

Family

Sunday School an experience

This past weekend I went on a busman’s holiday of sorts. I was visiting my daughter and son-in-law in Americus, Georgia. Plains is only 10 miles from Americus, so we decided to attend Jimmy Carter’s Sunday school class.

At 8:30 the doors open for the 10 o’clock class, so we got up early and made our way to Plains, driving past peanut fields and a peanut seed research facility on our way to Maranatha Baptist Church.

The church is a simple, one story brick building in a pecan grove about a mile outside town. We had heard the sanctuary holds about 300 people. When we arrived at 8:20 there were already about 50 people in line, and it began to grow quickly after our arrival.

When the doors opened we still had to be cleared by the Secret Service before entering the church.

One agent inspected all cell phones, cameras and purses, while a second “frisked” everyone with a metal detecting wand. Once they determined we were not terrorists we were warmly greeted by church members who handed us bulletins and showed us to our pews.

About 9:15 a retired school teacher began her lecture on protocol. She had not lost her knack for making sure her students learned their lessons. We were instructed not to stand or applaud when President Carter came into the sanctuary, nor to applaud during his class. Photos could be taken while he was informally talking to the group, but once he began teaching no photos were permitted. He was there, not as the former president of the United States, but as our Sunday school teacher. Our respect was to be, therefore, not for the presidential office, but for the Word of God. She added that Carter is the only president to ever teach Sunday school while serving as president and is now the only former president who teaches a Sunday school class.

President Carter entered the sanctuary a bit before ten and immediately began to talk to the group. He asked what states or countries we were from, and if there were any active clergy or missionaries present. We raised our hands, told what our denomination was and where we were from. I was the only clergywoman present. There was a priest from California, a Methodist pastor from Tennessee, and a United Church of Christ pastor from Georgia – former United Nations ambassador Andrew Young. Carter asked Young to open us with prayer, and the class began.

The lesson was from Nehemiah 2. Carter reviewed the history of the Hebrew people from Abraham, through Joseph to Moses, then the judges and monarchy, the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and finally exile into Babylon.

Nehemiah was born in Jerusalem shortly before the Babylonian invasion and had been raised as a Jew in Babylon. When Persia conquered Babylon he became a favorite of the Persian king, who allowed him to visit Jerusalem. Nehemiah was horrified by the destruction he found. He returned to Babylon and spent four months in prayer and fasting, seeking God’s guidance about Jerusalem. Nehemiah realized he had to return to his homeland, so he asked the king’s permission to return and rebuild Jerusalem. The king not only gave Nehemiah his permission, but also royal protection and resources to begin the project.

Once back in Jerusalem Nehemiah was ridiculed by the officials



After attending Jimmy Carter’s Sunday school class in Plains, Ga., Pastor Carol Rahn (left) and her daughter, Gretchen Smith, (right), had their picture take with the former president and his wife Rosalynn.

in nearby territories, but Nehemiah knew the project would be a success because it was not his plan, but God’s.

Carol Rahn • From the Pulpit

to the present day, asking us how this ancient story might apply to us in our own daily lives. He led us to four conclusions.

The first is that we are all vulnerable to the vicissitudes of life; no one is better than another, because not a one of us is immune from life’s pain and hardships. But we must always remember that our foundation is not in our own strength and greatness, but in the strength and greatness of God.

Second, God’s blessings are as available today as they were in Nehemiah’s time. It is through prayer that we know God’s power, blessing and wisdom in our own lives and can then live fully in God’s name. It is especially important to seek God’s guidance and will during difficult times and when hard decisions need to be made.

Third, Carter reminded us that we can never do what needs to be done alone. We must rid ourselves of arrogance and the illusion that we are better than others, but instead form partnerships with one another. As a corollary Carter added our most important partnership must always be with God.

And finally Carter emphasized that we can best be in relationship with God through Jesus Christ. We are all sinners and it is through Christ that we know God’s forgiveness and reconciling grace. We know the fullness of God’s goodness, grace and love in Christ, and when we are in partnership with Jesus Christ we are in partnership with God.

Interspersed with the lesson, Carter shared anecdotes from his experiences in the Middle East. After we read about Nehemiah preparing to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem, he told about jogging along the top of the wall of the old city with the mayor of Jerusalem, and watching the sun rise over the Dome of the Rock.

When Carter was talking about Nehemiah fasting as a spiritual exercise to discern God’s will, he told the class about a group of U.S. rabbis who fast every Thursday in remembrance of what happened to Gaza when the Israeli army launched missile and air attacks on the territory in January.

He also spoke of the plight of the 50,000 Palestinian Christians still living in Israel. About half now live in Bethlehem, which has been completely walled off from the rest of the country by the Is-

raeli government. When the present state of Israel was formed in 1948 these Christians, along with the rest of the Palestinians, lost their homes. Even today, Israelis will take possession of Palestinian homes and land without restitution. One could tell that Carter has strong sympathies for the plight of the Palestinians.

After his lesson Carter thanked us for being part of his class, and invited us to stay for Sunday worship. The class was an amazing experience. Not only was it wonderful to have someone else take on Sunday morning leadership, but it was an honor to have former President Carter as a Sunday school teacher, to hear his stories, and to hear him share the scripture through the lens of his experience. It was a Sunday I will not forget.

Carol Rahn, is pastor of Colby’s First Presbyterian Church.

Deaths

William S. AraSmith

William S. AraSmith, 78, Rexford, a retired oil-field driller, died Wednesday, Sept. 30, 2009, at Citizen’s Medical Center in Colby.

He was born May 16, 1931, in Densmore, the son of Wilbur and Grace (Davis) AraSmith. He attended a country school near Densmore, and lived in Lenora with his sister Hazel to attend high school. After high school, he joined the Marine Corps.

He was married April 10, 1955, in Densmore to Margaret McGuire. He did farm work in the area before moving to Lenora, where he worked at the school and later for Rural Telephone. This led to a move to Great Bend and a job

with Southwestern Bell.

Other moves to work in farm operations included Natoma, Oakley and Norton. Moving to Oberlin, he hired on with Murfin Drilling, where he worked until retiring.

Preceding him in death were his parents; a son, Michael AraSmith; a great-granddaughter, Brook Owens; two brothers, Robert and Riley AraSmith; and a sister, Hazel Leidig.

Survivors include his wife, of the home; two sons, Everett AraSmith and Patrick (Kimberly) AraSmith, both of Rexford; two daughters, Linda Parker, LaGrange Ind.; and Amanda (Shawn) Buettner, Monroeville, Ind.; two sisters, Agnes

(Orel) Newbery, Towanda; and his twin, Betty AraSmith, McCook Neb.; nine grandchildren; and 14 great-grandchildren.

Services will be held at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 6, 2009, at the Rexford Community Church with pastor Lane Purcell officiating. Burial will be in the Hawkeye Cemetery north of Rexford.

Visitation will be from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday at the Harrisor Chapel in Colby.

The family suggests memorials to the Rexford Community Church through any Colby bank or the funeral home, Box 634, Colby Kan., 67701.

Carolyn M. Goddard

Carolyn M. Goddard, of rural South Sioux City, Neb., 89, mother of Marilyn (Steve) Friesen, Colby, died at home Saturday, Sept. 19, 2009.

She was born Dec. 9, 1919, in Randolph, Neb., the daughter of Anton and Josephine (Reker) Schrad. She attended St. Frances Catholic School in Randolph.

In 1939, she moved to Sioux City, Iowa,. During World War II, she worked at the Wincharger factory. She married Milton Goddard on Aug. 10, 1952, in St. Benedict, Iowa. They moved to a farm in the South Sioux City area in the early 1950s.

She was a member of St. Mi-

chael Catholic Church and its Altar Society, the Legion of Mary and the Faithfully Devoted Perpetual Adoration group.

She was preceded in death by her husband on March 18, 1994, her parents, a brother Louis Schrad, and a sister, Cecelia Wintz.

Survivors also include four sons, Melvin (Kathy) Goddard, Lincoln, Neb.; Wallace (Sharon) Goddard and Douglas Goddard of South Sioux City; and Joseph (Debbie) Goddard, Tempe, Ariz.; two other daughters, Brenda (Omar) Arambul, Yakima, Wash., and Beverly (Dennis) Schmidt, Yankton, S.D.; a brother Paul (Leona) Schrad, Norfolk, Neb.; a brother-in-law,

Jimmy Goddard, Homer, Neb.; 23 grandchildren; and 13 1/2 great-grandchildren.

Services were Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2009, at the church, with burial in St. Frances de Chantal Cemetery, Randolph, Neb.

The family suggest memorials to the St. Michael’s School Endowment Fund, in care of the church, 1315 First Ave., South Sioux City, Neb., 68776.

Markets

Quotes as of close of previous business day Hi-Plains Co-op	
Wheat (bushel)	\$3.64
Corn (bushel)	\$2.90
Milo (hundredweight)	\$4.46
Soybeans (bushel)	\$7.88

SERVICES DIRECTORY

Worship in the church of your choice this weekend.



BREWSTER COMMUNITY CHURCH, Mike Pinkelman, Pastor, Brewster - 785-694-2720, Sunday School (all ages) 9:30 a.m., Worship Service 10:30 a.m., Bible Study 7:00 p.m., Wed. mornings 6:30 a.m. - Men’s Bible Study, Wed. 7:00 p.m. - Children’s Ministries (Royal Rangers/Missionettes), Wed. 7:15 p.m. - Intercessory & Prayer, Thurs. 4:00 p.m. - Women’s Bible Study.

Schedule of church services

GATEWAY FELLOWSHIP, 2nd and Sunrise, Oakley. Pastor James Bloom, Sunday Morning Worship and Children’s Church 10:15 a.m., Wednesday evening Bible Study and Intercessory Prayer 6:30 p.m. 785-671-4020.

COLBY INDEPENDENT BAPTIST CHURCH, 730 E. 3rd (former Jaycee’s building), Pastor Bernard Heinz, 785-460-0313, Sunday School 9:30 a.m.; Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.; Sunday Evening 6:00 p.m.; Wednesday Evening 7:00 p.m.

ASCENSION-ON-THE-PAIRIE EPISCOPAL, Rev. Don Martin, College Drive & Wheatridge Rd., 785-462-3041, Holy Eucharist, 9:00 a.m. every Sunday. Evening Prayer, 5:15 p.m. Wednesday, September through May. Christian Education for Youth, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, September through May.

COLLEGE DRIVE ASSEMBLY OF GOD, 245 W. College Dr., Colby. Pastor Steve Todd. Worship Service 10:15 a.m. Sunday School 9 a.m. for all ages. Wednesday Youth at The Rock 3:30 and 7 p.m. Sunday Nite Life at The Rock 5-6 p.m.. 785-462-8234. cdag@st-tel.net.

BEREAN CHURCH, 1000 S. Franklin, 785-460-2763, www.colbyberean.com; Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m. Awana Clubs, Wednesday, 7 p.m., Middle & High School, Wednesday, 7 p.m. @ the Heartland Christian School Gym.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, (Affiliated with American Baptist Churches USA) Carroll H. Morony, Pastor, 615 W. Webster, 785-462-2867. Sunday School 9:15 a.m.; Family Worship: 10:30 a.m.; Bible Study: Sundays at 7 p.m. RC Club 2nd and 4th Sundays at 2 p.m.

COLLEGE VIEW BAPTIST CHURCH (Affiliated with Southern Baptist), 1185 Wheatridge Rd. at College Drive, 785-460-7144, Sunday Bible Study 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship services, 10:45 a.m. Prayer Service at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday’s.

PLEASANT HOME CHURCH, Pastor, Perry Baird, 785-890-3375, 3190 Road 70, Edson, Worship, 9:00 a.m., Sunday School 10:00 a.m.

WINONA METHODIST CHURCH, 501 Bellview Ave. Rev. Sheryl Johnson, Sunday School, 10:30 a.m., Morning Worship 9:15 a.m. (CDT)

MINGO BIBLE CHURCH, 420 Main Mingo, 785-462-2992: An independent community church served by Village Missions Intern Pastor Pat Colley. Sunday School: 9:30AM -all ages. Sunday Services: 10:45AM. Sunday Nights: 1st Sunday of the month: potluck following morning service - no evening service; 2nd Sunday: services at 6:30 PM; 3rd Sunday: informal fellowship - bring a snack to share!; 4th and 5th Sunday: services at 6:30 p.m.

SACRED HEART CATHOLIC, 785-462-2179, Father Dana Clark, Pastor, Saturday Eve. Mass 5:30 p.m., Sunday Masses 8:00 & 10:00 a.m., Confessions will be heard Saturday 4:30-5:05 p.m. and from 7:30-7:45 a.m. and 9:25-9:40 a.m. on Sunday.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, Rev. Carol Rahn, 515 W. 4th, 785-462-6342, Sunday Worship 11:00 a.m.

WESLEYAN CHURCH, 320 W. Pine - 785-462-8391, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:40 a.m., Sunday Evening Cell groups at 6:00 p.m., Wednesday Youth Ministries, Kids Clubhouse 7 p.m.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS, 1145 S. Franklin - 785-460-6605, President Gary Slavens, 785-460-2656; Erwin Mitchell, 1st counselor, 785-460-1952; Tim Wilson, 2nd counselor, 785-846-7796. Sacrament meeting 10 a.m., Sunday School and Primary 11:20 a.m., Priesthood, Relief Society, YM/YW, 12:10 p.m.; Family History Center open to public, 7-9 p.m. Thursdays or by appointment. Call 785-462-3571.

REDEEMING LOVE MINISTRIES, INC., 345 N. Franklin, Dr. W.G. and Rev. Orvella Romine, Equipping Class, Sunday, 9 a.m., Sunday worship, 10 a.m., Wednesday, R.L.M Training Centers (Bible School), 6 p.m. Shop online at: www.rlmregionalchurch.com.

COLBY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, Rev. James Mardock, pastor, 950 S. Franklin, 785-460-6521, Sunday Worship Services at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m., Fellowship coffee 9:30 a.m., Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., KXXX broadcasts 11:00 worship. www.colbyumc.org

CHURCH OF CHRIST, Minister, Jarrod Spencer. 510 E. 4th, Sunday Bible Study 9:30 a.m., Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m., Interpretation for the deaf, Wednesday, Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, (Disciples of Christ), Pastor Lyle Knebel, 385 W. 3rd - 785-460-2718, Sunday Morning Worship at 10:00 a.m.; Sunday School at 11:15 a.m. E-mail: fccolby@st-tel.net.

OUR SAVIORS LUTHERAN CHURCH, Brewster, Sunday worship 9:00 a.m.; 2nd Sunday of the month at 8:00 a.m.

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH, Rev. Don White and Rev. Tim Llewellyn, East 5th & Country Club, 785-462-3497, Services, Sat., 5:30 p.m., Sunday; Sunday School and Adult Bible Class 9:30 a.m.; Services, 11:00 a.m. Visit us at www.trinitycolby.com.

LEVANT COMMUNITY CHURCH, 205 1st St., Pastor Jerry Vincent, 785-586-2376, Sunday School (classes for 3 years & up and 3 adult classes) 9:30 a.m., Morning worship 10:30 a.m.

BREWSTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, PO Box 250, Brewster. Pastor Dorine Chambers, 785-462-6044, Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.; Worship Service, 10:45 a.m.

THE SHEPHERD’S STAFF, REXFORD, Joan Dingwerth, Director, 785-687-2565.

REXFORD COMMUNITY CHURCH, Rexford, Pastor Lane Purcell, 785-687-3305, Sunday School 9:30 a.m., Worship Service 10:30 a.m.

BREWSTER COMMUNITY CHURCH, Mike Pinkelman, Pastor, Brewster - 785-694-2720, Sunday School (all ages) 9:30 a.m., Worship Service 10:30 a.m., Bible Study 7:00 p.m., Wed. mornings 6:30 a.m. - Men’s Bible Study, Wed. 7:00 p.m. - Children’s Ministries (Royal Rangers/Missionettes), Wed. 7:15 p.m. - Intercessory & Prayer, Thurs. 4:00 p.m. - Women’s Bible Study.



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