

"For everything there is a season, and time for every matter under heaven: ... A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together" Ecc. 3:1,5

A Biblical scholar I was once listening to talked on this passage about how in the villages of ancient Israel, when someone would have a significant encounter with God, they would gather a stone and carry it to the center of the village, stack it up with the other stones, and tell their "story". The term "Ebenezer" in the hymn "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" refers to this image. After awhile there would be a significant pile of stones there, and it was thought that these stones carried something of the presence of God. So this pile of stones was a special thing for the village, but after awhile the pile of stones would become something more like an amulet or lucky charm, than a holy place and so the decision would be made to "cast the stones away" and start fresh with the stories of God's work. One of my favorite preachers to listen to says to his congregation during "testimony time", "we don't want stories of yesterday's Jesus".

I share this with you, because as the staff and I settle in with each other, and look toward the spring, it feels a little like this passage from Ecclesiastes. While being truly careful with the rich traditions of Bay Shore, we're feeling like God is blowing a fresh wind through the trees of camp. A part of this is captured in the Dining Hall project that is well started with its fund raising. Additionally, we're also looking at a new way of staffing during the summer to allow for more flexibility, adding new programming opportunities with a "low ropes challenge course", and exploring new ways of doing summer camp to reach this generation with the claims of the Gospel.

I want to encourage you to think about partnering with Bay Shore as we raise funds for this Dining Hall project, as we look to stay vital in our daily ministries, but also as we look to new ways to offer up the gospel. Mostly importantly, join with me and the rest of your Bay Shore family in letting God, "tune your heart to sing his grace". See you at the "shore".

Mike



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SPECIAL MINISTRY EVENTS - 2008

MEN'S RETREAT - FEBRUARY 29 - MARCH 1, 2008
GUEST SPEAKER: REV. TOM HARMON

SPRING QUILTER'S RETREAT - APRIL 5-6, 2008
DEVOTIONAL LEADER: JANIE MALDONADO

ANNUAL KICK-OFF BANQUET - SATURDAY, APRIL 19, 2008

FATHER & SON CATFISHING TOURNAMENT - MAY 9-10, 2008
GUEST SPEAKER: REV. RICK JEWETT

FAMILY FUN DAYS - JUNE 6-8, 2008
IN CONCERT LIVING TRUTH II - SATURDAY AT 8PM