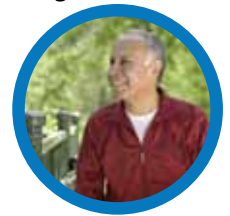




Senior Adult Newsletter

Evangelical Free Church of Hershey



Serving 'To Bring Glory to His Name'

An Interview with Mary Mitchell By Evie Zook

Recently I asked Mary Mitchell this simple question "Why do you serve?"

Her immediate answer was, "What a wonderful joy to serve the Lord! We can do everything in his name and bring glory to his name!"

As we talked further, I learned that serving is not new to Mary but it was encouraged at home since she was a little girl.

Mary recounted that when she was four years old, her mother encouraged her to go down the street and visit a lady who lived by herself and was lonely. Mary still remembers what the woman's home looked like and how she was given special treats of red cinnamon candies. But what made a much deeper impression was being able to cheer a lady who needed encouragement.

Mary also remembers as a young child helping a Sunday-school teacher with household chores. This woman had a son with special needs – he could work but was unable to speak. Mary was so impressed with how this woman was a true example of a genuine Christian life.

Mary recollects having a "scary" third-grade teacher after the family moved to a new town. Mary explained, "She was very strict. I can still see her with her hair up in a bun, wearing long dresses with black laced-up shoes. She always seemed to be barking orders!" Mary recalls that when she told her mother about the teacher, her mother responded, "Well, have you done anything to show her kindness?" With determination to try, Mary asked the teacher if she could wash the blackboards after class for her. As Mary began to talk with her teacher she went from fearing her to valuing her as a person, and over time they developed a lifelong friendship.

As Mary grew older, she was no longer simply



Jim and Mary Mitchell

carrying for others because her mother encouraged it – choosing to serve and care for people had become part of who Mary was.

When Mary's family moved back to their hometown, they lived across the street from a family whose little girl had died from a terrible disease, and their second daughter, Laura, had the same illness. Mary has wonderful memories of regular visits with Laura – reading, singing and talking together – until Laura went home to be with the Lord.

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it. – Proverbs 22:6

It's difficult for Mary to remember a time when children weren't an integral part of her world: When she was 12 years old she began babysitting for a family with 5 children. A Jewish family down the street had a 7-year-old she cared for. After she married, she did a lot of babysitting. She and her husband, Jim, raised four biological children. They also cared for foster children for 20 years and adopted two of them.

At church, Mary served as a Sunday School teacher, VBS teacher, Pioneer Girls leader, nursery worker and choir member and helped with mailings. No matter what age she was or where she lived, she

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Are There Rewards for Suffering?



By Paul Haken
Pastor for Congregational Care

During a six-week portion of my recent sabbatical, I spent time in Switzerland reading and thinking about suffering, its origins, purposes and consequences. As a result of reading Josef Tson's book called "Suffering, Martyrdom, and Rewards in Heaven," I began to think about the issue of rewards for suffering. Initially, I was quite negative about the idea of anticipating rewards for the suffering we have in this life. After all that Jesus suffered for us, is it reasonable to anticipate any special reward for our suffering, minor in comparison to his?

I began a word study of the word "reward" in the Bible and was surprised at how often the it appeared!

I discovered that it was used between 75 and 103 times depending on which English version of the Bible I consulted. I also learned that there are great men and women of God who spoke of reward as a motivator for righteous living. Naomi, speaking to her daughters-in-law said: "May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge" (Ruth 2:12). Of Moses, in Hebrews 11:26, the author

Whatever our suffering might be, we can be sure that God is with us and will give us the grace and strength to endure and overcome.

says, "He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward."

There are also biblical texts explicitly stating that we will be rewarded: "You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded" (Heb. 10:34-35).

Finally, there are verses in the Bible that command us to think of God as one who rewards us. "And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

Whatever our suffering might be, we can be sure that God is with us and will give us the grace and strength to endure and overcome: "Therefore we do

not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all" (2 Cor 4:16-17).

What a wonder to know that we do have a high priest who empathizes with our weaknesses (Heb 4:15). God will help us on our journey through this world and he will reward us both in this life and in the next (Mark 10:30).

Join Us for All-Church Progressive Dinner!

An All-Church Progressive Dinner is planned for Saturday, September 10. Hoping to have 400 participants, the event is designed to bring people together from all three services and all types of ministry in our church. That evening, we'll gather together for food, fun and fellowship. Attendees may choose from groups of homes in various geographical areas, and those not wishing to travel between homes may enjoy the entire evening at the church. Everyone will meet for dessert in the newly redecorated auditorium. Tickets cost \$15, and proceeds will help students in 4twelve, our college-age ministry, attend the Passion Conference in Atlanta in January 2012. Tickets are available in the sanctuary lobbies on Sundays or by calling Evie Zook, 533-2092. ext. 2034.

Out & About with Our Senior Adults

Brothers in Grace Concert



Sunday evening, June 5, was a wonderful blessing to all who attended the Brothers in Grace Homecoming Concert in the church sanctuary. Ted Wissler, a member of the Hershey Free Church and founding member of the quartet, has kept the group together for more than 20 years. They have shared their gift of gospel music in many churches throughout Pennsylvania and other states. Our concert provided the quartet the opportunity to come home and share how God has been using their gifts. The music was uplifting and inspiring, but more than that, it was filled with worship and praises to the Lord. We thank the Lord for how He is using their ministry to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Welcome home and keep on singing!

Spring Banquet



'Mamie Eisenhower' was our special guest speaker at this year's spring banquet on March 25. A delicious meal and great fellowship were enjoyed by all!

Valentine's Day Luncheon



The Senior Adult Valentine's Day luncheon was held at Fire Alley in Hershey on February 11. Thirty-three signed up for the luncheon, couples and singles alike. The day was pleasant, food very good and a good time was had by all! It gave us an opportunity to get to know others, renew friendships and share the day and the season together. Our Lord is the reason for this Valentine season. For he is love . . . and we celebrate him and all his provisions to us! Plan to join us for the Valentine celebration next February

Senior Adult / InfusionGame Night



It's becoming a tradition for senior adults to get together with the young adults of the Infusion Adult Education Fellowship for a game night in January. This photo from the 2010 event show that it is a great time for senior adults and young adults to get to know each other better and enjoy each other's company.

'Backstage Hershey' Bus Trip

The Town We Thought We Knew

By Ron and Lorraine Royer

On Thursday, May 12, 50 senior adults boarded a motor coach and left the church parking lot to experience places in Hershey not readily available to groups.

Excitement mounted as we traveled to "Pat's Hill" to tour the newly renovated Milton Hershey Middle School (formerly Senior Hall). The building had been totally torn down with the exception of the front exposure and center portion, housing the auditorium and gymnasium. It was then rebuilt to house the present middle school.

We were greeted warmly by three administrators who gave our group a very interesting and complete tour. Words cannot describe the beauty, size and quality of this facility, which creates a wonderful learning environment for the students.

That experience was followed by a tour of the Pennsylvania State Police Academy. We were divided into two groups and spent two hours seeing and learning what is required to become a state police officer. It was of interest to the group that the academy has always been in Hershey and it was actually the first State Police training facility in the country. Our tour concluded in the horse stables. Those who remembered the State Police Rodeos from the past were intrigued to see their training as well.

Another highlight of the day was our lunch and tour at the Milton Hershey School Supply Center. We were again very warmly greeted and received. This new facility houses the very latest up-to-date central kitchen, clothing room and central supply receiving and storage center for all materials needed in the school. Our buffet meal was delicious and

plentiful. Everyone was well fed and pleased with the gracious service.

Following our meal we were given a very extensive tour of the clothing room where all MHS students receive their clothing while enrolled there.

It was mind boggling to see the variety, quality and completeness of their wardrobes.

The central kitchen tour where all noon and evening meals are prepared for approximately 2,000 people daily was also overwhelming.

Finally the day ended with a tour of a student home. Houseparents Mr. and Mrs. Mike Yoder made us feel very welcome. The senior high girls who live in that



We saw Hershey in a new way through the bus windows.

home were eager to show us around and explain all about their group living. However, the greatest surprise and experience was in the basement when they showed us what the houseparents and students had built together. They have a huge model railroad and town display which fills one very large room. The entire display is a replica of the town of Hershey including the park with all the coasters and rides running, the same buildings as you see in town and several trains going through. They darken the room and we got a look at Hershey at night with all the lights and things running as well. Everyone was totally amazed at the quality and the magnitude of their work.

In addition to all the places we toured we did a "drive-through" tour of the Hershey Gardens, newly done-over Hotel Hershey grounds and the Hershey Cemetery where Milton and Catherine Hershey are buried.

Needless to say, "A good time was had by all!" We wish everyone could have enjoyed the day with us!



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Serving 'To Bring Glory to His Name'

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sought out ways to serve.

Again, we came back to the original question – Why serve? – and I pushed a little harder: “But, Mary, *why* do you serve? I understand the joy you receive, but why do you continue. Why is it so much a part of your life – really a part of who you are?”

There were two significant reasons that came out in our discussion:

First, serving developed a stronger relationship with the Lord. Mary said that in caring for those who were hurting, she felt more sensitive to the Lord and what He wants for her life: “I’m listening, Lord!” Her spirit is in tune with God’s Spirit to be available to those who need to understand God’s redeeming love!

The second reason is a little harder to explain, but I think Proverbs 22:6 expresses it: “Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.”

It was very clear how Mary’s mother influenced her to serve. Mary was blessed to have a wise mother who saw early on how God had created in her a sensitive spirit toward hurting people. She encouraged that gift so that Mary began serving in her “sweet spot” and as a result experienced great joy in serving! The interesting thing is that Mary’s sisters were not encouraged to do the types of caregiving activities Mary did. Is it possible if we would interview them, we would find that there were other ways their parents started them “on the way they should go?”

We are all uniquely created, and all uniquely given gifts to serve the Body of Christ. Mary, who now is in her 80s, has not stopped serving. She visits the sick, sends cards to encourage others and gives leadership to the Encouragement Team, which meets once a month to send cards of encouragement. Mary’s advice – “You’re never too old to serve the Lord!” Thanks, Mary for being a wonderful example of this!



Senior Adult Bible Study & Luncheon

There's Always Room for One More!

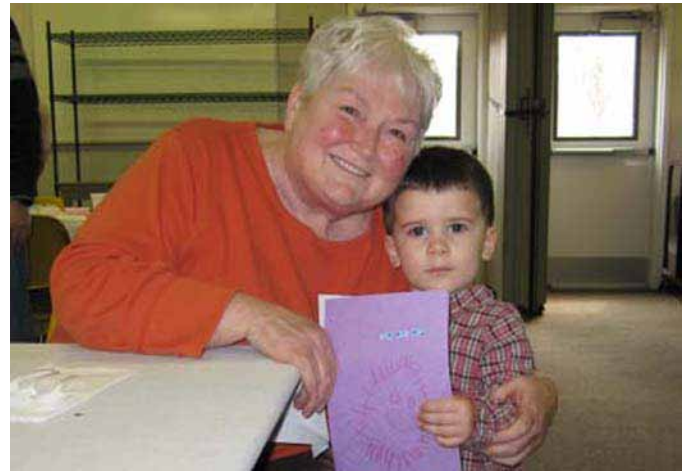
One of the mainstays of Senior Adult Ministry at the Hershey Free Church is our monthly Bible study and luncheon. The first Wednesday of each month, we gather at 10:45 a.m. in the overflow for worship and a study of God's Word led by a different speaker each month. Then we enjoy a light lunch (usually soup and sandwiches) prepared by some of

the ladies in the group. A donation of \$2 for lunch helps with expenses.

Pastor Kevin Dixon will be our speaker at the September 7 Bible study. We always have room for one more ... or two, or three, you get the idea ... so plan to join us! If you will be attending for the first time, please call Jo Albrite at 533-7329 to sign up.



All who are celebrating birthdays during the month of the luncheon are invited to wear "birthday crowns" and enjoy a special dessert.



At the February luncheon, kids from early childhood Sunday school classes presented handmade cards to the senior adults.

JOY Choir Loves to 'Make a Joyful Noise!'

By Donna Huffman

I am a member of the JOY choir (Just Older Youth). We go out to sing and bless folks in nursing homes, independent living groups, senior citizen groups and other church groups, and return home feeling blessed ourselves!

We have bonded as a group and have a wonderful time. We practice two times in February and two times in September. We sing sacred and secular music and have summers off. Our group brings glory to God with our voices. We have two days of practice before we start the programs – September 12 and 13, from 10 a.m. to noon at the church. If you love music and enjoy singing, come join us!



Senior Adult Activities Calendar 2011-12

We encourage you to invite someone to come with you to at least one of these activities. Is there a neighbor, friend or relative who needs that extra encouragement or nudging to get connected? Details for special events will be announced on HersheyFree.com, at other Senior Adult events and in the Sunday bulletin if space permits.

If you have an activity you would like to suggest please contact one of the Senior Adult Council members (see page 6 for contact info). We need your help in carrying out these activities – please let us know if you would like to help.

September

- 6 - Encouragement Team
- 7 - Senior Adult Bible Study and Luncheon
- 10 - All-Church Progressive Dinner
- 12, 13 - JOY Choir Rehearsals
- 17 - Adventure Sports Outing

October

- 4 - Encouragement Team
- 5 - Senior Adult Bible Study and Luncheon
- 11 - GAIN Work Day
- 19 - Sandy Cove Bible Conference Bus Trip

November

- 1 - Encouragement Team
- 2 - Senior Adult Bible Study and Luncheon

December

- 3 - Christmas Dinner
- 6 - Encouragement Team
- 7 - Senior Adult Bible Study and Luncheon

January

- 3 - Encouragement Team
- 4 - Senior Adult Bible Study and Luncheon
- 27 - Game Night

February

- 1 - Senior Adult Bible Study and Luncheon
- 7 - Encouragement Team
- 17 - Valentine Luncheon

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