

THIS WEEK AT THE CREEK

August 7, 2009

The day of my spiritual awakening was the day I saw – and knew I saw – all things in God and God in all things. - Mechtild of Magdeburg

Dear Cross Creeker:

First, I want to say it was a real joy to see so many of you at the *Worship in the Park and Picnic* last Sunday. It felt good to be back in community with you after a little summer recess!

Second, I want to offer a special word of thanks to Ruth Hopkins, who so graciously and competently “filled the pulpit” for four weeks while I was away.

Third, I want to let you know that I will begin a new series of sermons this weekend called **AN ALTAR IN THE WORLD: A GEOGRAPHY OF FAITH**, based on a book with that same title by



Barbara Brown Taylor. Taylor is one of my favorite writers, preachers, thinkers! The focus of this series can be summarized in one word: **practices**. Practices are the things we do that enable us to experience and encounter God. You might be surprised to discover that the practices we will be talking about are not a burden to bear, or some religious oddity, but are the everyday, ordinary sort of things that enliven and empower life!

In the world of academe, the practice of faith has been the focus of many studies, research projects, and books over the past decade or so and the word is out: practices, both corporate and personal, enrich the life of faith and are the engines that enable communities of faith to come alive! Taylor says the “purposeful return to these practices has the power to save religions that have just about run out of breath. If you have run out of breath yourself – or out of faith – then this book is for you...I have no idea what you will see when you look at your life – but if you are tired of arguing about religion, tired of reading about spirituality, tired of talk-talk-talking about things that matter without doing a single thing that matters yourself, then the pages that follow are dedicated to you...My hope is that reading them will help you recognize some of the altars in this world – ordinary looking places where human beings have met and may continue to meet up with the divine More that they sometimes call God.”

So, with all of that said, I hope that you will make weekend worship a regular *practice* in the days ahead. And if at all possible you will come to worship having read a chapter of Barbara Brown Taylor (the practice of study!). I think these two practices are a basic, winning combination for some spiritual growth and a renewed encounter with God! And in saying that, I am reminded of the words of Rabbi Irwin Kula: “When I pray, I talk to God. When I study, God talks to me.”

And by the way, I have ordered a number of hardback copies of Taylor’s book and they are available in the church hallway for purchase for \$20 each.

I will be looking for you in worship this weekend. Practice away!

Peace,

MIKE CASTLE, Pastor

* * * * *

IN WORSHIP THIS WEEKEND

This weekend as we will gather for worship Pastor Mike will begin a new series of sermons **AN ALTAR IN THE WORLD: A GEOGRAPHY OF FAITH**, based on a book with that same title by Barbara Brown Taylor. The prompting is entitled “*The Practice of Waking Up to God: Vision*,” which follows Chapter 1 of Taylor’s book. **KENNY ROADEN** will be singing a solo entitled “*Your Love Comes to Me*”.

* * * * *

For a complete listing of events, please go to www.crosscreekchurch.org.

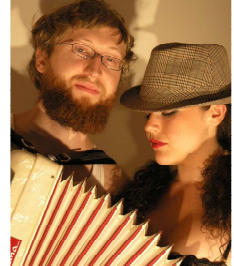
* * * * *

RIVER BAPTISM -- Sunday, August 23

Our annual River Baptism service will be held Sunday, Aug. 23 at the Jacoby Road Canoe Launch, located between Xenia and Yellow Springs. Participants, along with friends and family, will meet at 12:30 p.m. for a brown bag meal along the banks of the river. The service will begin at 2 p.m. If you are interested in being baptized, contact Pastor Mike Castle as soon as possible.

Shaun and Abigail Bengson In Concert **Saturday, September 5 @ 8:00 p.m.**

Fresh back from South Africa, Shaun and Abigail will offer a special Saturday evening concert. No tickets required, but a free will offering will be taken. Shaun and Abigail will also be our guest musicians in worship on September 5-6, 2009 for our "Out of Africa" theme.



HOLY C.O.W. -- CELEBRATE OUR WELCOME WEEKEND **September 26-27, 2009**



Cross Creek Community Church, United Church of Christ is pleased to announce that **JASON & deMARCO** will be in concert on Saturday, September 26 at 8:00 and **CANDACE CHELLEW-HODGE** will be conducting a workshop on her book ***Bulletproof Faith: A Spiritual Survival Guide for Gay and Lesbian Christians*** on Saturday, September 26 from 10:00 - 1:00 (including lunch). Costs for the Concert is \$20 per ticket and cost for the workshop is \$20 (includes lunch) per person, or a special package discount that can be purchased for \$30.00 which includes both the concert and the workshop.

In addition, **JASON & deMARCO** and **CANDACE CHELLEW-HODGE** will be special guests in all three weekend worship services on September 26-27 at 5:30 p.m. Saturday

and 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. on Sunday. All of this is part of Cross Creek Community Church's **HOLY C.O.W. (Celebrate Our Welcome) Weekend**. A brochure with complete details for the weekend, as well as a registration form to order tickets is available in the church lobby or online at www.crosscreekchurch.org.



LOOKING AHEAD IN WORSHIP...

August 15-16 **AN ALTAR IN THE WORLD: A Geography of Faith**
The Practice of Paying Attention: Reverence

August 22-23 **AN ALTAR IN THE WORLD: A Geography of Faith**
The Practice of Wearing Skin: Incarnation

**River Baptism at 2:00 p.m. at Jacoby Road Canoe Launch in Greene County.*

August 29-30 **AN ALTAR IN THE WORLD: A Geography of Faith**
The Practice of Walking on the Earth: Groundedness

**Drama Team to perform. **Back to School Recognition/Prayer (Sunday Only)*

September 5-6 "Out of Africa" Weekend

Jonathan McClelland & Megan Weber will share their summer experiences in Tanzania; Maggie Spring and Matt Chaney will share of their summer experiences in Kenya; Shaun and Abigail Bengson will share their summer experiences in South Africa.

**Communion will be served at all weekend services.*

**Shaun and Abigail Concert on Sat., Sept. 5 at 8:00 p.m.*