



AMELIA PLANTATION CHAPEL

Footprints

Monthly Newsletter

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A Letter From The Pastor

To Strive For The Kingdom

BY CONRAD SHARPS

Several years ago my mother gave me an old photograph taken when I was a child. I was only four years old but I looked like a professional paperhanger of the 1950's. I had on biboveralls and a tool belt and was busy with a putty knife taking several layers of old wallpaper off the walls of our hallway. Nearby, my father, smoking a pipe, was peeling a large section of old wallpaper off the wall himself. It was one of those classic mirror image pictures of a child imitating a parent at work.

"People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them." (Mark 10:13-16)

How often I have stood with great certainty and urged others on to spiritual maturity, and yet here the persuasive teaching of Jesus (in all three Synoptic gospels) urges us to receive the Kingdom as children. How then is one to achieve spiritual childhood?

I imagine many of you can identify with the responsibilities of being a pastor because of your own experience of vocation. In every discipline and field of human endeavor there are tasks which can never be far from our attention. There are deadlines, quotas and staff to manage. There are economic trends to follow, predictions to be made as well as the responsibility for the direction, tone and productivity of the firm, practice, church or company we represent.

To live then (to strive for the Kingdom) as a child, I often find myself praying not for strength to endure but for strength to submit. In prayerful submission I believe God will help us to see the world from a new perspective.



Continue to page 02

A Letter From The Pastor Continued

The Holy Spirit will help us to resist impure motives such as achievement, power and authority and live more as humble children who gather with many others around Jesus. Jesus does not fret, nor push, nor pit us against the world or one another. He invites us to his side, to help him, to find joy in his presence doing the work of God.

To be successful and to achieve as this world defines success we often feel the need to get tough, to grow thick skin, to advance through knowledge, skill and strength. This, I believe, is the response of the head, necessary, we believe, to get along in the world. Children, on the other hand, readily shed their tough exteriors and expose their hearts, their feelings, what makes them happy, sad and even fearful. But with this vulnerability one also expresses the desires of a child's heart, which coincide nicely with those of the kingdom: peace, unity, justice, joy and love. This, I believe, is the response of the heart, just like a child's honest, trusting and genuine response.

Perhaps the key is to approach the serious business of adulthood with the heart of a child who wants to be a part of something so much larger than him or her—joining with Jesus in his tasks and through our enthusiastic imitation of him, finding our greatest joy. Christian stewardship is not so much a matter of doing as a matter of being what and who we were created to be: children, brothers and sisters gathered around our brother Jesus, who is engaged in the work of Abba (as he called God) best translated in the vernacular “daddy or father.” By his side we are never in the way—instead our stewardship and witness becomes a matter of the heart through which we are blessed beyond human comprehension.

Starting in mid-January we will consider the discipline of Christian stewardship. This year our theme is “Forward In Faith!” Perhaps a simple prayer can help turn the mystery and awe of childhood into reality. “O God, may our only strength be that of joyful obedience — as children who gather around Jesus in the work of your kingdom.”

Board Splinters From December 2021

BY STAN WILSON, BOARD PRESIDENT



The Chapel Board met on December 16, 2021. The meeting opened with prayer. Here are some highlights of the meeting.

1. Pastor Conrad gave a report on his activities.
2. The treasurer reported that the overall contributions for this year would exceed the 2021 budget and overall expenses are in line.
3. The President reported that the Annual Congregational Meeting last month went very well, noting the approval of the new Board members and the nominating committee for 2022.
4. Christian Education reported that they hoped the nursery will be ready for occupancy for the Christmas Eve service.
5. Membership reported that the attendance to the services is holding steady. The number for both services and the live-stream attendance is averaging 325. The attendance for the Cantata service was well over 500. Ellen Schmidt was approved for membership to the Chapel.
6. Outreach reported that a three-member work group has been established within Outreach to review the framework for determining the amount of monies given to a ministry to ensure it is fair and equitable. He also stated that a review is being performed by the Committee of the five ministries that are given the maximum amount allowable under the Outreach guidelines of \$20,000. All five ministries have been asked to come and meet in-person with the committee to discuss how the Chapel gift is being used.
7. Pastoral Care reported that they continue to hold monthly communion for those at Osprey Village who cannot attend church services.
8. Building and Grounds reported good progress is being made on the repairs of the Sanctuary, narthex, and surrounding areas. Because of the long lead time on the new carpet, the work is expected to be completed around Easter. The pews still need to be reviewed but it is difficult to identify an organization to do so.
9. Worship Chair asked that a calendar for all events held at the Chapel be made available to all Board members on a weekly basis so any preparation can be made in advance.
10. At the conclusion of the regular meeting of the 2021 Board, the meeting of the 2022 Board was held. The new President, Dennis Schroeder, conducted the meeting and announced that Sally Ericksen will be the new Vice-President, Frank Vacirca will be Secretary and John Hopkins will continue as Treasurer.

Respectfully submitted,
Stan Wilson, President of 2021 Board



Nassau County Homeless Teens

BY CLAUDIA SMITH

Thank you for supporting the children in our Nassau County Schools, Families in Transition (FIT), Homeless Teen Christmas Ministry. 65 donors and shoppers from our Amelia Plantation Chapel Family provided gifts for 90 teens and their siblings. Thirteen of my neighbors in Isle de Mai served 14 teens for a total of 104 students and siblings served. Several shoppers also selected gifts for the parents and caregivers. Shoppers used specific wish lists for each child, providing everything from shoes and clothing, 23 bicycles, helmets, pumps and locks, games, art supplies, sports equipment, fishing gear, toys, bedding and towels, lighting, school supplies, books, personal care items, food baskets, to Christmas stockings filled with goodies, gift cards, and more. These teens are now a part of your heart's story, as you will be a part of theirs.

Angie McClellan, former Homeless Liaison sent this: "Because of the generosity of your group, grandmothers who have taken in a teen, parents of a teen who have taken in their teen's friend because of their family's dire situation, the family who was evicted and had to move into a motel room or into a trailer park that is known as a drug area and the trailer is falling apart, or single parents who have had to move their family into a friend or family member's home are able to provide Christmas gifts for their teen. These students, who would not have received Christmas gifts, are provided with gifts that meet their needs and many of their wants. They are able to honestly and proudly answer their friends' after-Christmas questions because of your generosity. The best part is that these public school students who are not exposed to Jesus' love for them at school are provided with at least one item that points them to Jesus and the gifts themselves show them that there are people who are filled with love for someone they don't even know. Your Christmas ministry illustrates well what is meant by the Christian's mandate to 'be the hands and feet of Jesus.' Well done!"

The gifts were picked up on Monday, December 13 by parents and caregivers. Mollie Cressey, current Homeless Liaison, sent this note: "Thank you so much for everything! There were lots of smiling faces and some tears of appreciation. I can only imagine what the children will be feeling when they get all of their gifts. You all have been truly wonderful to our families and such a blessing to our program. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!"

An interactive Nativity with the text from Luke and Matthew was included with each child's gifts along with a variety of Christian books. God bless you and your family this Christmas Season as you have so lovingly blessed these teens and their families.





Outreach Ministry

Kelby's Kids

BY FRANK VACIRCA, SHEPHERD

A report from Kelby's Klassen's blog, founder of Kelby's Kids medical ministry in Haiti:

"November was the 5-year anniversary of Kelby's Kids serving in Haiti full time! Kelby's Kids serves the needy and poor by providing free medical care through medical, malnutrition, maternity and wound care clinics. It's hard to believe that I have been living in Haiti for half a decade now. I have cared for so many kids, expectant mothers, and all who come to the clinics. I have seen a lot, brought hope through healing, helped through loss, and seen new life. But Haiti is in a very dark place these days, and not just medically.

"I am sure that you have all seen Haiti in the news again. Unfortunately, it is never for good things that make the news, and always with the tag-line of Haiti—the poorest country in the western hemisphere. The recent kidnapping of 16 American's and 1 Canadian on a short-term mission trip is the latest making national news (not to forget the recent earthquake, hurricanes, presidential assassination, humanitarian crisis, and political corruption). Gangs control just over 50% of the capital of Port-au-Prince. The police are outgunned by the gangs and the fact that most haven't been paid in months makes them susceptible to payouts and corruption. Many people are protesting the kidnapping of the foreigners, knowing this will drive more away, considering probably more than 60% of foreigners (ministry/aid/humanitarian workers) have left the country permanently already. Kidnappings, which have been out of control for the last 2 years, are up 300% in the last several months. If the 17-million-dollar ransom is paid, it will be open season on foreigners. If they kill them, Haiti could explode with violence.

"On top of all that, they have not sold any fuel in the country in over a week. This is causing extensive problems and will soon result in no food or water available to buy, no transportation, no one getting to work, and no communications. Haiti is a country where only about 35 to 40% of power is produced by the power company. So that leaves generators and some solar power. Generators take fuel. Yesterday the only children's hospital in the country closed due to no fuel for their generator. It is expected at least 10 hospitals will close today and most if not all of the rest within the week.

"After 5 years in Haiti, it often seems it just can't get any worse. But, unfortunately it just continues. Please be in prayer for Haiti. Haiti is a very broken place right now. It needs not only help from the international community but also from the power of the Lord. All of this increases the need for the ministry as well as increasing openness to the Gospel. But, I don't know how much longer I will be able to stay... Please pray for the ministry of Kelby's Kids and that I will know when or if it's time to leave Haiti for a while. (And that if I have to leave, that I will have something to come back to.) "



Outreach Ministry

Bring Your Brokenness

BY ED WEIHENMAYER, SHEPHERD

This is the powerful experience of one person with Bring Your Brokenness, one of the Chapel's local Outreach ministries:

"People talk all the time about life-changing spiritual events and awakenings, times when they catch little glimpses of heaven. I never believed that I would ever be able to have one of those extremely close moments with the God of the universe because I always felt undeserving. I have been a Christian since I was a young child, but I have never let myself truly feel and embrace the full and overwhelming love of Christ because I felt so unworthy of it. It was as if Jesus Himself was standing before me with His arms outstretched, pleading with me to let myself fall into His loving embrace, and I instead ask if we can just do a high-five. Before I came to this (Bring Your Brokenness) retreat, my dietician told me that nothing short of a miracle could keep me from going back to treatment, or at least some kind of outpatient program.

"I spent almost the entire eight-hour drive to Florida crying because I felt completely hopeless. I was a lost cause, a waste of my parents' money, a waste of space, a waste of the very air I was breathing! But that weekend, Christ's power was made perfect in my weakness! Despite every thought and expectation, God gave me my miracle. I truly felt like I met God in such an extraordinary way this past weekend, and I experienced His love and acceptance for me like I never had before. No matter how undeserving of this gift from God I felt, I could not escape the love of God that simply permeated the atmosphere everywhere I went. I saw it every morning when I woke up to volunteers who didn't even know me preparing my breakfast and asking if there was anything they could do to serve me. I received it in the form of the countless gifts that came in from people who had never even seen me, likely didn't even know my name.

"I experienced it in every interaction with the other amazing women who were participating in the retreat with me. I felt it in my every interaction with Amie, who poured out everything she had in her heart to help me and the other women at the retreat this year. My miracle was given to me in little bits and pieces from each and every one of the people I met on this retreat. Every hug, every kind word, every prayer, and every smile sent my way contributed to the miraculous feelings of freedom, hope, and joy that I felt on the drive home from Florida. Words truly cannot describe just how grateful I am for every single precious moment that I had at the Bring Your Brokenness retreat.

"Thank you so much Amie, for moving mountains in my life that I didn't have the strength to climb. Through you, God took my mustard seed of faith and turned it into a flourishing tree. Because of this retreat, I finally found the courage to run into the outstretched arms of my Savior, Jesus Christ, and rest in His perfect and unconditional love for me. In His love and His love alone, I have found my miracle!"

Dear Sarah, Love Pap Pap



BY JOE MARASCO

Dear Sarah,

Congratulations on your recent appointment as Director of Marketing and Communications at Opera America. My mother and her four Aloise sisters are dancing with joy in heaven that someone in the family has achieved such success in the opera field especially at the young age of 31. It was a short seven years ago that you courageously left Pittsburgh for New York with degrees in theater arts and creative writing, but without a job, knowing that your future in theater lay there. Clearly, you are blessed with leadership skills that you have used to the fullest, but as an individual who also has leadership skills, let me give you some good advice that I received from my mentor in Pediatric Radiology at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children in Philadelphia, John Kirkpatrick.

John reminded me to be open to advice from everybody-nurses, orderlies, X-ray technicians, janitors, etc. John practiced what he preached. One Friday afternoon he asked me what I had planned for Saturday. I said that I would be home with Carrie and the kids. He asked if I would come in and help him with a case. I couldn't imagine why he would need my help, but, of course, I agreed. To my surprise, the patient was Dr. Waldo Nelson, the author of the prevailing textbook in Pediatrics at the time. Since it was an adult X-ray examination, John wanted my help. This is not about me; I just happened to be on Pediatric Radiology rotation at the time and I'm certain that John would have asked any other resident on rotation for help.

John's wonderful advice helped me to grow my leadership skills. When I was the leader of a Radiology group of 26 individuals, I looked for partners smarter than me and hired several who were. They made us look good!

Sarah, your leadership skills are a God-given gift. Don't let success go to your head! Be grateful and humbly use them to God's glory.

Love,
Pap Pap

P.S. John later became radiology chief at Boston Children's Hospital, one of the most prestigious pediatric hospitals in the country



Fellowship 2022

BY KATHERINE DUDLEY HOEHN

“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.” - 1 Peter 4: 8-9

As the new Fellowship Chairman I want to first thank Jean Mauldin, who served on the board and in this capacity for the past three years. Once the worst of covid was over she quickly returned to overseeing our hospitality events such as the Sunday Fellowship Coffee between the two morning services and providing food and refreshments for other Chapel events such as the Welcome Back Barbecue and the Fall Conference.

We're now able to look ahead at activities for the year feeling confident that we can meet and greet and serve one another. It's great to be back together and we have some catching up to do!

Eight women, in addition to myself, are on the Fellowship Committee, organizing events this year and ensuring that our coffee time on Sunday is fellowship time. Thank you, Mary Lee Byrd, Nancy Inboden, Janet Kolar, Beth Mack, Sandy Malone, Toby Schubert, Sandy Sproat, and Marlene Strobach.

If you like to decorate, bake, buy food, organize, and meet new people, please help bring our church community together in fellowship by volunteering. Most of our volunteer work happens on Sunday mornings, but also includes church-wide events where food is served. Ideas are welcome and we would love to have you join us. Men are invited to be volunteers, too!

Please email me at katherinehoehn@me.com if you have an interest in joining our hospitality brigade.



Lenten Meditation Booklet

BY SANDY SPROAT

Each year, Chapel members create this daily devotional booklet which has great meaning to all who participate, by writing a personal meditation, and all who make a habit of reading the daily message during Lent. 40 writers are needed and the submission deadline is January 25, 2022. If you will write a meditation, please let Sandy Sproat know as soon as possible and she will send you the guidelines.

We encourage our newer members to participate as you have so much to offer that we are eager to hear and learn. If you have any questions please contact Sandy Sproat at 904.491.0390 or ssproat43@aol.com.

The Crossover

BY JENNIFER ST. CLAIR



Wake up! What time is it? Sunrise at the crossover! Hurry down to see the live 'slide' show God has orchestrated for you at the beach with pink colored clouds, seagulls breakfasting in the surf and those funny pelicans skimming the breakers. You don't want to miss any of this! No, I do not.

Off I go with a coffee cup in hand and great anticipation for what lies ahead. Once on the crossover I glimpse the vista beyond only to discover no pink clouds in the sky. Just different shades of gray streaked above the horizon. I do not even see or hear one noisy seagull. The wind is picking up speed and suddenly I feel chilled to the bone. Brrrrr...!

The question before me? Do I head back and finish my little talk with God in the warmth and comfort of my cozy condo? Or take off my sandals and sample the ocean temperature? I choose the latter and decide to step out in faith believing the next 'slide' will contain a mysterious surprise element known only by God. And was this ever true!

As I hesitantly reach the rushing tide line, there is no time to escape the cold, salty water circling around my ankles. And this is the case of perfect timing? The tide keeps on rushing, reaching a level up to my knees! I scream! Ahhhh!!!! Then I laugh as I run toward dry sand, exhilarated and wide awake. Now, that is what I call a surprise 'slide' in the show.

It gets even better! When I turn back toward the horizon, the sky is pink! And in the distance noisy seagulls announce their arrival. God saved the best 'slide' for last! We must live by faith, not by sight at what we see in our lives at the present moment. 'Cause what lies beyond encompasses God's majestic Presence.

2 Corinthians 5:7 *For we live by faith, not by sight.*



December Men's Breakfast

Entertainment: Terry Thrift and Glen Harper

BY FRANK VACIRCA



The Men's Breakfast held on Friday, December 10 featured the engaging musical artistry of our own Terry Thrift and Glenn Harper of Amelia Baptist Church, dad of the Harper Sisters.. These talented musicians blended their guitars and voices to create some very joyful traditional Christian music. It was entertainment and church fellowship for a gathering of roughly 50 men and women.

Their repertoire included Christmas standards such as Hark the Herald Angels Sing and Go Tell It on the Mountain, plus a few songs that got the friendly crowd singing and clapping their hands in unison. It was a morning of fun and praise giving our Savior the glory, with an abundance of good cheer and good will.

The morning's breakfast was also an opportunity for Ed Weihenmayer to acknowledge the volunteer work of our kitchen crew—Bo Duffy, Don Boyd, and Billy Allen, who together and every month create "the best \$5 breakfast in town."

Christmas celebrates the birth of our Savior. Music is one of the season's beautiful ornaments as we decorate the world in honor and anticipation of the beloved Christ Child's arrival on December 25th.



January Men's Breakfast!

BY ED WEIHENMAYER

Our speaker at the Men's Breakfast on Friday, January 14 is David Martin, owner of Martin CPA & Co. out of Lake City. David is the former President of Gideons International, which began in 1908 as an Association of Christian Businessmen which placed Bibles in hotel rooms. It has evolved into a worldwide organization which provides Scriptures to people in many facets of our lives. The Gideons' primary activity remains the distribution of the Bible and New Testaments, printed in over 100 languages, free of charge. Today it is a global enterprise operating in over 200 countries. The local chapter of the Gideons is very active; and members have been invited to join us at the Breakfast.

Please sign up with Beth at the Chapel at 277-4414 no later than Wednesday, January 12. Best \$5 breakfast in town.



Do You Know Jesus As God's Everything?

BY JAN SMITH

The Bible teaches us about God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We Christians have understanding that these 3 are ONE GOD. Together they form the Godhead of the ONE GOD we love, worship, and glorify.

As we study the Bible, and spiritual books, we come to comprehend that each person of the Godhead has a different function, and yet being One in thought and action, they are One God. The Father is the One Who plans all things from the beginning of time. (Ephesians 3:9). Jesus Christ carries out the plan of God. (Ephesians 1:7) The Holy Spirit then imparts the details of the finished work of Christ to us. (John 14:26)

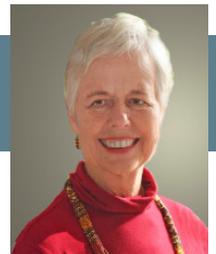
We begin to see is that Jesus is God's Everything. He is the personification of all God's work. In 1 Corinthians 10:13 it says God will not give us more than we can bear because HE has given us a way out of the trials and troubles... Jesus is The Way out. In 1 Peter 1:3 it says God has given us everything we need for life and godliness... Jesus is God's provision for a holy life. Jesus is all things and everything for us now: Jesus is all the fruit of the Spirit. He is all the armor of God. He is all the gifts of the Spirit. And... all of the promises of God find their yes in Christ. (2 Corinthians 1:20 Amp)

The Normal Christian Life book helps us to see and comprehend all these things in a practical way. Watchman Née leads us to see Jesus as all things and everything for Christians. Jesus Christ has done the work, and God the Father gets all the glory, as the Holy Spirit convinces us God's work is finished. God has provided everything we need.

Please consider joining us on Monday mornings as we study *The Normal Christian Life* together, looking into each thing Jesus has accomplished for us. Our hope is we will learn to walk in the Spirit, being well pleasing to God. We meet each Monday at 10:30 in the Meeting Room, and on Zoom. Books, and additional information, are available in the Chapel office.

New Year, New Reading

BY LINDA COLE



I don't always make resolutions at the beginning of a New Year. However, this year, I thought a good one would be to try to improve my prayer life. Surely, our church library has a book or two to help? You bet it does! There are at least 46 books on prayer in our small church library. (Yes, I counted!) I'm going to check out a couple, but there are plenty for all of us! Here are some sample titles:

With Christ in the School of Prayer by Andrew Murray

Too Busy Not to Pray by Bill Hybels

Only a Prayer Away by John Guest

Take a look yourself and if you find a particularly good one, let me know, please.



Tables of Eight

BY KATHERINE DUDLEY HOEHN and SANDY SPROAT

Tables of Eight is a social activity of informal, small lunches and dinners (in homes or restaurants) with groups of four to eight, open to all adults in our congregation. Most of our restaurant groups are four, five, or six.

Spring groups will meet once per month, February through May (four meals).

Single? Don't stay home because you are! We already have many singles participating and lots of couples who enjoy the company of singles. It's a perfect fit!

New to the Chapel? We want to get to know you; come dine with fellow Chapel members and grow closer to others in the Chapel family. You are welcome here!

We've had so much fun and hope to engage more Chapel members this year. To date, we have just shy of 50 registrants. A testament to the success and enjoyment by our fall groups --- 75% of them have registered for spring.

If you are interested in joining a group (for lunch or dinner, in homes or restaurants), please let us know by completing a sign-up form (in the basket in the narthex of the Chapel) or registering online.

Everyone registered by Sunday, January 16 will be assigned a group. Group leaders will communicate with their group members before the end of January and begin meeting in February. We'll break for the summer and new groups will form in Fall, 2022.

Assignments to groups will be made according to individuals' preferences for lunch or dinner and restaurants or in-home gatherings.

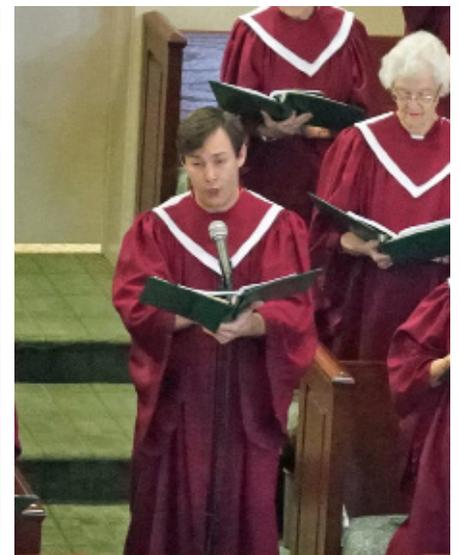
Questions or special requests? Email Katherine Hoehn, katherinehoehn@me.com, or Sandy Sproat, ssproat43@aol.com.





December 5, 2021

2021 Christmas Cantata



Bell Ringing 2021!



December 24, 2021

2021 Christmas Eve Service





Chapel News

January 2022

New Member Q+A

We will host a new and potential new member Q+A in the Chapel Library on Sunday, January 16 between worship services. If you are interested in joining the Chapel or learning more about the Chapel, please join us for this informative event! Questions? Call the Chapel office at 904.277.4414.

Chapel Bible Classes Will Resume

- Our adult Bible study between worship services in the Meeting Room will resume on **January 9 at 10:15am**. The class is studying the book *Pilgrim's Progress*. Books are available in the chapel office for \$8.
- Our Monday Adult Bible class will be studying *The Normal Christian Life* by Watchman Nee, will meet in the Meeting Room and resume on **January 3 at 10:30am**. Books can be purchased for \$6 in the Chapel office. The class is available in-person and via Zoom. Zoom meeting number – 2547409215 and passcode – 189056.
- Our men's and women's Bible study will resume **Tuesday January 11 at 10:30am**, studying *The Purpose Driven Life* by Rick Warren. Books are \$10 and are available in the Chapel office.
- Ted Schroder will use his latest book, *John Stott: A Summary Of His Teaching*, as a resource to teach this new Bible study class! The class will meet in the Chapel Meeting Room on **Thursdays at 2:00pm beginning January 6**. Copies of the book are available in the Chapel office for \$19. Call the office to register for the class.



Amelia Plantation Chapel

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