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The

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FLAME

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It Seems to Me...

The gift of repentance

by Dr. Carl Hofmann

Editor's note: Each month a guest writer will be featured in this column during the search for an Interim Senior Pastor.

"Now I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because your grief led to repentance;

for you felt a godly grief, so that you were not harmed in any way by us.

For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret..."

-2Corinthians 7:9-10

We've all seen those sandwich-board signs (or their cartoon counterparts) where someone invokes us to "Repent for the End is Near." Such messages tend to come across to us as negative—they are the shrill exhortations of self-appointed prophets who claim to care about our eternal life, but strike us instead as shaming and judgmental. Can "repentance" be a good word? Can it, in fact, be life-giving and holistic? I think it can.

These past few weeks I've been teaching on the goodness of the Christian message, the "gospel". Tracing its origins from the Old Testament to its radical nature in the preaching of Jesus Christ

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Angels unaware

Lamb's Ministries provides a welcoming environment to those in need

by Elsi Dodge

The volunteers and board members of the Lamb's Ministries are fully aware of the verse from Hebrews 13:2 which says, "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it."

The Lamb's Ministries provide a welcoming and safe place for building relationships between our faith community and the community of people who have low income or no homes. We

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photo by Elsi Dodge

During the winter months, Lamb's Ministries serve a delicious lunch to those in need every Saturday afternoon.

Marking your place in First Pres history

2009 Pictorial Directory sign-ups begin March 8

by Kier Jellis

In preparation for the 2009 First Pres Pictorial Directory, I have been perusing the pages of our directories dating back to the 1960's (you should stop by the church office someday to take a look at them). I have found a strange sense of comfort as I've turned the pages of these mini time capsules. First Pres has encountered difficult times throughout its 130 year history and we are currently experiencing our share. For me, the portraits of those who have come before us are

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photo courtesy of Carnegie Library, Boulder

First Pres Sunday School children with Sunday School teacher Hulda Nelson and minister William Robson Notman between 1896 and 1899.

IN MEMORY

Esther Hamilton

July 13, 1908
to January 13, 2009

Walter Dempsey

March 10, 1917
January 19, 2009

Norm Winchester

August 7, 1915
to January 30, 2009

Pauline Johnson

December 5, 1927
to February 13, 2009

HOSPITAL INFORMATION

When you go to the hospital...

- Call the Pastoral Care Office, 303.402.6434
- Register with hospital admissions as a Presbyterian
- Then members of the pastoral care team can call or visit!

Angels unaware

ANGELS *from page 1*

provide a spiritual environment where people can get away from the harsh climate of the street life. Relationship-building with God and with each other is the essence of the ministry. We seek to use material resources in a way that shows respect for our guests and encourages their efforts toward individual responsibility.

And, apparently, we entertain angels. So we wonder: Taking into account all the angelic action we see, how many *more* angels are hidden in our midst?

Consider ...

Consider the glove angel.

She volunteered to serve a meal at Lamb's Lunch in December. She returned in January, bearing 96 bags, each containing warm, colorful gloves, a pocket hand warmer, an energy bar, and an encouraging card.

She said, "I felt humbled to be able to be used by God to help those in need. I really don't want to be recognized in any way, just God and the guests who so graciously accepted the gifts."

Consider angelic, sharing guests. One man, on receiving his pair of new gloves, gave in exchange his old, still usable, pair. "I like the new ones better, and I don't need two pairs," he explained.

Another man was carrying around about 24 granola bars he had been given. "I'll never be able to eat them all," he told a volunteer. "Will you hand them out to people as they leave?" Another man brought the volunteers a handful of Starburst candies. "Thanks so much for helping!" he said.

Consider a cooking angel.

Bruce Greiner, who provides a hot meal for the Saturday Lamb's Lunch once a month. In December, he carved prime rib. In January, guests came through the line three and four times for

refills of his hot chili and rice.

"This is the best I've ever tasted," one man commented.

"Almost as good as my own," a woman said, dipping her spoon into her bowl.

Consider a family of angels.

Bruce Greiner's children, Travis, A.J., and Jenna, cook and serve alongside their father.

"We do this because we like to," Jenna said as she wiped down tables after the meal.

"This is an opportunity for our family to serve together," Bruce added as he finished cleaning up the kitchen.

Consider the guests on

Christmas Day, not looking

much like angels perhaps, sitting in the Annex of First Presbyterian Church, eating bagels, sipping hot chocolate, and watching *The Nativity Story* on DVD. When a man blocked the view of the TV, the other guests demanded, "Get out of the way!" And when he refused, they evicted him from the group.

"Think of the metaphor!"

Beth Wettergren moved between laughter and tears as she told the story. "He had an opportunity for companionship and warmth, and chose to be kicked out into the cold!"

Beth is the moving spirit behind the Lamb's Ministries. Treasurer of the board, it is her heart which has driven the outreach across the years. "I have a heart for the disenfranchised," she confides.

Consider the bus-token angel and a ten-year volunteer with the Lamb's Lunch, Sally Nesbit.

"Where's Sally?" guests would often ask. "I need bus tokens."

"Her smile always makes me feel welcome," another might say.

Sometimes Nesbit came

straight from dialysis to do name tags and bus coupons at Lamb's Lunch. Other times she changed her dialysis appointments because serving the guests was more important. Nesbit died December 17, 2008, of kidney failure, and her family arranged her memorial service so that Lamb's Lunch guests could attend.

Consider the angels who responded to Nesbitt's death

by writing checks marked, "in memory of Sally, for the Lamb's Lunch ministry." So far, the Lamb's Lunch board can purchase 275 one-way bus rides from these gifts.

Consider the anonymous angel who approached Beth the first Sunday of January.

"I am so sorry!" he began. "My family and I haven't been able to come help at Lamb's Lunch this season. We love it, but we just haven't been able to manage to get there. But, here's this."

When he had moved on, Beth opened the check he'd pressed into her hand.

"I stared in joy. It was enough to buy the guests long underwear for a year plus bus coupons for 500 rides. It's beautiful!" Beth says positively. "It's just beautiful!"

Lamb's Ministries entertains friends and strangers every week. And we entertain angels, also. Some we recognize. Some we don't. All are welcome.