

# Elgin Congregational Holiness Church

Newsletter Editor:  
Melinda Abram  
Co-Editor:  
David Abram

Pastor: Rev. Wesley Luke  
Asst Pastor: Rev. Judith Luke

1331 Smyrna Road  
Elgin, SC 29045  
(803)438-5351

Visit us on the web:  
<http://elginchc.weebly.com/>

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## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- **Men's Fellowship: Free Breakfast is the First Saturday of every month at 9am. Everyone Welcome! See Rev. Richard Abram for more information.**
- **Women's Meeting: Third Thursday of every month. Speak to Sis. Judy Hensley to help or if you have any ideas**
- **Remember our youth: They need our help. Contact Sis's. Angela Barnette or Melinda Abram to see how you can help.**
- **Want to write or help with the newsletter? Contact Melinda Abram Email: mabram458@gmail.com**

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Subtle Syllogism	1
Easter Find	2
Giving a Child a Chance	2
Change is not a bad word...	3
A Man With a Message	3
Women's Ministries	3
Sap of the Willing	4

## Subtle Syllogism

**by David Abram-** Go outside and inhale deeply one of these gorgeous mornings and you will undoubtedly agree that spring is in full swing. Whether or not this time of renewal and refreshment is a good or bad thing is probably determined by the number of sneezes you encounter after this breath. Allergies aside, spring is a great time of year in many ways, not the least of which is the rain which helps keep the pollen in check as well as nourishes a palette of flowers and new life.

I would be amiss for not mentioning the Life which our Christian version of this Easter celebration is all about. Jesus' return to life that resurrection morning is inarguably the most important event in the history of our planet, so using this spring season as a commemoration of this miracle just makes sense. Still, there are other celebrations which we must consider.

Students—your sons, your daughters, our collective future—are changing. Some look toward spring with excitement for the summer-to-come. Some look toward the summer in dread for the new school-year-to-come. We will focus on the latter here, but not so much as a new school year in whichever school they currently attend, rather to the ones graduating high school and moving into a new world of excitement and education in college.

College is scary to be sure, mostly because of the exponential increase in responsibility its students will be required to uphold. Let me tell you, these are the least of your problems. Unless you find it in your ability or future-building plans to attend a Christian college—there are plenty out there and deserve your research—you will be faced with peers, students, teachers/staff/



faculty, and in some cases parents who will each try to pull your beliefs in alignment with their own.

Teachers, our focus here today, can be truly relentless. I dare not pigeonhole each one into a state of apogean spirituality, but in my experience it certainly seems to be the trend of their curriculum. My advice to you is this: do not let the masters or doctoral degrees, the years of teaching experience or academic achievements lure you into believing that their words are golden. They

will give you assignments that will no doubt test the limits of your faith. Listen in those times of doubt to your heart, to God. When in doubt of which way to turn, whether for a good grade or for anything, just remember that your work will affect others.

When your English teacher, or professor, or whatever they want to be called reads your paper that stands out and stands up against the grain of the world, as long as it is in line with God's word, it will have an effect.

My last stretch at school came with many tests of this sort. I was asked to read articles and weird short stories that should never enter the minds of our youth. One such article raised the idea that religious fundamentalism, when learned at an early age, reduces the ability of

its followers to be creative, that the frontal lobes of their brains—the bit of the brain which is active during divergent reasoning—are underdeveloped. Sometimes the methods the Enemy uses to deceive are subtle, sometimes they are blatant. We must be ready.

Another assignment, which was actually very fun and challenging, was to write a "journal entry"...

*Continued on page 4*

Will you find Jesus this Easter?



<sup>27</sup> so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us;  
Acts 17:27 (NKJV)

# Giving a Child a Chance

**by Chrystal Rhodes-** Every child deserves to be given a chance. A chance to make a difference. Every child deserves to be truly loved. They should have a loving family and friends. Every child deserves to experience complete happiness.

What our youth group is trying to do is reach out to those beyond our church walls who are in need. We have become a bridge of hope for a little girl named

**The Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance among you, and the alien, the orphan and the widow who are in your town, shall come and eat and be satisfied, in order that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do.**  
**Deuteronomy 14:29**

Genesis. We decided to sponsor her at the Winter Jam here in Columbia last month. I personally felt the need that we needed to sponsor an orphan, so I spoke with Sister Angie about it and she said that she felt the same way. When everyone was in agreement, Sister Angie and I went down to the floor where they had pictures and information on the orphans. It was a tough decision to choose which one because my heart

continued looking, something kept making me think of her. I thought about how Genesis is the first book of the bible, it is the beginning. I think that sponsoring this orphan is the beginning of outreach for our youth group here at the ECH

went out for each and every one of them. Although, when I saw Genesis her name really stuck out to me. Even though I currently living with her birth family in Quezon and is trying to learn how to eat vegetables and practice regular tooth brushing. She was recently absent from school for two months due to an UTI. She lost lots of weight due to the illness and her weight was not gained fast. Current Focus: provide supplemental feeding to sustain nutritional level. Some people may not think that one child is a big deal, but the truth is, that one child is a very big deal. We all have a chance to make a difference in life. Sometimes it may not be a big difference but we can all help in some way. I am so glad that our youth group has decided to sponsor this precious child and I hope that God will lead me to make a difference in many lives of orphans because each and every one of them are so important in God's eyes. When you pray, be sure to remember Genesis. Even though she is far away from us, the same God that's here is with her in the Philippines.

I would like to take a moment to tell you a little about our baby. She was born in the Philippines on 02/17/06. She is five years old. She is

currently living with her birth family in Quezon and is trying to learn how to eat vegetables and practice regular tooth brushing. She was recently absent from school for two months due to an UTI. She lost lots of weight due to the illness and her weight was not gained fast. Current Focus: provide supplemental feeding to sustain nutritional level.

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Jesus said "Whosoever welcomes a little child like this in my name, welcomes me." (Matthew 18:5)

# Change is not a bad word...

by Pat Davis- **Change** – alter, convert, correct, modify, transfigure, adjust, transform, replace, substitute, vary, innovate, reform, etc., etc.

Why do most of us throw up our defenses when we hear the word “change”? Well, there could be several reasons. First of all, if the change involves us personally, that means we will probably have to do something to bring about that change. Perhaps that something is intimidating, bothersome or time consuming. Even though change may elevate our stress level and cause our adrenalin to flow, we may not have any control over whether to make certain changes – they could be mandatory job requirements.

In an ever increasing world of change, it is inevitable that somewhere along the way some sort of change must occur in our lives in order for us to continue to function and keep up with the times. My firm is continuously changing in some respects, but remains constant in others. For instance, we

stand on the same integrity and ethical ground that our founding fathers established in the early years. This sort of thing should never change. Yet technology in an office environment like ours demands change in order to better serve our clients and update our services in all fields of endeavor. Remember typewriters, carbon copies and erasers? Today we complain that the laser jet printer doesn’t shoot our copy out immediately after we send the print command.

I remember my first introduction to computers. I was told by my boss that I would be getting a computer to replace my typewriter. I panicked; horror gripped me. What if I can’t learn how to use a computer – oh, no! This is my job. I won’t do it! So I told my boss that they could set that computer up in my office but I would keep my typewriter and use the computer when I had spare time. His reply, “No you won’t, we’re taking your typewriter.” I was so mad at him – he made me learn

that computer in spite of all my objections, excuses and anything I could think of to get out of it. Guess what, it was the best thing that ever happened to me. I can create complex documents and forms, surf the internet, send e-mails, work on various programs and stay abreast of the most recent technology. The possibilities are absolutely endless!!!

This same analogy can apply to the church. Although we are never to compromise our faith and our beliefs, we should be open to the best way to reach people with the gospel of Christ without appearing pious and “holier than thou.” And yes, this may involve change... Jesus ate with the publicans, prostitutes and thieves. He was mocked for this by the religious leaders of his day, but his mission was to reach them where they were and give them the gift of life. If we set ourselves on such a high

spiritual plain that we look down on sinners, then we can never win the lost, which is our Great Commission from Jesus himself. Personally, I love the old hymns and good old gospel music, but my daughter, Terri, and my teenage grandson, prefer more upbeat modern praise and worship music. That doesn’t make mine right and theirs wrong, but I have to be willing to compromise and listen to what they like sometimes in order to create peace and harmony. Is this change wrong - from one type of music to another? After all, we are both worshiping God. No, this is just a personal preference.

So you see, change is not always a bad word. Expand your horizons and God may just be trying to bring about a change in you that will take you to places you never dreamed possible in the spiritual realm. Keep your mind open and see what you can do, in spite of yourself!



## The Man With a Message

By Mr. Leslie D. Wick  
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Jesus spoke to us in parables  
Powerful word, but in a simply story  
Not willing that any should perish  
They’re to prepare ourselves for glory

Look deeply, in searching for the message  
To understand exactly what Christ meant  
Each parable has a message to tell  
The hidden meanings were no accident

To read the Bible continuously  
Is like reading the headlines each day  
We learn more each time we read it  
Or see something in a different way

We can know it all, and really know nothing  
Not by might, nor by power, but by His spirit  
The scriptures all testify of Jesus  
His gift we can receive without merit

I don’t understand why Jesus loves us  
A greater message has not been heard  
I’m amazed by the price that He paid  
I’ll just believe Him at His WORD

## WOMEN’S MINISTRIES

by Linda Cowart-I am totally honored to have been elected as Women’s Ministries president. I realize that it will be a challenging but rewarding experience for me. I welcome Pat Ortman and Tangie Sims as my right and left hands. Please pray for us.

I again want to thank everyone who helped, donated (time or money) to our two fundraisers that helped defray the cost of the General Women’s conference. On March 31<sup>st</sup> a group of us (20 women and 4 men) embarked on a wonderful trip to Pigeon Forge, Tennessee for the annual General Women’s Conference. Jeremiah Yokum led the praise and

worship services. Beth Stephens spoke to us on Thursday about getting SIN out of our lives and homes which laid the foundation for Friday’s message of Shutting the Door to defeats in our lives. It was such a blessing to each and every one of us that attended. I was totally blessed to see our teens (all of them) praising God, tears streaming down their faces, prostrate before the Lord, crying out to Him – it was a TOTALLY EPIC (teen phrase) experience. I believe we had bonds broken, needs met and hearts mended on this trip. I look forward to next year’s conference where I hope we have each and every lady able to attend and be blessed.

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*Continued from page 1*

...once per week. The journals were not about anything we did that week, but rather an original story derived from some odd topics. In this example we were asked to write a short story from the perspective of an inanimate object—a pen, a house, a whatever as long as it's an "it." I have included my story just as further celebration of our beautiful season.

**"Sap of the Willing"**

What wrong have I committed? From time immemorial I have maintained a life that I believe to be right. Creatures of the wild describe me all too often as their home, and I accept them as tenants without appeal. The only chatter I create, in fact, is the audibility furnished to the otherwise silent wind. Surely even the shade I provide to the weary passersby is enough altruism to prevent this horror from enduring.

I am wracked with confusion; I am wracked with pain. With every swing of



the terrible axe I feel the blade's sting resonating throughout. The others around me share my lifestyle of peacefulness, yet I am the one being ripped from my home.

Each new hour is more indistinct than the one before. Why am I here? What will happen to me?

I see the ramparts of a great city. I hear the startling rattle of chain. I feel nothing, but I smell death. The chains appear; they contain a man whose flesh is mutilated with a parade following behind. Upon his face is the terror I feel, but in his eyes is the willingness I lack.

This man joins me where I lay.

His sap coats my skin as it falls to the ground. Slow at first, but soon flowing from the spikes like the mighty Jordan, about which the breeze has whispered many tales. We are raised up, both he and I, raised high above the earth as a banner unto some great triumph. Some cheer, some weep. Though I cannot comprehend the tongue of those around me, the man's desperate plea is unclouded. His pain is heard in his cries, his love is felt in his acceptance, and then he bows his head and speaks no more.

The light recedes now, but with it goes my fear. This day may be my last, but it is not my demise. It is rather a time to recognize my past as only memory, and a time to accept this day as my greatest. Others can provide shelter; others can give voice to the breeze; others can withhold the scorching sun from flesh. My legacy will persevere. I will not be used and forgotten, as the embers and soot. I will not be maimed and misshapen, as the craft upon the sea. I will be remembered.

## Letters from the Editor

**APOLOGIES-** I want to apologize to our readers about the delay in getting this issue to you. Unfortunately the constraints on my time schedule simply did not allow for a timely publication. Thank you all for your understanding and I will do my best to be more diligent in producing this newsletter promptly.

**EVENTS-** If you have an event that you would like to announce on the calendar please email it to me. I will gladly post anniversaries, birthdays, and other important events.

**HELP WANTED-** The newsletter needs your help. We are currently seeking articles and responsible people to write those articles. If the Lord has laid something on your heart to write PLEASE email it to me. Consider this an open invitation. You do not need to ask if you may send it. My email address is mabram458@gmail.com All articles must be submitted no later than the Sunday before the publication is due out. Also, if you are interested in taking on a larger role in the newsletter please contact me by email and let me know. There is opportunity for you to help even more. Let me know if you are interested and we can talk.

**\$\$\$-** This newsletter does cost money to put out. Many people donate time and effort to making this a success. Please consider putting an extra dollar or even .50 cents in the offering plate to help offset the cost. It would be greatly appreciated.

**Attention All Departments-** Newsletters are a great way to get to talk to your church family and get people involved. Any information you would like published must be to me the Sunday before the article is due to be released.