

# The AGAPE Newsletter

July 2008

Vol. 3, No 7



Jim Rigby is on writing leave for the month of July. We will have four guest preachers during the month.

July 6 Babs Miller  
July 13 Peggy Stoll  
July 20 Karen Wilson  
July 27 Gerald Gafford

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If you have pastoral needs during July, please call the church office and we will notify the person on call.

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Church office hours during July will be 9 am until 2 pm.

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AGAPE Teams will not meet on their regular Tuesday. The Educator Team will meet on Tuesday, July 15, at 7 pm.

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The Tuesday Morning Bible Class will not meet during the month of July.

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The Session will not meet for a regular meeting until August.

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No Godly Play classes or Children's Church. Childcare available during worship and the Healthcare Classes.

## "What if I Cannot Love?"

*"Make love your goal" St. Paul*

People sometimes lament that they are not loving enough. Sometimes they try to force themselves to be more loving by will power alone, which is like a child pulling its own hair to grow taller. Love is a worthy goal, but if we are not careful, we can suffer from uncharitable ideas of what the word "love" means.

We cannot manufacture love. It must be a natural fruit. To try to feel what we do not feel is actually cruelty disguised. Our task, instead, is to heal the wounds that keep us from feeling tenderness toward ourselves and others. Our work is to remove splinters of pain, not to milk compassion out of hearts already dry.

To "make love our goal" does not mean that we must carry a burden of always "doing it right". Love does not make us immune to negative feelings such as irritation and disappointment. The fact that love is a goal means that we do not necessarily start out with it.

We start out by trusting love not by doing it. Paul called that trust "faith." Eventually, as we heal, love makes us patient and kind, but to get there we must feel the full gambit of human emotion. Only such a tender approach allows us to grow into the fullness of compassion.

"Love" is the word we give to a fully functioning heart.

Love,

## July Sunday School Hour – Health Ministry: Healing and Wholeness



During the Sunday School hour in July, we will have the opportunity to learn from professionals in our church community who are experienced in teaching life skills. Classes are designed to help you discover ways to better care for yourself or for someone close to you.

**July 6- Suze Miller, LMSW** will guide us through Medicare and Medicaid benefits and discuss how unexpected illness, with or without a hospitalization, can worry patients and families. Learn how to qualify for short-term benefits for rehab services and nursing homes, learn what services and equipment might be paid for when help is needed in the home.

**July 13 - Peggy Stoll, Chaplain with Hospice Austin**, has invited two relatives of patients who received end of life comfort care to share their unique experiences with us. One couple received care in an extended care facility and the other cared for a spouse at home. Their stories will bring hope to the idea that comfort care can bring quality and dignity as life approaches its final stage.

**July 20 – Dr. Karen Wilson, Babs Miller and our new ministry team, First Responders for SafePlace**, will lead a discussion on the role faith communities can play in supporting those who have been abused. St. Andrew’s has financially supported SafePlace through our benevolences for many years. Learn more about the work that SafePlace is doing in the Austin community and what we can do as a church to further support this work.

**July 27– Jim Comer author of Parenting Your Parents**. Laugh, cry and learn as Jim Comer leads a discussion about the dangers of denial in aging. He will address how to begin those “hard conversations” with your loved before a crisis occurs. From his book, he will talk about some of the 50 questions that will save you time, money and tears.

### Session Summary for May & June

I am honored to be taking the baton from the very capable hands of Babs Miller as your Clerk of Session.

We welcome the following new members to St. Andrew’s for May and June: Lyn Whitcomb, Nan King, Delia Trujillo, and T.J. Griffin and Heather McLeod.

Your session approved a motion to call a congregational meeting for August 3 to elect additional members of the Nominations Committee from the congregation. Also, at the May meeting, the session decided not to meet in July, while Jim Rigby is on leave.

Tonya Hiland represented you as Commissioner at the recent Presbytery Meeting in Kingsville, and she reported to the June session meeting. Jim Rigby provided a preliminary report concerning proceedings at the biennial General Assembly Meeting of PC(USA), which is meeting in San Jose at this time. Barbara McCarty from our congregation is attending the meeting as an observer.

**Briefly noted:** Plans are underway for confirmation classes in the fall; more information will be provided soon. Planning is also beginning for a Fall Festival, scheduled for October 18. VBS Peace Camp went very well and included 80 adult volunteers and 45 children. The Educator Team also announced themes following the successful Buddhism class in June will be a series of Health Ministry classes in July and discussion of Joan Chittister’s book, Welcome to the Wisdom of the World, after that. The Pastoral Care Team advised that dates for a Compassion Fatigue Workshop will be September 14 and 20 and for Our Journey of Hope Workshop for cancer caregivers on July 19. The Guardian Team reported that \$625 has been donated toward a new stove for our kitchen.

Submitted by Wayne Rogers, Clerk of Session

### The AGAPE

#### News

Published monthly by  
**St. Andrew’s  
Presbyterian Church**

14311 Wells Port  
Austin, TX 78728  
251-0698  
[staopen@  
sbglobal.net](mailto:staopen@sbglobal.net)

#### Pastor

Jim Rigby  
[Jrigby0000@aol.com](mailto:Jrigby0000@aol.com)

#### Ministry Assistant

##### Music Director

David Marks

[David@](mailto:David@progchurch.com)

[progchurch.com](http://progchurch.com)

#### Congregational Nurse

Donna Rutherford  
[Rutherfo@earthlink.net](mailto:Rutherfo@earthlink.net)

#### Children’s CE

##### Coordinator

Tammy Iyer

[Tamara.Iyer@gmail.co  
m](mailto:Tamara.Iyer@gmail.com)

#### Youth Leader

Justin Follin  
[jfollin@gmail.com](mailto:jfollin@gmail.com)

#### Treasurer

Doug Arnold

#### Elders

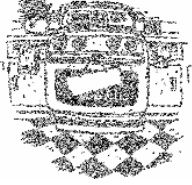
Sandy Beck  
Barry Becker  
Tonya Hiland  
Babs Miller  
Karalei Nunn  
Carroll Shelton  
Mary Graf  
Randy Cook  
Alice Ortiz  
Wayne Rogers  
Linda Rowold  
Ryan Ruta

#### Deacons

Amy Blackmon  
Andy Becker  
Matt Hiland  
Timmi Kuykendall  
Tom Nichols

## Guardian Team

### Kitchen Stove Fund



Our old stove is an energy hog, it is dangerous, it heats up the kitchen, and it is time to replace it. In addition to your normal donation, please consider contributing to this special fund. You can write "Kitchen Stove" on the memo line of your check and place it in the offering or mail it to the office.

## Ambassador Team



To keep the Food Pantry open this summer we need volunteers to staff the pantry and shower area. We have only one person signed up for the month of July as of the printing of this issue of the Newsletter. We need at least four people each Saturday. One man is needed each week to monitor the shower ministry.

Please contact Susan Wukasch, 930-0114, if you can help. Thank you.

## Pastoral Care Team

### *“Societal Messages and Their Impact on Women”*

Sponsored by SafePlace & St. Andrew’s First Responder Team for SafePlace  
August 2 – 10 am – 12 pm

This interactive workshop, lead by Dr. Karen Wilson, Director of Community Education for SafePlace, will explore the many messages women receive about what it means to be a woman and the four ways in which internalized sexism touches women’s lives. Levels of empowerment strategies to counteract dangerous effects of internalized sexism will be explored and participants will share various strategies to counteract the effects of internalized sexism. This workshop is primarily experiential, based on experiences, wisdom, insight and reflections of the women in attendance.

Men are welcome to attend but we ask that only women participate in the group exercises. Sign-up is limited. Sign up in the foyer on Sundays or contact Tiffany James at [sweetray0036@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sweetray0036@sbcglobal.net).

Dr. Wilson has trained our new First Responder Ministry Team for SafePlace. The ministry team will be dedicated during worship on Sunday August 3.

Starting in the Fall a series of workshops will be offered on Empowerment for Women.

## Educator Team



### Theology in Everyday Life

.Theology in Everyday Life will meet on Mondays, July 7 and 21, from 7:15 pm until 8:30 pm in the adult classroom of the children's wing.

Subjects for discussion include sermons, thoughtful essays, excerpts from books, poems, movies, current events, art and scripture among others. Our purpose is to apply theological concepts to our everyday life experiences. Handouts are available in a basket in the church foyer and everyone is invited.

.The Poiema Book Study group meets on third Sundays. The present study will continue on July 20, August 17 and September 21. We begin with a meal hosted by Poiema about 5:30 p.m. in the McCarty home. The book study begins at 7 p.m. The group is studying Citizens of the Empire: The Struggle to Claim our Humanity by Robert Jensen. All are welcome. For more info contact Barbara at 468-4012, [bm272-54@earthlink.net](mailto:bm272-54@earthlink.net) or [www.poiemacommunity.org](http://www.poiemacommunity.org).

## Children's News

➤➤➤➤➤➤We are in need of two childcare workers with one year minimum experience and at least 18 years old. They are needed for four hours on Sunday mornings and about 6-8 hours a month for evenings. If you know anyone who would be interested in applying for these positions please talk to Tamara Iyer.

*If you have questions or would like to be involved in any of the programs listed, please contact our Children's Christian Education Coordinator, Tamara Iyer, at 251-0698 or email [Tamara.Iyer@gmail.com](mailto:Tamara.Iyer@gmail.com).*

### Two important meetings this month

1. **Today-** Scheduling of volunteers for July and August Children's Church.
2. June 29, planning for Godly Play.

Both meetings are right after church.

◆ The **Godly Play** approach in Sunday School at 9:30 am, uses an open classroom with selected, developmentally appropriate story materials. The ultimate goal of Godly Play is to teach children the art of using the language of our Christian tradition so that they may encounter God in a personal way and begin to find direction for their own lives. Rather than giving pat answers or teaching doctrine, Godly Play seeks to support the child's own spiritual quest and enable the child to develop a faith that is continually growing. Central to this way of teaching is the assumption that children do have encounters with the mystery of the presence of God. What they do not have is the language to communicate about their experiences.

◆ **Children's Church** is where every child is valued and encouraged to safely explore their own experiences of God. Children ages 4 to 10 are invited to participate in their own worship service. They have rituals, songs, activities and small groups. Children's Church curriculum is based on the same scripture references used in Jim's sermon and meets when the children leave the sanctuary after the Puppet Show



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## St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

Living and Sharing Progressive Christianity

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14311 Wells Port Drive

Non-Profit Org.

Austin, TX 78728

Phone: 251-0698

[www.Staopen.com](http://www.Staopen.com)

E-Mail: [Staopen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Staopen@sbcglobal.net)

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## Open Minds Bookstore

### Open 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month

Many titles available in our Open Minds Bookstore are written by members and friends of the St. Andrew's Church Family. We are currently featuring a book by new member, Delia Trujillo. Other items that are offered by those connected with our church are CDs by Michael and Belinda Morris and by Marilyn Rucker; Jim Comer's book on Parenting Your Parents and Dr. Roberts Jensen's book which is the center point for the Poema discussion group this summer – Citizens of the Empire: The Struggle to Claim Our Humanity. (*Review below.*) The Transformation of (Y)our World: Finding Optimism and Serenity During These Difficult Times, (\$12.00) by Delia M. Trujillo, is a guide book for taking care of ourselves and taking care of our planet as we go through these challenging times. Writing with simplicity and compassion, the author draws from the profound wisdom of Eckhart Tolle; Thich Nhat Hanh, Deepak Chopra; Wayne Dyer; Jesuit monks Thomas Green and Anthony de Mello; and also *A Course in Miracles*. The author offers this guide as partial, down-to-earth advice for finding greater success, happiness, inner peace, and fulfillment in our own life, which ultimately empowers us to be in a position to make a difference for the earth and for humanity during these pivotal times. (Foreword by Rev. Jim Rigby; Introduction by Dr. Oliver Markley, Professor Emeritus of Studies of the Future, and friend of St. Andrew's.)

Citizens of the Empire: The Struggle to Claim our Humanity by Robert Jensen (\$10). For anyone who has ever despaired over our unresponsive and seemingly untouchable governmental power structures. Jensen reminds us what it means to be a human being and to continue the search for justice in an unjust society. This is the book the Poema Book Discussion Group is reading. Join us the third Sunday of the Month (July 20 and August 17). Please contact Barbara McCarty for details and times, 468-4012, [bm272-54@earthlink.net](mailto:bm272-54@earthlink.net).

NOTE: Jeff Sralla has provided additional copies of a special manuscript put together by the First Tuesday Group in the Presbyterian Church of Mt. Kisco, NY, featuring 50 frequently asked questions about homosexual orientation. It is entitled The Blue Book: "What We Wish We Had Known" and is a resource for individuals and families. Get these for only \$3 while they last..

Other Features:

Welcome to the Wisdom of the World by Joan Chittister. (\$16) This book is a helpful guide to life's most pressing questions and draws from the religious traditions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy, Kraybill, Nolt, et al. (\$21)

Still Here: Embracing Aging, Changing and Dying by Ram Dass. (\$13)

Sabbath: Finding Rest, Renewal and Delight in Our Busy Lives by Wayne Muller, (\$14)

How to Believe: Teachers and Seekers Show the Way to a Modern, Life-Changing Faith by Jon Spayde.(\$20) This book has chapters featuring our own Rev. Jim Rigby and Gerald Gafford.

How Then, Shall We Live?: Four Simple Questions That Reveal the Beauty and Meaning of Our Lives by Wayne Muller (\$14)

Taking Our Places: The Buddhist Path to Truly Growing Up by Norman Fischer, (\$12)

Everything Belongs: The Gift of Contemplative Prayer by Richard Rohr. (\$14.50)

Watch July bulletins for new offerings!