

## ***On Bunting***

By Bass Mitchell

"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life, will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it" (Mark 8:34-35).

We were packing up to move to the beautiful mountains of in Bath County, Virginia. My son, Michael, came across a blue, dusty picture album. He looked through it and came running to me. It was a collection of pictures and news clippings from my youthful summer days spent on the baseball field. One picture of me on a team caught my son's attention. I was about his age when it was taken. He had no trouble picking me out but he did have some problem believing that I was once his size and age.

That album, especially that picture, brought back many memories for me. The team in the picture was one of the best in the state. I recalled just why it was so good. Yes, we had good pitchers, hitters and fielders. But what we did better than anyone was bunt. Our coach believed in bunting. Every practice we had bunting drills. Everyone on the team was good at bunting.

Perhaps you are not a baseball fan and do not know about the fine art of bunting. Bunting is when a batter doesn't try to swing and get a hit. The batter, instead, turns or squares around, faces the pitcher, with hands apart on the bat, and attempts to tap the ball a few feet or yards in front of home plate.

Why? Usually it's because you have a runner on first and want to move that runner to second base. This gets the runner in better scoring position. If someone comes up after you and gets a hit, a runner on second has a much better chance of scoring a run from second than first base.

Sometimes we would use the bunt in what was called a "squeeze play." You have a runner on third base. When the pitcher throws the ball, the runner on third runs for home. Your job as batter is to bunt the ball, thus allowing the runner to score. If you miss the ball, the catcher catches the ball and the runner is easily tagged out. You can see why players sometimes call this, "The Suicide." But our team had that play down to perfection.

True, bunting is not very exciting. A triple, or homerun or grand slam is much more exciting. Bunting doesn't help your batting average either, for most of the time when you bunt you get thrown out at first base. You see, another word for bunting is "sacrifice." You sacrifice your chance for a news making hit (or sometimes a strikeout) for the good of the team. You get thrown out at first but your team mate gets to second, that is, your team gets a better chance to win. Winning teams have some good bunters, persons not afraid to sacrifice for the good of the team, even if it doesn't show up in the score book.

I don't know how it came up, but the topic one day came around the church. Our pastor and our coach were talking about something that the church needed. I overheard the coach respond, "Pastor, sounds like what our church needs is more bunters."

That really puzzled me at the time. I couldn't see at all what bunting had to do with the church. But the minister seemed to understand what our coach was saying. In fact, I later learned that the coach himself had volunteered to be a teacher in the youth church school class.

Now I understand. You see, "winning" churches, like winning baseball teams, have good bunters, persons willing to sacrifice for the good of the team. The churches I know that are really growing and accomplishing things for God have lots of people who do not care who gets the credit for what's done. All they care about is bunting, is doing what they can for the good of the team. Their names may not show up each Sunday on the bulletin, but they sit in quiet celebration, for they know that their efforts help make for a winning team.

I remember one game in a championship series. We were tied. We had a runner on first and it was my turn at bat. One out. The coach gave me the bunt signal. I really didn't want to bunt. I thought I could get a hit off of that pitcher. Besides, that would have gotten my name in the paper. But I did what I was told. I laid down a perfect bunt down the third base line. The runner on first advanced easily to second but I was thrown out at first. I walked to the dugout a little down. But you know what? Our next batter hit a Texas leaguer right over the second baseman's head and the runner on second scored the winning run. Nobody cheered louder than I did. Everybody put the runner and the guy who got the hit on their shoulders. But the coach came and a put an arm around me.

Maybe what we do for Christ does seem insignificant and goes largely unnoticed by many. But we know what we contribute and so does The Coach. Our bunting helps the team. That's all that matters.

Prayer: Great Coach, you have given me and all your players many gifts and chosen us to be on Your team. We are ready to play, even if You ask us to bunt. Put us in the game. Amen.

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Bass Mitchell  
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## United Methodist Women

The Epiphany UMW will not be meeting in April, but will have a regular meeting on Saturday May 15<sup>th</sup>. We will assemble school kits at the meeting, which will be sent to the Annual Conference in June.



The Epiphany family extends our sympathy to Mary Lau and her sons Mark, Peter, and David upon the death of her husband, Chuck, on Saturday, Feb. 20<sup>th</sup> in Charlottesville, VA. A graveside service will be held at Arlington National Cemetery on Monday, June 21<sup>st</sup>. There will be a reception here at Epiphany following the service.

### 2010 Membership Directories available

The 2010 Membership Directory is now available. Please pick up yours in the Narthex and help us save on postage! You will find your name on the back of the Directory.





# VOLUNTEER

## **Acolytes**

April 4	Danny Tucker
April 11	Abby Fusca
April 18	Cara Mazella
April 25	Jack Tucker

## **Coffee Time Hosts**

April 4	Missions
April 11	Dick & Inga Carlson
April 18	UMW
April 25	Epiphany Choir

## **Greeters**

April 4	Dick and Inga Carlson
April 11	Sharon and Jerry Thompson
April 18	Danny and Tammy Niblett
April 25	Margaret Brady and Marguerite Miller

## **Nursery**

April 4	Karen Fowkes
April 11	Becky Vanstone
April 18	Debbie Mitchell
April 25	Kristen Hicks

## **Tellers**

April 4	Sharon Thompson
April 11	David and Anna Marie Foulis
April 18	Gail Rosner
April 25	Phil and Rhoann Blount



## MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The Missions Committee will be planning a fundraiser at the next meeting. The Missions Committee was disappointed to cancel The Chocolate Festival in February due to the snow, and will be planning a fundraiser at the next meeting.

## LIFE LINE SCREENING

Epiphany will be hosting preventive health screenings for members and the local community. Life Line Screening, the nation's leading provider of preventive health screenings, will offer their affordable, non-invasive, painless health screenings on **April 28th**.

Screenings will be offered to scan for potential health problems related to vascular disease and bone health:

- ❖ **Carotid Vascular Test** scans the carotid arteries in the neck for plaque buildup. 75% of all strokes are linked to carotid artery blockage.
- ❖ **Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Test** screens for the existence of an aneurysm in the abdominal aorta. The vast majority of people who have an aneurysm have no symptoms.
- ❖ **Peripheral Arterial Disease Test** screens for plaque build-up in the lower extremities which is linked to coronary artery disease.
- ❖ **Heart Rhythm Test** detects irregular heart beat and increased risk for blood clots.
- ❖ **Bone Density Screening** detects risk of osteoporosis (thinning of the bone).

Register for all five tests for \$149. Add Disease Risk Assessment with blood testing & biometrics for \$90 more. Screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. Call 1-800-324-1851 (code HSC3549) to pre-register.



## EPIPHANY'S YOUTH GROUP

### **FIRST EVER EPIPHANY POETRY CONTEST**

Grand Prize..... Appreciation and Praise of the Entire World!  
Second Prize...The ability to think in a new way about a yearly  
occurrence!

Third Prize..... Parents that think you are so very smart!

Epiphany UMC would like your feelings about the subject  
"SPRING"

What does it mean, what happens when it happens, what does it  
make you feel,

Everyone wins, including all the people that will read your poem!  
More to come!

Email Jenny at [jennyjo2100@excite.com](mailto:jennyjo2100@excite.com)

# EVANGELISM

By Tony Eller



**Evangelism, from the Greek: evangelion ( eu = good as in eulogy: good + logos, word, and angelicos, angel ( messenger), i.e. good message = good news. The mission of the Evangelism Committee at Epiphany is to tell the good news of God's love through Christ to all, both within the church and without, in response to the Great Commission.**

Much of our focus in this column has been the idea that evangelism is our personal responsibility; we are commanded to tell others about Jesus. Some attention has been paid, as well, to techniques of evangelism. How do we start? What do we say? Keep in mind, here, that the act of accepting the Gospel message and its subsequent result, conversion to Christianity, is not just an intellectual exercise of gathering knowledge; it is primarily a change in heart. In telling of Jesus, we can impart knowledge, but we cannot change a person's heart. Only God can do that. Therefore, our task is only to tell. Conversion, that is, how someone responds to our message, is beyond our control. It is not our responsibility.

A third, important aspect of evangelism is its legality or appropriateness in other cultures. In western culture, and especially here in the United States, we are blessed with full freedom to accept or reject any religion as we please. For us as evangelists, this means that telling others about Jesus cannot justifiably be misconstrued as forcing a new religion on

someone. The conditions are sharply different in Muslim countries, however, where one is classified as Christian or Muslim by birth, according to one's parents. Although the Koran [2:256] states "no compulsion" in religion, this usually is interpreted as not forcing a Christian to become Muslim. The converse, however, converting from Islam to Christianity, often is punished severely, sometimes by death. This, in spite of the 1948 U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, which claims to guarantee a "freedom to change" one's beliefs. [Part of the above material is drawn from a recent article, *Proselytism 'on the table,'* by Julia Duin, a world recognized journalist on religion.]



Epiphany Preschool  
Church Newsletter  
April 2010

This April the preschoolers have decided that the new baby animals at Kidwell Farm in Frying Pan Park, just have to be seen. So we'll be off on a sunny April day to see the newborn lambs, kids, piglets and calves. It is a wonderful way to continue our Easter story of rebirth that God gives us each Spring.

**FUN FUNDRAISING:**

In addition, everyone is invited to Epiphany Preschool's Family Fun Night on **Friday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.** The emphasis is on **fun** - puppet shows, pizza, a 50/50 raffle and a silent auction will highlight the evening. Mark your calendars and stay tuned

Bobbi Neal, Director of the Epiphany Preschool, has announced that she plans to retire at the end of the current school year in May. Bobbi has been at the Preschool for 25 years, the first ten of them as a teacher and the last 15 as the Director. We as a church are enormously grateful to her for the many years she has devoted to the instruction and nurturing of so many children in our community. We are planning to recognize Bobbi and honor her for her long and dedicated service on Sunday, May 2 during the worship hour. On that same morning the preschool children will be coming to sing for us, an event that is always a joyful occasion. If you would like to make a contribution to Epiphany's retirement gift for Bobbi, please make a check out to Epiphany UMC and mark it for Bobbi Neal's gift.

A search committee has been formed. If you know of anyone who is interested in information about the position, or would like to apply for it, please have him or her contact one of the committee members listed below.

Dave Foulis	dsfoulis@verizon.net	Karen Crouse
	j.c.crouse@verizon.net	
Bass Mitchell	pastor.bass@gmail.com	Judy Rushing
	jbellerush@cox.net	
Sarah deKramer	gdekramer@aol.com	Bill Fowkes
	fowkesfamily@cox.net	
Mollie Regan	mollieregan@verizon.net	



## Anything to Add?

If you have anything to add to the May Newsletter, please submit your articles by April 10<sup>th</sup> so we can get the newsletter out in time.

Items to be included can be dropped off at the office or emailed to the church secretary at [office@epiphanyumc.com](mailto:office@epiphanyumc.com).