

THE COLUMNS

First Baptist Church, Omaha, NE
Forward in Faith...Empowered by the Spirit

Volume 37

Issue 2

February, 2008

Just A Thought...

Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, "The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him." At once he came up to Jesus and said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed him. Matthew 26:48,49

I am a fan of the television series Law and Order. What takes weeks, months, and years in real life all happens within an hour including commercials. But that aside, it is intriguing to watch how they finally capture and bring to trial someone who directly or indirectly committed a crime. First the police are called to a crime scene and then the detectives start to investigate. Along with the DA everyone at first is concerned with one thing, motive. Who had the reason? Who had the opportunity? What did they have to gain? And, as it turns out, imbedded within the motive, in one way or another, power is what they had to gain. Also, as it turns out, the perpetrator of the crime is someone who was close to the victim. It was someone they knew and sometimes even loved. Of course this is no surprise to us as we have seen this played out in our community and perhaps even in our own lives. Law enforcement officials tell us that even though there are random acts of violence it is most often the case that perpetrators of violent crimes knew and/or were known by their victims. Judas stands before us as a biblical example of such a person.

The Bible tells us that Judas was used to having a certain amount of power. He was the keeper of the finances and there are few things that exert more influence over people like money. We also know that he had bargained the betrayal and received 30 pieces of silver. To have done this he had to have worked in secret. This is also a power play. When someone works in secret they have something the rest don't and therefore gain a certain amount of power. There are some theologians who have speculated that there was still another power issue involved. Perhaps Judas believed that if he forced Jesus' hand, Jesus would show his power by destroying the Romans and establishing a powerful united kingdom. Power was certainly a part of Judas' motives.

Then there was the familiarity issue. Judas knew Jesus. He had followed him, worked with him and ministered with him. He had sat under his teaching and watched him reach out to the people. Jesus apparently even trusted Judas with the finances. No doubt Judas probably talked the talk and said all the right things, but his actions in private betrayed his words and actions in public as seen by the kiss he used to betray Jesus into the hands of those who sought to end his life. Being a close, personal friend put Judas in a powerful position.

The season of Lent reminds us that we are like Judas, like the criminals on Law and Order. The old hymn asks us "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" and the answer is yes. We were a part of the crime scene. We had our own motives for power, for secrecy. In our own private lives we have talked the talk but not walked the walk. We have acknowledged Jesus as our Lord and Savior and yet there have been times when we have willingly walked away and betrayed him. The season of Lent leads us to the cross where our sins are exposed and declare that we are the guilty ones. But, because of Jesus' obedience and reckless love we receive pardon, mercy and forgiveness. Because of the cross we are once and for all declared "not guilty." May this season be a time of prayer, examination, repentance and heartfelt gratitude for the forgiveness of our sins.

Pastor Kip

Prayer Requests

Please remember our members who are unable to be in church any longer. They appreciate our thoughts and prayers.

- ✓ Lorraine Olson, homebound.
- ✓ Ella Faulkner, homebound.
- ✓ Pat Buie at Millard Manor
- ✓ Beverly Tompkins at St. Joseph Towers.
- ✓ Violet Schoening at Fox Run Assisted Living.



Our love and prayers go out to the Ken and

Dorothy Sciford and Sue and Darrell Reed families on the death of son and brother, Jeff Sciford, January 20th, 2008. The service was in California. Also, our sympathy to this family on the death of Dorothy's sister, Vivian Wooster who passed away on January 16th.



Thanks to all for the prayers during Jeff's illness and, now, his death and the death of my sister, Vivian. Your care and concern are appreciated by us and our children, Sue Reed, Dean and Ken, Jr.

Dorothy and Ken Sciford

2008 Cabinet and Ministry Leaders Elected

Moderator – Vacant position
Vice Moderator – Hal Johnson
Clerk – Judy Cunningham
Treasurers – Fred and Jeanne Shelor

Ministry Leaders

Hospitality, Care and Nurture

Lynne Chesire

Worship and Celebration

Karla Musick

Youth and Young Adults

Jeremy Stober

Children's Ministry

Sue Endicott

Finance and Stewardship

Jim Musick

Property and Physical Resources

Jeri Shelor

Discipleship and Adult Education

Roger Bosch

Local and World Missions

Carole Bosch

Evangelism and Community Outreach

Steve Dickey

Membership Development

John Cleveland

Please remember to pray for our church leaders as they carry out the work of God's church and His people.



Lenten Services will begin on February 11th at 7:00 p.m. There will be services on Feb. 11th, Feb. 18th, March 3, March 10 and March 17th. You are invited to come and join us in prayer, music and meditation as we prepare our hearts for this Holy Season.

Women's Ministry Opportunities

New and exciting things are happening in the Women's Ministry. A book club for those interested in discussing the book **Miss Julia Speaks Her Mind**, by Ann B. Ross, will begin meeting on February 9th at 1:00 p.m. at the church. Another group will meet on February 11th at 1:30 in the home of Jan Walden.

A Bible study group will begin meeting in March. This group will be studying the book, **Bad Girls of the Bible** by Barbara J. Essex. More information will be forthcoming on exact times and dates.

Looking further into the month of April, plans are in the making for a women's retreat at Camp Moses Merrill. Watch for further details later.

If you are interested in participating in any or all of these events see Jan Walden, Jean Weaver, Lindsay McCoy or Phyllis Porter.

Rebecca-Ruth Circle will be meeting on February 19 at 1:00 p.m. or when the noon Bible study is completed. All women are invited to be a part of this circle meeting.

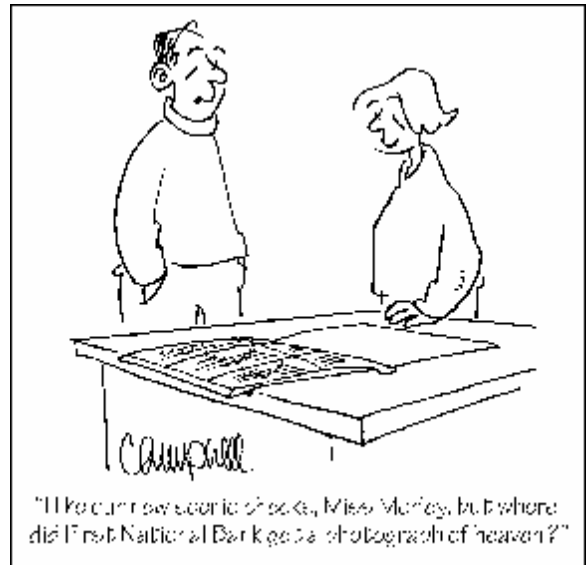
Homebuilders Class will hold their monthly social February 8th at 6:30 in the church parlor. Any questions see or call Jeanne or Fred Shelor, 731-7486.



And Young Adults

Jeremy, Kate, Gretchen Heil and Amanda Arbaugh have planned a number of events for the youth and young adults for the next couple months. Please note the events listed below.

- Ø Feb. 15 – Youth sponsor a date night (baby sit while parents go to dinner and a movie)
- Ø Feb. 29 – Bowling at Thunder Alley.
- Ø March 14 – Weekend to Remember (Young couples encouraged to attend this event)
- Ø March 23 – Youth will prepare and serve Easter breakfast.



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The **COLUMNS** (USPS 124-740) is published monthly. **Postmaster: Send address corrections to, First Baptist Church, 421 Park Ave., Omaha, NE, 68131-3904.**

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