

CHURCH NOTES

The **New Plainsmen Quartet** will be performing at 7 p.m. Saturday at the Jones Center for Families in Springdale.

Faith Lutheran Church in Bentonville will sponsor a fall harvest from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sept. 22. The event consists of a rummage sale and a barbecue. Proceeds will go to a fund to help church members need and to the church's growth fund.

Unity of Fayetteville will present the singer-songwriter team of Bukeka Shoals and Jerome Johnson in concert at 2 p.m. Sept. 30. The musicians have opened concerts for Harry Belafonte, Christopher Cross, Michael Beckwith and more.

Central United Methodist Church in Fayetteville will host a special "Check Us Out" Sunday on Sept. 16. Information about the church and guided tours will be available.

Bethel Baptist Church in Bentonville will present Francois Norcilus, a missionary pastor from Haiti, as guest speaker at the 10:45 a.m. service Sunday.

Roy Tremble, a gospel soloist, will perform in concert at 10:45 a.m. Sept. 16. A free-will offering will be taken during the worship service. Tremble has four Dove awards and three Grammy nominations. He sang with the Rebels, Whitney Gleason and the Jubilee Quartet, the Weatherfords and was a member of the Cathedrals for eight years.

Eagle Heights Baptist Church in Bentonville will celebrate its one-year anniversary with a special service Sunday. The church, started as a mission of First Baptist Church in Bentonville, continues to meet at 10 a.m. Sunday at the Springhill Middle School.

Elizabeth George, speaker, teacher and author of the best-selling Christian book "A Woman After God's Own Heart," will speak Oct. 12-13 at the Chateau on the Lake in Branson, Mo. For reservations, call Fellowship Bible Church of Northwest Arkansas in Lowell.

Faith Free Will Baptist Church in Springdale will present an outdoor gospel singing from 2 p.m. until dark Saturday. Local groups and church members will perform. Visitors are encouraged to bring lawn chairs.

Parishioners of **Nueva Esperanza at Central United Methodist Church in Rogers** will honor pastor Romero Lizcano at noon Sunday.

Calvary Baptist Church in Fayetteville will offer a praise and worship conference from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sept. 22. The conference is for all pastors, music directors, instrumentalists, choir members, sound operators and church members.

First Presbyterian Church in Springdale will observe Promotion Sunday with an intergenerational kick-off for the new Sunday school year at 9:30 a.m. Sunday. The celebration will include special music, a craft and introduction and recognition of teachers. Fall classes will include songs, stories and memory work for elementary students; a survey of the Old Testament for middle school students; discussion on current issues for high school students; a lectionary class, a video series "The Hurried Family" and a book discussion on "The Case for Christ" by Lee Strobel for adults.

The church will return to its regular schedule of services this week with Sunday school at 9:30 a.m. and worship at 11 a.m.

Christ the King Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Bentonville has a new pastor. Arno Fericich will begin his service as interim pastor Sunday. Worship services are at 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Sunday School is at 9 a.m.

The church will hold its Holiday Bazaar on Oct. 6. This event is a fund-raiser presented by the Women's Service Circle.

Iglesia Centro Cristiano in Rogers will present the Rev. and Mrs. David Duncan, Assemblies of God international missionaries, speaking at 7 p.m. Sept. 14.

Duncan is adjunct professor at Global University and serves as an advisor to schools in the former Soviet Union, northwestern Europe and Africa. Mrs. Duncan has developed women's studies and activities.

They will discuss world evangelism as it relates to recent political developments in the former Soviet Union and the status of missions in "closed" and "difficult" areas.

First Presbyterian Church in Bentonville will celebrate Christian Education Sunday. Church school teachers will be commissioned

during the 9:30 a.m. service. Classes for all ages will begin at 10:45 a.m.

Children's and youth classes will use the "Hands-on Bible Curriculum." Four new adult classes will include "Basic Christian Beliefs," "A Bird's Eye View of the Bible at a Snail's Pace," a women's class studying "When All You've Ever Wanted Isn't Enough" by Harold Kushner and "Sandwiched Between Your Parents and Your Kids."

New Pentecostal Holiness Church in Fayetteville will hold a revival with evangelists Donna Jean and Monty Duke. Services start at 7 p.m. Wednesday through Sept. 15 and at 11 a.m. Sept. 16.

First United Methodist Church in Bella Vista will present Marilyn and the Rev. Larry Williams and the Rev. Harrell Guard, Stephen ministers, leading the worship service Sept. 16. A dinner for new members will be held at noon. Other new member events are planned for Sept. 23 and Sept. 30.

Abundant Grace Church, which meets at Word of Life Fellowship in Bentonville, will host Richard Hight, an artist and illustrator, at 10:30 a.m. Sunday. He will present "Visual Impact."

First Methodist Church in Rogers will offer "Noah's Arts," a weekly program for children, beginning Wednesday. The church offers several educational programs for children and adults, including "Christian Believer: Knowing God with Heart and Mind."

Teens from Bella Vista Christian Church will discuss their experiences as missionaries in Mexico at 7 p.m. Sunday.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Fayetteville will host Michael J. Beary, author of "Black Bishop: Edward T. Demby and the Struggle for Racial Equality in the Episcopal Church," at 10 a.m. Sunday.

Village Baptist Church in Bella Vista will ordain Gerald Johnson as deacon Sunday.

Bella Vista United Methodist Church will send volunteers to Mount Sequoyah Assembly at 7 a.m. Saturday. These volunteers will paint walking prayer path signs.

— SPECIAL TO THE MORNING NEWS

SUBDUE NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

Buddhist Master: Cut Off Root

'AFFLICTED MINDS' BIGGEST ENEMY TODAY

By Annette Fuller
THE DALLAS MORNING NEWS

Lid Juarez found something four years ago that transformed his life. The 70-year-old Dallas man has lost 25 pounds, and chronic problems with indigestion and arthritis are gone. He said the hassles of day-to-day life no longer bother him, and he feels at peace 24 hours a day.

"I am responsible for my own self," said the convert to Buddhism, whose study and practice have brought him a new life force. "Through meditation every day, my life stays on the right track."

Juarez and others like him gathered recently at the Vietnamese Community Center in Garland, Texas, to receive blessings and empowerment from one of the most respected and revered Buddhist leaders in the world: Drubwang Pema Norbu Rinpoche. The 69-year-old is the retired Supreme Head of the Nyingmapa, the oldest school of Tibetan Buddhism.

Most Buddhists consider face-to-face time with teachers all-important, and the rapt attention received by Rinpoche, which means "teacher," showed his followers' intense devotion.

Each time he arrived at the community center, he was surrounded by about a dozen young monks who travel and study with him. The monks played horns and carried incense holders. All were draped in colorful robes of orange, yellow and red, and Rinpoche slowly hoisted himself, with the aid of the monks, onto a colorful platform.

"The experiences of happiness and suffering do not just arrive out of nowhere," he said, his words translated into English by one of the monks. "They arise out of your good or

"It's hard being a Buddhist in corporate America. No matter what happens at work, I try to stay calm and centered."

TIFANY HENDERSON, Plano, Texas resident

negative actions. Generating loving kindness and compassion is the only path on how to liberate oneself from suffering."

Rinpoche told the quiet audience that all humans need to "cut off the root" of self-attachment and act as a loving parent to all other beings, including humans, animals and even the smallest insect.

"We are all equally the same," he said, referring to humans and all creatures, big and small.

The only enemy in the world today is our own "afflicted minds," he said. "With meditation and practice, we subdue our negative emotions, which are our inner enemy," he said.

If humans subdue their afflicted minds, and fill themselves instead with love and compassion, then "the external world cannot do anything harmful to (them)," he said.

Tiffany Henderson of Plano, Texas, began her quest to adopt Buddhism a few months ago.

"It's hard being a Buddhist in corporate America," said Henderson, who is a quality-assurance analyst at a telecommunications company. "No matter what happens at work, I try to stay calm and centered. I incorporate Buddhist teachings at work a little more each day, and I encounter less stress every day."

America could use the benefits of Buddhism, she said.

"We could all use more peace and less stress," she said. She meditates twice a day — 20 minutes to an hour in the morning and at night.

Even on vacation recently with her extended family, she went to the corner of her hotel room, asked her family to talk quietly and meditated.

"It's gotten to the point now where I don't miss meditation," she said. "Wherever I am or whatever I'm doing, I do find a time and place."

Bill Clements of Arlington, Texas, an acupuncturist, became a Buddhist three years ago. His in-laws, Robert and Elizabeth Umana of Dallas, who were out of town last week, allowed Rinpoche and his monks to stay at their home. He firmly believes that the home will be blessed by Rinpoche's presence.

"There are many subtle realms of existence that are accessible through quiet meditation, chanting, prayer beads and so on," Clements said. "These are catalysts to help us get to those subtle realms and free ourselves of pain and suffering."

Rinpoche, born in Tibet in 1932, is considered to be the incarnation of Vimalamitra, one of the founders of Tibetan Buddhism 1,300 years ago. Rinpoche was named the 11th throne holder in a Tibetan monastery. He is the founder of the Palyul Namdroling Monastery in southern India, where he lives when not traveling around the world.

He visited Dallas for a week, conducting workshops for Buddhists in the north Texas area. His visit was sponsored by the Longchenpa Institute, an Allen-based nonprofit dedicated to preserving and promoting Nyingmapa Buddhism.

Mentor Couples Salvage Marriages

RESEARCH SHOWS THOSE WITH STRONG RELATIONSHIPS ARE BEST TO TEACH OTHERS

The American Association of Christian Counselors made an extraordinary announcement this week: They will seek to train 100,000 married couples as marriage coaches in 10,000 churches over the next five years.

"This is the best news I have heard this year for the marriage-strengthening movement," said Diane Sollee, founder and director of the Coalition for Marriage, Family and Couple Education.

"Research shows that the people who can best teach the skills of how to have a good marriage are those who have solid marriages, serving as mentor couples. People get married in churches, so this work is best done in congregations, where there is trust. It is natural to recruit couples who are part of that community."

Most marriage preparation today is done by pastors or professional counselors, such as AACC members. Sollee, a former associate director of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy, thinks that is a mistake:

"We don't need to turn marriage into a mental health issue. Marriage is not a disease. It is a language that must be learned. Mentor couples do a better job of teaching because they are not outsiders with a white-coat

Michael J. McManus
ETHICS & RELIGION

syndrome. For example, a stepfamily couple who has walked the walk, can be more helpful to a couple entering a stepfamily situation than some professional who may never have been in a stepfamily and may not even be married."

AACC president Tim Clinton said his group's 45,000 members were moved by recent George Barna polling data showing "divorce in the church is at a par with the society at large. The divorce rate is still at an epidemic proportion. About 40 to 50 percent of people who are getting married this year will end up getting divorced, and if separations are also counted, it is 66 to 67 percent."

Therefore, AACC is calling not just the church "but the nation to some type of effort to curb, to reduce the divorce rate. We are demonstrating our commitment by providing resources to help strengthen marriages. We have produced 'Marriage Works,' 30 one-hour videos by some of the finest people in marriage coaching and marriage mentoring. We have enrolled 5,000 already, with more than 100 from a single church."

Most marriages fail due to

selfishness. What couples need to see modeled for them is selflessness. No one can do a better job teaching selfless love than a couple who has learned that lesson — often painfully.

Consider Julie and Kevin Steuber of Overland Park, Kan. Both had one failed marriage before marrying each other 15 years ago. Four years later, Julie filed for divorce. Police showed up to escort Kevin out of the house. Why?

"Kevin was very controlling. When I got a job and brought home a paycheck, he said, 'It has to be spent on what I say it goes to.' No matter how many times I explained how I felt, he did not understand. We differed on the way we should raise children, in our communication styles and did not agree on anything."

Kevin thought he was the "perfect husband" — a Christian who was a good provider, working at two jobs, and who never chased other women. But he now ruefully acknowledged, "I never listened to Julie, to hear what she needed. I couldn't understand why she got so emotional."

They paid \$100 an hour for eight visits to a counselor, who agreed that Kevin was doing all he could in the marriage. He told Julie, "You better shape up and listen to your husband."

Pretty hopeless, right? Not at all. Kevin was taken in by a friend Dale Hedrick, who with his wife, showed Kevin videotapes by Gary Smalley — "Hidden Keys to Loving Relationships," which explain in an often humorous way how radically men and women differ.

Dale also went to Julie and showed her the same videos. "They softened my heart," she recalled. "I learned why he does not understand my feelings. I agreed to allow him to come back to the house."

"He then listed everything we had ever argued about, and said, 'When I said this, I really hurt you.' He was right, dead on. Once you break through the communications barrier, how each sex works, we could work things out."

Today, they lead a "Marriage Assist Team" of marriage mentors at Christ Lutheran Church who helped a dozen conflicted couples save their marriages.

The key, Kevin said, is "God's plan for marriage. If you think of God first, your spouse second and yourself last, your priorities are straight. Selfishness is a huge problem."

He knows from experience and can teach it.

MICHAEL J. MCMANUS IS A FORMER CORRESPONDENT FOR TIME MAGAZINE. HE HAS WRITTEN THIS SYNDICATED COLUMN SINCE 1981.

Mt. Comfort Church

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**Large blessings
come in
small packages.**

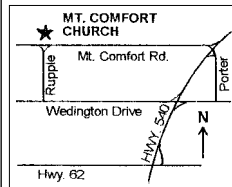


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- Our guests are encouraged to keep their checkbooks in their pockets and purses.

- There is no dress code (written or unwritten). God looks at the inward person and so do we.
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The Mt. Comfort Church
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No Peace? Know Peace!

You Are Invited to
RALLY DAY at Peace!

September 9th, 12:15 p.m.

Picnic & Carnival

NEW SCHEDULE

Saturday Worship 5:00 p.m.

Sunday Morning Worship 8:00, 9:15, 11:15

Sunday School at 10:25 a.m.

(additional adult class at 9:15)

Peace Lutheran Church, 8th & Olrich, Rogers
501-636-2140 www.peace-church.org

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