

Words of Faith

THE NEWSLETTER OF FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Volume 2, Issue 3

July—September 2002

CALENDAR

August 8-15

Mexico Project

September 2

Church picnic

September 3

First day of classes for
Covenant High School

October 4-5

Pacific NW Presbytery Meeting,
Crestwood Presbyterian Church,
Edmonton, Alberta

Mark your calendars for Friday evening May 23rd, 2003 for a special celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the church and Pastor Rayburn's 25th Anniversary as our minister.

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Covenant High School's Great Britain historical tour 2002: Fellowship across time and space

By Lorna Arnold

April 1, 2002. I had studied every handout, map and hymn sheet the kids brought home from school. In order to enter as fully as possible into the students' trip experience, I took both of the Covenant High School Great Britain tests (How did I do? It depends on whom you ask. A few students corrected my tests. The more imaginative said I passed with flying colors. Others accused me of embellishing my answers simply because I gave an abundance of colorful and interesting details instead of supplying exact names and dates!). I made a timeline of British history to fit into my trip notebook with all my handouts, tour itinerary and group roster. Call me overzealous, but I stood ready to march down the halls of history with forty-eight eager students, teachers and other chaperones.

In reality, the tour wasn't much like a march. The overall pace was brisk, to be sure, and we did do a lot of walking, but as we visited place after wonderful place, it was much more like jumping and leaping through a time warp. Even when standing in one place, there was layer upon layer of history to experience.

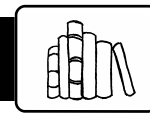
We spent four days in and around London. It was strange to be in the middle of this bustling, modern city,

navigating my way through the underground tube system, enjoying great theater in the evenings, then visiting the Tower of London and being carried back to a time of imprisonment, beheadings and tortures. At Westminster Abbey it was odd to view tombs and memorial stones from several different centuries, then to stand amazed in the Jerusalem Chamber where so many great men met together to figure out precisely how to best say the things we still say today in our Confession and Catechism, while at the same time workers were moving chairs and hanging lights and mounting television cameras, making ready for the Queen Mother's funeral.

Canterbury is a short trip from London, and there again were more sharp contrasts. The cathedral did just what it was designed to do - it lifted my eyes upward and made me remember the glory and majesty of God. I especially loved walking around the cloisters outside the cathedral. I could almost see the monks walking there, living out their devotion to God in the shadow of that grand place. The ruin of St. Augustine's abbey was just a short walk away. Such a humble place compared to the glory of the great cathedral, but the rough hewn stone walls called me back to a time when these early missionaries struggled with their faith, just

(Continued on page 4)

Lessons of Faith



Biblical Worship: A Continuing Series

Using our hands and knees in worship

By Rob Rayburn

One thing that most obviously and immediately distinguishes our worship from that of most other Presbyterian, Reformed, and Protestant evangelical congregations is that we kneel for some prayers and that we raise our hands for some praises. People who visit our church notice this at once and often comment on it. Kneeling, of course, is hardly unique to us. Many churches have always knelt in public worship. Similarly, our Pentecostal and charismatic brethren have long raised their hands. However, these have not been postures commonly employed in American evangelical worship in general or Reformed and Presbyterian worship in particular.

It takes too long to tell, but the story of how kneeling fell out of use in Reformed worship is a cautionary tale. It is a perfect example of good men, with the best intentions, throwing the baby out with the bath-water. In the 16th and 17th centuries, a time of sharp conflict with Roman Catholicism, kneeling became controversial as a posture for receiving the elements at the Lord's Supper (some fearing that it encouraged the view, all too common in those days, that the elements were being venerated themselves as having physically become the body and blood of Christ). The result over time was the abandonment of kneeling altogether in Reformed worship. It had not been so from the beginning. Kneeling for the Lord's Supper and for prayer

In the Bible, when people found themselves in the very presence of God they always, instinctively assumed some posture appropriate to that momentous encounter.

was common in the worship of Calvin's Geneva and Calvin himself advocated the raising of hands. Those later controversies shaped Reformed practice in surprising and perhaps unintended ways.

Once the habit of not kneeling and of not raising the hands was formed, it became difficult to break. This was all the more so because churches that continued these practices were often those with which Reformed Christians had substantial disagreement (e.g. Roman Catholics knelt and Pentecostals raised their hands). It was easy to feel that kneeling or raising hands were acts that somehow were tainted by the errors Reformed Christians found in those other communions.

Presbyterians, however, have made a principle of worship being *biblical*. That is, we have argued that we ought very strictly to take our direction in worship from the Bible itself: do what it tells us to do and refuse to do what it does not tell us to do (the *regulative principle* of worship). In

this case, we were not loyal to our own principles! In the Bible we are commanded to kneel in our worship (e.g. Psalm 95:6) and we are shown saints kneeling for prayer together, not merely when they are alone (e.g. Nehemiah 8:6; Acts 20:36; 21:5). There is plenty of biblical support as well for the raising of hands (Nehemiah 8:6; Psalm 141:2; 1 Timothy 2:8). Similar support can be found in the Bible for standing for prayer. It is doubtful that the Bible anywhere *commends* sitting for prayer, though, of course, we know that prayer can be offered anywhere, at any time.

These biblical postures are trans-temporal and trans-cultural. We all know how kneeling conveys humility and the spirit of supplication, how standing shows reverence, and how the raising of hands expresses the direction of our thoughts and words. By recommending these postures to us by illustration and commanding their use, the Bible bears witness to their significance. These postures serve at least three important functions.

First, they enable us to pray and worship with our whole selves, body and soul together. It is interesting that in the Bible it seems not to matter whether we say that "we lift up our soul" (Psalm 25:1) or that "we lift up our hands" (Psalm 63:4). *Second*, we all know how the posture and the action of the body can assist the soul in obtaining and preserving a proper attitude. Kneeling or raising the hands coerces our unreliable and wayward thoughts and feelings and sets them on their proper object. We

(Continued on page 3)

New Member Spotlight



ROSEMARY COOK started attending evening services at Faith several years ago, then added other services to her schedule as time went by. Caregiver to elder emeritus Ken Anderson for the past three years, she grew up in Olalla, and was a high school and youth group chum of Anita McNeely. She graduated from Prairie Bible Institute in Three Hills, Alberta, and was a missionary in Japan (where she became acquainted with Ted and Phyllis Brannen) for more than 20 years. She has two grown sons, and another who died at the age of ten months from SIDS. Over the years her personal geography has come full circle – she now lives and works just a mile from where she grew up.

JANA GARDNER has been commuting to Faith for the past year and a half from Olympia, where she worked for Thurston County Care Net for three years. When she first visited Faith three years ago, her first impression was that it was “way too stuffy and formal.” (Has the church become less so, or has she become more so?) She grew up in Everett, where her father, mother, and brother still live.

TERRY and MARY TOMLINSON have lived in Puyallup since last October, when they moved from Seattle into a house that they had been restoring for two years. Mary works at a bank in downtown Seattle, and Terry is a cabinet-maker turned cabinet salesman. Married 25 years ago in

a non-denominational church, they did a lot of wandering around theologically, but during that time were introduced to Reformed writers, and after reading them at some length found that “suddenly things were starting to make sense.” They attended Green Lake Presbyterian in Seattle for three years, have two adult daughters who live in California, and own a 40-foot sailboat that Terry rebuilt.

Child communicants

SAMUEL AOWN, son of Mark and Stacie Aown.

CHRISTINA JORGENSEN, daughter of Chris and Jane Jorgenson.



Lessons of Faith, continued

(Continued from page 2)

sit for so many things. When we kneel and when we raise our hands we bear witness to ourselves that what we are doing now is no ordinary thing at all. *Third*, such postures bear a public witness to the fact that the church is in the very presence of God and that she is speaking to God. I grew up in worship that was largely disembodied and I feel now that the great weakness of that worship was precisely that it did not convey to the soul or to the congregation or to the world that in the high worship of the Lord’s Day the saints were *coram Deo*, in the very presence of God. The fact that we did not *act* like we were in God’s presence contributed

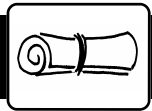
mightily to this lack. In the Bible, when people found themselves in the very presence of God they always, instinctively assumed some posture appropriate to that momentous encounter.

It is precisely because all of this is so easy to understand and these postures are so helpful in all of these ways that they never disappeared from the private worship of Reformed Christians, even when they were not used in public worship. But why would we cheat ourselves of these blessings in our public prayer and praise? Why, indeed, when the Bible so clearly commands their use? It is no surprise to me that as Reformed Christians have begun to think seriously again about

worship, many are recommending the restoration of kneeling, standing, and the raising of hands as neglected elements in authentic Christian prayer and praise.



Cover Story, continued



(Continued from page 1)

as we do, while striving to bring the truth of God to the Britons.

Back in London, another very moving stop was at Bunhill fields. This spot was originally designated as a burial ground for victims of the Great Plague. Twenty years later it was used to bury religious Nonconformists, who were banned from being buried in churchyards. We stood by the grave of Isaac Watts, with John Bunyan and others nearby, and sang “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.” This seemed a moment of great fellowship in the church universal. We were spanning not only the globe, but time as well, and the cross was the one great unifying thing.

I would not have missed London, with all its intensity, but driving away from it was a relief. The landscape changed to green rolling hills and gave our senses a needed rest. Over the next five days we saw Cambridge University, John Bunyan’s Elstow and Bedford, Shakespeare’s Stratford-Upon-Avon, John Newton’s Olney, Oxford University, Durham Cathedral and Hadrian’s Wall (I feel traitorous leaving out details from each place). There was that glorious sense of time-travel at each stop, but for me, Oxford was a real highlight. I sat in the balcony of St. Mary’s church and looked down on the spot where Thomas Cranmer gave his last heart-rending speech. With Doug Bond narrating the scenario, I could fairly hear the jeering crowds and Cranmer’s impassioned cries. We walked out to the place that Cranmer ran to in his eager-

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ness to burn worthily for the truth of the Word of God. Remembering the noble deaths of Latimer and Ridley before him made this a sobering, humbling visit.

The other Oxford highlight was taking a punt out behind Magdelene College and then walking a bit on Addison’s walk, where C.S. Lewis was fond of taking his exercise. Oxford is quite a bustling town, but back there it was quiet, green and peaceful. I stood looking at the distant Oxford spires, took deep breaths and could almost imagine what it might feel like to have deep insightful thoughts and be able to articulately write them down!

We experienced a gorgeous, sunny Scotland for the final seven days. Holy Island and Iona were rocky, wild and lonely places, made beautiful by the ruins of ancient priories. St. Andrews was a moving experience, especially as we remembered again the fighting commitment that led to the martyrdom of George Wishart, Patrick Hamilton and others there. Edinburgh was unforgettable for its massive, menacing castle keeping watch over the city. The Royal Mile is the road that leads from the castle down to Holyrood

Palace, and passes John Knox’s home and St. Giles church. I could envision John Knox there, passionately pounding his pulpit and vehemently reproving the queen. Below the castle we visited the Grassmarket, where so many Covenanters, faithful to God, were cruelly murdered. By their mass grave in Greyfriar’s churchyard we sang Psalm 121, “Unto the Hills.” Again, there was that sense of fellowship across time and space.

I had heard that the visit to Newmilns was the high point of the trip. I couldn’t quite figure this out and wondered if really it wasn’t just the pleasure of a real bed, homemade food and a respite from the constant schedule. Well, as wonderful as the trip had been so far, I found it to be true for me, too. The bed, food and rest were certainly lovely, but I think what made it really sweet was the leisurely, restful fellowship with other Christians. We had been, for the past several days, fellowshiping in a spiritual sense with hundreds of brothers and sisters in Christ by remembering them, reading from and about them, sympathizing with them, agreeing with them, mourning for them. Now, to be able to talk and sing and join hands with living breathing saints... well, it was delightful.

Lorna Arnold was one of 49 people (39 students and 10 teachers/chaperones) who toured the British Isles in April 2002.



Church History



A brief history of Faith Presbyterian Church

Third in a series

By Ken Anderson

After more than ten years as pastor, Rev. James Hanson concluded his ministry on April 4, 1964. The church reception was combined with a celebration of the Hanson's 25th wedding anniversary. The church was without a permanent pastor for the next two years. The Rev. Alex H. Sauerwein served as Interim Pastor from June 15, 1964 until February of 1966. His wife, Della, accompanied him to Faith.

During the time of Mr. Sauerwein's ministry, the denominational name had changed again, due to a merger of two national bodies. In 1965 the Reformed Presbyterian Church, General Synod, with roots going back to colonial times, and the much younger Evangelical Presbyterian Church combined to form the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod. The congregation's name was changed to "Faith Presbyterian Church," with denominational affiliation indicated separately.

On February 20, 1966, a pastoral call was issued to the Rev. George H. Ackley of Bellingham, Washington, who was installed on March 27, 1966.

1977 proved to be an eventful year in the life of Faith Presbyterian Church. On January 10th the final payment was made on the church mortgage. Later that month the Session called the Rev. James Hanson, the first pastor of the church, to rejoin the pastoral staff. The 25th anniversary of the congregation was celebrated with special meetings,

services, and a mortgage burning. On Memorial Day Sunday a large framed Memorial Roll of those members who had died since the church's inception was presented to the congregation.

During the spring of 1977, tensions which had been an undercurrent in the church's life for some time surfaced in a destructive way. These culminated in a congregational meeting Wednesday, July 27th at which the congregation was asked to vote on a motion to leave the denomination. Dr. Robert G. Rayburn came from St. Louis to moderate the meeting. The motion, requiring a majority of two-thirds, failed by a very slim margin.

The result was the departure of a substantial majority of the congregation. The Judicial Commission of the Presbytery appointed Mr. James Hanson as Interim Pastor, having declared the pulpit vacant. Three men who had served the congregation formerly as elders were appointed the church Session. The regular services of Sabbath worship and midweek prayer continued.

A Pulpit Committee was appointed in the winter of 1977-78, and a call was issued on April 29th to Robert S. Rayburn, a Covenant Seminary graduate, then finishing doctoral studies in Scotland. Rob and Florence moved to Tacoma in May of 1978, his ministry began on May 23rd, and in a service on June 4, 1978, he was ordained to the ministry by the Presbytery and installed as Pastor.

In 1980 an invitation was extended to the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod to join the Presbyterian Church in America. In June of 1982, the merger of these two denominations was completed and the congregation gained a new affiliation.

A one-year internship is required for ordination to the pastoral ministry in the Presbyterian Church in America. The first to fulfill such a requirement in this congregation was Mr. Jack Collins. In the winter and spring of 1984, Mr. Collins pastored the church in the absence of Dr. Rayburn, who was granted a sabbatical leave of five months, which he took with his family to study at the Free University in Amsterdam.

In 1984, for the first time in 30 years, a congregational photograph was taken.

In August of 1985, custodian Mr. Fred Johns retired after 23 years of faithful service in maintaining the church building and grounds. On Thanksgiving Day, 1985, a violent windstorm tore off the metal ridge running the length of the sanctuary roof. In April of 1986, while Pastor Rayburn taught for a month at Covenant Seminary, the Rev. Ian Tait of Welwyn, England, preached and pastored to most happy effect in his absence. In September of the same year the Women's Fellowship was reorganized as "Women In the Church" (WIC). The first men's all-night prayer meeting was held in the autumn. In January of 1987 kneelers were installed in the sanctuary pews.



Reflections



Psalm 100

All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
Him serve with mirth, his praise forth tell,
Come ye before him and rejoice.

Know that the Lord is God indeed;
Without our aid he did us make:
We are his flock, he doth us feed,
And for his sheep he doth us take.

O enter then his gates with praise,
Approach with joy his courts unto:
Praise, laud, and bless his name always,
For it is seemly so to do.

For why? the Lord our God is good,
His mercy is for ever sure;
His truth at all times firmly stood,
And shall from age to age endure.

To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
The God whom earth and heaven adore,
Be glory, as it was of old,
Is now and shall be evermore. Amen.

*Tune: Old 100th. Taken from
"Psalms of Scotland"*

Hollywood has Bond films. Presbyterians have Bond books. Author, elder, and CHS teacher Doug Bond has just completed another volume, this one historical fiction set in 17th century Scotland. *Duncan's War* was published by P & R Publishing in July, is 288 pages in length, and is written for young people ages 11-14.

The skeptic may truly be said to be topsy-turvy; for his feet are dancing upwards in idle ecstasies, while his brain is in the abyss. To the modern man the heavens are actually below the earth. The explanation is simple; he is standing on his head; which is a very weak pedestal to stand on. But when he has found his feet again he knows it. Christianity satisfies suddenly and perfectly man's ancestral instinct for being the right way up; satisfies it supremely in this; that by its creed joy becomes something gigantic and sadness something special and small.

—G.K. Chesterton, writing in *Orthodoxy*

Thanks to our splendid Bible societies and to other effective agencies for dissemination of the Word, there are today many millions of people who hold "right opinions," probably more than ever before in the history of the Church. Yet I wonder if there was ever a time when true spiritual worship was at a lower

ebb. To great sections of the Church the art of worship has been lost entirely, and in its place has come that strange and foreign thing called the "program." This word has been borrowed from the stage and applied with sad wisdom to the type of public service which now passes for worship among us.

—A. W. Tozer, writing in *The Pursuit of God*

Elder and CHS teacher Dr. Robert Rogland penned an article outlining the benefits of a Christian school for the March/April 2002 issue of *Equip for Ministry*. He writes: "What are the particular benefits of sending your child to a Christian school? The greatest is surely this: teachers in the Christian school view the training of covenant children as their calling from God and have prepared themselves to exercise that calling faithfully and effectively."

Francis Schaeffer Came Back

By John Fischer

I am anticipating a trip to Wheaton College to keynote a writer's conference, and I am like a kid again.

Will the tree on the front lawn I fell in love under still be there? Will all those dormant feelings spring up, warmed by familiar sights and smells?

College was not supposed to be important to me then, or at least that was how my close-knit group of friends played it. Futility of futilities, all is futility, saith the teacher. We were experts on Ecclesiastes then. Yes, I got my diploma, but it was nothing more than a piece of paper. After all, it was 1969.

Now, like most everyone's college memories, it's not about what happened in the classroom that I remember most.

Staying late after chapel was one covert pleasure I allowed myself. Watching that huge hall vacate in a matter of seconds, leaving me alone with a conservatory student struggling through the long organ postlude, gave me a feeling I was finding a deeper level of appreciation somewhere in the lingering. Chapel was one of those things we were supposed to loathe. I secretly loved it.

Francis Schaeffer came to chapel my freshman year and I could not understand what the big deal was. He was a tiny man way over my head, talking about a world I knew little of – a world peopled with the

likes of Kant, Camus, and Antonioni. I was riveted, nonetheless, by his passion and the idea that here was a spiritual man who was not making spiritual talk. He spent as much time talking about the world as he did the Bible, and he seemed to have a genuine love for them both.

But by far the most significant thing about Francis Schaeffer, and my college experience, was that he came back. As a frequent college speaker myself now, I know the usual practice is to let a whole class go before you bring a speaker back. But in my senior year, Francis Schaeffer came back. This was the defining moment. This was what I could realistically measure, far more than with a diploma. It was a simple yardstick, and I didn't realize it until years later, but it has become the benchmark of my college experience. Francis Schaeffer came back, and when he came back, everything for me was different because of one simple thing: I could understand him now.

I had read the novels, heard of the movies (if not seen them), listened to the songs, studied the philosophers, learned the history. I was plugged in and I got it now. Whatever you happen to believe about Francis Schaeffer and his work, he was one of the first in my generation to connect the world and biblical truth. That connection is what has driven my faith and my work ever since. It is an understanding that today seems to put me at odds with many Christians.

We have a Christian subculture in this country that is trying to pull away from the world by creating and marketing a safe Christian version of everything in it. This has done nothing but marginalize our influence in the culture. The mass-marketing of Christianity in the end has made us, and the gospel we carry, far too easy to dismiss.

It is through a Christian's presence and participation in the world, in every sector of society, that Christ will be known. The world does not need a Christian version of itself; it needs the love of Jesus. Francis Schaeffer and Wheaton College taught me that, and I am forever grateful.

John Fischer, a 1969 graduate of Wheaton College, is a musician and author who lives in California. This article is condensed from the Spring 2002 issue of the college's magazine, Wheaton.



Faith Presbyterian Church
620 South Shirley Street
Tacoma, Washington 98465

Phone: 253-752-7601
Fax: 253-752-5992
E-mail: fpc@faithtacoma.org

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Local Events

CHS graduates 17

On a sun and cloud-dappled afternoon on the last day in May, the 17 graduates of Covenant High School's class of 2002 ended their secondary schooling and stepped out into the future.

The class marched into the service to the music of English composer Edward Elgar (who has been helping graduates put pomp into their circumstance for several generations now, having composed the piece in 1901), then faced two of their teachers one last time as they were welcomed by Mr. Doug Bond and presented to the audience by Mr. Richard Hannula. They were commissioned by Rev. Eric Irwin, pastor of

Covenant Presbyterian Church in Issaquah, WA, who helped organize the high school more than a decade ago. Board member Mr. Steve Jack dispensed the diplomas.

The commencement was held in the downtown Tacoma sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church, in order to accommodate the number of people attending.

Class members will continue their education at nine different colleges (including six who will attend Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Georgia), in the military, and in missionary work.



Sermons preached at Faith are available via download from the church website, on audio tape, and in printed form through the church office.

To request sermon tapes, please contact Eunice DeSoto or call the church office at (253) 752-7601. The tapes are available for a suggested donation of \$2 each.

