

COLONIAL

CONNECTIONS



*"Let your
conversation be
always full of
grace, seasoned
with
salt,
so that you may
know how to
answer everyone."*

COLOSSIANS 4:6

S A L T A N D L I G H T

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*"Now to Him who is able to do
immeasurably more than all we ask or
imagine, according to His power that is
at work within us, to Him be glory in the
church and in Christ Jesus throughout
all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."*
Ephesians 3:20-21

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Life is full of transitions.

This issue of *Connections* is experiencing its own transition as we say good bye to April Schweitzer who has served as Managing Editor for the magazine for more than four years. April is a talented writer who possesses a rare blend of creativity and practical editorial ability. She has brought together a team of volunteer writers who have consistently produced an excellent magazine. She has also served as staff writer for Colonial working behind the scenes to write and edit the Vision Report, the Capital Campaign materials, and other copy needed to support the ministries of the church. We are thankful that April will still be a part of our team as a volunteer writer. Well done, April!

With this transition, Angela Clendenin will be assuming the responsibilities of staff writer and magazine editor. Angela came on staff with Colonial's Communications Department in February 2008. Before that she had been a volunteer writer for *Connections* for three years. Welcome, Angela.

Paul Franitza, *Director of Communications*

You are the salt of the earth...

and the light of the world . . . let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

MATTHEW 5:13-14

As believers, Christ tells us that we are both the seasoning that will make others thirst after Him and the preservative that can help slow the decay of the world in which we live. We are to be lights that are not hidden, that others might praise God. Both are tall orders. Neither can be accomplished without a dependence on Jesus.

At Colonial, there are many stories of believers who are living salt and light. In this issue of Connections we will shake out a few for you to taste.





"We'll lose some of our family feeling. It's hard not having your best friend to talk to and not having the comfort of knowing that he's walking in the door in the evening and hearing her yell, 'Daddy's home.'"

—KELLY LESHER



Making the Sacrifice

Sending a spouse off to war requires an incredible personal sacrifice. It can be a time filled with unknowns, danger, fear and loneliness. For a believer, it can be a test of faith and a challenge to grow as you trust God to carry you through when the partner He gave you is gone.

Sgt. Matt Leshner left for Iraq in March, 2004, just five months after he and Kelly Bogart were married. In fact, his orders to deploy came while they were planning their wedding. He was given four days leave from Army training to come home for their wedding and honeymoon in Hilton Head, S.C. Then it was straight back to duty with only brief visits before he was sent to Iraq where he served as a tank gunner.

After nine months of separation, the Leshners obtained access to videoconferencing equipment. How exciting to finally see each other! But the experience would exemplify the challenges they both faced – the danger and risk for Matt and the isolation and stress for Kelly.

There they sat, separated by thousands of miles, talking through headsets. Kelly, comfortable at home, Matt in his fatigues in the computer lab on base. It was 11 pm in Iraq, 3 pm in Raleigh. Five minutes into the conversation, Matt's base came under rocket attack.

"I heard an explosion and then I saw guys jumping up from computers behind Matt and taking ready position with their weapons. When they're in ready position, you know it's serious. Matt just said, 'I love you. I'm going to have to go.'" And for Kelly, that was it. She didn't know what was going on and wouldn't find out until Matt was finally able to call home two days later. "I prayed," she says. "And I kept very busy. Those were a very productive two days."

For Matt, the next minutes after their conversation were some of the most intense he had experienced in Iraq. A rocket had struck a five-ton ammunition truck right outside his living quarters and just yards away from the computer lab. "My whole platoon was up there in that bay," Matt says. "We couldn't get in there because the rounds were going off.

For the next 10 to 12 minutes, we did not know the fate of our men."

Two barracks caught on fire and a hole was blasted through the 12-inch thick concrete wall surrounding Matt's barracks. Thankfully, everyone inside survived.

The experience typifies life for a couple in the service during a time of war. The serviceman is constantly on alert, dealing with high pressure, life-or-death situations. The spouse at home is managing the home and family as well as her own

emotions of loneliness, worry and fear. Even when she can speak with her husband – and, of course, she has to wait until he can call her – she only gets pieces of information. And military spouses are advised not to burden their service member with stress from the home front. If the dog dies or the bills get behind – they'll have to deal with that on their own.

"I think that's why some military wives feel so disconnected," Kelly says. "I want to know every detail and he can't tell me any of it. Basically, it's just, 'The food's good. The weather's nice.'"

The Leshners helped bridge that gap during Matt's deployment by reading the same devotionals and Christian books and talking about them. Matt then left the books behind when he came home so that other soldiers could read them.

"My wife keeps me accountable," Matt says. "She reminds me that I'm an example to these guys. When we first met, I was a pretty young Christian. She has helped bring me a long way so that I've been able to grow up and be the leader for her."

In Iraq, Matt says, he had to find his own fellowship. "It's not existent in the chapel services. You have to seek out people who are serving Christ fully."

Matt found a brother in Christ named Jeremy Wallace. On a typical morning, they were both up well before 5 am. Sharing a passage of Scripture and 15 minutes of prayer became an important part of their morning routine.

During his time in Iraq, Matt was able to share Christ with

— Continued



*Do not be anxious
about anything,
but in everything
by prayer and
supplication with
thanksgiving let
your requests
be made known
to God. And the
peace of God,
which surpasses all
understanding, will
guard your hearts
and your minds in
Christ Jesus*

—PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

two young Iraqi men. The men worked on his base, and over the course of a few months, Matt was able to study with them through the Book of Matthew and share the gospel with them. “I saw it as a free missions trip,” he said.

Now, he’s in training for another one of those “missions trips.”

This time around will be quite different on the home front. Matt and Kelly are expecting a son April 24th. He’ll be joining big sister Camille, who will be two-and-a-half when her daddy goes back to Iraq.

Matt will be training in Mississippi until the end of April when he is scheduled to deploy to Iraq. Their prayer is that everything will be timed so that Matt will still be in the States and able to take a few days of leave for the baby’s birth.

“Not knowing what to expect is kind of an overwhelming feeling,” Kelly says. “I’ll be dealing with Camille’s separation from her daddy, her emotions and not quite understanding what’s going on . . . and I’ll have the new baby – and not even knowing what he’ll be like before Matt leaves.”

For Camille, a newborn brother won’t quite replace the big playmate she’ll be missing when daddy’s gone. “They love to hide from each other and run circles around the downstairs,” Kelly says. “She loves it when Matt boosts her over his head and plays airplane.”

“We’ll lose some of our family feeling. It’s hard not having your best friend to talk to and not having the comfort of knowing that he’s walking in the door in the evening and hearing her yell, ‘Daddy’s home.’”

To keep Matt a part of their daily life, the Leshers are making videos of Matt reading some of Camille’s favorite books like *Goodnight Moon* for her to watch at bedtime each night.

While they’re apart, Kelly’s days will be full of diapers, feedings, Play-Doh and fingerpaint. On top of that, all of the household responsibilities that she and Matt have shared will be hers to take care of.

Matt’s typical days will begin with tank maintenance, pre-combat checks and inspections. That’s followed by a mission rehearsal to go through each person’s role and to go over what to do

if they’re attacked or ambushed. Some days they’re looking for the enemy or raiding an enemy target. Most days, though, are village assessments. “We go into a village and find the sheik or elder,” Matt says. “We let them know who we are and ask them if there’s anything they need.” The answers have been everything from bottles of water to rebuilding schools.

“Directly or indirectly, we’ve been able to provide for those needs. We’ve been able to bring hope to these people. We’ve built schools, trained teachers, given them what Saddam kept away from them.”

While Kelly and Matt’s days will be completely different, their lives remain intertwined and interdependent. Like all of us, Kelly would not have the freedom to live her life were it not for Matt and those like him who are serving to protect and defend our country. And Matt could not focus on his job if he did not have Kelly at home supporting him, praying for him, and managing the home front so he doesn’t have to worry. They are two cords of a thread woven together by their love and faith in their Lord.

“I think it was when Matt was gone that I really understood – it just spoke volumes to both of us – how Christ was the third strand of our relationship. He provided us with peace and comfort. We grew so much then,” Kelly says.

The peace of God that is beyond our understanding is the peace that sustained Kelly and kept her free from worry. It is the peace that gave Matt “the assurance that I was going to make it home to Kelly.” It’s the peace that comes when worry and fear are turned over through prayer and petition. (Phil. 4:6-7) It’s prayer, Matt and Kelly believe, that makes all of the difference.

“The most important thing is to pray,” Matt says to his Colonial family. “And keep tabs on Kelly and our family. If I’m not able to make it back, pull together as a whole church for them. It’s something I’ve got to prepare for.”



*Written by
April Schweitzer*

April Schweitzer is a homeschooling mom to Ruby and Alex and wife to Jon. She enjoys teaching ballet and writing.

Shake It Out!

How do we flavor the world around us? How do we shake out our salt so that others get a good taste of what makes us different? For many, it is in the everyday choices they make and the way they respond to others. They choose to stand for their Savior in the face of opposition. They decide to take action rather than just talking about what Jesus would do.

Here's how a few in our Colonial family are living out their faith at work, school, and on the team.

—Continued



Darrin Spivey

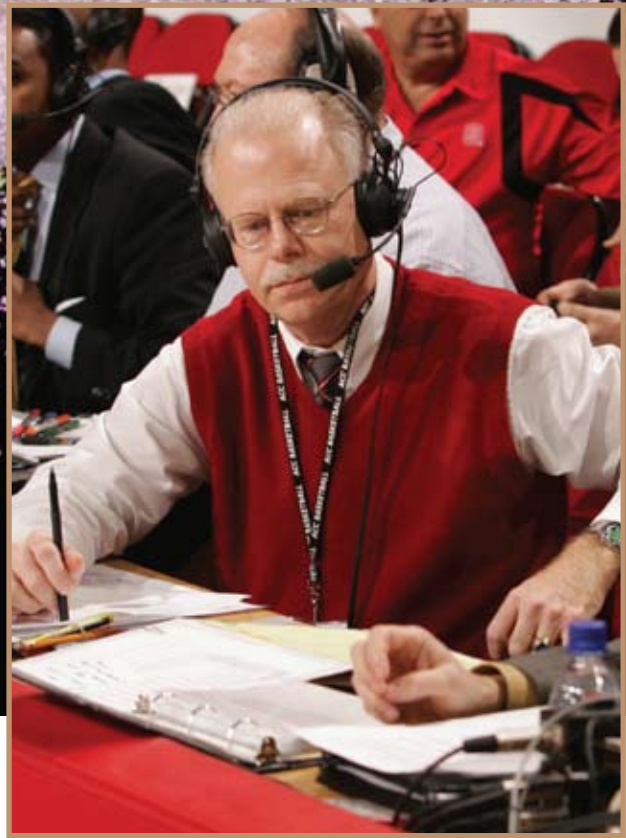
Being a Christian and owning a business doesn't have to be two separate realities. For Darrin Spivey, owner of Millennium Print Group in Apex, faith translates directly into work. Darrin and his family have watched God at work in their business during the last 15 years. "We have prayed that God would use our business to help build His kingdom . . . He has done this in amazing ways," says Darrin.

Owning a printing business means doing business with clients who promote varied products and services. Serving those clients requires discernment – the ability to choose work the business can do and carefully consider work that falls into gray areas. Darrin bathes decisions in prayer, seeking God for wisdom. Darrin also discusses difficult decisions with believers whom he trusts and shares decisions and prayer requests with his family.

Occasionally, Darrin has been forced to take a bold step of faith and turn down business that was potentially offensive or morally questionable. "Our policy is that we don't always have to agree politically or socially, or endorse particular views or products when we do the printing, but we have refused jobs. It's not something that I like doing because I see dealing with organizations that I don't agree with as a witnessing opportunity, it's part of my testimony," says Darrin.

"I am fortunate to have this opportunity and to be in a field that I enjoy," reflects Darrin. "I know that I have been very blessed."

Written by Daniel Lawson



Gary Hahn

Gary Hahn has been the Voice of the Wolfpack for 19 years. NC State fans are accustomed to hearing his voice throughout the year. From football to basketball and into baseball season, Gary puts what he sees into words for others to hear on the radio.

In addition to his radio career, Gary receives a number of requests for speaking engagements. When approached, Gary always respectfully asks if he can share what God has done in his life. With the same clarity that Gary describes a football touchdown play, he describes how he has seen God run a play in his own life.

"The Lord guides the opportunities," shares Gary. "I just use the platform that He's given me; a platform to testify and witness for what He has done in my life."

Carefully describing his personal journey for security, significance and acceptance, Gary takes listeners through his career and relationships. The journey, of course, leads to God. But God used someone to bring Gary back to Himself; "When my life hit bottom, God drew me to a Christian man who was consistent and had a strong family," says Gary. "When my life fell apart, he is the one I turned to."

Like that man, Gary notes, "I try to be a consistent witness for my co-workers. I am thankful for the platform I've been given. I don't take it lightly."

Written by Jamie Robinson



Ryan Dyer

Ryan Dyer became a soccer coach for Colonial, unaware that he'd be ministering to so many.

"When I signed up to be a coach I didn't know I'd be a missionary," says Ryan who coaches eight to ten year olds. "The boys are so impressionable and moldable at this age. When we tell them 'the Bible says this' it makes a huge difference to them."

"About half the boys are not from Colonial," he points out. "Every season a family will sign up with no intention of participating in the devotionals." Some parents take their sons when the game is over, not allowing them to hear the spiritual lesson shared when they "circle up." "We give them handouts with Scripture," says Ryan, "and for some of these boys that's the only Bible they'll have in their home that week."

"We know we're not just ministering to the kids," adds Ryan. The referees are not part of Colonial. "I see a real difference in this league," commented one ref, "the way the kids treat each other, not yelling, but saying 'here you kick it, no, you kick it.'"

"People are watching you all the time, so you live it in front of them during the game." Ryan and the other coaches don't trust the outcome to themselves. They always pass to their Forward. "If the Lord is not the main focus out there, we might as well be playing soccer," observes Ryan, "... and we can do that anywhere."

Written by Ben LaCorte



Rhonda Potts

Rhonda Potts, known as Shelly Shutterbug in Colonial Corners, teaches first grade at a local elementary school. In that public school environment, Rhonda takes seriously her life verse, "*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations . . .*" Matthew 28:19, by telling as many as she can about Jesus. "I might be the only one to ever tell them (her students) about Jesus."

At Thanksgiving, Rhonda has children tell what they are thankful for and discretely prompts the Christian kids in the class to let their lights shine for Christ. "I feel that God handpicks the kids He puts in my classes," Rhonda says.

Opportunities to let her light shine have come along too. Once a little girl in her class was going to have her tonsils out, and Rhonda told her she'd be praying for her. When Rhonda called to check on the child, the mom thanked her for praying and said her daughter had told her that her teacher promised to pray. "The best compliment is when someone who may not be a believer comes to me and asks me to pray. I want others to see Jesus in me."

At Christmas, Rhonda sets up a nativity and reads the Christmas story to her class. She also allows children from other religions to share their traditions and beliefs.

One of Rhonda's favorite verses is found in Matthew 10:42. "*And whoever gives one of these little ones only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, assuredly I say to you, he shall by no means lose his reward.*" Rhonda desires to be an "imitator of God" and demonstrate the love of Christ to these little ones who have been entrusted to her.

Written by April Valentine

"I showed up for the first day of work to an empty house, no salary, and no coworkers. It was only by God's grace that I didn't collapse from exhaustion in that first year."

—AMY JONES



“Here am I, Lord”

Amy remembers Donna clearly. Clad in a low-cut blouse and loud skirt, the ninth-grader stuck out in Amy’s quiet Christian high school.

It might have been easier to snicker at this newbie from the bleachers, but Amy Jones sauntered across the gym floor to introduce herself. “What classes are you taking? Do you like softball? Seen any good movies lately?”

After a few friendly conversations and shared lunch breaks, Amy discovered that Donna had been living in a dilapidated motel, trading sex for rent. Through an unexpected encounter, Donna had connected with a Christian couple who had taken her in.

The story of Donna and Amy slammed to a halt when Donna disappeared one evening. Amy, however, still carries the imprint of that “chance meeting.” To her, it was God’s test; not one week before, she had asked God for just such an opportunity. “I laid in bed and said, ‘Lord, I don’t have anything to offer, but use me to reach girls who are hurting,’” remembered Amy.

God took her prayers seriously. Twenty-plus years later, Amy stands as a cornerstone to Raleigh’s Christian Life Home, a ministry that opens its arms to today’s Donnas. The home provides a haven for girls ages ten to twenty-three who find themselves in an unplanned pregnancy.

“A lot of the girls come to us with no money and no responsible adults in their lives,” Amy said. “Some have just made one bad decision after another, burned all their bridges, and have nowhere else to go.”

Some girls face an ultimatum at home: abort the baby or leave the family. Others simply buckle; they watch their dreams crumble to rubble. So much for college. Or that new car.

“I felt like I was trapped in a chaotic, abusive relationship, and then I was pregnant,” recalled Jessica, a young mother, “I wanted to escape that life but I didn’t really know how.”

What the girls find at Christian Life Home is safety, a soft bed with clean sheets, and someone to hold their hand. The home welcomes six girls at a time to live for the duration of their pregnancies while providing for their needs. They receive classes on nutrition, prenatal care and finances as well as parenting and adoption plans. Each girl also meets weekly with a counselor.

Beyond these benefits, the girls encounter something irreplaceable: a home. The Christian Life Home is parented by a Christian husband-wife team known as house parents. They model God’s design for a loving relationship between a man and a woman.

“For a lot of the girls this house parent may be the only daddy they ever have,” Amy said. “The love of an earthly father will help them understand the love of their Heavenly Father.”

Imagine receiving your first Christmas present from your father as a tenth grader or eating your first family dinner for your sixteenth birthday. Imagine slogging home after a break-up only to be greeted by a dad’s gentle hug and the words “I love you, kiddo.” Imagine the impact.

Along with unconditional love comes firm discipline. At

CLH, the girls learn fifty life skills – from greeting courtesies to self-discipline, obedience, and personal responsibility. “Nothing I’m doing now would have ever been possible . . . without Christian Life Home being there to give me that push,” said Jessica.

In 1988, an era of protests, marches and abortion clinic sit-ins, a team of Wake County citizens realized that despite lip service, nobody was taking any real action. Back then, girls often felt they had no option but to abort.

Then, the team developed the vision of Raleigh’s first maternity home. Now there would be another option.

As the team fought through hurdles, Amy Jones came into the mix, primed by years of service with a Christian teen ministry. She believed Christian Life Home to be the ministry she had envisioned since her encounter with Donna. At age twenty-four, she accepted the position of counselor.

“I showed up for the first day of work to an empty house, no salary, and no coworkers,” Amy recalled. “It was only by God’s grace that I didn’t collapse from exhaustion in that first year.”

God never has forgotten Amy’s commitment from her high school days. He has used her willing spirit and obedient heart as a conduit for His message of grace. The reputation of the Christian Life Home has shot across the nation, garnering calls from countless maternity homes.

“So many homes close after only a few years,” said Amy. “They may have a vision to help pregnant teens, but have no idea what to do with them once they get them.” Dinnertime? Curfew? Boyfriends, jobs, visitation, house parent vacation . . . the questions were endless. From guiding principles down to the nitty-gritty, Amy has shared the structure of Christian Life Home with other blossoming ministries.

“The first time I had to speak in public, I kept praying Lord, tonight would be a great night for the rapture,” Amy prayed. “Just come back now and get me out of this.” No rapture rescued Amy, but through Amy God rescued several struggling homes. During one keynote speech, God gave her an audience of 150 people from nineteen countries. That’s tough for someone who doesn’t enjoy public speaking.

Amy now consults full-time for Christian Life Home, both in the United States and abroad. The ministry has since opened a second house in the Triangle area that serves as a hospitality home for visiting trainees and vacationing house parents.

Amy has held countless girls’ hands as they’ve given birth to their first child. She’s prayed with them as they’ve accepted Christ’s grace. Amy has helped to show many the way from death to life.

All God needed was one willing vessel. From this, hundreds have been given life and life abundantly.



Written by Cherith Manguam

“Cherith, a blissful newlywed, and Kevin, her husband, live in Raleigh with their black lab.”

Living in a Democratic Society

Q&A with Pastor Davey

Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

—ROMANS 13:1

The Apostle Paul was a Roman citizen, a privilege enjoyed by few who lived in the Roman Empire. And yet, Paul never took on the Roman government or the ills of the culture of his day. Instead, he purposefully traveled the Empire sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He taught new believers that they were subject to their government. Some of his converts were political leaders – members of Caesar’s own household; others were leading citizens and successful businessmen. Paul encouraged them all not to abandon society, but to influence every arena of life they encountered for Christ’s glory and the truth of the gospel.

Most believers of our day want to be and are good citizens. But, what does that mean? For insight, Pastor Davey recently responded to these questions . . .

Q. *How do we, as believers, live in a democratic society?*

A. I want to relate the idea of living in a democratic society to New Testament principles for the believer. The classic text to consider is Christ’s Sermon on the Mount where He talks about believers acting out the properties of salt and light.

So, like salt, we both inhibit the speed of decay as well as create thirst for Christ. Like light shining in a dark room, we shine ever brighter for Christ’s reputation and Gospel. For a Wake County school teacher this might mean taking the opportunity to share Christ

when a student asks. She’s not going to change her school system, but she may change a life. I think we have to get back to a goal of impacting individuals, so that our focus isn’t changing culture. Christ never told us that we would change our culture. He told us that we would influence culture as salt and light.

A lighthouse never sent a storm away, but it provides guidance to ships and sailors in the midst of a storm. For the believer acting as a lighthouse, we may not quiet the howling wind and merciless waves; in fact the storm may actually increase. But for those who desire direction in life they will find in the shining testimony of the believer the

truth about right and wrong; the truth about moral issues; the truth about life and death; the truth about a true and living God. Then, as God changes that person’s life, they change another life and then – and only then – is culture impacted and reformed. Just keep in mind that if the goal of our witness is to change culture, we are going to look for some big battle to win: an election, a piece of legislation . . . and miss the real impact of winning one life at a time to the saving truth of Christ. Consider this hard truth – while the church has spent millions of dollars and hours in the last 30 years trying to change culture from Washington on down, she has become

biblically illiterate, unsure of what the Gospel actually involves, disobedient to the Great Commission as well as the claims of Christ on a person's lifestyle, morals and behavior. Worst of all, the church has become, in effect, like its culture.

The idea of "saving our nation," which the Bible never commands of any believer, sounds intriguing and logical; however, it is not only unbiblical, but distracting. Paul was never commanded to save Rome; Martin Luther was not following an agenda to save Germany; nor was Spurgeon attempting to save England. Likewise, we have not been called to save America – we have been called to save Americans – one life at a time – through the light-bearing testimony of individual Christians and collective churches.

Q. *What responsibilities do we have when secular leaders are elected?*

A. We should rest in God's oversight. In Romans Chapter 13 we are told that God ordains civil servants and ultimately determines those who hold public office. Paul also reminds us in Acts 17:26 that God has already mapped out our country's appointed times, borders, and national destiny.

We should also remember our obligations to:

- **Intercede** in prayer on behalf of public officers.
- **Investigate** which candidates would be most in line with our views and who, through their testimony, could slow the process of societal decay like salt.
- **Intersect** lives within our culture at every opportunity where God places us to deliver truth, to stand for truth, and to reflect the truth as gracious servants of Christ.

Q. *How should we respond, as Christians, when secular leaders with whom we may disagree are elected?*

A. I want to make sure we understand the difference between a political commission and a spiritual commission. We believe in a political commission; God has ordained secular leaders. No matter who is elected to office, they are ordained by God. So I have the assurance that while I vote, God is ultimately in control.

That gives us the ability to exercise our rights as citizens without fear. We intersect culture and politics graciously, respectfully. As long as we have the freedoms and blessings of democracy we want to exercise them. That is not inconsistent with Paul's own personal use of his citizenship to avoid a whipping in jail.

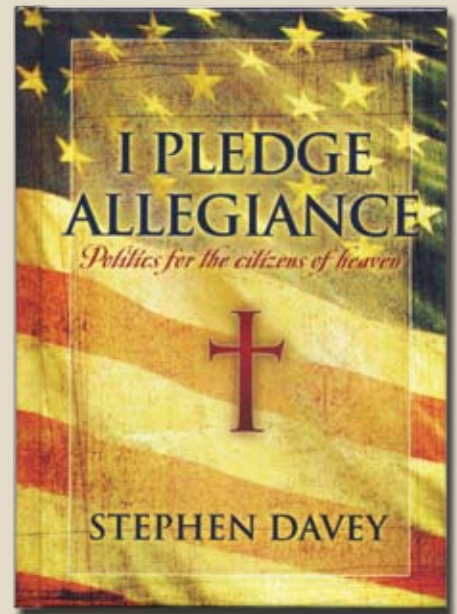
However, our commission as believers is not based on national renewal, but on individual salvation. I rejoice when a Christian gets into office; because, I know that his testimony can influence a broader spectrum than mine. We rejoice about that and we pray for his testimony to shine. We want to see Christians elected, because they can influence the decay of sin in individual and cultural expression . . . that's what salt does, it slows down decay. But to somehow believe that any leader can remove the potential for decay or its ultimate course is a false promise.

Q. *What can we learn from an example like Daniel and his service when we are called to live under leaders with whom we disagree?*

A. He is a fantastic example of integrity in his political office. His priorities remained God-focused and God-centered. More than one of the kings he served under was converted because of his clear testimony and a lack of compromise. Let's not forget that it didn't alleviate political corruption – it actually increased it! And Daniel suffered because of his testimony. In fact, he almost lost his life because of it. So, like Daniel, we have no guarantee that the world will somehow appreciate us because we are faithful Christians. In fact, Christ told us that we are going to be hated by the world. But he (Daniel) is a good example to us of what we should be as good citizens. Good Christians make the best citizens. We're law abiding. We're honest. We work hard. We cut our grass. We're kind to our neighbors. We're kind to animals – even cats! That's the way it ought to be.

Daniel was a phenomenal businessman, promoting the blessing of Babylon. That doesn't mean that he agreed with everything Babylon did. He understood that his personal commission was to honor God.

That never changes, no matter who



The last months of 2008 were very eventful.

The economy is on shaky ground; new leaders will soon be installed; change is coming. Are you confused about whether your role as a citizen conflicts with that as a church member? What does the Bible really teach about our responsibilities to local and national authorities? If you still have questions, check out *I Pledge Allegiance: Politics for the Citizens of Heaven*, by Pastor Stephen Davey on these and other related topics.

is in office.

In the meantime, the church needs to get back to the business of being the church. Not a political voting bloc; not the enemy of the evil sinners who attempt to further corrupt the culture; not a people group that uses the same weapons of intimidation and power that the world has long perfected. Frankly, we have tools of power that far exceed the puny, temporary influences of culture.

We have the sword of the Spirit and the Gospel of truth that can change lives forever!



Written by
Angela Clendenin

Angela is a staff writer and editor for Colonial. She and her husband Gary have three children: Hannah, Martha and Sam.

faces

GOD'S PEOPLE, OUR FAMILY

Jesse and Geraldine Fort



Jesse and Geraldine Fort made Colonial their church home when they returned to North Carolina six years ago. *"We wanted the richness of the Word, that biblical teaching,"* Geraldine said. Geraldine is retired and Jesse still works full-time. Jesse serves as an usher and enjoys attending

the Quest Men's Bible study where he helps cook and set up. Attending seminary classes and women's Bible studies helps to satisfy Geraldine's hunger for the Word. The Forts love to bowl and have one grown son.

Mark Fowler



Mark Fowler is a busy man! He's been a member of Colonial for more than 12 years and has served in many ways including: singing in the choir, volunteering for Carpenters for Christ, being an AWANA leader, and serving as a Deacon. He especially enjoys being a part of Christmas Sweet. *"It's neat to see how so many people can get involved in one ministry... it can have such an*

impact on people who attend," Mark said. Outside of Colonial, Mark volunteers his time to a fledgling ministry to video gamers called Soldiers of Christ (SOC). Mark and his wife, Sherry, have three children: Megan, Libby and Graham.

Anne Steckmann



If you attend the 11:00 service, you may have noticed Anne Steckmann signing at the front. Anne learned finger spelling as a fourth grader and was hooked on learning sign language. In high school she became fluent and had opportunities to interpret for deaf students. *"I love to sing, but I don't do it very well, so I sign instead,"* Anne said. Anne

recently returned to teaching part-time. She and her husband, Dirk, have two sons, Zack and Thomas.

Ashley Whitehead



Ashley Whitehead, a 19-year-old home school graduate, enjoys *"using her hands to praise the Lord,"* according to her Mom, Susan. Ashley remembers becoming fascinated with signing at a young age. *"I love signing songs,"* notes Ashley. She has had the opportunity to sign for Singing Waiters and Christmas Sweet. Ashley attends the One Generation to Another class

with her family and volunteers for the Colonial Library Children's Storytime.

■ Compiled by Angela Clendenin



C O L O N I A L B A P T I S T C H U R C H