



# CrossWord

THE NEWSLETTER OF NORCROSS PRESBYTERIAN

April 2004

Norcross, Georgia

## Matt's Musings

By Matt Fry

Who can believe that we are at the end of our 40 D.o.P.? It seems like just yesterday we began. It has been a good journey. One of the things we did was begin to ask for feedback a couple of weeks ago. So, even though I included these in the celebration Sunday sermon of 4 April, I'll include smaller portions here.

Here's one about small groups. Friendships have become stronger and we have enjoyed the fellowship. We have been able to openly discuss things and to listen to different points of view.

Here's another about small groups. I am thankful to be part of a small group, even though it is not the small group I signed up for. I'm only home for the weekends, and as I recall Pastor Matt's 20% margin sermon, I know that I cannot do it all. The 40 days drama group is my small group. After Sunday morning drama practice, it is already time for choir practice, and there is no time left for the other small group I signed up for. The beauty of the drama small group is that the people in it change every Sunday. This is a great opportunity for me because it provides a way to maintain fellowship with many members of my church family that I otherwise have little to no contact with during the week. The 40 Days of Purpose study really does have a small group for everyone.

Or this one. I couldn't be in an official group, but my spouse and I became our own group. The chance for 87 of us to meet in the

official small group manner, and many more of us to meet with others in nonofficial ways, has been something that we have all seemed to enjoy.

Here's an amalgamation of what many of you reported:

This book and study has helped me confirm what I believe, but in more than one way, There are, obviously, parts that I do agree with. Reading those has been helpful. But there have been parts that I don't agree with as well. And reading those has made me stop and think about what it is I do believe. Then, when I talk about it with someone else, I find that articulating what I do believe helps me grow in faith. This time has helped me feel more Presbyterian than ever, and helped me grow because of the opportunity to disagree in part with something.

There were some general statements as well, like this very powerful email. I do not have a lot of feedback for you except that these 40 days have given me a whole new way of defining my relationship with God. (I'd say that's a lot of feedback in one short sentence). Prior to these groups I had never really considered that God had a definite purpose for my life. I am still not sure of that purpose, but I believe that such a purpose exists



NORCROSS  
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and it is my task now to find that purpose.

I hope you also get a chance to see Kathy Fleur's acrostic version of the 5 purposes. It is hanging in the Narthex on the "Church Life" bulletin board.

This campaign has brought us together. I believe that we have grown, both corporately, and as your response shows, individually. Let us use the enthusiasm and excitement generated as we go forth, and grow forth, into the future.

As I am always,  
Yours in Christ,

*Matt*

*Now, That was the article for April. Due to certain circumstances, we were unable to put out a newsletter last month. Since I always like to note anniversaries and such, I include this one that I had written for March. Hope this isn't too much of me writing for you.*

It's been a year. As I write this on Tuesday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March, today marks exactly a year since the Sunday I was voted as pastor of this Church. We had our fellowship dinner, Melissa and I met many of you that very night. We moved to Ash Wednesday, our first worship service together.

Let me state again what I said in a sermon on the 18<sup>th</sup> of January. Melissa, Kayla, and I love it here. We love this church. We love the people who are in it. We are growing in faith because of our experiences here. We are confident that we will continue to find that our faith will grow because of this wonderful church. We give thanks to God for calling us to such a wonderful, caring, exciting, alive place.

We have been through a year full of emotion. Many things stick out as great memories in only one year.

⇒ Playing Bocce Ball in the backyard while smells of frying fish and boiling crawfish wafted over us all. And then eating all of the food at the Fish Fry.

⇒ Experiencing a wonderful VBS with 60+ kids in attendance on some nights.

⇒ Having the pleasure of coming into so many of your living rooms, dens, kitchens, your offices, on your front porches, and sharing some time. Visits with you for just the sake of visiting, or for comfort and a prayer has been a true blessing.

⇒ Having so many of you come to our house last spring/summer for Food at the Frys.

⇒ Eating crawfish, corn and potatoes with no plates or silverware over community tables.

⇒ The birth and baptisms of two adorable new ones in our midst.

⇒ An exciting confirmation class, who saw one of their own baptized as well, and who wrote a wonderful statement of faith that we all used during Advent.

⇒ Waking up early in the a.m. (usually I recognize one three thirty per day, that was not the one) and getting to the parking lot with the smell of ham in the air. And then of course, enjoying the lock-in type camp out as one of us cooked, one of us (me) bundled up, and two of us snored. Chopping 200+ pounds of BBQ at 9.30 a.m. And then the taste. YUM!

⇒ A weekend of singing, playing, worshipping, dressing up, seeing bears, watching Melissa jump about 4 feet in the air, and general great fellowship, at Montreat.

⇒ Inspiring Christmas Eve services.

⇒ Watching the planning and sensing growing excitement over a unified theme.

⇒ Seeing 87 people in small groups studying the bible and talking about their faith.

That is just a taste of the excitement we have experienced. Of course, the year has had its share of grief as well.

\* Being with our best friends as they lost a pregnancy / baby.

\* Enduring our miscarriage.


I note a couple of things there. **One**, the good bullets far out-number the not-so-good. In fact, I didn't list all of the good, cause there is only so much room.

**Two**, on the not-so-good, I note this. Our grief were marked by wonderful expressions of love and support from this church; there was support, rallying, a

sense of circling the wagons if you will, from the wonderful people we call church family here. Again I can feel the church doing this, rallying around itself, circling the wagons, and doing what we do best, being a family together.

I know that we will continue to forge into the future as the family that God is calling us to be, as the family that God is pleased to call His own. I know the year (and years) ahead will contain many more joys, and certainly a few more grief. The biggest joy is knowing that God is holding our future, and in that knowledge comes great comfort. I know that God will help us as we grow as the community God is calling us to be.

*Matt*

 <http://www.norcrosspresbyterian.com>

#### By Norma Badeaux

The Life and Nurture Committee would like to thank **Ken Birmingham** for creating and maintaining our new NPC website. It is a great tool for keeping up to date on our church events, and fun to look at our pictures—past and present! If you have something you would like to see on or submit to the website, please contact Ken Birmingham, Norma Badeaux, or Larry Fluehr. Pictures can be scanned or emailed. We are hoping to add more to the history portion of the site, so please share your memories, too! Vacation Bible School is June 14-18 and vol-

### VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL HELP NEEDED

By Amanda Helmstetter

unteers are needed. I am getting my arms around what we need, but at a minimum we will need people to lead music, arts and crafts, games, someone to coordinate snacks, some shepherds, someone for decorations and someone for publicity. Be thinking about how you would like to support VBS.



## 21st Annual NPC FISH FRY

The 21 Annual NPC Fish Fry will be held on Sunday, April 25, 2004. We plan to have picnic-type games starting at 4:00 pm, with food being served at 5:00 pm. Tickets on sale through Sunday April 18th.

**Very Important:** These big events take much advance planning so buy your ticket early! Tickets may be purchased in the Narthex before and after services or you may email Van Badeaux at [van-bad@bellsouth.net](mailto:van-bad@bellsouth.net) to make your reservation early.

Adults \$7, Children under 12 \$3, family maximum \$20. If you bring a friend, their ticket is free, but we need to have a close head count by April 18 to assure adequate preparation of food.



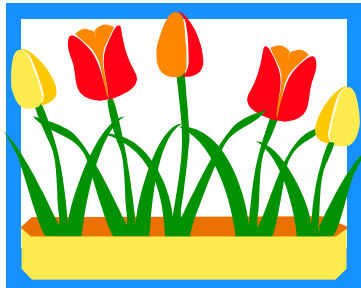
### CALLING ALL COOKS

If you have helped in the past, your expertise is needed to help cook at the fish fry. If you haven't helped in the past, well, that's half the fun, so come join, learn, or keep the cooks company; in this case there can never be too many



## THANKS TO THE DRAMA TEAM By Tanya Carroll

Drama-I would like to thank all of the volunteers that gave up their time for the dramas we all enjoyed throughout the 40 Days of Purpose Sundays. It is always a challenge to put these short yet meaningful skits together twice a month much less every Sunday and it couldn't have happened without you all. I would especially like to **thank Ken Birmingham**. With all of the responsibilities Ken has at home, work with the choir, and now the wonderful website, Ken has still managed to WOW us with his portrayal of Ron these many Sundays. You are wonderful Ken. You inspire me. Thank you for your friendship and your example.



### Newsletter Articles

News articles may be submitted to the church office prior to April 28th for publication in the May **CrossWord**. Calendar updates will be made on the website as they are provided.



## CELEBRATING MARCH/APRIL BIRTHDAYS

### MARCH

- 1 Drew Bain  
Justin Smith
- 2 Carli Bernardo
- 4 Johanne Valentine
- 6 Bob Peterson
- 7 Diane Lewis
- 8 Jim Fox  
Ruth Martin
- 10 Madison Ferraiolo
- 15 Rod Lewis
- 16 Elizabeth Price
- 20 Elois Burns  
Jan Singletary
- 24 Mitchell Bernardo
- 27 Henry Singletary
- 28 Bill Brown  
Jake Harris
- 30 Claudia Orr
- 31 Gene Reiley

### APRIL

- 3 Tanya Carroll  
Amanda Helmstetter  
Alicia Villalobos
- 6 Nancy Hogan
- 8 Helen Harris
- 12 Martha Correa
- 15 Kelly Bartlett
- 16 Jessica Lankford  
Grace Helmstetter
- 18 Stephanie Currier
- 20 Nathan Smith
- 28 Melissa Plyer
- 29 Matt Fry