

## LISTENING WITH HEART, MIND, AND SOUL

The Sunday School Lesson for Sunday, August 23rd, was entitled, "God's Call to Obedience" in the International Lesson Series. I thought it was a good one because it included a portion of Scripture called the "Shema," Deuteronomy 6:4-9. The first two words of this section of the Torah (Hebrew Bible) are "Hear, O Israel," and this portion is a centerpiece of the morning and evening Jewish prayer services. The first verse encapsulates the monotheistic essence of Judaism: "Hear O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is One." The Shema is considered the most important prayer in Judaism, and its twice-daily recitation is a "mitzvah" or religious commandment. It is traditional for Jews to say the Shema as their last words.



I mention the above because what follows that first verse is a section of scripture very familiar to Christians. It is called, "The Great Commandment," and was picked up by Jesus when he was asked what was the greatest of the Commandments (Matthew 22:37). In the Shema it says, "Hear O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." (Deut. 6:4-5)

Some interpreters read the words, "heart, soul and might" as component parts of what it means to be a human being. But these three words really function together to portray a "whole being" posture of total devotion to the Lord. The word "heart" refers to a person's center of thought and decision-making. To love the Lord with all one's heart is to be fully devoted and centered on obeying God with one's thought-world, decision-making and will. Soul is not the spiritual part of a person but rather the totality of the person. To love God with one's soul is to be fully devoted and faithful to God with all that one is—with all one's gifts, talents and passions. To love God with one's heart, soul and might is an all-encompassing command. It requires 100% of the person. But there is more. The word "might" can also be translated, "muchness." It asks us to rise above and beyond the call of duty or obligation. In other words, to love God with all one's heart, soul and might is to love God with all that one is and then some. (Teachers Guide, Adult Bible Studies).

As older adults we have freedom; we have resources; we have time; and we have talent. God calls us to give of ourselves wholly in His service of "making, nurturing and sending forth disciples." I'll see you in church each Sunday.

—Bill Ellison

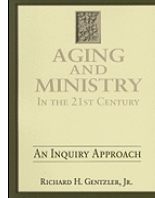
## FRIENDSHIP CLUB TRIP ON NOVEMBER 16TH

**Friendship Club, an open group that meets monthly, will travel on our church vans to Burlington on Monday, Nov. 16,** to have lunch at *The Cutting Board* and then stop for a visit at *Replacements, Ltd.* on the way back. Lunch is on your own. The vans will leave the ECC Parking Lot at 10:45 and return by 3:30. **Make your reservation with Jeanne Shepherd in the church office, 275-4587, by November 12th.** For more information contact Mary Belle Gilbert, 288-4664.

**On December 21st, Friendship Club will enjoy Christmas Music by Alice Ann Johnson and Susan Bates. Reservations are required by December 14th.**

— Mary Belle Gilbert

## SPIRITUALITY AND AGING



Excerpts from "Aging and Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" by Rev. Richard Gentzler.

***To age well is to see and know that all of life—at every stage—is a gift from a loving, creator God.***

*Affirmation of a person's worth is found in one's "being," not through "having" or "doing." Our worth is not found in our ability to be rich, smart, or productive. It is not important "Who" we are, but more importantly "Whose" we are. As children of God, we are created in God's image. If our worth is in what we own or have amassed or the work we have done, in time we will have neither wealth nor possessions. But as children of God, we are and always will be valued, accepted, and loved by God. That's why God sent his Son into the world. God demonstrated his love for us on the cross. The reality is that in spite of ourselves, in spite of our sinfulness and failing, God loves us. As a result, we have a new meaning for our aging.*

*To age well means to creatively accept the many changes and stages in our lives and to maintain a spirit that grows healthier, wiser, and closer to God.*



***This will enable us to "add life to our years instead of only adding years to our life."***

—John Coggins, Chair Committee of Spirituality

## AARP OFFERS INSIGHT IN HEALTH CARE REFORM



Bill Wilson, Associate Director of the N.C. Chapter of AARP, spoke to 35 Older Adults on October 9th in our Fellowship Hall. The topic was Health Care Reform—of interest to all who attended.

— Ethel Glenn

## THE S.E.N.I.O.R.S. OUTREACH COMMITTEE

### Hot Dish & Hope

Hot Dish and Hope is a ministry based at First Presbyterian Church that provides a hot meal twice a week to those in need (referred to as guests), along with a message of hope. Many of those served are homeless. From 100 to 150 are served each evening. Several area churches have joined in to participate in this ministry.



In April, 2009, the SENIORS Outreach Subcommittee began recruiting volunteers from WMSUMC to help on the 2nd Thursday night of each month. Now we have a dedicated group of 15-20 church-wide volunteers who help to set up the tables, greet people as they arrive, dish up plates of food and serve them, pour and refill drinks, and clean up. We also have volunteers who provide music and lead singing, plus others who present a short message.

There is always a need for additional volunteers. The typical volunteer commits to about an hour, starting between 5:30 and 6:30 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of each month. Please contact Linda Pritchett at 292-3875 or Karen Stahl at 558-7591 for more information.

### Computer Buddies

Do you often find yourself looking at your computer and wondering what to do (or not to do) next? And wishing you had someone to call (or come to your house) to answer your questions? The SENIOR Outreach Committee has become aware that there are a number of WMSUMC members who could use help and guidance in the use of their computers. (And not all of these members are Seniors!) WMC is blessed with many who are quite knowledgeable, and comfortable, using computers. How great it would be for a person needing help to be teamed with someone who could assist with his/her questions, i.e. a "computer buddy."



In an effort to answer this need, the SENIOR Outreach Committee will be making two sign-up sheets available beginning Sunday, Nov. 15th. One sign-up sheet is for those who desire help and the other sign-up sheet is for those who can give help. These sign-up sheets will be available in the Gathering Space, Fellowship Hall and Sunday School classes. If you wish to sign up or have any questions, please phone or email Karen Stahl at 558-7591 or [kjstahl@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kjstahl@sbcglobal.net). The SENIOR Outreach Committee will then match each person needing help with a "computer buddy." This is for members of all ages.

## CROP Walk, A Family Tradition

Church World Service was founded in 1946. "CROP" then stood for "Christian Rural Overseas Program." My father, Rev. J. Doane Stott, worked with Church World Service and CROP from the very beginning as he chaired an area in eastern North Carolina collecting train car loads of food and clothing to send to Europe following World War II. He and my mother, Flora Belle Stott, missionaries to Japan, 1930-1941 and 1963-1964, always had a special interest in helping the poor and hungry, personally sharing food with them. For many years Doane maintained a close relationship to Church World Service. With continued interest to serve the needy after retirement, he worked with a committee at Grace Church under the leadership of Rev. Earnest Fitzgerald, doing the initial downtown survey that resulted in helping to found Greensboro Urban Ministry.

Doane and Flora Belle helped to start the Greater Greensboro CROP Walk in 1981. Flora Belle started the CROP WALK at Friends Home Guilford. Doane walked both Greensboro and Burlington Walks. The walk was much longer then; now it is a 5K walk (3.1 miles). Doane asked for CROP donations from friends and relatives and total strangers because he believed it was a good way to help alleviate hunger. When Doane could no longer walk the whole walk, he had a special friend, Emerson Spivey, who walked the rest of the way. Flora Belle joined Doane in soliciting donations and making many calls. Chuck Voight and Mike Risotti pushed Flora Belle in a garden cart enabling her to complete some Greensboro walks. Both Doane and Flora Belle were active in CROP walk participation until a few months before their deaths. Together they raised over \$40,000 for CROP. They really set the example for walkers.

I wish to thank all West Market walkers and sponsors who participated. At press time, WMC has raised \$7,323.52. Our goal for 2009 is \$10,000. You may still donate by writing a check to "CROP" and putting it in the offering plate or turning it into the church office. Every dollar will make a difference in a life.



**CROP Hunger Walks** help children and families worldwide—and right here in the U.S. — to have food for today, while building a better tomorrow. Each year some 2 million CROP walkers, volunteers, and sponsors put their hearts and "soles" in motion, raising over \$16 million per year to help end hunger and poverty around the world and in their own communities. And you are part of it!

— Mary Belle Gilbert