

# The Well

Newsletter editors: Greg & Jennifer Helms Jarrell and Jason & Joanie Williams

Holidays 2004

## The Well

Vision, Dreams, Calling, Community, Compassion, Care... The Well...

“Still Still Still.  
You can hear the falling snow.  
For all is hushed;  
the world is sleeping.  
Holy child  
its vigil keeping.  
Still Still Still.  
You can hear the falling snow.”  
Shhh!  
Can you hear what  
can't be heard?  
Hush  
Sleep is the vigil  
And all for the  
Holy Child  
Be still  
And know  
Keep vigil  
Sleep  
Shhhh  
Sleep

## Happy Holidays!

Jennifer Helms Jarrell

More often than not, this section of “The Well” is dedicated to an update on how “We” (Jason, Joanie, Greg, and Jennifer/Helms) have been doing since the previous newsletter. Here's the quick gist of what's been going on: Joanie's been working a lot, Jason's been doing a lot of school stuff, Greg's been loving his work with the Church Hill Wellness Center, and Helms has been letting go and adjusting to a lot of newness related to her job at Mt. Hermon Baptist Church.

Now onto more *important* issues.

### Holiday Plans

We're going everywhere possible this holiday season so that we can celebrate with you! Please contact us if you'll have time to visit. We want to spend time with you.

### Helms and Greg

Thanksgiving in the Raleigh area. Thursday-Saturday evening.

Christmas Eve in Fuquay-Varina

Christmas with family in Raleigh and Bunn

Dec 26th in Reidsville

Dec 28-Jan 2nd in Charlotte

### Joanie and Jason

Thanksgiving in Fuquay-Varina Thursday-Saturday evening

Christmas Eve Vinton

Christmas Day with family in Vinton and Fuquay-Varina

Dec 28th- Williamsburg

Dec 30th-Jan 2nd Charlotte

*A Peaceful Season and Meaningful Journey to you  
during the holiday season.*

Introducing two “new” partners to our community: Michael and Christine Kellett. Michael and Christine are dear friends of ours. The Kellett's are from the Greenville and Greenwood areas of South Carolina. In 2001, they set up roots in Richmond and began seminary studies at BTSR. Just recently, the two have mentioned their desire to be active partners with us as we seek to be in community with one another and as we begin the start up process for Chyaets. We are excited about the Michael and Christine taking an active part in what we are doing and we look forward to them sharing with you in “The Well” soon.

## Editor's commentary

Joanie Williams

I have an image in my head of Moses holding the stone tablets. In my imagination, Moses is a stern man with harsh expressions. The image often portrayed is one that says, "Do not cross me or I'll bang you over the head with these tablets!" This image communicates idolatry of the commandments that Moses holds in his arms. The image forces me to consider following the laws as the most important part of my relationship with God. This image portrays Moses wanting to stir up conflict, stating that he has the power. Applying what this image means to our situation means that if I own the commandments for myself, I have power! This is what I imagined about Moses, until recently....

When Jason and I were in Italy this summer, we went to the Basilica of St. Pietro in Rome. Inside, we both stood in awe of Michaelangelo's masterpiece "Moses." My image of Moses was challenged and transformed in the presence of that sculpture. The history that the sculpture holds makes its image more human, more encouraging. As I stared at the light colored stone figure before me, I saw a Moses that was calmly wise. Also, I noticed that the way Moses clutched those tablets was not expressing power. He was holding those oversized tablets with love. In seeing the sculpture, I came to realize that before being given the tablets, Moses had a history that included richness in his relationship with God. Michelangelo's sculpture bore a concerned and passionate expression of love. After experiencing it, I could no longer associate Moses solely with power to govern. The laws he held tightly in his hand now symbolized power to love.

You may be wondering why I'm reflecting on what I felt when I saw the masterpiece in Italy. My reflection has come in the light of the recent elections and wrap up. First of all, I have been left feeling betrayed. It seems it's *all about power*. Since the attacks on Fallujah began just days after the election, I have been mad. *It is all about power*. This morning a voice on the radio asked me to wait and see the "great" changes in legislation that would be put in to place by the new Congress and that then I would certainly give power to the Republican party. *It is all about power*. We are constantly told that we are considered the most powerful nation. I was asked to pray that the *wrong* people do not get killed in Fallujah. This prayer implies that it is okay for some people to be killed. There is no love in our law and the way we approach our relationships anymore—*it's about power*.

### Why are we encouraged to assert power instead of concern for others?

So I feel betrayed--betrayed by the governing authorities of our country. Why is it that we must put on that stern harsh face of power and point markedly to the laws? I will be honest, right now I am placing blame on those governing parties. It seems that the purpose of laws and policies should be intended to express care for people. This political system is portraying to me a similar image to my original concept of Moses.

### How can we regain the purpose for the law as a means to express love in our relationships?

When will we stop using laws to relate to people and express love instead?

"Oh the King is coming!  
The King is coming!  
I have heard the trumpet sound-  
ing and now  
his face I see.  
The King is coming!  
The King is coming!  
Praise God!  
He's coming for me!"

WAKE UP!  
Hear the trumpet  
See the face  
He's coming!  
Praise goodness!  
Just what we've been  
waiting for!  
WAKE UP!  
He's coming for  
YOU!

## Write the Vision...

Habakkuk 2:2-3

Recently, we have been spending some time participating in something akin to "visioning meetings." We've been brainstorming, planning, setting goals, and analyzing everything having to do with this "vision" we find ourselves called to. In previous newsletters, you have witnessed first hand the stretching and growing of our "vision"; this "vision" that we hope will become yours as well. We want you to be a part of what we are doing, planning, and foreseeing. That's why we've decided to go ahead and spill the news to you that..... WE'RE MOVING! That's right! We've got somewhat of a plan and it involves packing up and moving out.

Here's the deal. Our plan involves a camp/retreat center that will minister to NC, SC, and VA. It (Chyaets) includes a partnership in an urban area. It also involves connections with congregations and living in community. We feel the best way to begin molding all these aspects together is to move to CHARLOTTE, NC and live in an urban/transitional setting and start up a hospitality-type house. After a number of years of making relationships and building community, we hope to extend this ministry to a camp/retreat setting.

HERE WE GO! We plan on moving sometime around the summer of 2005 after everyone gets out of seminary. Right now, we're researching and visiting the area. We're also in the works of finalizing our business plan (something that's required of us in order to become a non-profit, but not necessarily something we like to do.). In addition to that, we're working on spiffing up our resumés and seeking employment in Charlotte.

In the next few months, we'll be making a lot of changes and hopefully some sort of progress toward what we envision. We hope, too, that you will join with us as we stretch and grow into all that we are called to be.

## Passion, Calling, Desires...

Greg Jarrell

So we're moving! And to Charlotte, the nation's 21<sup>st</sup> largest city. We've gone about this kind of backwards, of course. Most folks find a job first, and that determines where they go. But we have picked a city first, and jobs, we hope, will come. With a city in mind, we now need to make another important decision- a neighborhood. This brings up the topic of passions, callings, desires.... My summers in East St. Louis gave me a new perspective on living in a city. Growing up, I had woods, streets with little traffic, and a homogenous group of neighbors who could be as close or distant as they chose. Consequently, downtown Raleigh frightened me. It seemed dirty, unsafe, full of strangers, and way too busy. In East St. Louis, there were strangers everywhere, houses built right next to each other, buses and subway trains- everything that I was unfamiliar with and a little scared of.

This is a simplistic view, of course. Cities are not horrible places, nor are suburbs idyllic ones. Recently, though, I have begun to understand the importance of cities, and their significance for Christians. This has come through two different sources. The primary one has been actually living in a city neighborhood. Oregon Hill, as mine is called, is an old neighborhood, built by blue collar workers in Richmond's gunnery and iron works from the 1870s to 1910s. Being a part of the life of this neighborhood has been a wonderful experience- folks sitting on their porches, a block of people who know my name, opportunities to greet strangers and help homeless folks, a neighborhood restaurant where the servers know what I want when I come in, and the chance to walk most places, escaping the isolation of the car. Having lived in this neighborhood for a while, I have been reflecting on why I love it so. I have come to be able to talk about it in sensible terms through the help of Eric Jacobsen, the author of *Sidewalks in the Kingdom: New Urbanism and Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2003).

The city is an important biblical place, of course. The book of Revelation depicts the return of Jesus to establish the New Jerusalem, a city. Jacobsen tracks the importance of cities in the Bible, and then turns to a modern way of thinking about cities- a movement called New Urbanism. This movement seeks a return to a sensible urban planning like that employed prior to World War II. This type of urban planning gave rise to neighborhoods like Oregon Hill, like Oakwood in Raleigh, Dilworth in Charlotte, Greenwich Village in New York, and many other historic neighborhoods in cities big and small around the country. Jacobsen identifies six 'markers' of a city: public spaces, mixed use, pedestrian scale, beauty, local economy, and strangers. This space will not hold all of that information, though I think it is very important to us as Christians. This is why: in a brief drive through downtown Richmond, one will encounter at least four building that *used to be* churches. There are likely more than that, probably some that have been torn down, and one or two I have yet to notice. Those same congregations still exist, but they have all abandoned the city for the false promises of the suburbs. How can people of a faith for whom welcoming the stranger is so important flee from the opportunity to encounter them? How can a people of ministry to the poor move to a place where there are no poor to be seen, except through a window at 55 mph? The church has much work to do in our cities. Our new city (soon) is Charlotte. Whether yours be Raleigh, Richmond, Roanoke, or somewhere else, we hope that you will join in the work of God in our cities.

## All about (C)Hyaets...

We have already begun to get odd looks when we share our name with people. We're considering the existence of the "C" at the beginning of the word. In the mean time, here is a little instruction guide on the pronunciation.

C—Cast your eyes on the C for now, it may not be here for long—

H—Ha! I may be promoted to the position of "C"

Y—You can dry off your neighbor, the spitting's all done.

A—All you need to do now is think of the number. . .

E—Eight (and add an "s").

T—"Tree of life" is the meaning, in English if you forgot

S—So now your educated on Chyaets!

~Joanie Williams

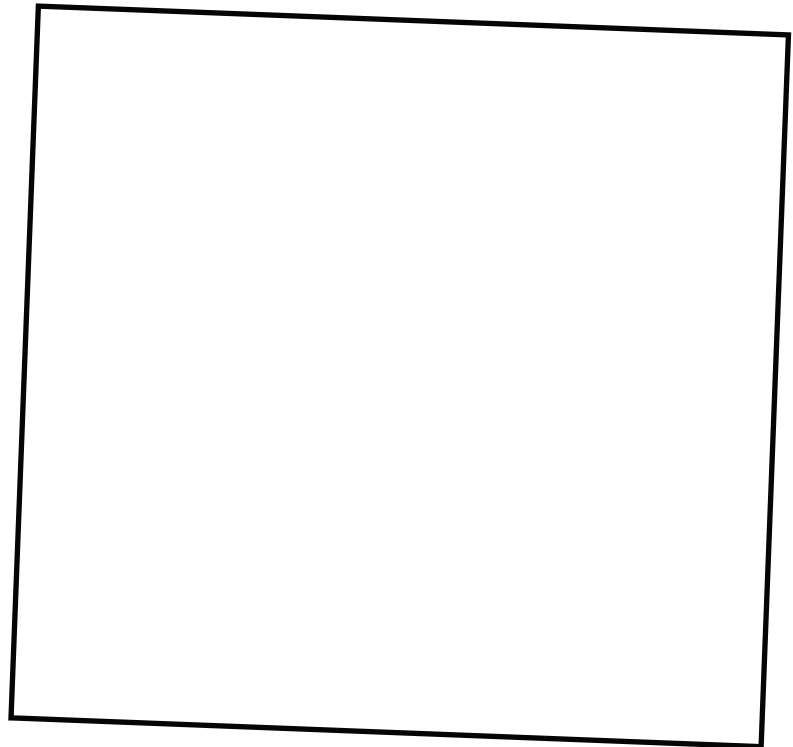
(C)Hyaets is a faith based non-profit organization covenanting to inspire, enrich, and embody community. The ministries of (C)Hyaets include Little Tree camp/retreat experiences, Shade for Sojourners Urban Partnership, Seed Exchange Congregational Connections, The Arbor Community Living, and The Well—a ministry newsletter.

## The Well

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Vision, Dreams, Calling, Community,  
Compassion, Care... The Well



### Food for Thought:

There is in all visible things an invisible fecundity, a dimmed light, a meek namelessness, a hidden wholeness. This mysterious Unity and Integrity is Wisdom, the Mother of all, *Natura naturans*. There is in all things an inexhaustible sweetness and purity, a silence that is a fount of action and joy.

It rises up in wordless gentleness and flows out to me from the unseen roots of all created being, welcoming me tenderly, saluting me with indescribable humility. This is at once my own being, my own nature, and the Gift of my Creator's Thought and Art within me, speaking as Hagia Sophia, speaking as my sister, Wisdom.

I am awakened, I am born again at the voice of this my Sister, sent to me from the depths of the divine fecundity.  
Thomas Merton,  
in *Emblems of a Season of Fury*

### Books and Movies we've read and seen lately

*Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, by Annie Dillard – a **MUST READ!** Annie Dillard's writing is somewhat strange and free. She journey's through nature, biology, science, and a myriad of thoughts to point towards the sheer fecundity of God.

*Border Crossings*, by Rodney Clapp – if you ever need your toes stepped upon, pick this book up. Rodney Clapp trespasses on almost every aspect of our modern culture and society. He challenges his readers to look critically at the way we think and live through an insightfully Christian perspective.

*Elizabeth* – Believe it or not, this movie was a class requirement for Baptist Heritage! It's a little lengthy, but worth the time.

*Shrek 2* – Almost as good as the first which means that this movie is better than most everything else out there.

*Saved* – Saved is a wonderfully provocative look at evangelical Christianity. If it disturbs you then it has done its job. We can all learn something from this flick. One word sums it up: **Hilarious!**

~Jason Williams