

# Words of Faith

THE NEWSLETTER OF FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Volume 2, Issue 2

April—June 2002

CALENDAR

**May 17**

CHS Spring Concert

**May 19**

Pentecost Sunday

**May 21**

CHS Spring  
Instrumental Concert

**May 31**

CHS Commencement

**Jun 18-21**

General Assembly  
Birmingham, AL

**Jun 22-29**

Horn Creek Youth Camp  
Horn Creek, CO

## Annual meeting offers pizza, perspective, kingdom purpose

The annual meeting at Faith was held on Wednesday, January 30. Beginning with a hymn and ending with a psalm, a year of church activity was condensed into one hour of presentations and summary, including 22 pages of reports and statistics.

But before the meetin' came the eatin', and as has been the custom in recent years the evening started with a church-sponsored pizza supper. The three basic food groups at this year's event were pizza (high fat, high guilt, high enjoyment), veggies (low fat, low guilt, low enjoyment), and desserts (high sugar, high fat, and high enjoyment, with guilt trampled in the dust of chocolate-chip cookies, which were plentiful and of most excellent quality).

Information presented at the meeting included:

1. Voting membership at the end of 2001 was up from 281 in the previous year to 301, and the number of families was up from 145 to 149.

2. Average weekly attendance at morning worship increased from 472 to 496, and attendance at evening worship increased from 311 to 339. Sunday school average attendance declined slightly, from 342 to 336.

3. Building committee efforts to date included the purchase of two homes adjacent to the church, the accumulation of more than \$630,000 in the building fund, and working through the final stages of a special-use permit with the city of Tacoma.

4. Covenant High School is now in its tenth year of operation, with 148 graduates and a current enrollment of 99 students, 42% of whom also attend Faith.

5. The deacons distributed more than \$32,000 to members of Faith, the community, and the Tacoma Rescue Mission. Two special offerings during the year went to the work of Grace Academy in Dehra Dun, India, and to relief work in New York City following the terrorist attacks on September 11.

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Jul 7, 14, & 21 - Pastor Rayburn and Pastor DeMass are on vacation. Rev. Hywel Jones, former director of the Banner of Truth Trust in Great Britain and currently a professor at Westminster Theological Seminary in Escondido, CA, will speak on July 14. Ben Shoemaker, a seminary student at Covenant Theological Seminary, will intern with us this summer, and will preach one Sunday in July as well.



## Lessons of Faith

### Biblical Worship: Ministerial clothing

By Rob Rayburn

In the Bible's teaching about worship we find both main points and details. In previous installments of this series I have concerned myself with main points. But throughout church history and up to our own time details have often proved as controversial as the broader issues. One of them has been and is today the minister's dress.

Until quite recently in almost all Christian churches the minister wore some uniform of his office while presiding at the worship of the congregation. Earlier controversies turned on what uniform he ought to wear. Later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century however, and especially in America, it became common for Protestant ministers to wear suits, such as the other men would be wearing to church, and later still, as congregational dress became more casual, for ministers to wear casual clothes. These changes were instituted for various reasons, but perhaps primarily, at first, to lessen, if not eradicate, the difference between the minister and the congregation. American democratic impulses worked against the notion that the minister occupies a place apart from the congregation and that there is a role that only he can fulfill.

You find today in many churches, including Reformed and Presbyterian churches, the notion that the "clergy-laity" distinction is unbiblical or contrary to the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Later, the movement to still more informal

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The issue is whether God or man is most prominent in the mind of God's people when the minister speaks and acts in worship.

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dress for ministers was made in hopes of making the church a less intimidating and more welcoming place for seekers and newcomers who, it was thought, might be put off by the perceived formality or simply the strangeness of a minister in a robe or clerical collar.

However, the connection between clothing and office, especially in the case of a minister leading worship, is taught directly in the Bible. In Exodus 28:2 we read that the robes of the priests were for the purpose of giving him "dignity and honor." That point is made several times and also the point that they are to wear these robes when they are "ministering in the sanctuary" (Ex. 35:19; 39:1). "Dignity and honor" are timeless concerns in Christian worship, as is the concern that the voice of God be heard and recognized in the worship of the congregation. Ordination to the Christian ministry confers precisely that authority: to speak on God's behalf to the people of God (1 Thess. 2:13). This is the point made in the *Second Helvetic Confession* (1566) where we read, "The preaching of the divine word *is* the divine word," and the point Calvin was after when he referred to the minister as a *nuda persona*, a bare person.

It is the Word of God in the minister's mouth that is the all-important thing. But, that all should understand it to be the Word of God, there has been from the beginning a ministry, a special office with a special authority to speak and act on God's behalf. There has been throughout Christian history the recognition, based on the biblical evidence and a natural instinct, that the authority of his office and the role the minister occupies in Christian worship should be conveyed by the special clothing he wears. It is a principle that even unbelievers recognize, which is why still today judges, policemen, doctors and the like wear a particular uniform of office. In heaven itself, this principle is still given explicit expression (Rev. 4:4).

These robes are not vestments, in the Roman Catholic sense of clothing specifically for the administration of sacraments. That notion is without biblical support. Rather the robes display the minister's office in general, give him "dignity and honor" in all that he does when presiding at a worship service. The purpose of this clothing is to accentuate the office and its authority and, at the same time, to hide the man in his individuality. The private opinions or the personality of a minister are of no particular importance, especially when the congregation is gathered on the Lord's Day. But the Word of God in his mouth and the hand of God in his hand at the font and the table are matters of the highest conceivable importance.

Ministerial dress will always be a feature of that worship in which God's people really believe that they are in

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## Local Events



### Winter retreats: frozen fun, rain-forest relaxation

While the grey and wet weeks of winter drizzled by, two annual functions of the church took place.

From January 25-27 more than 40 high schoolers and half a dozen adult chaperones were at Tall Timber Ranch near Leavenworth for the weekend snow retreat. The retreat lived up to its name, with several feet of snow waiting for them when they got there – in fact, the vehicles transporting the group had to chain up when going over Stevens Pass. Activities included tubing, snow fights, capture the flag, hiking, and even a football game (all in the snow, of course). Elder Tim Skrivan, always one to use his own head as well as the heads of those around him, introduced the group to a game similar to musical chairs – only using hats.

On the reflective side, a series of homilies on the subject “Life is War, and We Are Soldiers” was presented by Jeff Wheeler, Tim Skrivan, and Pastor Rick DeMass.

From February 28 through March 2 it was the married folks who headed out of town, replacing snow and sleeplessness with snoozing and serendipity at the annual couples retreat, held at Lake Quinault Lodge. 21 couples attended this year. This retreat was less structured than previous events, with ample time for meals, rest, and conversation, with a hike through the rain forest for those so inclined. One unexpected bonus this year: in the middle of winter, in the middle of the rain forest, there were three straight days of sun.



### CHS students hang out at Tacoma Art Museum

The Tacoma Art Museum featured an exhibition of artwork by Covenant High School students from January 18 - April 7, 2002.

“A Puget Sound Academy” showcased 38 works by some two dozen students and was shown in the lower-level gallery at the museum, while 40 paintings from the National Academy of Design were being shown on the first floor. (The National Academy, founded in 1825, is located in New York City, and the Tacoma Art Museum was the only west coast venue for this exhibit.)

The idea for the exhibition came from CHS art teacher Janis Lindley, who also volunteers part-time at the museum. Pieces that the students displayed included pencil and gouache, a painting technique that uses water and gum to produce bright and vivid colors on a paper base. Their work came out of researching 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century art movements, and personalizing aspects of those movements.

The CHS art department activities, in addition to the works that the students produce, include monthly field trips, a three-day art tour each spring, and trips to Great Britain every other year. Their work is displayed at local galleries and museums, and the students are also currently working on a mural for the Youth for Christ offices at 2<sup>nd</sup> and I Streets in Tacoma.



## Lessons of Faith, continued

(Continued from page 2)

the presence of God (*coram Deo*) and that in their worship God speaks directly to them and acts immediately on their behalf. Formality or informality is not the issue. The issue is whether God or man is most prominent in the mind of God's people when the minister speaks and acts in worship. The particular robes worn by the ministers of this church are the traditional black robes, the standard dress of the Reformed minister since the time of Calvin.

Remember, a minister's clothes say something no matter what. They may say, as they do in some American churches, “If you believe in Christ, you too can wear \$800 suits and \$90 ties.” Or, they may say, “I'm just one of you, sharing my thoughts about the Bible.” Or, as throughout Christian history, they may say, “The Lord is here to speak to you and to serve you at his table.”



# Suffering



By Johann Christoph Arnold

Whenever I think of suffering, Miriam comes to mind. Born with multiple physical handicaps, including the inability to swallow, she had to be fed by dropper for the first few weeks of her life and by feeding tube until she was one year old. But it was “brittle bone disease” that affected her most severely. As a toddler she would sometimes break a bone just by trying to pull her leg out from between the bars of her crib.

Later, a bump into a door frame or a simple fall caused by tripping could mean a series of fractures in her arms or legs or both, often followed by hospitalization and surgery, and always accompanied by much pain, not to mention six weeks or more in a cast. By age eight, she had broken her legs sixteen times.

At ten, Miriam was suffering heart failure. As if that weren’t enough, the curvature of her spine, which significantly reduced her lung capacity, left her continually short of breath. By the time she entered adolescence, she was wheelchair-bound. She died at age twenty-eight, by which time she had undergone at least fifteen operations, been hospitalized more than forty times, and suffered dozens of fractures.

But throughout her short life, Miriam’s personality remained largely free of the burdens placed on her by her medical condition. In fact, she reminded one of a spar-

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The New Testament  
tells us of people like a man  
whose blindness was caused  
“so that God might be  
glorified.”

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row – small, spunky, cheerful. This was true at the end of her life, too: though she struggled for every breath, she was indomitable. When nothing more could be done for her medically, she said, through her oxygen mask, “Well, I think I’m ready. I only have a few more thank-you notes to write.”

Can a lifetime of suffering like Miriam’s or a debilitating illness of any length, ever represent God’s will? If we claim it cannot, we are faced with a certain tension. After all, the New Testament tells us of people like a man whose blindness was caused “so that God might be glorified,” and that it was God’s will that Jesus should suffer and die. On the other hand, because the Bible is so full of passages that speak of God’s power to heal and save and give life, it seems incomprehensible that sickness and death should still exist at all.

Writer Elizabeth Elliott points out that though we accept these things, at least on a certain level, as part of life, we find them harder to accept when they “strike down a child, an ‘innocent’ adult, or someone else whose victimhood offends our notions of fairness. And so we ration-

alize and theologize and try to come up with answers.” Certainly it can be fruitful to explore the meaning of suffering, to grapple with the “big” questions, and to let them deepen us. At the same time, Elliott goes on, there is a price to be paid “every time we satisfy our need to rationalize such things as suffering. Once we think we have unlocked a mystery, we tend to close the books to further study. Unsolved, the problem captivated us with the challenge of discovery; shelved, it loses relevance and meaning.”

It is all the more remarkable, then, to discover someone like Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who not only submitted humbly to hardships he could not understand, but also let them change him. A survivor of Siberia’s worst labor camps, Solzhenitsyn struggled for years to make sense of his imprisonment. At length, however, he stopped tangling himself up (as he put it) in the riddle of suffering, and began to make peace with the fact that whether or not he understood it, it would still exist.

But what does suffering mean for someone who is not granted such a recognition – or who could not accept it, even if he were? For many people, the belief that pain can be overcome by biting your lip and riding out the storm is coupled with the fear that it is the only thing they *can* do, short of letting down their guard and exposing their true feelings. They refuse to do this, because they feel the mask of invincibility provides at least some protection. But far from shielding them against pain, this mask only hurts them: in

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hiding their pain from others, it forces them to carry it silently and alone.

In our therapized culture it takes no great leap of faith to believe that “sharing one’s pain” like this is the best way to deal with it. But given the number of people I know who have not only coped with enormous suffering in their lives, but come through it stronger than before, I have come to feel that maybe we ought to stop approaching pain as something purely negative. If we allow it, pain can be an occasion for redemption – a crucible of sorts that may refine and renew us.

Deb grew up in a comfortable home, attended private schools, toured Europe, and vacationed on Martha’s Vineyard. After high school, she attended Smith, an exclusive college for women near Boston. But if her childhood was synonymous with privilege, her adult life was not.

At forty-three, Deb, who was by now married with six children, began to experience numbness in her hands and feet. No medical explanation could be found. Not one to complain, she quietly bore the bothersome problem as it slowly worsened. Soon she began to grow weak and unsteady as well. “Mom can’t even help me zipper my jacket,” her son Tommy told a classmate. Nor was she able to lift a milk carton off the table without great effort, by clasping it with

both hands. Still, she bravely insisted on fulfilling her motherly tasks.

Early in 1969 a lump was found in the back of Deb’s neck, and she was hospitalized. An emergency operation removed the tumor, but the surgery left her totally paralyzed below the neck. Almost completely helpless, she could communicate only with eyes.

But where others saw a ruined body as the main outcome of her ordeal, Deb concentrated on the fact that her life had been spared. She saw a physical therapist several times a week, and later entered a rehab program to re-learn the daily activities and skills she had taken for granted all her life, but could no longer perform: walking, writing, tying her shoes, buttoning her blouse, combing her hair, cracking an egg. Despite the tremendous efforts she made, her recovery was only partial: walking proved difficult, her hands shook so that her writing scrawled all over the page, and she remained extremely frail.

For the next several years Deb courageously fought her way back toward normalcy, one painful step after the next. Then, almost imperceptibly, she began to lose ground. Surgery was advised, and she underwent two operations, but neither helped in the long run. For the last five years of her life she was confined to a reclining wheelchair, her body so weak that she could not support the weight of her own head and arms.

Coming from a large family and a close-knit community, Deb enjoyed a security and comfort that many do

not have – especially nowadays, when loneliness, neglect, and poverty make untold numbers of the disabled and elderly feel that they are a burden, and the once unthinkable idea of a “right to die” has become an attractive, if morbid, dream.

But quite apart from everything that was done for Deb, there was her own attitude: her resilience in the face of infirmity, her awareness of others who didn’t have the care she received, and last but not least, her humble acceptance of her dependence on others – which did not come without struggle.

Deb’s view of her suffering is summed up in her reply to a well-meaning visitor who told her, near the end of her life, “If you ask Jesus, he can make you well again.” “I know,” Deb said. “But he has given me something much more wonderful – my family, and the love of Christian brothers and sisters.” At her memorial service, her neurosurgeon said that of all his thousands of patients, he felt most privileged to care for Deb. He always felt as if he was ministering to Christ, because Christ lived in her so visibly.



Condensed from *Be Not Afraid: Overcoming the Fear of Death* (Plough, 2002). Available at 1-800-521-8011 or <http://www.plough.com>.

# Church History

## Faith Presbyterian Church

A brief history of Faith Presbyterian Church, Tacoma, Washington.

Second in a Series

By Ken Anderson

The Rev. James E. Hanson, from Sprague, Washington, began his ministry as permanent pastor on November 15, 1953, having accepted a call to the pulpit on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September. Accompanying Mr. Hanson to Tacoma were his wife Janet, son John, and daughter Joanne.

Under Mr. Hanson's leadership the church continued to grow and various new ministries were initiated. These included a weekly radio broadcast called "Bible Questions Answered." A manse for the Hanson family was eventually purchased at 5019 South "G" St.

A building site at South 8<sup>th</sup> and Shirley Streets was purchased on February 22, 1956—10 lots for \$7,000. Four months later, on June 24<sup>th</sup>, groundbreaking ceremonies were held. South Shirley Street was then unpaved and vacant lots of Scotch broom formed much of the surrounding scenery. Businesses were few and far between on the now busy Sixth Avenue thoroughfare.

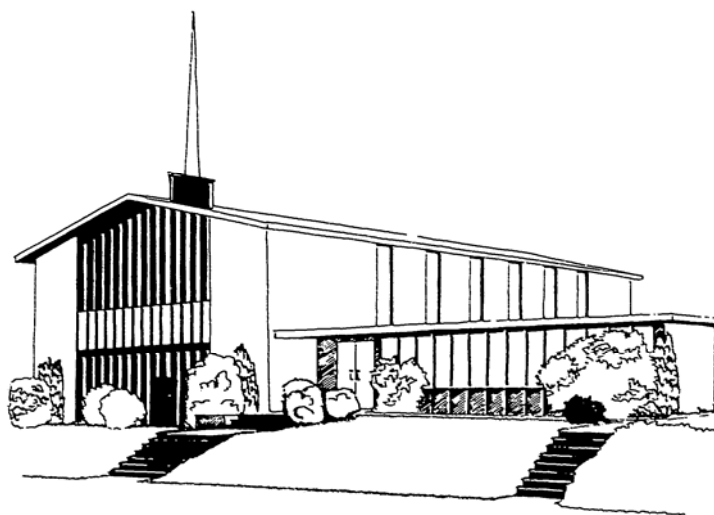
Two years later the architectural firm of Worthington, Wing, Seifert, and Forbes was hired, on June 25, 1958, the bid of Brynstad Builders in the amount of \$110,902 was accepted, and construction began on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. A sketch of the new church was featured on the front cover of the October 1958 issue of *The Bible Presbyterian Reporter*,

the magazine of the Bible Presbyterian Synod. Although the target date for completion had been the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1959, all was not ready for the first services in the building until Sunday, April 26, 1959.

Dedication of the new building to the glory of God was held during the week of May 17-24, 1959. Special speakers from the Pacific Northwest Presbytery took part in the week-long celebration including the Rev. Carl J. T. Straub of Edmonton, Alberta, the Rev. Wilber Antisdale of Spokane, and Dr. Douglass Parris of Seattle. Dr. John Walvoord, President of Dallas Theological Seminary, also spoke. The new main sanctuary had a seating capacity of 500, the parking lot was designed for 70 cars, the youth room had a capacity of 140, the steeple was 69 feet tall, and the building was valued at \$150,000. About 450 were present at the dedi-

cation services. At the time of dedication the Session consisted of the Rev. James E. Hanson (Chairman), Kenneth Anderson, Harry DeSoto, John Dobler, Ross Everett (Clerk), Leslie F. Lecy, John Norgaard, Emil Nordstrom, Phil Pierce, Roy Quam, Arthur Riebli, Roland Schrupp, Carl Seifert, Smith Snyder, and R. P. Watson.

As a member church of the Bible Presbyterian Synod, a highlight of this affiliation was hosting the 25<sup>th</sup> General Synod, July 22-28, 1961. Over 150 pastors, elders, and family members from churches across the country attended. It was at this meeting of the Synod that the name of the denomination was changed to Evangelical Presbyterian Church, which change resulted in a new name for the congregation: Faith Evangelical Presbyterian Church. During the same week, at Lake Retreat Conference Grounds, the young people of the denomination—the Evangelical Presbyterian Youth Fellowship—held their annual Bible Conference.



## New Member Spotlight



By Ron Boydston

JIM & JANIE IRWIN recently moved to Tacoma from Renton, and have been attending Faith for the past year. Jim is a commercial industrial electrician, working mostly in King County; their son SAMUEL is nine years old and a third-grader at Skyline Elementary. They met at a Bible study similar to the covenant groups here at Faith, and although both were baptized as Methodists, and attended various evangelical churches, found themselves over time moving to a Reformed perspective. When they started coming to Faith, they were drawn to the preaching as well as the hymns, and as Jim puts it, “We felt like we were coming home.” Jim reads and tinkers with computers in his spare time, while Janie quilts and does other sewing.

ISAAC and WENDY MATSUDA met in Japan, where Wendy had moved in 1980 to teach English,

and where she was to spend the next 20 years. She met Isaac at a Reformed Presbyterian mission church in Tokyo, and they were married in 1993 on a ten-day trip back to her stateside home in Everett. In April 2000 Wendy moved back to the U.S., and Isaac followed that July, only to encounter visa problems that sent him back to Japan for another 15 months. Finally a green card brought him back, and after a stint at Microsoft he recently started working at Milgard Windows in Fife. They have three children – HANNAH (8), ELSA (6), and Daniel (3).

ROB and ROSIE MOREN are soon to celebrate Rob’s release from more than 20 years in prison, 18 of those on McNeil Island. Saved while serving time (five years after being witnessed to by a Christian going door-to-door), Rob holds a B. Th. from Ozark Bible College, and taught Bible studies and preached extensively

while at McNeil. He came to a Reformed persuasion through independent reading and study, and through the influence of such men as Ken Kvale, who ministers at McNeil regularly. Rob and Rosie each have two adult children from previous marriages.

### Child Members

WILLIAM DARBY, son of Paul and Dawn Darby  
HEATH TRILLER, son of Steve and Kim Triller  
ANDREW GORDON, son of Michael and Jennifer Gordon

Note: Upper-case names indicate communicant membership.



Happy birthday T(w)o You, Heather Lind: the oldest daughter of Jan and Rinnie Lind, celebrated her 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the 2<sup>nd</sup> month of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium.

## Tacoma doctors make house call – to Rochester, MN

There is no shortage of doctors in Rochester, Minnesota. It is, after all, home to the Mayo Clinic, which employs thousands of health professionals, and is the dominant industry in this town of 80,000 people.

But the number of doctors in town was temporarily increased by three recently when Dr. Rob Rayburn (Ph.D.), Dr. Bob Rogland (Ed.D.), and Dr. Hugo vanDooren (M.D.), accompanied by Florence, Sharon, and Loretta, flew to Rochester for the ordination and installation of Max Rogland as minister of Trinity

Presbyterian Church on February 10, 2002.

The PCA congregation of approximately 100 members includes employees of the Mayo Clinic as well as the Rochester branch of L’Abri Fellowship (a legacy of the time that Presbyterian minister, philosopher, and author Dr. Francis Schaeffer, along with his wife Edith, spent in Rochester).

Max and Lara Rogland, who spent part of their growing-up years at Faith, are the children of Bob and Sharon Rogland and Hugo and

Loretta vanDooren. Max, himself a doctor of the academic variety (Ph.D. from the University of Leiden in the Netherlands), is also a graduate of Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis.

Pastor Rayburn spoke at the proceedings, and Dr. Rogland, as a visiting elder, was able to participate in Max’s ordination service as well. By Minnesota standards the weather during their visit was mild, with only a little snow and low temperatures in the 20s.



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## Guide to the Church Library

By Maggie Moores

Thank you for using your church library. It is a joy to see so many books, tapes, and videos getting checked out each week. It is an even greater joy to see them brought safely back!

Please allow me to reacquaint you with the library procedures that help us to keep it functioning smoothly.

The resources are separated into sections to aid you in finding helpful material. Within each section the books are alphabetized by author. Our exception is the biography section, which is alphabetized by the name of the person it is about rather than the name of the one who penned the book.

You can easily recognize each sec-

tion by the colored stickers on the spines:

- Doctrine - orange dots
- Bible commentaries and study helps - yellow dots
- Missions, evangelism and apologetics – dark blue dots
- Current issues in culture or society – light blue dots
- Church history – red dots
- Biography – green dots
- Devotionals – dove stickers
- Family issues, marriage and home schooling – red hearts
- Adult Christian fiction – butterfly stickers
- Children's fiction and nonfiction – yellow smiley-face stickers
- Reference material – gold stars
- Audio tapes and CDs – pale purple dots
- Videotapes – large neon green circles

After selecting an item to utilize, please pull out the attached library card and fill in your name and the

current date. The card should then be placed in the card file on our library cabinet. All materials are due back in one month, unless you renew by signing out that same card again.

Items should be returned into the wooden cabinet nestled by the coats outside the ladies restroom. Please don't attempt to reshelve an item even if you think you know where it belongs.

Lastly, many of you have donated wonderful books, videos, and tapes. Most of the library's growth is due to your generosity, so we all thank you. Questions, comments, and even complaints can be made to myself or Mike Simpson. It is my prayer that the Lord will enable you to grow in His grace and knowledge through the resources of the library.