



Seventh Notes

SEVENTH & JAMES BAPTIST CHURCH

April 2010

SEEING JESUS IN THE FACE OF ANOTHER

The following Opinion piece was written by David Wilkinson for the Associated Baptist Press. Copyright © 2010, Associated Baptist Press—Reprinted with permission.

One of my prayers for this season of Lent was to be more intentional about looking for Jesus in unexpected faces and places. Lo and behold, Jesus showed up for dinner.

On Ash Wednesday, our church family did something a little different for most Baptists. We exercised our Baptist theology of the priesthood of all believers by serving the elements of communion and administering the ashes to one another as we sat around the dinner tables following our mid-week meal.

As the pastor introduced the sacred ritual we were about to perform, I glanced at our table: a few remaining iced-tea glasses and coffee cups, a discarded napkin or two, several saucers with smudged bits of icing and leftover crumbs from a birthday cake served in honor of several church members, and a bowl of melted ice cream.

Amid the clutter was a simple arrangement displayed on a square piece of black cloth: a small iron cross, a stone, a dried palm branch, and a lighted votive. At the cloth's edge were a communion tray and a small bowl with the ashes of palm fronds from last year's Palm Sunday service. As I surveyed the scene, I thought about the appropriateness of sharing bread and cup amid the messy evidence of a meal we had enjoyed together, reminiscent of the Last Supper.

Sitting directly across from me was James Paxman Boadu. While the other six of us at the table were couples, Paxman was alone. His wife, Theresa, and three of their four children were asleep in the Boadu's home in Kumasi, Ghana, more than 6,000 miles away. Paxman resigned the Baptist church he served as pastor to come to Baylor University's George W. Truett Theological Seminary in Waco, Texas, to pursue a theology degree so that he can go back to Ghana to be a better pastor.

"Let us break bread together," we sang in preparation for communion. Then a deacon at each table began the sharing of the bread. My wife, Melanie, handed me a plate with a portion of pita bread, called me by name and said, "This is the body of Christ, broken for you." As the bread and the words made their way around the table, I glanced at Paxman. He took the plate, pinched off a bite of bread and smiled.

At first, I thought it was a smile of awkwardness from feeling a bit out of place and doing something familiar in an unfamiliar way. But as he turned to the Baylor student seated next to him and spoke the somber words, he smiled again.

I thought about how different we are, Paxman and I. Measured in terms of race, nationality, native language, class and culture, our life experiences are worlds apart. Yet we are brothers who find common ground in one faith, one Lord, one baptism.

(Continued on next page)

It happened again with the cup. “This is the blood of Christ, shed for you,” each of us said as we passed the communion tray to our neighbor. Another smile spread across Paxman’s broad face as he lifted his cup of juice from the tray.

This time, I saw more in his smile -- something deep and profound. I think it was the outward manifestation of an inner joy that bears witness to the agony and the glory of the cross, the indescribable gift of God’s Son, and the promise of the resurrected life in Jesus.

Another deacon picked up the small bowl of ashes. Each of us in turn dipped our thumb into the bowl and smeared the mark of the cross across our neighbor’s forehead. “By the wearing of these ashes,” we solemnly declared, “we offer our suffering and brokenness to God.”

When Paxman’s turn came, he closed his eyes to accept the mark of the cross, smiling again. The smile came from a heart that has gladly embraced sacrifice to follow Christ. He -- and his family -- have sacrificed much for him to come to the United States for theological studies and further training for ministry. But I know there have been other sacrifices for the sake of the gospel.

Paxman is also acquainted with pain and sorrow. Just a few days later he would experience them again, feeling the sting of separation from his family with the news of the deaths of his sister and a nephew. We stood to sing a closing hymn, each of us now bearing on our foreheads the ashen mark of the cross. Paxman smiled. And it occurred to me that in that smile I had seen the face of Jesus.

I’m confident Paxman would be embarrassed to read those words. His humility is deep and genuine. But I know what I saw. And I am the one who was humbled.

And blessed.

WELCOME, HENDRI!



Hendri Wijayatsih

Hendri joins Seventh & James by Watchcare. Hendri is from Indonesia and is spending the spring semester observing professors at George W. Truett Theological Seminary. Welcome to Seventh, Hendri!

AMERICAN VIOLET

MOVIE NIGHT IN HARPER HALL
SUNDAY, APRIL 25TH AT 5:30 P.M.

American Violet is the story of Dee Roberts who is falsely accused of distributing narcotics in a school zone. Roberts is offered a deal she can't refuse: plead guilty and accept a 10-year suspended sentence. The alternative: risk serving 16-to-25 years in jail. Realizing a conviction would ruin her life, Dee decides to fight back. Suing the DA for racial discrimination, Dee battles impossible odds in a case that will not only change her life but the laws of Texas as well.

Bring a brown-bag supper and join us for the movie and discussion to follow, led by Mark Osler. *American Violet* is rated PG-13 for thematic material, violence, drug references and language. The film runs 103 minutes, and will begin promptly at 5:30. Childcare is available with reservations made by Sunday, April 18th. If you have questions, please see Leslie Rosencrans.

PROPOSED 2010-2011 BUDGET

Copies of the proposed 2010-2011 budget are available in Harper Hall, at the sanctuary exits, and in the church office for review. We will vote on the budget during Church Conference on Wednesday, April 21.

SEVENTH'S SENIORS

**Picnic at Carleen Bright Arboretum
April 22 • 10:30—1:30**

**DEACON OFFERING
COORDINATORS**

Date	Deacon
April 4:	Ashley Cruseturner
April 11:	College Sunday
April 18:	Bob and Mary Darden
April 25:	Youth Sunday
May 2:	Ray and Ellen Deaver

**Deacon Circle Luncheon
April 18, 2010
Harper Hall**

Deacons: If you are unsure about whether your deacon circle is meeting, please contact Ann Sims.

**MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST
SATURDAY, APRIL 3
8:30 AM**



**HARPER HALL
\$6.00
PLEASE INVITE A FRIEND!**

**Sunday School
Fellowship**

Join us for goodies in Harper Hall before Sunday school on

Sunday, March 28th from
9:15-9:45am

Don't miss this chance to fellowship with friends!

Food From the Faithful: Please bring donations of canned meat (tuna, chicken, etc.) to be donated to Caritas for families in need in Waco.

COLLEGE STUDY TABLES

It's that time again! In May we will open the Melton Building for students to study for exams. If you would like to provide homemade goodies (or store-bought) please see Matt Rosencrans. We will also need volunteers to help with sign-in each night.



College Study Tables:

May 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7

8:00 pm - 3:00 am

Shifts run from 8:00-11:00, 11:00-1:00
and 1:00-3:00

Contact Matt (matt@seventhandjames.org)

Moderator Michael Long called for a motion to go into conference. **Carolyn Keathley** made the motion; Rosalie Beck seconded, and the motion carried. **Bert Wilson** moved that the Known Agenda be adopted; **Tom Newsom** seconded, and the motion carried. **Bill Hillis** moved to accept the Membership Report; **Raymond Bailey** seconded, and the motion carried. **Argye Hillis** made the motion to approve the amended Minutes of the January conference—Kelli Phillips should be listed under Watchcare; Dan McGee seconded, and the motion carried.

Tom Newsom presented the report for the Administrative Council, noting that the budget was in good order, and that the Administrative Council as well as other church councils are in the final stages of budget preparation for 2011.

There being no Old or New Business, **Raymond Bailey** presented the Staff Report, first turning the floor over to Tom Newsom again. Tom presented a report on developments with the Bisu of Thailand, recipients of Leuschner funds for scholarships from Seventh & James.

Continuing with the Staff Report, **Raymond Bailey**

- read aloud the resignation letter from Lu Treadwell, which the church voted to accept based on the motion of the Administrative Council;
- reported that the church is making preparations for the Lenten season;
- that the accessibility ramp at the Leuschner Building is nearing completion.

There being no other reports, **Dann Walker** moved to Adjourn.

Respectfully submitted by

Moderator Michael Long (in absence of a Church Clerk)