating everything, May the Lord bless you abundantly.



Statistical name tags drew the pastors closer than the ones that just say "Hello, my name is . . ."

UPCOMING EVENTS

National Day of Prayer breakfast – Sand Lake Area Association of Churches will hold its annual National Day of Prayer breakfast on May 5, 2011 @ 7 a.m. It will be held at St. Henry's Church.

Everyone is invited to this annual event where we pray for our nation and intercede on her behalf before the Throne of Grace. There will be a \$8 charge for the breakfast.

National Day of Prayer gatherings:

There will be several gatherings for prayer on Thursday, May 5, 2011 on the occasion of National Day of prayer in and around the Capital Region. In Albany, the prayer gathering will be from 10:30 a.m.– 1:00 p.m. at the East steps of the Capitol building.

Please join any group closest to your location and let us intercede on behalf of our Nation. Our Nation needs prayer more any other time in her history.

Mothers Day Luncheon

We are excited to announce our Mothers day luncheon which will be held on Saturday, May 21, 2011 @ 11- 1 in our Fellowship hall. The preparations are well under way to make this a memorable day for every woman in our church. The theme is: "**Women of Excellence**" The Lord willing our speaker this year will be Jean Fast, she is a life coach with Christian Counseling Associates. Mark your calendars for this special event in the life of our church. You will soon receive invitations and further details of this memorable celebration.

Alight Care Center will hold its 10th annual fundraising banquet on Monday, May 23, 2011 6:00-9:30 p.m. at Michael's Banquet House in Latham, NY. Anyone interested call the church office for reservations. We are hoping to have a table of ten from our church.

Memorial Day parade – the Union Gospel Church will place a wreath at the war memorial in Poestenkill, NY on Monday, May 30, 2011 following the parade through town.

Global Day of Prayer

On Sunday, June 12, 2011 we will celebrate the Global Day of Prayer (GDOP) with the rest of the world; every country on the globe is expected to be represented in this largest prayer meeting in world history. Each year since its inception in the year 2000 this GDOP has been appropriately celebrated on the Day of Pentecost, which is the birthday of The Church according to Acts 2. Jesus had told his

followers on the 40th day after his resurrection (this was also the day that Jesus ascended to heaven) to remain in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit was given; they did so for 10 days and then the Holy Spirit was given. In light of all this it makes sense for us to join with the world 10 days before May 23 and pray our prayers of preparation just like the disciples did before the Day of Pentecost.

The first of those ten days is Thursday, June 2, 2011 Ascension Day. We are encouraged as a church to join in with the rest of the world to pray and seek God's face, specially, for the ten days leading up to Pentecost Sunday on June 12.

Gifts to the Church – We always appreciate your gifts. Special thanks, to our dear friends near and far who send us gifts to cover expenses of the Newsletter. You are a breath of fresh air! The Bible says those that refresh others, will be refreshed themselves. May the Lord bless you and reward you abundantly, the only way He does!

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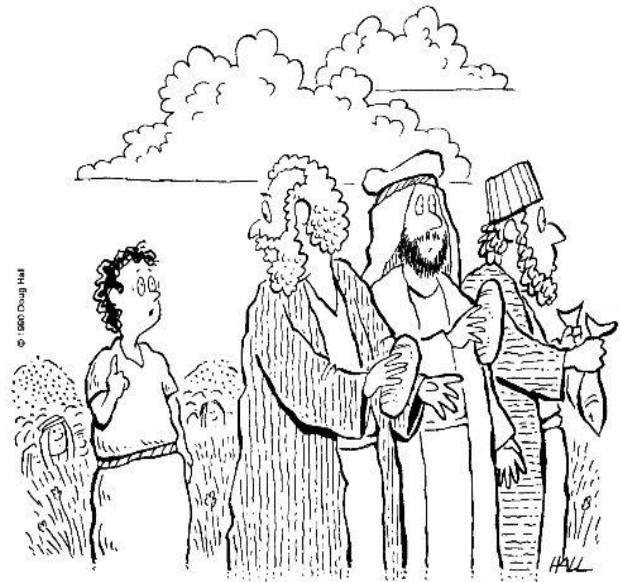
Schedule of Weekly Services

Sunday

Sunday School for all ages: 9:15 – 10:15
Pre-Service Prayer: 10:40-11:00
Worship Service: 11:00 A.M.
Communion First Sunday of Month
Evening Service: Every other Sunday 7 P.M.

Wednesday

Prayer Meeting and Bible Study
6:30 – 8:00 P.M.



"About my loaves and fishes . . .
could I get a receipt for tax purposes?"