

SECOND THOUGHTS

JANUARY/FEBRUARY
2009

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From the Pastor's Pen...

Just this morning our daughter called and told us that the Motor Vehicle Office had denied her a name change on her driver's license because her marriage certificate wasn't legal. She was in tears asking me if she wasn't legally married or what? I assured her that since I had done the ceremony myself, she was legally married, but that the Pennsylvania-issued marriage certificate is not legal outside of Pennsylvania. She will have to get a certified license for her state. Then we discussed the process and she was ok by the end of the call. All was resolved and well.

The call reminded me of the hours of red tape and waiting at government offices for licenses and registrations, etc., both in Venezuela and in New Jersey and then again in Pennsylvania, and the frustration I experienced trying to meet all the requirements for proper identification brought on by the 9/11 tragedy. However, as the day went on, this call spurred me to think about our relationship to the Lord. What if our covenant with God could somehow be derailed by a legality? What if the baptism waters weren't administered properly? What if my personal prayer of commitment wasn't theologically accurate and I didn't know till – well, till it was too late? What would happen if what I thought was enough to get me into eternity with Jesus wasn't what God had in mind after all? You might chuckle, but I thought it.

The beauty of our relationship with Christ is that he initiates and seals and assures us of the veracity of both the offer of salvation as well as the state of our salvation. When John writes, "But to all who received him, he gave the

power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor the will of man, **but of God**. See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and **so we are**." [John 1.12; 1 John 3.1] This is the truth that makes it all legal – and more importantly, assured and reliable in our lives.

As we begin the New Year, I pray for all the very best for each of you. But what I believe is more important than your well-being in this world, is the health of your soul. It is my prayer, then, that you will take a look at your heart and your life, as I intend to do, and make sure that things are indeed "well with my soul," as the hymn writer has us sing. Trusting in the Word of God and the work of God's Spirit in our hearts, let us listen when the writer of Hebrews says: "Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

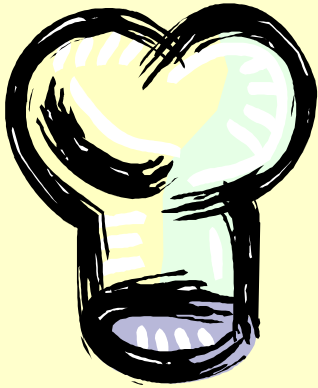
Happy New Year!

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Second Thoughts
has a new look!!

Check it out, tell the Editor in Chief what you think! We will be trying out new formats until we get it right. Give us your opinion. Articles and suggestions are always welcome!!!



Another Elijah's Promise Event, "Chef's Night" is June 29, 2009. Look for more details.

"As of 2007, heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States, England, Canada and Wales, killing one person every 34 seconds in the United States."

Elijah's Promise -

3rd Annual Valentine's Fundraiser

Guest Chefs & Culinary Dynamic Duo, Nancy & Frank Kluberspies will be cooking for you for a "Eat for a Cause" fundraiser on Saturday, February 14th 7 - 9:30 pm at 211 Livingston Avenue. Seating is limited - last year's dinner sold out within 2 weeks.

Dinner is \$75.00 a person. Purchase your tickets today. Seating is limited to thirty-five people! The dinner is BYOB. All proceeds will be used to support the Promise Jobs student scholarships fund at Elijah's Promise. In the event of snow, the dinner will be rescheduled for Sunday, February 15th. For a detailed menu and to download a registration form go to www.elijahspromise.org or Contact Michelle Wilson at elijahs.promise@yahoo.com to register.

The United Methodist Church -

Housing First! Conference

Developing options and opportunities to reduce homelessness in our communities and across our state remains one of NJ's most pressing social challenges.

The United Methodist Church in Milltown will host its Housing First! Conference on February 12, 2009

1:30 - 4:00 pm. Four experts who have worked on creating successful solutions and finding permanent housing for homeless persons and families will participate in a panel discussion.

If you would like to find out more, please email umc47nmain@aol.com or call 732 828-0610

Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital -

Matters of the Heart

Come join RWJUH for a free health education event on Thursday, February 26, 2009. Health professionals will speak about prevention, warning signs and treatment of heart disease and stroke. Peggy Fleming, Olympic Ice Skater and Heart Disease Awareness Advocate, will be present. Exhibits and Dinner are at 4:30 pm with a program following from 6:00 - 8:30 pm.

Please RSVP by February 17th 732 418-8110. To learn more and to register, please visit:

www.rwjuh.edu/mattersoftheheart



First Reformed Church of New Brunswick presents:

"Raising the Roof through Music"

Concert by NJ Gay Men's chorus will be held on Saturday, January 31st at First Reformed, 9 Bayard Street. A silent auction & Hors d'oeuvres will be served at 7 pm, concert at 8 pm.

This is a benefit for their Historic Preservation. Ticket prices are \$20 in advance. Call 732 545-1005 or email:

Secretary@firstreformedchurch.net for more information.

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

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*Two Extra Special
Coffee hours:*

*2/15 - Happy Birthday
SRC Cookie Sale &
Williamson's Anniversary*

*2/22 - Helen Erdey's
Birthday!*

Readers

Coffee Hour Hosts

FEBRUARY

- 1 - Steve Sandor
- 8 - Helen Pallay
- 15 - Martha Palmer
- 22 - Alice Beals

FEBRUARY

- 1 - Judy Chibbaro - *Monthly Volunteer*
- 8 - Ellie & Walt Holz
- 15 - Kathleen & Tom Williamson
- 22 - Larry Wehr

Coming Soon: UPCOMING EVENTS - Look for details in your bulletin insert & emails

- ◆ Ash Wednesday - February 25th - Services to be announced
- ◆ Cookie Sale - February 15th Missions Annual "Happy Birthday SRC" to benefit Church World Service
Volunteers Needed to bake, see sign-up sheet on the bulletin board
- ◆ Mardi Gras - Maybe a party at SRC????

Crossroad XXV ~ A Retreat for Women

Please join the Women of the Synod of the Mid-Atlantics for their annual Retreat being held, Friday - Saturday, April 17 - 18. Once again it is being held in beautiful Harvey Cedars, New Jersey.

The theme is "Our Call: Where Do I Fit In"? The keynote speaker will be Michelle Cavinder, Director of Women's Ministries of the Crystal Cathedral. Music is by doorjamb - this includes favorite hymns and praise songs of the past 25 years.

Some of the hot topics will be:

- Prayer
- Sharing Our Faith
- Checking our Baggage
- I'm too Busy and
- Bad Girls of the Bible!!

Registration forms are in the church office, or for more information contact Darlene Purcell at 908-904-0800 or purcelldm@comcast.net.

We're on the Web!
Web site address

www.Secondreformednb.org

