

SAINTS ALIVE!

November 2006

Shenandoah Congregation

Pastoral Message : *Fall Pleasures, Holiday Joys and Sharing*

by Carol Dean White

November is one of my favorite months, not just because it's my birthday but it means that South Texas is finally starting to cool down. Although the south Texas harvest has come and gone and winter gardens have begun, I have always loved the look of autumn with leaves that change color and life that is beginning to go dormant for winter and rebirth in spring.

Texas' attempt at fall colors in some isolated hill country spots is "iffy" at best. There has to be enough rain (probably not this year) and enough cool nights or even a freeze at the right time (maybe not this year since it's 80 degrees as I write), and you have only a couple of weekends to see it. If it hasn't happened by Thanksgiving, it probably will not be a very colorful fall. But no matter, it's the start of the Holiday season! Some of us, me included for sure, have elaborate spreads and eat like there is no tomorrow, we watch football until our eyes glaze over, maybe we think about our blessings, and we get ready for Christmas.

But a more novel experience for us might be to learn about the Jewish festival called the Sukkot also know as the Feast of Booths, the Feast of Tabernacles, or the Feast of Ingathering. It is a biblical pilgrimage festival that in early or late October and is a 7-day holiday. Now, I'm sure there are Jews that eat like there is no tomorrow as well, but the football and day-long TV would not fit too well with this holiday. The word Sukkot is plural of sukkah, which means booth or hut. During this holiday Jews are instructed to construct a temporary structure in which to eat their meals, entertain guests, relax, and even sleep. It is reminiscent of the type of huts in which the ancient Israelites dwelt during their 40 years of wandering in the desert after the Exodus from Egypt, and is intended to reflect God's benevolence in providing for all the Jews' needs in the desert. The huts are decorated and guests are invited including Gentiles. It is a joyous occasion and referred to in Hebrew as the season of our rejoicing. But the temporary nature of the sukkah (booth) itself symbolizes the frailty and transience of life. It also reminds its dwellers that true security comes from faith in God, rather than from money or possessions.

God sent his Son, Jesus, to show us the way to security and peace. The words and deeds of Jesus witness to a Christian vision of shalom, which denotes social wholeness and the well being of all. Shalom will come only to the inclusive embracing community that excludes no one. The blessings of shalom will be shared by all or enjoyed by none according to James McGinnis, who I will tell you more about in coming articles, classes, and sermons.

We have brought our gifts of food, clothes, and personal hygiene items as part of our offertory for the whole month of October. Carol Ann has taken to the Christian Assistance Ministries (CAM) at the University Methodist Church and has first hand seen that our efforts are meeting needs of others. There has been discussion among some of you that we should continue this practice at least on a monthly basis (look for more guidance on this activity).

It is my hope that in our own season of harvest and thanksgiving, that we come to realize how connected we are to each other, how we need each other and when we share with others on the basis of need, we will find ourselves provided for in our time of need. It is my hope that we will trust in God and the power of love. Lasting security lies in creating communities that share until the Spirit working in partnership with us brings God's beloved community to its fullness.

We proclaim Jesus Christ and promote communities of Joy, Hope, Love, and Peace.
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News from the Pews

Kathlyn Graves will be visiting Fort Brucker, Alabama November 1-3, attending graduation ceremonies for her granddaughter, **Billie Ann Graves**, who has been attending U.S. Air Force Flight school. Warrant Officer Graves will be leaving soon for her first assignment in Fairbanks, Alaska. She will be piloting Black Hawk helicopters.

Lafe Williams made a quick trip to the Kansas City area in mid-October to attend an Oct 21st reunion of his first cousins who were raised near Atchison and St. Joseph. He said 13 of the 16 were able to attend and there was an inordinate amount of bragging about kids, grandkids and great grandkids.

At about the same time, **Lisa Talcott** journeyed to Indianapolis for a conference of University Academic Advisers.

ANOTHER WAY TO HELP THE CHURCH BUILDING FUND

A basket will be on the food table at Pot Luck Dinner. If you are unable to prepare food for Pot Luck dinners and would like to contribute cash, the money collected will be added to the Shenandoah building fund. (Of course, if you prepare food you can still contribute cash!)

New Church Planned in Houston

New property has been acquired by the Coastal Bend Mission Center to be the new location for the Bauman Road Congregation and Houston Outreach Task ([HOT](#)). In coming days we will announce opportunities to assist in the improvement and /remodeling efforts. In the interim, Bauman Road will continue to meet at their current location and Houston Outreach Task will be locating at the North Houston Community of Christ facility. We want to thank everyone involved for their patience and assistance in advancing this project.

Accident Claims Husband of Apostle Skoor

Church officials are asking for prayerful support for Apostle Susan Skoor and her family. On October 23rd Susan and her husband, John, were walking on the beach in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. Although they were some distance from the water, they were unexpectedly struck by a "rogue" wave. John's sister Debbie was injured in the incident and is recovering in a hospital. Tragically, John was carried out to sea and has not been found. In the wake of such a terrible accident, Susan has requested the prayerful support of the Community of Hope.

POSITIVE FINANCIAL NEWS

The World church reports the receipt of \$790,000 in World Ministries Mission Tithes in August 2006. Two months into the fiscal year, total contributions are 10% ahead of budget. The church has now experienced more than one year of consistent, month-to-month improvement in contributions to World Ministries Mission Tithes. Thank you so very much for increasing your giving, and then sustaining your giving at the new level. Your continuing generosity will lead to more and better ministry in the world we are called to serve.

Shenandoah Money Matters

Beginning this month we will include a monthly budget report in the newsletter so you can see what our income was for the month in addition to our expenses. Financial officer Patty Walker says we may rest assured that there is always a healthy balance in the checking account but some months our expenses do exceed our income for the month. If you ever have any questions regarding the information presented via the newsletter, please feel free to call Patty at 695-4593 or email her at pwalker5@satx.rr.com. As always, there are monthly financial reports posted on the bulletin board in the Education Building.

INCOME

September Receipts	\$4,490.00
Other Income	\$170.00
Interest Income	\$15.40
Less World Church Funds	\$1,397.00
SubTotal	\$3,278.40
Less Coastal Bend Mission Center Funds	\$204.00
Total Net Income	\$3,074.40

EXPENSES

Bank Service Charges	\$105.82
Christian Education	\$23.83
Communications	\$105.90
Herald-In-Every Home	\$570.00
Housekeeping	\$400.00
Leadership	\$2,600.00
Repairs/Maintenance	\$170.00
Supplies	\$126.79
Worship Commission	\$126.50
Utilities	\$717.63
Total Expenses	\$4,946.47
Total Net Income	\$3,074.40
Less Total Expenses	\$4,946.47
Variance	(\$1,872.07)

New Date for Congregational Event

The Fall Festival/Outing at the home of the Coles scheduled in October was postponed because of rain. It has been rescheduled for Saturday, November 18 beginning at 4 p.m. There will be games, food, and a campfire. Directions will be on the bulletin board. Plan to come enjoy fun and fellowship with each other.

THIS IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT!

The approaching holiday season affords many opportunities to share our resources with others. Here are two of the traditional ways our congregation may become involved and Reta Tucker has details:

THANKSGIVING BASKETS

Once again we will be sharing our bounty with those less fortunate by the giving of Thanksgiving Baskets. We are asking for donations of non-perishable foods-- canned, boxed, dried, etc.-- the first 3 Sundays in November. We will also accept money contributions for purchasing the perishable goods needed. Please give your money to either Pat Campbell or Carol Burdick.

CHRISTMAS TOYS

The Bellaire Hispanic Mission has provided toys for needy children in the past. We will again help them with this project this year. Begin shopping now for toys that will not need batteries. Some suggestions are dolls, cars, games, puzzles, & books. We will also need gift wrap, tape and ribbons as well as gift tags. We will begin collecting the toys the first Sunday in December and continue until Dec. 10. Thank you all for your generous support.

NOVEMBER GREETERS

5---Edna Workmon
12--Carol White
19--Dottie and Dalton Klaus
26--Doris Jackel

November Birthdays

3--Beverly Higginson
8--Allison Anderson
Carol White
10-Jennifer Theisen
Cassandra Cole
11-Fred Ayers
12-Kerry Coleman
Marvel Riley
14-John Patten
15-Kathlyn Graves
22-Amelia Bowden
29-Tom Walker