



Also in this issue:

A BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR A HOUSE

by Bettina Blake

A celebration? We realized that 2011 was the 350th anniversary of the 1661 Blake House! . . . **Page 3**

OVERTURE!

By Linda O'Donnell

The most frequently mentioned instrument in the Bible is the voice... The new song for worship will be the song of children. . . . **Page 5**

NOT JUST POMP & CIRCUMSTANCE Congregationalists on a Mission

by Nancy S. Taylor

Yet, as we march into the school's auditorium to the music of Pomp and Circumstance, there is something amiss. . . . **Page 6.**

COMMUNICATION SURVEY RESULTS

by Katie Gerriob

Would your readership of Old South's newsletter and journal increase or decrease if they were again mailed in hard copy vs. e-mailed? How did you answer?

Page 8

WHY WE LOVE QUINN (& a Prayer upon his departure)

by Old South Church

The time has come to say good-bye to Quintessentially Quinn, to celebrate Quinn's quiddity, thank him and, not least, to avail him of his quittance.. . . **Page 10**

BEING THE LUNCH PLACE

By Margaret Bush

For many weeks this past summer, Old South's second floor meeting room, Mary Norton Hall, became a daily dining facility, stacked with supplies and added cooking equipment to serve breakfast and lunch to almost two hundred women, most of low income and many homeless. Run by a small staff and a large squad of volunteers, this well-organized service was in temporary mode at Old South. Known as *The Women's Lunch Place*, it has been a lifeline for needy individuals since 1982, operating in the basement of Church of the Covenant over on Newbury Street <www.womenslunchplace.org>.

Like some other Old South members, I had visited *The Women's Lunch Place* a few times over the years. We've always given a small bit of financial support, and I was well aware that it had grown into a very robust organization, which supplies modest counseling, medical help, and legal advice along with meals. Now, as their much-used space was undergoing a makeover, we were given an up close and personal sense of this impressive operation and the many dozens of women using it each day. Old South volunteers joined in assisting with the traffic flow, welcoming and serving those who rely on The Women's Lunch Place for meals.

During weekly shifts as elevator operator, I was provided both enjoyable observations of the women who lunch (and breakfast) as well as some humbling lessons. What a varied group of folks this is! They are of many ages, races and nationalities. They



Volunteers both cook and serve lunches to low income and homeless women (photos from www.womenslunchplace.org).



differ in social background and physical and mental health. Some speak little English. Some are on crutches or canes. Some push grocery carts filled with their worldly goods. A young woman with Down's Syndrome sports a large backpack. Carrying a folio stamped with the name of one of Harvard's distinguished schools, a woman with a nice haircut and attractive clothes looks as if she would be at home in any business or professional setting. Each week some frantic or clumsy episode reminds us that something is very much amiss with her. Some of the women are sad or angry. Many are cheerful and friendly. they are surely a microcosm of our city streets.

A very welcoming atmosphere is created by those who operate the Lunch Place, and the daily guests often respond in kind with a friendly "Good morning" as they enter the elevator and a smiling "God bless" as they ride down later. There is such a sense of hospitality in this program, and some of the women are hospitable in return, which becomes a lesson for me. "Would you like some water?" one asks me on one of summer's hottest days. "Oh. I have coffee here, but thanks," I reply. On another day one makes a nice offer. "Can I get you anything?" she asks, recognizing that I'm just riding up and down, up and down in the elevator. "Oh, I'm all set," I tell her. then I finally realize that I might do better by accepting these small acts of kindness. These are people who are doing their part in the nice scheme of hospitality. I'm reminded of that line in the hymn. "Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant, too." Obviously I still have a way to go with this suggestion!

Many pleasant exchanges occur in this elevator. One day I compliment a woman on her pretty, summery top. "And I got it for just two bucks," she says with satisfaction. I give her a thumbs up. One slim woman is always dressed in black; her long sleeves and covered hair seem to be a matter of personal choice and not religion. She carries a hefty backpack and some plastic bags, looking both warm in the summer heat and tough. I'm told by the volunteer supervisor that she is both angry and tough and prone to intimidate other guests. She greets me always in serious but friendly fashion—even months later as I now encounter her far from The Women's Lunch Place. I've discovered that she is regularly present in my local public library, where we have since had brief friendly conversations.

One woman's friendly comments are both entertaining and a rather special gift, connecting me to my past. A small black woman of older years, she is very admiring of my hair during our elevator trips. "It's so pretty!" she says when we first meet. We are so different, and I can't imagine why she would be this taken with the faded hair of a white woman. She must realize that I'm puzzled because she quickly explains. "It's all one color," she says. "I wish mine would be just one

color!" Pulled tightly back, hers is what we would call salt and pepper. I burst out laughing. I tell her that if we were to go outside in the sunshine mine would be all different colors, too. She isn't buying that, though. Each week, if others are riding with us she pokes them, pointing out my hair, and says, "Isn't it pretty?!" The approving tone in which she pronounces this is a very nice compliment, to be sure, but for me it's also a personal moment in race relations that brings back a special memory.

Years ago, when I was a minority of one while working in the library of Howard University down in Washington, I was pushed into a terribly awkward situation when the library director abruptly pushed aside the nice but inept head of our large department and made me—a relative newcomer—the supervisor. None of my colleagues got a good explanation, and we all just had to work it out. The young secretary I inherited made me smile several times when she would explain what the black women liked about me. I sometimes expressed my annoyance over unethical stuff happening above us. "I just don't get it," I'd tell her, and she'd say, "You just don't get it, Miss Bush, because you're not black." Small moments surely bring us together in unexpected ways. I imagine there were many of these for those of us from Old South sharing the visits of those who dine at The Women's Lunch Place.

As breakfast and lunch returned to their nicely refinished home at Church of the Covenant early in the fall, we are left with a nice sense of friendship and a much greater understanding of the huge effort required to operate this vital program day after day, week after week, year after year. Lucy Costa of our Christian Service and Outreach Committee did yeoman service in rounding up and assisting our volunteers. She continues to stay in touch and work with The Women's Lunch Place and would very much appreciate hearing from anyone willing to volunteer a bit for this life-giving and affirming effort. †



Photo from <www.womenslunchplace.org>.

A Wall Mural by WLP's Creative Expressions program left as thanks for the generous and warm hospitality of Old South Church.

Delicious cake replica of Blake House (photo by Sydney Hanlon).



A BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR A HOUSE

by *Bettina Blake*

As we are reminded on the cover of every Sunday bulletin, the Old South congregation was “Gathered 1669” in the earliest days of the English colony at Boston. Even earlier, in 1661, on the Dorchester side of the harbor, James Blake built a house for his family. James had arrived as a boy in 1630 on one of the first ships bringing settlers to New England. The woman he married, Elizabeth Clap, was among the first babies born among passengers on the same ship. Today the house that James Blake built for his wife and children is the oldest surviving single family residence in Boston (and thus one of the oldest houses in the United States). Through my father, born in Jamaica Plain, I am a direct descendant of James Blake.

James Blake served as Deacon of First Church, Dorchester, for fourteen years and later as Ruling Elder for a similar length of time. He was also a constable, a town selectman, and a deputy to the General Court (Massachusetts legislature). His dwelling—large for the 1660s—was surrounded by a 91-acre estate (non-contiguous) consisting of farmlands, orchards, gardens, and even a tannery. Viewing the house today, on a busy urban avenue, it is hard to visualize its rural Colonial setting.

When I came to Boston in 2005 for retirement, I knew of the Blake House, having visited it in 1996 with the president of the Dorchester Historical Society (DHS). It was in disrepair but the Society was hoping to get funds to restore it. Some years later DHS succeeded in getting a series of grants and the house now has a new roof, the old windows have been replaced, the foundation repaired, and the yard restored and fenced in. The house is located just below Edward Everett Square, at 735 Columbia Road, in Richardson Park. Ellen Berkland, archaeologist for the state’s Department of Conservation and Recreation, lives there as caretaker. During the school year she conducts occasional tours of the house for school children, but otherwise the house is closed because the DHS cannot afford to have it open to the public.

The DHS makes heroic efforts to maintain the 1661 Blake House. It is a unique example of West of England wood frame construction; one can also observe characteristic seventeenth century details such as wattle and daub insulation in its walls. The DHS owns and manages three other historic structures, the Lemuel Clap (1710, 1765) and William Clapp (1806) Houses, and the Clapp Barn (ca. 1850). Almost all the maintenance of the properties is done on a volunteer basis. Having donated some Blake furniture to the DHS, I wanted to see whether, by getting in touch with other Blake and Clapp descendants living beyond Dorchester, it might be possible to create more financial support for preserving the DHS properties, especially the Blake House.

A public historian, Faith Ferguson, had worked for me part-time on two other projects. She agreed to search for descendants of the earliest settlers of Dorchester—Blakes, Clapps, Withingtons, Capons, and so on—using her knowledge of electronic and genealogical resources. The results were impressive. Direct descendants were located in South Carolina, Hawaii, Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, California, as well as in the New England states. In January 2011 Dr. Ferguson was hired part-time by the DHS as director of the Dorchester Descendants Project, with responsibility for creating a website, contacting descendants, and planning a celebration in June.

A celebration? We realized that 2011 was the 350th anniversary of the 1661 Blake House! In conjunction with a “birthday party” and a festive weekend at the DHS, I was also willing to underwrite—and Ferguson to write—an illustrated catalogue/book about the historic collections belonging to the DHS. Not only would such a publication be an attraction for Dorchester descendants who came to the commemoration weekend, but it would also be a useful resource for the DHS in the future.



Celebration of the 350th Anniversary of Blake House (photo by Sydney Hanlon).

During the winter and spring Faith Ferguson worked out of my apartment (no space was available at the DHS). We enlisted the expert services of Jim Hood, OSC member and professional graphic designer; to design the catalogue/book. He in turn brought Susan Symonds, gifted art photographer, into the collaboration. What had begun as a simple booklet grew into a significant historical account of the evolution of Dorchester from colonial days to the early twentieth century, illustrated with magnificent photographs of the DHS buildings and artifacts.

During the same period Earl Taylor, the indefatigable president of the DHS, was marshaling the resources and volunteer effort of the Board of Directors, the caretakers of the houses, and others, to create a memorable two-day party June 24 and 25, involving all three houses and the barn. Experts on New England history and genealogy were secured as speakers/workshop presenters on Saturday. The Dorchester Winery on the pier near Tenean Beach agreed to hold a celebratory Friday evening kick-off in its facilities, where members of the DHS Board would host the out-of-town guests at a wine-tasting dinner.

As the last weekend of June approached, the pace of preparation became hectic. Questions of lodging for guests, transportation, directions to the houses were coming in, while Ferguson, Hood, and I were reading galley proofs for *Dorchester's Collections: Illustrating a Community, 1630-1930*. A giant cake, in the form of a reproduction of the Blake House, had been ordered by a member of the DHS Board, and there would be ice cream for everyone attending the noon birthday party on the lawn in front of the Blake House, under a tent erected in case of inclement weather.

The DHS has long experience conducting community events. Its expertise was demonstrated in the well-organized Blake House weekend. The numerous Withingtons from Windsor, CT mingled happily with Blakes from Ohio and Clapps from all over at the Friday night dinner, where Faith Ferguson's book was unveiled. The weather was chilly on Saturday but dry. The DHS properties, groomed for the occasion, hosted many local visitors as well as those from afar. The workshops on genealogy, care of family treasures, and the writing of family histories were well attended. Many people, especially the children, were fascinated by the old farm equipment displayed in the Clapp Barn.

At the Blake House, I found *myself* on display—seated in a corner near the entrance, I was one of the attractions, pointed out to touring groups as a “direct descendant of the man who built the house.” It was fun to greet friends who came through: Anna Yoder, Kay Davis, and Diane Pierce-Williams from Old South, a colleague from my Wellesley

College days, a fellow administrator from the University of MN, Morris who now lives in Boston, and others. A friend from Barnard College, who drove up from NYC for the occasion, chauffeured me around for the whole two days.

As noon approached on Saturday, everyone gathered in front of the Blake House, under or near the tent, admiring the large and amazing likeness of the House created in cake and frosting. After a brief program, we all sang “Happy Birthday” to the venerable House. With some trepidation, I made a first cut into one side of the giant cake. Others then took over and saw that all present were served with cake and ice cream. The Blake House, in colonial days, often served as gathering place for meetings of town officers and elders of First Church, but I doubt it ever before enjoyed a birthday party for itself!

Will the Dorchester Descendants continue within the DHS, expanding to include descendants of more recent generations? Will this initiative eventually result in greater financial support for the DHS? DHS President Earl Taylor has talked about having a “reunion” of descendants in June 2012. Faith Ferguson has moved on to projects elsewhere, as have Jim Hood, Susan Symonds, and I. But I have assured Earl Taylor of my continued interest in supporting the DHS and the Blake House.

The Blake House has endured for an unusually long time for a modest wood frame structure. I am hoping that its longevity augurs well for its future. ✚

Note: copies of the Dorchester Historic catalogue are still available (from Bettina Blake or the DHS) at the bargain price of \$10.00.



Direct descendent Bettina Blake makes the first cut into the cake replica of the 350 year-old Blake House. (All photos by Sydney Hanlon -- a judge of the Mass. State Court of Appeals!)

OVERTURE!

by Linda O'Donnell



The new Old South Children's Choir debuts, singing "Chrissimas Day" at the Festival Service on December 18, 2011 (photo by Scott McInturff).

The Bible makes countless references to praising God with music. Trumpets, harps, drums, tambourines, lyres, cymbals, pipes, and strings are mentioned throughout its books. However, the *most* frequently mentioned instrument is the voice.

Sing unto him a new song; play skillfully with a loud noise. --Psalm 33:3

During worship services, people join together in singing anthems, hymns, and responses. It is only natural that this tradition of singing God's praises should begin in childhood. The Old South Children's Choir is an ensemble where children can learn new songs, develop their vocal skills, and contribute to the music ministry of the church.

The new song for worship will be the song of children. They will be heard singing in the Old South Children's Choir. This group is a new ensemble at Old South that has begun this year. Children now rehearse weekly and prepare for numerous appearances annually during the Festival Worship Service. Their songs include primarily sacred repertoire ranging in style from the classics to folk music.

All elementary-age children are welcome in the choir. The amount of experience does not matter because all children can learn to sing. As infants, they used their singing voices before they learned to speak. The cooing sounds that they made as babies were the first sounds of their voices. As these sounds were stimulated, they developed into more varied sounds. If children are surrounded by adults that sing and, even better, by other children that sing, they will begin to repeat these songs and chants and their singing voices will emerge.

The Old South Children's Choir is a place where children can learn to sing skillfully. Many children have been singing for all of their lives while others may find it to be a new experience. In both scenarios, there are skills that need to be developed in order to successfully sing in any vocal ensemble.

During rehearsals, choir members will experience child-centered games and activities designed to stimulate vocal manipulation. Once a child is comfortable moving the voice, attention can be directed towards pitch-matching skills. During each rehearsal, every child will have the opportunity to sing a short solo. While singing within a group, not all children have the ability to discriminate between their own voice and the voices of others. Therefore, all young singers need the opportunity to hear their voice alone in order to compare it to the example. Experienced singers will become vocal models for younger and less experienced singers. Inexperienced singers will learn quickly by listening and imitating other choir members.

Choir members will also work on breathing, blending, and projecting their voices. As the choir grows with skill and experience, part-singing will be introduced. Along with singing skills, choir members will also work on the ability to focus and follow a conductor.

The Old South Children's Choir made its debut on December 18 with a loud noise. The loud noise was not as much a sound as it was an impact. This ensemble of young singers was definitely noticed by the church community. The Children's Choir is now a place where children not only can sing but also can make a contribution to the music ministry of Old South. By singing in the choir, children can learn that they are never too young to offer their time and service to the church. This experience can be a training ground for their service as adults. These children will be the future singers in adult choirs. They will also be the next generation of music committee members, and hopefully active leaders in their church communities.

Let the children of Old South sing a new song in the Children's Choir. Let them learn to use their voices skillfully in order that they have them to use throughout their lives. Let them make an impact on the church today, as well as in the future. ✝

Nancy Taylor giving the Benediction at the Inauguration for President David G. Horner with glowing results!

NOT JUST POMP & CIRCUMSTANCE

by Nancy S. Taylor, Senior Minister

from Oct. 30, 2011 sermon (Reformation Sunday)

The auditorium is filled to capacity. The school orchestra is engaged in a lively and loud rendition of *Pomp and Circumstance*. The academic procession begins. It wends its way in, down the aisle, onto the stage. Faculty and Deans, Trustees and Visiting professors, Presidents from other universities, distinguished guests ... all in academic regalia ... robes and hoods and caps, velvet and silk in an array of colors.

The occasion is the inauguration of the new President of the American College of Greece. The American College of Greece is Europe's oldest and largest, comprehensive, U.S.-accredited academic institution and the largest private institute of education in Greece.

I am there, a guest of the President, to offer the Benediction. I have been flown in to deliver a two-minute Benediction. I have been flown from Boston, Massachusetts to Athens, Greece, Business Class, to deliver a two minute Benediction. I have been flown from Boston to Athens, put up in my own apartment, with a stunning, panoramic view of Athens from my private balcony, my kitchen and refrigerator stocked with food, to deliver a two-minute Benediction. It is, hands down, the best gig I have ever had.



President Horner's invitation to me is very deliberate. The American College of Greece was founded by a female Congregational Missionary from Boston. In 1875, Maria West boarded a ship from a wharf in Boston Harbor and sailed to Asia Minor with the mission of founding there a school for girls ... with the express mission of offering to girls the opportunity to learn, to read and to write, to investigate the world, to study science and math, medicine and the arts.

At his Inauguration, President Horner hopes to embody the school's heritage ... the two streams of culture, language and religion, that still course through the school's bloodstream: Boston and Athens, English and Greek, Orthodox and Congregational, a surprising and delightful synthesis of Occident and Orient. *(continued next page)*

CONGREGATIONALISTS ON A MISSION

By Nancy S. Taylor

Once settled in the New World, those who followed the Congregational Way set out to bring the glad tiding of Jesus (not to mention saving and civilizing influence of Christianity) to those hitherto bereft of such joy.

Since the Congregational Way depended on an educated and literate laity (upon persons equipped to read, to understand and to discourse upon the Holy Scriptures), they set out to teach reading and writing. Occasionally, as in the case of Algonquin, they first created a written language and then translated the entire Bible into it. From the founding of Harvard (1636) to urban and rural Sunday Schools, to integrated schools to educated freed slaves, Congregationalists were determined to educate the world, enabling every person direct access to the Scriptures.

In the early 1800s, Congregationalists took to the high seas, founding schools in China, India, Africa and across Asia. Braving hardships of every kind, they persevered to teach

reading and writing, endeavoring to give every living soul the opportunity to know the saving power of Christ.

In 1875, a young, adventuresome and spirited woman from Boston boarded a ship bound for Turkey. Maria A. West traveled alone. Supported by prayers and dollars from New England, she was determined to found a school for girls in Turkey (having taught herself Armenian on an earlier venture to Constantinople). Failing to convince the Muslims of the need for Western education and Christianity, she turned her efforts to the Armenians. They, too, were hesitant to place their girls under the educative influences of Maria West, for the idea of education girls was revolutionary in Ottoman Turkey. Undeterred, Miss West circumnavigated the fathers, brothers, Orthodox hierarchs and the Ottoman authorities, appealing directly to the mothers. This strategy was shrewd. It was thus in 1875, in the cosmopolitan, tolerant and prosperous city of Smyrna that the American College of Greece was born.

Miss West's achievements were lauded back here in Boston at the American Missions Headquarters. *(continued next page)*

President Horner struck upon the idea of capturing and representing these two living, vital streams in two representative personages: first and foremost, representing Greece, His Beatitude, Hieronymos the Second, Archbishop of Athens and All Greece; second, last and least, representing Boston Congregationalism: me.

Yet, as we march into the school's auditorium to the music of *Pomp and Circumstance*, there is something amiss. President Horner's thoughtful idea has hit a snag. His Beatitude, Hieronymos the Second, Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, is a no show.

Here's the story as it was told to me. At the last minute, His Beatitude learned I would be part of the ceremony ... that he and I were to be paired bookends to the Inauguration: He the invocator ... me the benedictor. This, it seems, was not to be borne. A last minute substitution was made. In the place of His Beatitude there appeared a bishop whose name I never learned, whose hand I never shook, with whom I never exchanged a word.

The substitute Bishop was present and did his duty in offering the Invocation and thereby conferring upon the proceedings the imprimatur of the Greek Orthodox Church ... but, he refused to participate in the academic procession.

Instead, the Bishop appeared mysteriously from back stage ... offered his Invocation and departed by the same mysterious route ... his black garb evaporating into the stage's black curtains ... like magic.

Through the decades and centuries that followed, Boston supported the school through outbreaks of smallpox, typhus and bubonic plague, through war and the eventual evacuation from Smyrna during the horror of the Armenian Genocide and its relocation to a new home in Athens, Greece.

Today, the American College of Greece is a beacon of academic excellence, teaching Western-style education to high school, college and graduate students. Its President, David Horner, is a member of Old South Church in Boston, as is their scholar in residence, Dr. Sue Horner. The school's board of trustees continues to meet in Boston. ✚



Maria A. West

That was two years ago, March of 2009. I am recently returned from my second trip to the American College of Greece. Undeterred by his first failure at ecumenical cooperation and understanding, President David Horner invited me back again ... this time to help the American College of Greece celebrate an anniversary.

It was my job to explain to the students what became of the Boston Congregationalists left behind in Boston by their founder, Maria West. In other words, I was to tell them about you!

I explained that American Congregationalism and American Democracy grew up together, hand in glove, each shaping and forming the other.

I explained how and why we had changed and evolved to being among the most progressive churches in America ... I described the early ordination of women, of persons of color and of openly gay people.

When the students asked me about how I came to be at Old South Church, I explained to them the Congregational dating system in which lonely clergy look for lonely and compatible churches until they find a good match.

Greece is a mono-religious culture. The Greek Orthodox Church is everything and everywhere. Greek Orthodoxy is what Greeks know of Christianity.

(continued next page)

A Missionary Says Thank You

The following inscription, written by the author (pictured at left), was placed on the first page of her book, *The Romance of Missions: Or, Inside Views of Life and Labor in the land of Ararat*.

*To the ministering women, American and England,
who like the Marys and Marthas,
the Joannas and Susannas of old,
follow in the footsteps of the Master;
"Ministering to Him of their substance,"
in palace beautiful, or in lowly cottage,
in "every city and village" where he,
in the person of his disciples,
is "Preaching and showing
The glad tidings of the kingdom of God."*

--Maria A. West

Greek Orthodoxy is patriarchal. The liturgical language of the Greek Orthodox Church is New Testament Greek, a language no one in Greece speaks or understands ... which is to say, the liturgy—lengthy, rich and complex—is utterly incomprehensible to virtually every single Greek citizen.

In other words, Greek Orthodoxy and New England Congregationalism are as day is to night.

At the American College of Greece I was an object of profound curiosity. The students had many questions: Does anyone **go** to your church? What do you **do** all day? What did your parents say when you told them you would do this thing?

Reformation Sunday is a Sunday celebrated throughout Protestant Christendom. We recall our Protestant Reformers: Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli, Jan Hus and John Calvin. We sing strong, stirring Protestant hymns. We recall the struggles, the persecutions, the pain and violence that wracked the followers of Jesus as our forebears engaged in an all out, down and dirty battle over the right way to be church. We feel, perhaps, a touch of sinful pride over being better, newer, more evolved than our cousin faiths ... more than Orthodoxy and Catholicism.

One of the first questions tourists ask upon entering this sanctuary is this: Is this a Catholic Church? Whenever I encounter that question—and I encounter it a lot—I want to ask: "Why does that matter? This is the house and home of God! What's the difference if it is Catholic or Protestant or Orthodox ... Baptist or Lutheran, Eastern or Western? Don't you dare let that question affect your experience of the *Mysterium Tremendum* whose home this is!"

Here is what I wish the tourist would ask ... I wish they would ask the same questions asked of me by the students of the American College of Greece: Does anyone **go** to your church? What do you **do** all day? What did your parents say when you told them you would do this thing?

Those are questions that take us to matters of some substance.

Here is what is true of Orthodoxy, Protestantism and Catholicism: We all call Jesus, the Child of God, our Savior and Friend. We all partake of bread and cup in hushed and holy remembrance.

We all light candles, pray prayers, sing hymns and wonder at the Creator of the Whirling Planets.

And this: We all bring to these houses of God our most

precious possessions: our children to be baptized; our beloved dead to be received home into the everlasting arms; our money, our dollars as symbols of our devotion and trust.

The motto of the American College of Greece is a Latin phrase: *Non Ministrari Sed Ministrare*.

These were words first spoken in Arabic, but which the Greeks translate into Greek and we translate into English: "I come," said Jesus, "Not to be served, but to serve."

It is the language of Jesus, the common language of our common gospel ... the good news of Christ's love.

Everything else is just so much pomp and circumstance. †

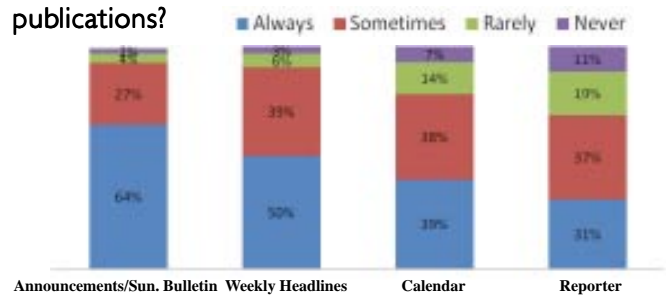
COMMUNICATION SURVEY RESULTS

By Katie Gerrish
Communications Committee

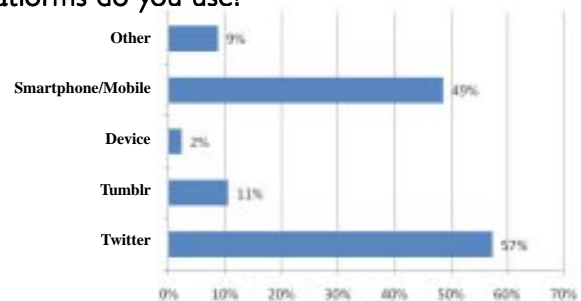


Thank you to everyone who participated in the Communications Survey this past fall! We got 218 responses to the survey. The Communications committee is in the process of analyzing the responses and determining how to best use this information to keep you, our congregation, as well informed about all of things that are going on at Old South. While we are doing this analysis, we wanted to share with you some of the information that we gathered. Below is the breakdown of the collected data.

How often do you read each of the following publications?

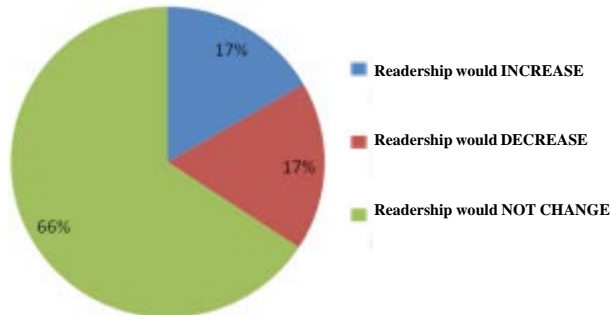


Which of the following social media and technology platforms do you use?

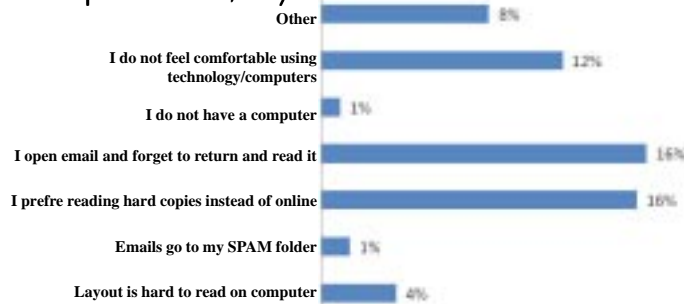


A few years ago, we switched to electronic distribution of the newsletter and journal, achieving huge savings of money, time, and environmental impact. We are trying to assess the effect – if any – this has had on readership levels.

Would your readership of the newsletter and journal *increase* or *decrease* if they were mailed in hard copy to your home versus emailed?



If email distribution makes it less likely that you will read these publications, why?



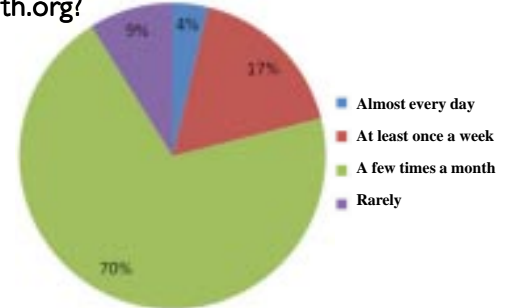
A sample of some of the “Other” responses:

- * Also, whole family will read it more if hard copy is on refrigerator or in bathroom;
- * Email communication is very frequent – I would read more often if the email was dispersed once a week;
- * So many e-mails that it sometimes just gets lost;
- * Computers are work; reading hard copy usually isn't – this is irrational, but true for me;
- * I prefer the electronic format;
- * I just get way too much e-mail – time is a problem;
- * Short stuff is fine but long things like newsletter + journal unpleasant to read from computer screen;
- * Read email so no need to read hard copy (duplication);
- * Read emails;
- * I print out long documents like the Reporter;
- * I actually like the e-mail version better;
- * I read the (emailed) publications, but often a few months “late”;
- * Too many emails, which is probably the reason I'm less likely to read these publications;
- * I print hard copies;
- * Having a hard copy around makes it more likely I will physically pick it up to read multiple times.

Are you subscribed to the *Old South Forum*, an informal email group for members and friends of Old South?

Yes = 49% No = 36% Subscribe Me = 12%

On average, how often do you visit the church website, www.oldsouth.org?

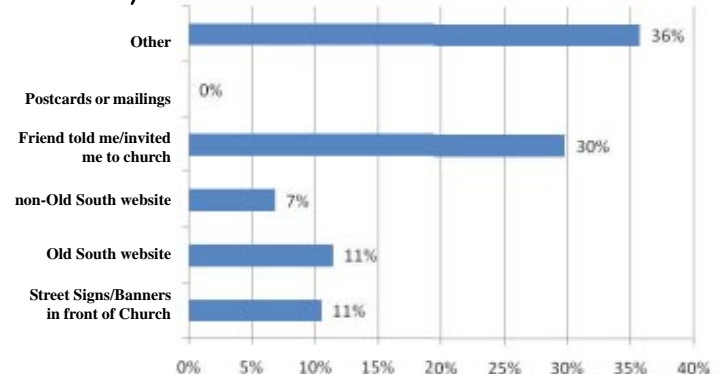


What information do you look for on the website?

Below is a summary of some of the common responses:

- * Photos;
- * Sermon and Worship Podcasts;
- * Event and Calendar Information;
- * Preaching Schedule;
- * OSC Directory and Contact Information.

How did you first learn about Old South Church?



There were a variety of “Other” responses; here are some of the common threads:

- * Walked in, walked by, live in the neighborhood;
- * UCC website, Mass Conference, Google, or Phone book (pre-web);
- * Word of mouth – from a friend, family member, former pastor;
- * Came for a non-worship event (i.e. music concert, First Night, Handbells).

What kind of information would you like to see more of in church publications?

Many people noted that they think the publications are good as they are. They like what they see and appreciate the articles.

There were many answers to this question – some of the common threads are:

- * Want to learn more about the members of Old South;
- * Highlight members;
- * How members participate in the various church ministries;
- * Personal stories about how members came to Old South;
- * Testimonies – significant events in people’s faith journeys, ways they have felt close to God;
- * Good news about members;
- * Information about the church;
- * Financial;
- * Committee information, such as
 - What they are doing, What their purpose is;
 - How to get in contact with chairs;
- * Volunteer Opportunities;
- * Church Resources to use at home;
- * Daily scripture passage, Upcoming scripture for worship;
- * Suggestions that Old South start a Singles group.

One of our primary tasks was to find out, if we needed to take a step backwards from full digital distribution of our church publications, the monthly *Calendar* and the quarterly *Reporter*. But with 17% of you saying you would read it more if we went back to hard copy mailing, and 17% of you saying you would read it less, it was a mixed signal that told us that we are, perhaps, just in a period of transition and going back would not be helpful. We need to do a better job of letting everyone know that hard copy versions of both these publications are always available at church (check elevator lobby) or else request that it be sent to you by postal mail to <admin@oldsouth.org>.

As for the other questions, it is clear that more and more of you are either becoming familiar with or already dependent on digital communications of various types. So, we will continue on the road to new venues for Old South Communications (watch for our new Old South Facebook page to officially debut shortly!) and, as always, we appreciate your input to keep us on the right path. ✝

A PRAYER UPON QUINN'S DEPARTURE

by Jan Monsma

Loving God,

Help us to pray. Help us to say what our hearts know so well but our minds search for words to express.

“Thank you” comes first and foremost.

Accept our great gratitude for Quinn’s six and one-half years of faithful leadership in this group. Thank you for the gift of your amazing love shown to us through him.

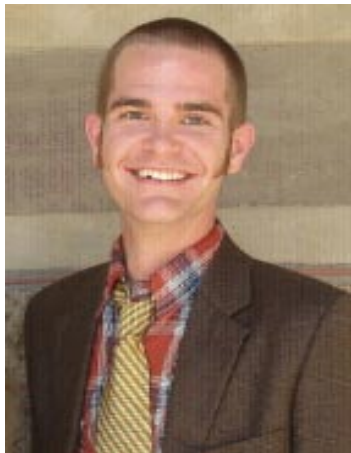
His inclusiveness has shaped our lips to pronounce “welcome” with sincerity.

His listening has opened our ears to hear opinions at variance from our own.

His love for your natural world has opened our eyes to see and strengthened our hands to bless and protect.

His regard for each of us has softened our hearts toward one another.

His wisdom has bent our minds to realize that our old, old faith is ever current and bears rigorous contemporary demands.



Associate Minister Quinn Caldwell leaves Old South Church after 6 ½ years of stellar service.

His sense of joy has shaped our faces into smiles and made our throats channels for laughter.

And most of all, his wise and sturdy faith in you has anchored ours with an unapologetic resolve to learn from and follow the Christ you have given us.

Oh God, thank you!

Thank you for all his gifts Quinn shared with us. Shower them now and in the future on a multitude of others whose lives, we pray, Quinn will touch in the future.

Grant Quinn your guidance and blessing as he finds his new area of service to you. Bless his family, Terry and little Asa with your guidance, protection and infinite love.

And grant to us who remain in this place your grace and peace, secure in the knowledge that your love ties us all in a living tether which geographical distance cannot sever.

In Christ's name we pray.

Amen ✝

WHY WE LOVE QUINN

by Old South Church

After 6 ½ years of stellar service, Associate Minister Quinn Caldwell left Old South Church on January 8th as his last Sunday, when a grand goodbye celebration and many tributes and gifts were given. Quinn, his partner Terry, and their toddler son Asa are returning to upstate New York to be closer to family and Terry's new job. You can read Quinn's letter to the congregation at this link: <www.oldsouth.org/news/quinn-caldwell-departing-osc> as well as those from Senior Minister Nancy Taylor and Moderator Vard Johnson. Quinn's ministry has forever marked Old South Church. He helped form First Worship and Jazz Worship, initiated numerous study groups -- Theological Book Group, Faith on Tap, and the Disciple Bible Studies -- built up our LGBT and Friends and helped update OSC's "Note on the Inclusive Dimensions of God's Grace" to include gender identity. Quinn has served as the staff liaison for the Christian Service and Outreach Committee and joined the Mission Trip Team on several missions. His contributions as a member of the UCC's Still Speaking Writer's Group have given Quinn and Old South a national profile with our denomination. His inventive and poetic sermons have arrested our spiritual attention while nourishing our hearts and minds. His astonishing Words of Welcome challenge our assumption and ring in our ears. . . . **And here are yet more reasons:**

WHY WE LOVE QUINN

He writes *the* best Daily Devotionals. As soon as I start reading I know whether Quinn is the author. He has an original, inspirational style. **He brought not only his whole self to Old South Church, he also brought Terry and Asa into our midst!** *His very sturdy, stable faith expressed in surprising new ways and words.* THE CREATIVE WAYS IN WHICH HE PROCLAIMS THE ALL-INCLUSIVE WELCOME. *His talent as a storyteller is tops.* Candles, flash paper and pretty much any kind of FIRE or FLAME. Inspiring & moving preaching! **A terrific Biblical exegete and expositor.** HE IS SO FULL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT IT SHINES THROUGH! He compels me to question, to challenge, to wonder about my own assumptions ... and to feel Quinn's passion long after I forget his words. **Witty, Welcoming, Warm & Wise ... a Wondrous Word-Wizard.** *He has shown us a God who is both unknowable and intimate. He made us so proud!* *The way he pastored us before our marriage, during our wedding and through infertility.* His poetic ear! HE IS AT ONCE SO WISE AND SO FUNNY! **VIM, VIGOR AND CONCISENESS.** Knowing him has been diverse, fun and profound. *That special divine spark that draws us in and then challenges us with a provocative message to rise out of our complacency into a better Christ-filled world.* **PRIDE INTERFAITH WORSHIP SERVICE organizer.** His introduction to communion, especially at JAZZ Worship. *You never, ever know what to expect with Quinn: he is full of delightful surprises.* **QUINN'S HARD WORK HAS CREATED WONDERFUL BIBLE STUDY GROUPS AT OSC THAT I RELY ON FOR COMFORT, COMMUNITY AND PASSIONATE EXPLORATION.** Modern, relevant, humorous pastoral prayers. When we walk into Old South on Sunday morning and Quinn Caldwell says to our Quinn (age 5) "Hi Quinn!" and our Quinn answers back "Hi Quinn!" We will miss that. **HIS EVER-CHANGING HAIR & FACIAL HAIR** 😊 *He brings images to life and makes things so relatable. He has a gift and it will be greatly missed by us!* He finds Ithaca gorges, adores the *Magnificat* and makes that old Bible so fun. We love him because he loves us. *His inclusiveness shapes our lips to pronounce "welcome" with sincerity.*

STAFF PICKS: Sermons in iambic pentameter **ORANGE!** All the really cool things on Q's desk. We think he makes us hip by association. **He calls his iPhone, My Precious** *He's already a published author!* His amaaaazing mentoring of our interns: Jeff, Tadd, Elissa, Abby, Bob, Jocelyn, Jack, Catherine & Shawn. *We are a little confused: If the DEVIL is in the Details, does that mean that the Devil is in QUINN?* **His name begins with Q!** *Quinn loves Animals & Nature.* **BRAND QUINN:**



Old South Reporter



Winter 2012 Edition



from Page 8

WINTER REPORTER 2012

“One of the first questions tourists ask upon entering this sanctuary is this: Is this a Catholic Church? . . . I want to ask: “Why does that matter? This is the house and home of God! . . . Don’t you dare let that question affect your experience of the Mysterium Tremendum whose home this is!””

Old South Online Forum

Keep in touch with OSC all year round by subscribing to our online e-mail forum. See our Bulletin Board and join at <http://www.tinyurl.com/OldSouthForum> or request subscription from communications@oldsouth.org.

Old South Reporter

OSC Reporter, a voice for the extended community of the Old South Church, explores the mission of the church and aspects of the Christian life through news, stories, poetry, essays, and commentaries

Communications Committee: *Jon Geldert, chair; Katie Gerrish, Christopher Breen, Jess Jackson, Jackie Geilfuss, Evan Shu, Ron Buford & Nancy Taylor.*

Deadline for next issue: **March 18, 2012**
Submissions/Info to: evanshu@comcast.net

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