

World Religion Day

What do you value about your faith that enhances your sense of kinship with everyone?

To understand what contributes to the sense of kinship I feel with everyone, I first felt I needed to ask what a sense of kinship really means; what that looks like. To figure out what the idea of kinship means to me, I thought about my own family. My younger brother Sam is my only sibling. We're less than a year and a half apart in age, and we've always been very close. But in a lot of ways, we couldn't be more different from one another. Our personalities, interests, and areas of talent are distinct. In addition to being quite different, we've had our share of disagreements over the years. We've made mistakes and hurt each other with inconsiderate words and actions. The same things could be said of my relationship with my parents.

But we're still family. So family isn't about being the same or always agreeing with each other, then. Within our relationship, our differences of temperament and opinion don't change the love we feel for one another. When my parents hurt, I hurt. When my brother is excited about a new music album, it makes me happy, even if I don't happen to like the band's music in the same way he does. And in those times when there's been conflict between us - as there always will be in relationships between imperfect people - my family has taught me how to forgive and how to ask for forgiveness.

In my life, my faith helps me take those principles of kinship and expand them to all people. As I read the stories of Jesus, I see someone living in a society not so different from our own, filled with people who were very concerned with determining who was "in" and who was "out." He often got questions from people who wanted specific answers as to what they were obligated to do for other people, and for which other people they had those obligations. Questions like "How many times must I forgive someone who wrongs me?" or "Who exactly is my neighbor?"

When he was asked those kinds of questions, Jesus often challenged the ideas and beliefs of those around him by expanding love and kindness beyond their expectations. When Peter asked how many times he should forgive someone who wronged him, he suggested seven as a reasonable number. Jesus responded by saying that people shouldn't only forgive someone seven times, but seventy times seven. The point here wasn't to give a specific number of times to forgive, but to teach those around him that forgiveness belonged on a broader scale than the one on which they'd placed it. That they should forgive more, not less. He wanted to expand their understanding of forgiveness beyond the narrow confines they had created for it.

Another question Jesus was asked is "Who is my neighbor?" The story he told to answer it seems closely related to the question of why I feel kinship with all people. A lawyer wanted Jesus to define exactly what it meant to say "Love your neighbor as yourself." According to the story, he asked because he wanted to justify himself. The answer he received is commonly known today as the parable of the Good Samaritan. We use the phrase to refer to a stranger who helps someone in need. But this isn't simply the story of a stranger helping out. It defines a Samaritan as the neighbor of the story's main character. Samaritans, at least in the eyes of Jesus' audience, weren't just different, they were *too* different. They lived and worshiped in the wrong places, were descended from the wrong people, and believed the wrong things. If there was an in-group and an out-group in Jesus' society, Samaritans would have definitely been placed in the out-group. But this is the example Jesus gave, when asked "Who is my neighbor?" And after the story, he tells the lawyer to "Go and do likewise." To love more people, not fewer.

So here is the lesson I take from the teachings of Jesus, the lesson that leads me to feel kinship with all people: Our relationships and obligations to one another aren't determined by how close we live or where we're from or what we believe. It's about something beyond those things. Something that means when we see anyone hurting or in need, that should be enough. Differences between people have been used to

divide and exclude for too long. The uniqueness that every one of us possesses reflects God's gift of diversity, and it should be cherished.

My brother and I are both similar and different in many ways. But it is the differences that I value the most in our relationship. I learn from him and grow as a person through the things he teaches me, and he's told me that he believes he benefits from our differences as well. If being family meant members were all the same, I think it would be a less meaningful concept. I find the value of family, both on the small scale of my own relatives and the broader scale of global kinship, in being a group of people who celebrate each other's differences while seeking to grow together, learn together, and love together.

Kelli Joyce

Habitat Townhome Dedication

Join us on February 12 for the dedication of our Habitat townhome, 428 Bingham Street, on February 12 at 9:30 am.

Habitat Homeowner Housewarming Party

In Celebration of our Habitat for Humanity building project, The Missions Committee is hosting a housewarming party for our homeowner Chastity. The party will be held in the fellowship hall on Wednesday February 2nd, following dinner. For those who would like to purchase a gift, signs with suggestions are posted in the upstairs hall and on the downstairs bulletin board. If you have further questions, feel free to email or call Wendy Smithey at wbsebay@yahoo.com.

Singing From Your Soul

The Adult Choir is looking for folks who love to sing spirituals. During the month of February, the Adult Choir will sing arrangements of some of your favorite spirituals. Join us during our rehearsals in January on Wednesday nights at 7:15 pm!

Military Blood Drive-Donate Blood to a Soldier

Help support sick and injured military members and their families by donating blood to the Armed Services Blood Program on February 2, from 10:00 am-6:00 pm, at the Greensboro Coliseum complex, 1921 West Lee Street. For more information, contact Greg Woodward, 207-8706.

Church Directory

A new church directory is in the works! Please take a moment to update your information on [one of the three draft copies](#) (home address, work number, birthdates, email addresses, etc). The rough drafts are located just outside the church office.

Our Total Giving to Heifer International

Our Total Giving to Heifer International was \$1,704, which provided for one Joy to The World animal package, plus 7 hives of bees. (no rabbits were sacrificed.) Thank you for your generosity!

Thank You

Dear College Park family:
Thank you so much for the wonderful shower you threw for Atticus. Thank you especially to the Celebrate Life Committee for their hard work and the delicious food. We are so thankful to have such a wonderful, supportive community to help us bring Atticus into the world. Thank you for all your support as we learn how to be a family of three instead of just two!

Mike, Kari & Atticus Baumann

Dear College Park Church,
Thank you for all of the great Christmas presents for My Sister Susan's House. We have really enjoyed watching our clients and their children play with some of the already opened toys.

Thanks again,
MSSH Staff/Residents

Dear College Park Friends:
On All Saint's Day the Diaconate honored me with the presentation of the "College Park Church Servant Leadership Award for 2010." The gift is in the form of a beautiful engraved Gold Star. I feel so unworthy, but do appreciate the honor. Thanks so very much.

With love,
Betty Withers

Dear Friends at College Park,
Thank you! We appreciate your generous gift to our ministry among the Roma. It will go a long way in making a difference in the lives of many here.

We also appreciate your continued support of the Ruth School and the Gypsy Smith School. Through education we can make a difference.

We are settling into life in Bucharest, learning language, and making friends. We have certainly felt your prayer support in this transition.

We may live in different places, but College Park will always be home.
Ralph & Tammy Stocks

Hey! What's for dinner?
CPC Wednesday Night Fellowship

February 2
Bourbon Pork Chops
Scalloped Potatoes, Salad
Pineapple Upside Down Cake

February 9
Country French Chicken
Lima Beans/Rice Pilaf
Apple Spice Cake

February 16
Five Spice Pork Chops
Broccoli, Apple Sauce
Cream Cheese Sheet Cake

February 23
Chicken Sausages
Roasted Potatoes, Slaw
Raspberry Shortbread Bars

Three Nickels in 2011

In 2009 Michael Usey began College Park's Three Nickels program as a new missions opportunity. Michael's point to our congregation was that we should do more to help people living and dying in extreme poverty around the world, and we should be a witness to Greensboro that all of us can do a little more. (To read Michael's May 2009 sermon about Three Nickels, go to www.collegeparkchurch.com/three_nickels.htm)

Since that time, the yearly goal of our Three Nickels program is to have 100 families or members pledge to give at least \$1 per week, or three nickels per day. The funds we raise are then given to ministries or programs that operate outside North America, that have been suggested by church members, and that College Park's Missions Committee has found to be trustworthy and efficiently run.

In 2009 and 2010 our Three Nickels money supported:

- Watering Malawi
- Heifer International
- The Ruth School, Romania
- Pennies for Peace
- Earthquake relief in Haiti
- Angel House Rehabilitation & Education Activity Center, China
- Pennies for Peace
- Soles 4 Souls

In 2011, Three Nickels will support:

- Drilling new **water wells in Ethiopia**, giving local villages a clean water supply (www.thefellowship.info/Give/Gift-Catalog/Poverty-and-Transformation)
- The Dr. Tom Graham Memorial Fund at **Global Dental Relief** (www.globaldentalrelief.org), which provides dental care for children around the world
- **The Ruth School** (www.projecttruth.ro), which provides an education, food, and medical care to Roma (gypsy) children in Bucharest, Romania
- **Children of Vietnam** (www.childrenofvietnam.org), which provides food, medicine, housing, and an education to disadvantaged children in Vietnam

Each of these ministries will be highlighted in a focus during a worship service later this year. The Missions Committee is also accepting suggestions for ministries that you'd like Three Nickels to support in 2012.

However, in order to have funds to send to these programs, **we need your support**. Simply fill out a Three Nickels pledge form and place the completed form in an offering plate during worship or return it to the church office. Help fight poverty around the world by sending your dollar per week.

Fighting Poverty Around The World With Just 3 Nickels a Day

I _____ pledge to help fight poverty around the world by giving at least One Dollar per Week. I understand that this pledge is above and beyond my normal giving. I would like to make my donation as follows;

Single 2011 payment of \$52.00

Weekly payments of \$1.00

I can give more \$ _____
Specify Amount

Signature _____



College Park
An American Baptist Church
1601 Walker Avenue
Greensboro, NC 27403

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Every Member a Minister

Lin Bounce, Associate Minister
Phyllis Calvert, Treasurer
Cindy Dillon, Minister of Small Groups
Susan Finley, Handbell Director
Rydell Harrison, Minister of Music & Worship
Darlene Johnson, Sexton
Matt Lojko, Deacon Chair
Georgia Murray, Office & Media Manager
Ralph & Tammy Stocks, Missionaries
Michael S. Usey, Pastor

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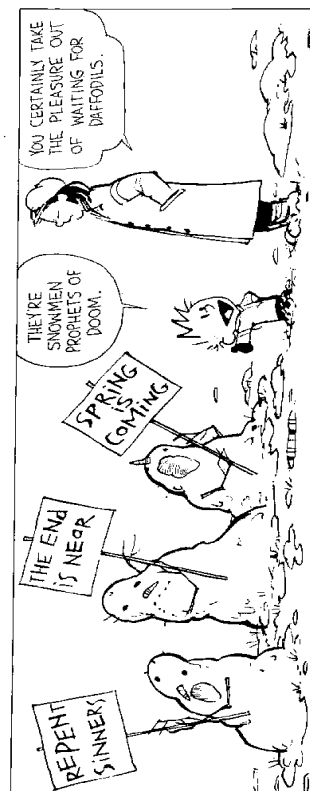
Alliance of Baptists - American Baptist Churches - Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

December Peanut Butter Donations = 30 Pounds

Total Peanut Butter Donations for 2010 = 570 Pounds

Total Other Food Donations for 2010 = 106 Pounds

Grand Total for 2010 = 676 Pounds



11
COLLEGE PARK
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Cowboys & Aliens

Theme For Our 17th Annual Male Bake-Off
February 6th

Immediately following worship on Sunday, February 6, everyone is invited to a simple lunch of soup and sandwiches in the Fellowship Hall. Afterwards, we'll sample all the male bake-off entries.

Rules for entry are:

- Any male 5 years old or older can enter (non-members are welcome).
- The entries should be ready for judging by **11:30 am** on Sunday, February 6.
- Men entering the contest may receive no help from any woman. Boys may receive some help from brothers, fathers, or other male figures.
- All entries should be an edible dessert of some variety, and of a reasonable size.
- Men may use a boxed cake mix, but should not cheat.. (Cheating would be buying an already-made cake.)
- Awards will be given for Best in Show, Judges award, Most Creative, Best Looking (dessert, not the baker), Best Tasting, Best Chocolate, Best Non-Chocolate, Super Bowl Award, Muy Macho, Best First-Time Entry, Best Veteran, Weirddness Cup, Fruit Frenzy, Best Pie, Poison Control Alert, and People's Choice (1st, 2nd and 3rd place).
- There are three overall divisions: Boys (ages 5-11), Young Men (12-18), Men's (19 & older).
- Each entry costs \$5 to pay for the snappy awards.
- As always, four impartial judges will judge all desserts. Bribes are appreciated.

Reminder

Please email the church office at cpbcgbo@bellsouth.net if you would rather receive the monthly newsletter via email.