



Cornerstone

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MMXVII No. 5
May 2017

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Home for the Homeless—Bob Turner

I'm writing this in the fellowship hall of Pullen Memorial Baptist Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, the host site for the Alliance of Baptists' Annual Gathering. This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Alliance, so it's appropriate to mark that milestone here at Pullen, one of the congregations that was instrumental in the group's formation.

The Alliance grew out of the conflict between inerrantists and moderates within the Southern Baptist Convention, which lasted from 1979 to about 1993. In fact, the Alliance of Baptists started out as the Southern Baptist Alliance, a loosely-affiliated group of churches and individuals who felt increasingly marginalized in their Southern Baptist congregations and could read the writing on the wall. The hard turn to the right the SBC had taken left little or no space for those of a progressive or even moderate approach to theology and church, so in 1987, some of these refugees banded together and created a new home for themselves.

I know this sense of dislocation personally. I grew up in a Southern Baptist environment, and after college I headed to Louisville to attend the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. I had been pretty well insulated from all the nefarious goings-on in the SBC—mostly, I think, because my home church was right in line with the “conservative resurgence” (or “fundamentalist takeover,” depending on whom you asked) and the leaders saw no reason to talk about it. So it came as a bit of a shock when, at my seminary orientation in late January

1991, just after the “Desert Storm” bombing campaign had begun, one of the faculty members said, “Welcome to Southern Seminary, the Baghdad of the Southern Baptist Convention.” I wondered what I had got myself into.

Southern was the last holdout in the fundamentalists' plan to take over the boards and agencies of the SBC, and the architects of the takeover were bearing down hard on the faculty and administration—hence the Baghdad metaphor. It would be a mere two-and-a-half years before the inerrantists gained a majority on the seminary's board of trustees, but I found that a great deal of damage can be done in two-and-a-half years. It was a mean-spirited takeover, unworthy of disciples of Jesus Christ, and much of my education took place in an atmosphere of suspicion and rancor.

As I grew into my understanding of my own theological and philosophical convictions, it became clear that the SBC was no longer my home. I didn't know much about the Alliance at the time, so I wasn't aware of an alternative within Southern Baptist life, and when I got the call to come to West Virginia to serve as the *American* Baptist campus minister at West Virginia University, I jumped at the chance. Like Pontius Pilate, I washed my hands of the SBC and have not looked back since.

I soon discovered, however, that the American Baptists are a mixed bag as well. The West Virginia Baptist Convention might as well be a part of the

Many submissions to the newsletter are voluntary contributions from individuals. The ideas expressed do not necessarily reflect the mission or views of University Baptist Church as a whole.

SBC, I learned to my distress. University Baptist Church learned the same thing about the American Baptist Churches of Ohio a few years ago. With the Rochester Genesee Region, we have landed on our feet in one of the best possible regions in the ABC-USA, but for every RGR there is one or more WVBCs or ABCOs where Baptists of a progressive bent often feel isolated and marginalized.

That's why the Alliance of Baptists is so important. It provides a home for the homeless, a port in the storm for ships that have been cut adrift, a respite for those wandering in the wilderness. This weekend I sat in worship between two gay couples; shared a meal with a transgender woman who is a former Army chaplain and a current stand-up comedian; attended a press conference and rally opposing North Carolina's discriminatory HB2 law; and participated in discussions with a group committed to racial reconciliation in the US and another committed to a just peace in Israel-Palestine. I was embraced by old friends and new; I got hardly a whiff of judgment directed at anyone for her or his lifestyle or politics or opinions; and I witnessed courageous, open, and healthy resolution of interpersonal conflicts.

The Alliance is not perfect by any means. It's made up of people, after all, and people are notorious for having hidden agendas and mixed motives, and for saying and doing dumb and hurtful things. People can be self-centered, wounded, passive-aggressive, and obnoxious by turns. The Alliance is not heaven. But it is, I think, a small slice of the reign of God on earth—a group that despite its flaws remains committed to the full flowering of God's justice and love in our churches, communities, denominations, and world. And that's something to celebrate.

Happy birthday, Alliance! Many happy and hopeful returns!

Grace and Peace,

bob

May Scriptures

Fourth Sunday of Easter

May 7, 2017
Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 23
1 Peter 2:19-25
John 10:1-10

Fifth Sunday of Easter

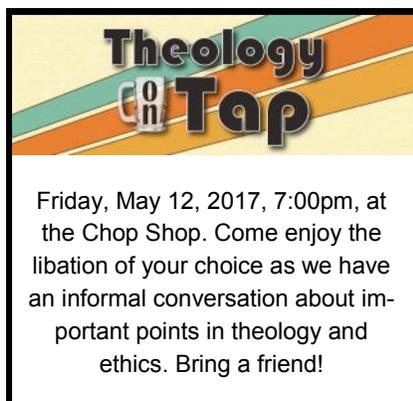
May 14, 2017
Acts 7:55-60
Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
1 Peter 2:2-10
John 14:1-14

Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 21, 2017
Acts 17:22-31
Psalm 66:8-20
1 Peter 3:13-22
John 14:15-21

Seventh Sunday of Easter

May 28, 2017
Acts 1:6-14
Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35
1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11
John 17:1-11



Newsletter Submissions

Newsletter items are due the third Friday of the month.

Also, it is UBC policy that all references to God be inclusive. We will edit to reflect this.

Please contact the office if you have any questions.

Thanks Mom (and Dad)— Julius Mayo

“For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.” (Matthew 12:50)

In my early years of graduate school, I encountered one of the most troubling experiences of my life. While talking to an elementary school teacher about what it was like to be a teacher, she made the comment, “I like teaching, the only thing I don’t like is working with little black boys.” Having once been a “little black boy” I was struck by the comment. For days I even lamented over the thought of how many other educators felt the same way about young students who were like how I once was. Then I remembered what had made a difference for me in elementary school. I had a flashback memory of playing on a wooden chair as my mother talked with one of my future school teachers about expectations. I remember my mom attending PTA meetings and Open Houses and asking lots of questions to make sure I was getting what she called a “good education.” Both my parents insisted that I attend church and Sunday School, but it was always mama who had the large Sunday dinner prepared each evening after church. I knew it then, but I am certain now, that God’s love was in everything my mother (and father) were doing for me. It is a blessing I truly appreciate, and never take for granted!

All praises be to the Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit!

--Julius Mayo

P.S. Happy Mother’s Day from the Mayo family

Hiding in Plain Sight—Kerry Cheesman

For years I wore reading glasses to do close-up work, like reading or working on small objects. I had multiple pairs because I never seemed to have one handy when I needed them. One was in the car, one in the bedroom, one in the family room – you get the picture. Yet when I really needed one, I could never seem to find one. I think they had a mind of their own and they all hid whenever I went looking for them. Of course they were always right where I had left them – in plain sight, staring at me, but blending in so that they were not obvious.

At a recent biology conference I was privileged to see a new 3-D documentary about life in the Amazon. It was especially exciting because I have traveled to the Amazon with students on numerous occasions, and witnessed the type of environment that was shown in the film. A portion of the film focused on animals that survive by hiding in plain sight. Yes, that's right. They have evolved to mimic their surroundings in such a way that they are very difficult to see (and therefore cannot be found and eaten by other animals). In fact most of us did not see them on the big screen until they suddenly moved and drew attention to themselves (here is your test – can you find the animal in the picture here?).

Sometimes I think we as Christians go about our lives hiding in plain sight just as some of these Amazon animals do. We may be conscious about sticking out and being noticeable, perhaps out of fear that we may be attacked or ridiculed for our beliefs. So there we are in plain sight, in our offices or classrooms or neighborhoods, flying low under the radar so that others don't notice the way we live our lives as we try to follow Christ. We try to blend in so as not to draw attention to the fact that we are Christians, that there is



something different about us. We strive to be safe in a world that is sometimes not so friendly, and where the competition in our concrete jungle can be every bit as fierce as it is in the wild Amazon.

The reality, however, is that Jesus told us to do something quite different, and to be someone quite different. Jesus didn't tell us to hide our faith and blend in. No, he told us to shine so the world will take notice and (hopefully) respond. In Matthew 5:14-16, for instance, Jesus tells us *"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."*

He makes a similar statement in Luke 8:16, and the author then repeats it again in Luke 11:33 (so it must be important): *"No one lights a lamp and hides it in a clay jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, they put it on a stand, so that those who come in can see the light."* And lest there be any doubt what was meant by the light, in Acts 13:47 we read: *"For this is what the Lord has commanded us: 'I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.'"*

A light that is hidden cannot illuminate the darkness. A Christian life that is camouflaged so that it blends in cannot bring others to the saving grace of Jesus Christ. I don't think we need to shove our faith in the face of others, but I do think we need to stick out just a little so that those around us notice there is something different. Of course that something different should be positive and illuminating so that others want to know what we have in our lives that makes us so delightful, and that opens the doors for others to gain the light that we so desire to give away! Blending in is good for God's little creatures, but for us it should be quite the opposite!



Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

18	David Riley
	Kyle McClafferty
30	Charmagne Hough
	Jeffrey Jackson
	Ken Peterson

Some Musical Notes—David Tomasacci

As the UBC Choir's 2016-2017 season draws to a close, I thought I would share some highlights from the choir's very busy past few months. I am very thankful for our choir members' talent, dedication, and patience throughout this past year, and especially during Lent and Holy Week. Throughout Lent, the choir not only rehearsed and performed its usual repertoire of anthems for the Message in Music, but furthermore presented an Introit and Postlude/Benediction for each Sunday Service in Lent, which ranged in complexity and style from simple "Amens" to challenging Medieval works. Lent began at UBC with a beautiful Ash Wednesday Taizé service, and Holy Week commenced with the UBC Choir and our guitarists Frank Asher and Alex Thesken joining the Newman Center's Music Director Eric Utsler in leading the combined Palm Sunday Service processional with the combined congregations of UBC, the Newman Center, and St. Stephen's.

As is tradition, the Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services were performed with the combined choirs of UBC and Glen Echo, which for me, was certainly a highlight of this year's Holy Week Services – rivaled only by how overjoyed I was to see so many UBC folk join the choir at the end of

the Easter Sunday service to sing the *Hallelujah Chorus* from Handel's *Messiah*. It's always wonderful to have such a nice, full choir... (hint hint hint!!!!) and you all sounded lovely!

We've had a few musical surprises this year, as well. Wil Tao, a doctoral student in vocal performance at OSU, sang Cesar Franck's *Panis Angelicus* as a guest soloist, and will be returning in this capacity throughout the summer. Quinton Jones, a colleague of mine at Capital University, was a guest organist for Frank and Rick Asher's wedding, and gave a stunning performance of Bach's *Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor*. Jacob Panteloukas, our tenor section leader, conducted the choir in singing the anthem *Day by Day*, an anthem that holds special meaning for him. We learned that in addition to her lovely soprano voice (which we all got to here both as a soloist in the second Sunday of January, and at Frank and Rick's wedding when she sang in the duet "All I Ask of You" from *Phantom of the Opera*), Ashley Hart, our soprano section leader, is also quite the lovely flutist! And in Lent, we welcomed our new Bass Section leader, the very talented Justin Fields, a graduate student in vocal performance and pedagogy at OSU, who is taking over from

Alex Thesken, our erstwhile Bass section leader and a member of the UBC Choir for three years, who is leaving Columbus for new things in New York City this May. I would like to thank Alex again for his talent, his wonderful voice, his versatility, and his joviality, and I would like to reiterate the sentiments expressed by the choir and Kenneth Watkins' blessing from our April 30th service: Alex – you will be missed; you are loved, and you will always be part of the UBC family.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

This year's Pride weekend is June 16-18.

Join with us as we once again march in the parade and have an information booth.

The parade is June 17th with step off beginning at 10:30. The booths open the 16th beginning at 4:00.

More information to come!

May 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 6:00 pm Bible Study	5	6
7 10:30 am Worship	8	9	10 9:30-11:30 am INCH 6:30-9:30 pm CCF	11 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:30 pm Choir Practice	12 7:00 pm Theology and Ethics on Tap @ the Chop Shop 6:30-10:30 pm CCF	13
14 10:30 am Worship COM Meeting following worship	15	16	17 6:30-9:30 pm CCF	18 No Bible Study	19 6:30-10:30 pm CCF Newsletter Deadline	20
21 10:30 am Worship	22	23	24 INCH Teacher Lunch 6:30-9:30 pm CCF	25 6:00 pm Bible Study 7:30 pm Choir Practice	26 6:30-10:30 pm CCF	27
28 10:30 am Worship	29	30	31			

University Baptist Church — *Progressive • Welcoming • Inclusive*

- **Theology and Ethics on Tap. Friday, May 12, 7 pm.** Meet at the Chop Shop.
- **Council of Ministries (COM) Meeting.** Sunday, May 14, after worship.
- **Pride Weekend is June 16-18.** Join us as we march in the parade and have an information booth. More to come!
- **Refreshment sign-ups for 2017.** The sheet is up in the Narthex. As you plan for 2017, please consider providing snacks for fellowship after worship.



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Website: www.ubccolumbus.org

Pastor—Rev. Bob Turner
Moderator—Frank Benline
Choir Director—David Tomasacci
Pianist—Mollie Rausch
Office Manager—Kerry Taylor
Nursery Care—Liliya Yang

Worship—10:30 a.m.

**Children's Sunday School—2nd
and 4th Sundays—10:30 a.m.**

Office Hours

Tues.-Fri. 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Return Service Requested 5/31/17