



# The Newsletter

*"Celebrating Christ, Community and Communion Every Sunday"*

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## APRIL 2016



### ~AHCC Food Pantry Blog~

The Alamo Heights Christian Church Food Pantry is a good outreach ministry for us. We are able to provide food for a large number of people who otherwise might get the nutrition that they need to survive.

However, there are some who express doubts about the net value of a ministry like a food pantry. Dr. (Ph.D.) Robert Lupton is founder of the FCS Urban Ministries in Atlanta, has been asked the question: "Do well-intended services like clothing drives and food pantries- many of them run by Christian organizations - really help the poor?"

**Question:** "You say churches and charities can harm those they propose to help. How?" **Answer:** "Typically, the giving is one-way: those of us with the resources give to those with a lack of resources. One-way giving tends to make the poor objects of pity, which harms their dignity. It also erodes their work ethic and produces a dependency that is unhealthy both for the giver and the recipient."

**One approach:** "What is one of the best examples you have seen of a charity that works well?" **Answer:** "We converted our food pantry into a food co-op. Members of the co-op put in \$3 a week; with that, we can purchase \$30 worth of groceries from the food bank. The members of the co-op actually own it, run it, collect the money, do the shopping and decide what the rules are. It becomes an empowering process."

I go back to the starfish story, where a young boy throwing some starfish washed up onto the shore, believes he make a difference to the ones he can rescue from a certain death if allowed to stay on shore in the sun without water. This is his one step towards changing the world.

We can't all be part on an organization like FCS Urban Ministries (<http://www.fcsministries.org/>), founded in 1976 with a 20 person Board of Directors and more than 250 volunteers. At AHCC, we do what we can with the personnel and resources we have. We can't all be a giant force in making a better world, but we CAN be a thrower, improving the life of one starfish every day. Peace and Love to you all.

Photos are what it looks like on Tuesdays before distribution.



Everything lined up for distribution – Non-perishable items are done on Mondays and with produce, bread and meats on Tuesday Morning. Barbara Perkins, Liz Brown and Vernon Mackey are the volunteers in the picture. Note – this is a Tuesday with 26 boxes ready to go!



## The Power of Love

As I write this article, we have just come from Palm Sunday services. I love Palm Sunday. Jesus rode through Jerusalem on the back of a donkey instead of a white stallion. We are told that this is to show the nature of God, that He came to bring peace and reconciliation and not to be a conquering, warrior king as the Jews were expecting in a Savior. Ultimately He was crucified for the misunderstanding. We now know that this was God's plan all along, but the Jews are still waiting for their warrior savior. Look what they are missing.

I have heard it said that our mainline churches are lacking young men in the pews because we "wussify" Jesus. In other words, we make Him out to be too peaceful and emphasize His soft power of love instead of pointing out His warrior nature. Some evangelical churches have gone so far as to have armies for Christ and integrate military type activities into their programs to engage men's more testosterone prone proclivities. The hope is that they will relate to the warrior God that will defeat evil in the end. Perhaps they do get more attendance of men for their trouble. I just don't know.

I do know that if you really think about it, a God that has all the power in the universe at His disposal and can turn your bones to ashes in the blink of an eye if He so chooses, must have much more strength in restraint. If you have ever suffered a fool (or a politician) for any length of time, and not popped off, you would know what I am talking about. I don't know why *that* isn't worth a heap of respect and multitudes of wonder. I'm grateful every day.

Perhaps we have a great problem with bullying in our country, because we are so enamored with the stick instead of the carrot. It's called "being strong". Whatever happened to speaking softly and carrying a big stick? A real strong person or **SUPER** power shouldn't have to threaten everyone. God should be our model. **WWJD?** It's not a quaint old question from a bygone era if you are really a believer. He is God after all, either He is Lord of your *whole* life or not.

I love old movies. The morals in the movie are so clear. Sometimes the movie is about how the bully loses because the victim refuses to fight back and everyone finally sees how evil the bully is just because the victim is taking such a beating and the bully is loving the dishing out of the beating so much that it becomes disgusting to everyone but him. The crowd becomes sickened and disperses. That is what the soft power of the cross is about. The goodness of Christ is *so good* in comparison to the evil done to Him on our behalf that

there is no choice but to choose Christ. That is the real power behind John 3:16. It is the difference between God and Satan, the ruler of this world.

Go in love and peace! Enjoy the rebirth of Spring  
Stephanie Blandford



## What is prayer?

I am guessing that most of us have spent a lifetime of discovering the answer to that question. I find myself still on a quest to understand and experience all I can with prayer. Prayer has become a very precious part of my life.

As I mentioned in a previous message, I am reading the book "**The Battle Plan for Prayer**". This message is taken from this book.

"The Definition of Prayer"

Prayer is communion with God in order to...

1. Intimately know, love and worship Him;
2. Understand and conform our lives to His will and ways;
3. Access and advance His kingdom, power, and glory.

Let's focus on the first explanation....

Prayer is about an intimate sharing and fellowship between two loving parties. This is the "*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name*" dynamic of prayer. Relationship and worship. Prayer is an ongoing, daily way to know God better and better – to comprehend more of who He is and what He does. The more we know Him and experience Him, the deeper we grow in our respect and love for Him – *love that can never match the depth of love for us (Ps 63:3-4)*. Paul's prayer for the church in Ephesus was that they would "*be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all of the fullness of God*" (Eph. 3:17-19). Knowing Him and loving Him leads to worshipping Him. The natural response to the presence of God is worship. Honor and loving adoration. Dedication and delight. Willing submission.

*As for me, my prayer is to You, O Lord. (Ps 69:13)*

May God Bless You.

Linda Hawkins, Chair of Elders



*Easter Sunday  
Morning  
March 27, 2016  
Front Chancel Area*



## *A Note from the Deacon's Corner*

### **Deacons in the New Testament**

How did the office of Deacon evolve into what we have today? Each deacon has become a part of the ranks of an ancient and honorable order of servants who hark back to those halcyon New Testament times when the Spirit was molding Christ's body on earth and when deacons were a critical component in his work.

The office of deacon is probably first noted within the book of Acts, specifically *Acts 6:2-9*. Deacons' appointments came as a response to the complaint that the widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. The Greek word "*diakonos*" means a table waiter or servant. Acts refers to deacons serving as evangelists and witnesses.

First Timothy 3:8-13 continues the list of characteristics from the book of Acts for a deacon and sets the standard for those who would serve in the capacity. The passage is clear that the office of deacon is fulfilled not only by men but by women as well. Paul, in Romans 16, makes reference to Phoebe as a deacon. The deacon of the second century saw to the physical needs of the congregation and was a valued assistant to the one who presided.

However, if you look at the church today, the office of deacon has changed. The office of deacon is obviously not the same for each domination, nor is it the same in individual churches within the congregationally governed denominations. Despite the variety of understandings about certain details, most churches perceive the primary role of deacons as that of servants. The deacon's responsibilities invariably include seeing to the physical needs of the church and the members.

God has gifted us all, and we are all called to respond to the grace of those gifts by using them in service to God through serving the people of God. God calls everyone! That's about as inclusive as it gets. Everyone, not just those whole in body, mind, and spirit, is called to serve God by serving others. Everyone is a child of God, and everyone inherits an equal share of the kingdom.

*It is our calling to be servants for Christ, students of His Son, Jesus and Candles to those who are in the dark.*

*In His Name*

*Parts of this article have been taken from "Your Calling a Deacon" by Gary Straub and James Trader II.*

## **Membership Information**

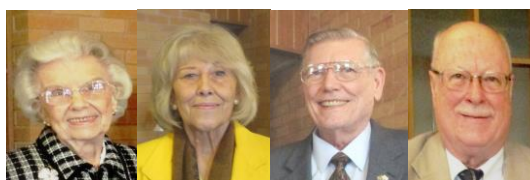
The Membership Committee would like to announce a new address for Rev. Grace Scruggs. Her address is as follows:

Rev. Grace Scruggs  
Brookdale Oakwell  
3360 Oakwell Court Rm # 118  
San Antonio, TX 78218

She has been able to attend every Sunday, since her new place is closer to the Church.

AHCC celebrates Birthdays and Anniversaries once a month. The celebrants have their picture taken so we know who they are and how much they have changed. The picture gallery begins below – the membership of AHCC seems to withstand the sands of time!

### Birthdays for March 2016



Janelle Brumley, Pat Eller, Bill Ingram and Tom Schaezler celebrated their birthdays during the month of March. Janelle Brumley celebrated her 95<sup>th</sup> birthday on Easter Sunday.



**The Church Office needs to know when your Birthday or Wedding Anniversary is celebrated. Please call the Church Office 210-828-5728 and let Sarah know your information.**

## **Up Coming Events**

**Tuesday, April 5, 2016**

**6:00 pm – Ron Toland's Special Finance Committee Meeting**

**Saturday, April 9, 2016**

**8:00 am – Elders Breakfast Meeting in Kirtley Hall**

**Sunday, April 17, 2016**

**12:15 pm – April's Birthday / Anniversary Celebration in Kirtley Hall**

**Thursday, April 21, 2016 – \*\*\*\*DEADLINE to Submit articles or information for May's Newsletter and Calendar\*\*\*\***



**Check the April's Calendar for additional events taking place at AHCC.**