

**SPECIAL  
FOCUS:  
Billy Graham  
Crusade**

The Bright and

# Morning Star

"All the Good News  
That's Fit to Print"

Volume XIII, No. 2

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, TARRYTOWN, NY

Summer - Fall 2005

## How Strong is Your Vision?

by Pastor Torrey Robinson

I'm sure this may be a bit simplistic, but for the most part our church family can be divided into one of two groups. Some of you live in or close to Westchester County because you were born and raised in this area. For you, this is and always has been home. Oh maybe you went away to college, but aside from a short stint "abroad" this is your home. If you changed jobs you'd still probably try to stay in the area. Your roots go down deep here.

At the same time, a significant number of us moved to this area from some other state or even another country.

For us a job opportunity brought us here. When we move on from that job we may well move to another part of the country or a different part of the world. For us Westchester is a stopover even if we haven't nailed down our final destination.

Whatever group we find ourselves in, most of us reading this article have chosen to make First Baptist Church our church home. You may have chosen the church because it is near where you live. Perhaps you choose the church because of the kids programs or because of the worship. Maybe you like the emphasis on small groups. For whatever reason, First Baptist is now our shared church family. Others may have made First Baptist what it is, but the future of the church is up to us.

If our Lord does not return soon, our church will face significant challenges planting the seed of the gospel in the spiritually hard ground around us. At the same time, the future for our church is truly exciting. There may be no place on earth where a strong and vibrant witness for God is more needed. We who live in Westchester county have the opportunity to minister to business leaders who make their homes here. That means we can influence men and women who shape the world. New York City has been called the crossroads of the world. It is not surprising when we discover that our neighbors and friends are people from all over the globe.

In May we officially adopted a new church vision statement. It is a vision that recognizes the strategic importance of our church to our community and our county as well as

our world. Our vision statement is simple yet profound, "Sharing together God's love and hope to transform hearts, homes, Westchester and the world." That is a God-sized vision.

Years ago, when I enrolled in seminary in Dallas, I did so with the thought I might one day be called to go to the mission field as a missionary. During the years I studied for full-time ministry, I discovered I had spiritual gifts that might better be used by God here in the United States.

Now after almost 25 years of ministry and after completing

eight years of ministry at First Baptist Church in Tarrytown, I have become convinced that I have, in fact, been called to serve on the mission field. But that field is right here in Tarrytown and Westchester County through the ministry of First Baptist Church.

The vision of our church begins with each of us personally. It starts by shaping individual hearts and homes. This demands that we each look for opportunities to share God's love with our family and friends, our neighbors, co-workers and classmates. We all know people around us who need to know God. Each of us is responsible to be a witness for God in our homes, on our jobs, in our schools and our neighborhoods.

Our vision also directs us to prayerfully look for ways to link arms with fellow Christians in Bible-believing churches around us to somehow make a difference for God in Westchester County. There are almost a million people in our county, most of whom do not know the good news of Jesus. 2000 years ago on the day known as Pentecost, God poured out His Spirit on people

continued on page 2

*The vision of our church begins with each of us personally.*

### Inside...

Women's Ministries Looks Forward to a New Season.....	2
VBS 2005.....	2
First Things First Stewardship Program Update - Summer 2005....	3
Slovakia 2005.....	4
New Church Library on the Horizon.....	5
Small Groups Plan for the Fall.....	6
What's Up With the Youth Ministry?.....	6
Angel Tree.....	7
New Church Building.....	7
God's Process: The Making of a Crusade.....	8
The Crusade is Just the Beginning....	9
Lessons Learned from Billy.....	9
Upcoming Events.....	10

Vision continued from page 1

who were gathered in Jerusalem from all over the world. Thousands of people came to believe in Jesus as a result. It was through those diverse people that God ultimately spread the news of His great love and hope to the whole world. In our modern age of technology and travel, can you imagine what could happen if we had a second Pentecost experience among the diverse groups of people here in Westchester County?

God has given us an even bigger task than reaching our county. He has called us to share His love and hope with our world. Like the challenge of reaching Westchester, reaching our world requires that we work with other churches and other Christians. That is why we are part of a denominational fellowship and why we support missionaries in places like Africa, Asia, the Middle East and even here in the USA.

Whether you were born in this area or whether you moved here for work, God has chosen to intertwine our lives in this family we call First Baptist Church. Most of us let our families and our vocations determine what we do with our lives. I have a radical thought. Maybe God has an even greater purpose for our lives than any of us ever dreamed. If God wants to expand His kingdom in Westchester and the world, it is almost certain that the greatest achievement of our lives will be what God accomplishes through our service together at First Baptist Church. Whether or not Westchester County is your final destination, being part of what God chooses to do here is good reason you might want to extend your stay.★

## Women's Ministries Looks Forward to a New Season

by Lois Kirby

Praise the Lord! It has been a great year of fellowship and study with the women of our church. We began a study on Christian Character which we hope to continue in September. Our year ended with salad supper at Lauren Zaccaria's home on June 14th.

A volunteer steering committee, consisting of Linda Zoppa, Heika Fendrich, Becky McGovern, and Lois Kirby was selected to work on pro-

grams for the 2005-2006 year. We are now planning the new Fall program. Consideration is being given to having two meetings a month with special programs of interest.

We welcome all of you ladies who are interested in fellowship and Bible study with the women of our church. Our first meeting of the new year which will be September 27th at 7:30 at the Church.

Many thanks to all who have helped during the year; and to all who attended making our meetings a time of sharing and growing in our walk with the Lord.

See you this fall!★

## VBS 2005 The Serengeti Trek

by Becky McGovern and Jen Leahy

This year our church is crawling with excitement as we go on a Serengeti Trek. This year's VBS program will provide fun, memorable Bible-learning activities for kids of all ages. Each day kids will sing catchy songs, play team-work-building games, nibble Watering Hole snacks, take on a Daily Challenge to let God's love grow into their homes, experience electrifying Bible adventures, collect Bible Memory Buddies to remind them of God's Word, and create

Bible Point Crafts they'll take home and play with all year long.

Serengeti Trek is a fun way for kids to learn more about God's love. We'll be studying stories about bible characters who were wild about God. Plus, this year's Missions Project will stay close to home as we partner with our very own Tracy Ellis Ward, Director of the New York Metropolitan Area Fellowship of Christian Athletes. This year's campers will help raise money for Tracy to purchase Bibles to distribute during her ministry efforts.

Serengeti Trek will run from August 22-26, 9-12pm. call the church office for more information 631-6372.

Thank you.★

### 2 Corinthians 1:2

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and*

*God of all comfort, who comforts us*

*in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*

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The Bright and Morning Star is seeking contributions for the next issue on any topics of interest which glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. Please send articles to: The Bright and Morning Star Newsletter at the address above.

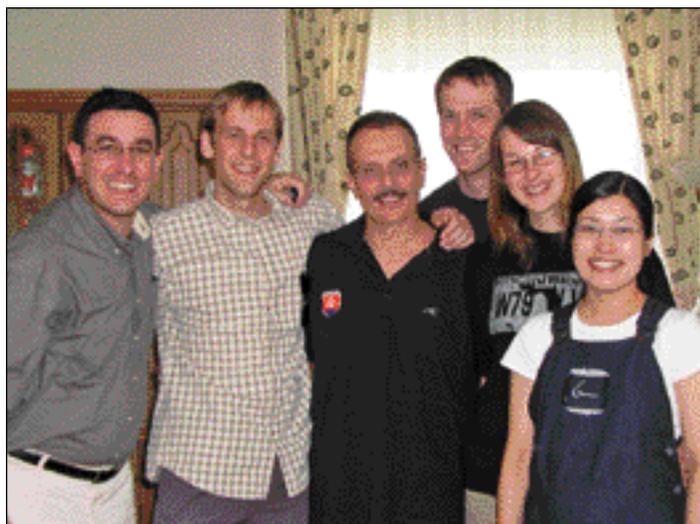


## **Budujúc Priateľstvá Pre Vecnosť** *(Building Friendships for Eternity)* **Slovakia 2005**

*by Chris Herrmann and Frank Pastore*

**W**hen the Prophet Isaiah was commissioned he heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Isaiah said, "Here am I. Send me!" (Isa 6:8) When we hear the Lord Jesus' words as He commissions us (Matt 28:18-20) what is our response? Are we overwhelmed by the challenge? There may be a tendency to view Isaiah as a larger than life character who would have no problem responding as he did. After all, he saw the Lord sitting on a throne; he heard the voice of the Lord; he was special... But as for me, well, I'm just me. I know the Lord Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations..." But I'm just me! What about you? How do you feel?

I'm learning that this life of faith is a life that must be actively lived out. How we live it out really does reflect both the reality of our faith and our obedience to God. Since Chris and I have made the journey to Slovakia for a third time this year the question may arise, "Are you saying that we should all be going to Slovakia or some other far-



**Chris, Daniel, Frank, Milos, Lenka, Koko (left to right)**



**Frank and Jaro Ban preaching in the church in Presov**



**The Kosice (the city in Slovakia) College & Teen Group at Pizza Hut**

away land?" No, that's not at all what we're saying. What we are suggesting is that God's call through His commission on the life of each believer is real and demands a response. It might be as near as the house next door or as far as Tibet. But wherever it is, it is real and God expects us to go.

I am convinced that our commissioning by the Lord Jesus Christ is just as real as Isaiah's was thousands of years ago. As believers in the Lord Jesus we are not only called to follow Him but to call others to follow Him as well. God has plans and purposes for each of His children;

He has equipped us for the work to which He has called us (Eph 2:10). This latest trip to Slovakia has made me realize just how marvelous His plans are.

For those of us who go "short-term" it's easy to have a view of mission that is unrealistic. Sometimes our expectations are way off. But as each trip to Slovakia has ended I have also come to realize that we met with God there and our desire to be faithful to His call and abandoned to His purposes is all that He requires. We go to serve and He blesses us and changes us. It happens every time.

The Gospel is meant to be proclaimed to the ends of the earth. One person, two people, two hundred or two thousand people can't do it. But one person can do incredible things for God when that person is giving him/herself over to God. Each visit to Slovakia has been different. We have ministered somewhat differently according to the circumstances that we were presented with. Each time we have met more people and renewed relationships with many of

continued on page 5

Slovakia continued from page 4

the people we've come to know. And although some things change, the message doesn't—it is timeless. We go because Jesus tells us to. Are we special? No! We're just obeying the call.

The Body of Christ is marvelous. Chris and I have been blessed to be a part of God's work in another part of the world. This year we had the opportunity to work in both Presov and with the church in Kosice. We were able to present the Gospel in some school settings and get to minister in the homes of some of the people in Kosice. God allowed His work to be very personal this year. I think that's appropriate—He takes missions very personally. I know that my words are inadequate to tell the whole story. The language barrier has never really been an issue. God has always provided translation for us (Jerry Ban has been, for the most part, God's wonderful provision in this area). We have seen that although we have cultural differences and we speak different languages, we are really all the same. We have the same issues. We all have a hunger that only the true and the living God can satisfy through a restored relationship that only comes through Jesus Christ. That's the message that we bring. It's the only thing that matters. Just think, God wants us to have a part in bringing about this reconciliation. Will you go?

If you'd like more information about Slovakia (or Missions), please feel free to speak with Chris Herrmann (cherrmann@att.net) or Frank Pastore (aberean@adelphia.net). We love sharing our Slovakia experience(s) with everyone !! If you would like more information on Missions at First Baptist Church, please contact Barbara Kaess (bjkaess@optonline.net). ★

You cannot persevere unless  
there is a trial in your life.

There can be no victories without battles;  
there can be no peaks without valleys.

If you want the blessing, you must be prepared  
to carry the burden and fight the battle.

– Warren Wiersbe

If God Brings You To It  
If God brings you to it,  
He will bring you through it.  
Happy moments, praise God.  
Difficult moments, seek God.  
Quiet moments, worship God.  
Painful moments, trust God.  
Every moment, thank God.

– unknown author

## New Church Library on the Horizon

by Linda Zoppa

Have you ever gone through a day without needing to consult a news radio station, newspaper or the Web for the weather or some other piece of information? Have you, lately, needed to consult a journal article or a library catalog for information prior to making a decision to purchase something or travel somewhere? Each person reading this article, whether they are teenager or adult, probably answered “yes” to at least one question. While you may not think much about how often you need resources to help you make it through the day, it's something that interests me; that's why I am a reference librarian! We live in an icon world filled with images and electronic databases that contain data that we can access at the push of a button, or in some cases, a click of the mouse. We need information and various helps to assist in our gaining of skills and our understanding of the world around us...that is the very purpose of public, school, and college libraries. Each of these institutions contains a myriad of information sources, in various formats, with trained librarians who know what's there and how to use it. Well, what if you needed materials to help you understand a Bible passage? Where would you go? The public or school libraries around you will not have many quality sources for an evangelical study. Would you like to have such resources available here, at FBC? How about creating a library, here, at our church?

If you visit your local library and browse the 200s section, which is the Dewey classification for “religion,” you will find few materials that can be considered “evangelical” or “Biblical.” However, if you read through a list of designated subject headings in the 200s category, you will find topics like: Old Testament studies and survey, New Testament survey and study, commentaries and expositions of each and every book of the Bible, Bible histories and antiquities, Hermeneutics, Christian growth, Prayer, devotions, missionary stories, Christian fiction, etc. The list is endless! These topics are not found in your local library, but you will find books and materials on evangelical subjects in a church library or a Christian college library, like Nyack, or in a Christian bookstore, like Christian Publications.

We all know the importance of selecting *appropriate* and *evangelical* books and materials. We would want to make sure that the materials we place on a shelf in our church library *line up with what the Bible says* and *support* the mission and purpose of our church. This responsibility could not be entrusted to public librarians or other library professionals who are not Christians. Since the missions of the public and school libraries around us are not the same as our church mission, we could not expect other libraries to have what we need to support the teaching at FBC.

continued on page 6

Church Library continued from page 5

In 1988, when I was working on my MLS degree, I created a library at Ridgeway, my former church. I worked with a small, dedicated staff who helped type cards and labels; others helped put shelves up, process the books, and perform some of the clerical tasks. Now, 17 years later, we have the help of technology to make these processes easier; all we need to get started at FBC is a core group of individuals who have the time and desire to commit to the training and the clerical duties (no pressure or deadlines). The library can begin with donated books, tapes, videos as well as magazines, pamphlets, and important articles for all ages. We already have received some donations of books. Later on, books and materials could be obtained from Christian publishers and jobbers, free of charge, as they identify their overstock.

When Pastor Torrey spoke to me about starting a church library, I agreed with him, that having a church library would be an important ministry! I would be happy to get the process going and show an interested core group of folks how to make it happen. It will prove to be, I'm sure, a rewarding adventure. It will be a good opportunity for those in the church who want to learn about the mechanics of using the 200s (Dewey) and the formation of how a library is constructed. Yes, teenagers are welcome! In fact, learning the skills necessary to put together a library will easily lead to a job as a library page or clerical worker within a public library. If you work in a public library, one of the perks is that you will not be charged any overdue fines!

If you are interested in becoming involved in this ministry, speak to Pastor Torrey or call the church. If you need to find out more about this task, please, get in touch with me and we can talk. God Bless!★

## Small Groups Plan for the Fall

by Steve Armstrong

**H**is time on earth is short. Only hours remained until he would fulfill his destiny. What can he say to the twelve men who had followed him closer than any others? What can possibly prepare them for the moment where their desperate hope in his mission is finally crushed? What can take these twelve through the lonely Saturday that will follow? Their faith will be tested for sure.

He leads them from the place of their last supper together, with his impending arrest and suffering at hand. Though the moments ahead stab at his soul, he must speak words of comfort and peace into those who are troubled around him. But he is not merely speaking to these twelve, but to generations who will proceed them. These are the words he says...

### Passion in the Fall

The new church wide small group study, coming September 25th, based on Jesus' last words to his disciples. The small group studies will coincide with Pastor Torrey's messages on the book of John. Look for more details in the fall. If you've never participated in a small group before, try one this fall. Small Groups will be meeting throughout the week and across the County. The study will finish the week of November 13th.

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## What's Up With the Youth Ministry?

by Steve Armstrong

**I**'m having a difficult time knowing what to write about the youth ministry for this article. By the time the *Bright and Morning Star* is published we will have completed many of the events that we are gearing up for now. That makes me feel awkward about describing these events in the future tense. So I'll do my best to tell you where we stand for the coming year.

This year we'll miss Melanie O'Quinn and Ryan Bloise. Melanie has been a fixture in the group since I came as Youth Pastor three years ago. Ryan came to Christ nearly two years ago and has been a part of the group ever since. It is hard to imagine youth ministry without either one of them.

Debbie Melillo will be joining the youth ministry team. Debbie has been a true joy to work with, as she has always been willing to sacrifice her time and energy for the church. She joins a team that already features Katie Woodburn, Jacques Cowart, and my wife Elaine. Having these guys standing with me makes my job so much easier!

One of our goals is to make the youth ministry more relational. It is easy to be consumed by organizing programs and preparing Bible studies and forsake building strong relationships between caring adults and the youth we are called to minister to. This is a value we continually need to emphasize and build upon.

By the time this article is published, we will have completed a major summer outreach called "3 Days in August". This is a three day event for Jr. High students that revolves around the theme of relationships. I'm hoping and praying that God changes lives during these three days.

So now we're preparing for September, which will feature a lock-in, a Jr. High Retreat, and a Sr. High retreat to follow in October. The Jr. and Sr. High groups are becoming more and more distinctive, and I see the different needs that these two groups have. Pray that God will help us to lead these students through where they are now to where God wants to take them.★

## **Angel Tree... Ministry to Children and Families of Imprisoned Individuals**

*by Susan Hubbard-Gordon*

**P**rison Fellowship's Angel Tree, once known as a Christmas Gift ministry has, over the past several years, become involved in year round ministry to the Children of Prisoners. Gifts are bought in the incarcerated Parents name and distributed to the families with a message of Christ's Love by Church ministry members.

Churches wishing to get involved in Prison ministry or Ministry /Outreach to Children, often participate first in the Christmas ministry and then become more involved, developing ongoing Ministries in partnership with Prison Fellowship. Some of the extended ministries include Summer Camping and Mentoring of children Most at Risk.

As some of you know Angel Tree has been a tradition in Tarrytown First Baptist many years now... Patty Perry and Women's ministries started Angel Tree in our Church

in the 1980's. It has actively involved not only Women's ministries, but also the Youth groups and the Church as a whole.

Last year Westchester County was home to 897 children that were serviced by local churches. The Prison populations have risen drastically over the past 10 years; many are incarcerated without being convicted. Children and families of these incarcerated individuals lose touch and lose hope. Children of Single Parent families are considered at highest risk for Juvenile Crime and waywardness. We must break the cycle by bringing the hope of Christ and reconciliation into these homes.

At First Baptist we are always happy for new people to get involved with Angel Tree, but this year we are especially in need of help. Several of our more active ministry members are moving or have moved. We are going to need people to coordinate and call the families as well as people to help deliver in small groups. Would you consider getting involved?

E-mail [Sgt.99@juno.com](mailto:Sgt.99@juno.com).

## **To Dream Again... Visions of the New Church Building**

*by Pastor Torrey Robinson*

**G**reat news! You might say a dream is about to come true! Construction of classrooms and bathrooms in the back of the church is set to begin in September. In a matter of months we will have a nursery and handicap accessible bathrooms in the church. Soon we will have a large classroom space adjacent to the sanctuary. We've been waiting a long time for this. The wait will soon be over.

For those of you who may be new to the church, let me quickly tell you a very long story. On December 23, 1989 a fire completely gutted the church building. Reconstruction following the fire was a nightmare. There were problems with insurance, problems with our construction company and ultimately legal problems.

After the fire, the church leaders quickly discovered that the insurance coverage was not adequate to rebuild the church completely. It soon became apparent that rebuilding the church would require significant additional funding. By the time a new roof was installed and the sanctuary largely rebuilt, it became apparent that the contractor had made some very serious and costly mistakes. In addition, the contractor initiated a lawsuit against the church. The church countersued. This legal battle halted the rebuilding efforts for six years. Finally, after more than half a decade, both sides agreed to drop their respective lawsuits. Before the church could proceed with reconstruction, the church family had to correct some of the mistakes made by the

contractor. These corrective measures have largely been the focus of our rebuilding efforts until now and have consumed a great deal of the money the church has raised since the fire.

When you understand some of what has transpired in this difficult reconstruction effort you can better appreciate the significance of this upcoming phase of work. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have already been spent installing a new roof, addressing water problems outside and inside the fellowship hall and upgrading the existing heating and ventilation system. Yet with all that has been accomplished in recent years, the new classrooms and bathrooms will be the first usable space finished since construction ground to a halt almost fourteen years ago.

It is up to each of us to be sure this dream becomes reality. We still need more than \$15,000 to complete the work on the classrooms and bathrooms this fall. And this is only the beginning. The construction this fall will finish off only a small part of the space in the back of the church. Once the classrooms and bathrooms are complete, we will need to raise more money to finish the fellowship hall, including a new kitchen. The pace of our rebuilding is entirely up to us. The more we give to the building fund the sooner we can finish the back of the church.

The long night is almost over. The nightmare of reconstruction will soon become the reality of finished usable space. The dream of a completed fellowship hall and kitchen is currently on the drawing board. With God's help, our generosity will make this a reality as well. The wait for new space will soon be over. Just how soon is up to us. ★

## God's Process: The Making of a Crusade

by Sue Hubbard-Gordon

From the Beginning (on August 16th 2004) when I met Eric Swensson, Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church I knew that God was working something in my life. The coincidental incidents leading up to this meeting and happening around me could be explained in no other way.

I happened to be at the service with my African friend Shem to promote Angel Tree, based upon a converted Muslim Inmate's testimony about the Church. When we arrived for the service we found that there was a young man (5-7 yrs.old) just arrived from Shem's country being welcomed into the congregation that morning. We were invited to a special fellowship they were having, where we shared ourselves with young and old congregants. As Shem and I were leaving, Pastor Swenson and I shared a couple of moments and it was at that time that he found out I was from First Baptist and that I found out about his involvement as a Westchester coordinator for Billy Graham. Just three days prior Pastor Swensson had contacted our Church on behalf of Graham Ministries about participating in the Crusade process.

It was two days later that a friend (now my husband) Clyde Gordon made his intentions known to me and from there things only became better. I confided in Clyde that I wanted to participate in the Crusade process and see my Church be a part of it. Every step of the way he encouraged me to proceed and every step of the way he has been there to assist and counsel me. He attended every meeting including the first in November and conspired with me to get First Baptist involved. That plan was realized when, in February we received Pastoral approval to hold several informal meetings to get the Church involved.

From those meetings we were able to see another Act of God as several new Church attendees and several well known Church Members volunteered to lead the various aspects of Crusade preparation in the Church. I was blessed by the assistance of Becky, Awilda and Maria offering me their expertise and fine tuning of the rough hewn plans to make the Crusade presentations professional looking and stylish. Their input and efforts greatly relieved me from feeling overwhelmed by the tasks ahead.

Clyde, Maria Herrmann and Theresa Giampapa immediately threw themselves into Planning and Praying as the Prayer Leaders and continued to do so throughout the com-

ing Months each Sunday half an hour prior to church with any who would join them.

I am told they wish to continue the habit even now that the Crusade event is over and would encourage people to arrive early and join them when you can.

Yolanda Johnson and Awilda Sanchez headed up the Outreach for the Church and assisted in implementing Operation Andrew for the community and the Prayer Magnets within the Church. Jen Leahy took over the Children's ministry from Regina Mignona this past fall and along with her helpers took charge of the Kids Operation Andrew, while Steve Armstrong headed up the Youth Participation, he was assisted by Jaques Cowart who was called away early.

Becky McGovern and Lauren Zaccaria did a great job of keeping the Church informed and getting them coordinated to attend the Christian Life and Witness courses.

The Leader Teams consisted of new members who were guided by older members and that too was a blessing not only for the Team members and the Church but also for me to see people coming together in mentoring capacities.

Doug Morton agreed to head the Discipleship Team and along with Barbara Kaess and Linda Zoppa he has prepared for Discipling New Believers coming to the Church. Their Job and ours (the congregation) are not yet done. When you

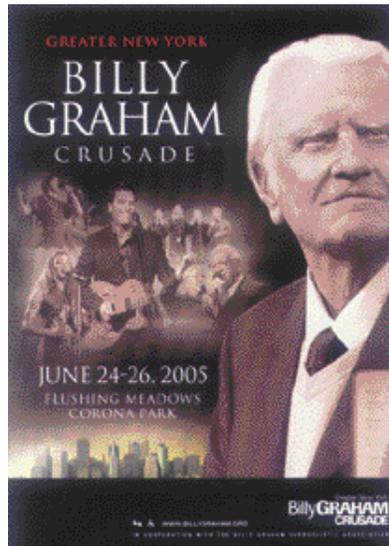
meet someone new whether at work or in Church use what you have learned and what newfound confidence or boldness you may have acquired and tell him or her about Christ. Embrace any and every opportunity to witness and share your faith with those whom you share your life on this earth.

As the months passed before the Crusade people contacted me with comments and questions and many became just as excited as I was. I came to realize that in many ways the Crusade Process is a blessing to many from our Church. We had several of our youth make a decision for Christ or rededicate themselves. Steve Armstrong was able to counsel a couple of them. All will be included in the summer Discipleship study if their schedules permit.

I received several messages about the Crusade that I would like to share:

- From Grace Soong: "Ali" went forward to dedicate her life to Christ at the Crusade Saturday Night. Grace and Alison prayed the Prayer together with Dr. Graham and then Ali talked to her 11 yr old counselor, Heather who was on a Missions trip with her Church from Mobile Al. Grace herself goes on to say that she "had been looking forward

continued on page 9



Crusade continued from page 8

to going to the Crusade, but had no idea how really special it would turn out to be. Praise God!"

- Linda Zoppa was the first to respond to my inquiry about the impact of the Crusade and this is part of what she had to say: *"Sometimes God takes us out of our comfort zone, for me it's music, and calls us to do things that we never thought we could do. This time, for this Crusade, the Lord has given me a big desire for ministering to women. (She had a chance to minister to a couple of women at the Crusade.)... I am writing an article for Decisions Magazine, more about my experience being trained as a first timer and why I chose not to do music over counseling and discipleship.*

- I was so very impressed with how thousands of people were brought together for this fabulous moment in history. Perhaps no other location could have impressed me more than the place where the United Nations met for several years and where the state of Israel was born and where the World's Fair was held. Just God's simple yet awesome reminder that He is always in control of situations and events and only He could bring together such a large group of people from all corners of the globe! There to worship and fellowship and receive His love and hear the salvation message. Such a complex involved orchestration organized to hear the simple message of God's undying love!

– Lauren Zaccaria

- Yolanda Johnson sent a last minute message that: The Billy Graham Crusade was a memorable and a spiritually renewing experience for me. To be present with 80,000 Christians from diverse backgrounds, age groups and nationalities praising and worshipping God together was simply awesome. I'm thankful to have had this opportunity to see our all powerful, loving God do amazing things. He helped to work out all the logistics of the crusade, strengthen Billy Graham to deliver God's message to us each night and our magnificent God poured out His spirit and 8400 made the decision to give their lives to Christ. Great is our God! I was both humbled and exhilarated by this experience and I will continue to praise God from whom all blessings flow. Thanks

– Yolanda Johnson

And I want to say Thanks Too!

Thanks to my husband Clyde for his Love and Assistance while adapting to his new Church home.

Thanks to All of you for your support, participation and undying Love of Christ, your fellow Christians and man. John 6:26-27 is never truer.

Most of all Thanks be to God for the strength and guidance he provided me throughout this whole process.★

## The Crusade is Just the Beginning by Steve Armstrong

The Billy Graham Crusade has come and gone, with over 8000 people brought to Christ in the process. In its wake I find myself mulling over a few question in my mind. What was all of the build-up for? Hundreds of Christians volunteered to be counselors and ushers for the actual event, and even more took The Life & Witness Course that trains to Christians to live and bear witness to the transformation that God brings in our lives. In our own community, we passed out fliers inviting to people to join us on the buses headed down for Flushing Meadows. If all we were building up for was an event, then we are done with these types of efforts, until something like it comes around. But if we were seeking to draw closer to the heart of God for a broken and searching world then we are not done yet.

What was all of the build-up for? It's so easy to get wrapped up in events, and Billy Graham's visit to New York certainly was monumental. Major newspapers and television broadcasts covered the three meeting in New York and interviewed Mr. Graham. Most non-Christians have at least heard of Billy Graham so inviting unsaved friends was relatively easy. Yet the core of the message proclaimed at Flushing Meadows is a truth that is always accessible. God is living, and He pursues a real relationship with human beings. If we were only building up for Billy Graham's visit, then we will be silent now. But if we labored out of our conviction of who God is, then we will understand that salvation is not only found in crowded venues, but in quiet places where friends and family members speak honestly with each other.

The event we anticipated for so long is over, but there is much work to be done.★

## Lessons Learned from Billy by Doug Morton

Despite the many advances in science and medicine, the death rate in America has remained the same since our founding fathers penned the words of the Declaration of Independence. Billy Graham made reference to this amazing statistic at the beginning of his sermon on the last night of the Crusade here in New York. Prefaced by representatives from the NYPD and the FDNY who had lost colleagues in the 911 tragedy, Dr. Graham began to preach on the subject of death and judgment. He immediately made reference to the Gulf War and said to the audience of 90,000 that war does not decrease the death rate. His point was simple. War may shorten life expectancy, but the rate of death per person is still one out of every one.

The fact that every one dies sometime is not meant to trivialize the beautiful gift of life that God has granted us. Billy's first message on Friday night started off at the other

continued on page 10

Lessons Learned continued from page 9

end of the spectrum. He laid out a clear definition of what it meant to be "Born Again" based on John 3. He pointed out that only those who experience the new birth in this life are able to fully enjoy this life. Our Creator made us for a reason. Those who are not re-born spiritually are incomplete beings that are unable to connect with the Creator. When the creature and the Creator are able to "connect," life becomes real and full of meaning and because they have new life now, they need not fear death and the judgment to follow.

For weeks, many of us here at FBC have been attending Christian Life and Witness classes sponsored by the Crusade. I must say that I have never seen such a well-organized program in place to train believers on how to share their faith. The training did not reveal some special technique or secret formula that they have devised to share the gospel, but it merely relied on the simplicity of the gospel itself. We are dead spiritually and dying physically. We all die and we are all born spiritually dead. In other words, we are separated from our Creator. Christ loved us

so much that He died for our sin. His death paid the penalty or judgment for our sin and we can be reborn spiritually by simply placing our trust in the One who paid for our sin. We may die physically, but we will never die spiritually once this occurs. This simple act of faith is what reconnects us to our Creator.

We were born to reproduce physically, and as born again creations, we reproduce spiritually. The Christian Life and Witness classes were simply designed to help encourage a natural healthy spiritual walk that would allow the spiritual reproductive process to flourish. Billy Graham was right about the physical death rate. But, we can all change the statistics of spiritual death. For nearly 60 years, Billy Graham has dedicated his life to improving the rate of "re-birth" in America and abroad. If there is one lesson from Billy that we can learn from him and his life, it is this. A life that is dedicated to helping others come to know Christ, is a life well spent. No, it is a life that is best spent. After all, we are all going to die (unless the Lord returns soon). But life with Christ today guarantees us and all those who accept him, eternal life with God after death.★

**Upcoming Events**

- Sept. 11..**Friendship Sunday
- September 16-17..**Promise Keepers at Nassau Coliseum
- Sept. 18..**Adventures in Growing starts up
- Sept. 23..**Men's Lakeside Fall CBC Retreat, Peter Mason, Guest Speaker

- Sept. 25...**Small Groups start up
- Sept. 26...**Senior's Luncheon
- Oct. 21-22...**Women Of Faith Conference (Hartford Conn.)
- November 28...**Senior's Luncheon

Please call the Church office for more events and times 914-631-6372 or visit <http://www.fbctarrytown.com>

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**The Bright and Morning Star**

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