This Week's Calendar
Week of October 8 - 14
(click on item for information)

Monday 8th
• Gammon Theological Seminary's Founders' Day
• Global Ministry Committee Meeting
• LAGR dCOM Meeting
Tuesday 9th
• AMRY dCOM Meeting
• Hispanic Church Development
Saturday 13th
• YSF Day at Six Flags
Sunday 14th
• Griffin District UMW Annual Meeting

• Entire Calendar
Article Archives
• Monday Morning in North Georgia
• Weekly Conference Update

Links of Interest
• Sign Up to receive the Monday Morning Newsletter, & other North Georgia e-mails.
• Manage e-mail preferences
• E-mail Jamie Jenkins
• Employment Openings

Lectionary and Bible Readings
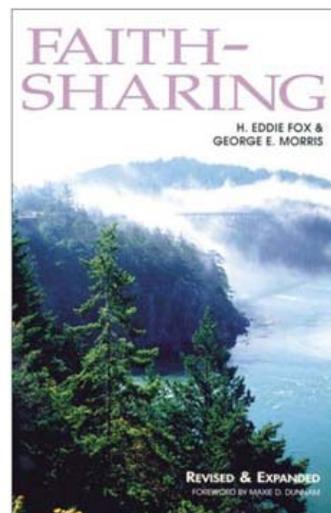
Daily Bible Reading
• Readings that will take you through the entire Bible in a Year

Listening is Key to Sharing Faith

I believe that the Good News of God's love shown through Jesus Christ is the most significant fact of human experience. Salvation by faith is an essential and foundational Christian principle. But how do we communicate that truth on a personal level?

"Witnessing for Christ" or "sharing your testimony" is a frightening challenge for many persons who are fully committed disciples of Christ. Images of abuse and instances of harassment enter the minds of many persons as they hear others speak about evangelism.

Dr. Eddie Fox and Dr. George Morris offer a balance of theory and practice for this task in their book, *Faith Sharing: Dynamic Christian Witness by Invitation*. In the foreword to that book, Dr. Maxie Dunnam says, "We must share the faith, not for the sake of the church, but for the sake of the persons with whom we share." The authors provide guidelines for anyone to be "engaged in evangelism as naturally and normally as a robin sings or a happy child plays."

Among other things, Fox and Morris suggest that a relationship of trust is necessary for effective sharing of one's faith. They believe that a Christian "witness" requires honest, perceptive, non-judgmental, relational listening which conveys trust and acceptance to others. Listening opens the door for speaking.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer believed that listening was a form of Christian ministry. He said, "The first service that one owes to others consists in listening to them. Many people are looking for an ear that will listen. They do not find it among Christians, because these Christians are talking when they should be listening."

One professor has concluded that there are six rules for good listening:

1. Compassion: "Suffering with" or "to be with."
2. Concentration: Focusing attention entirely on the other.
3. Control: Discipline that knows when to speak and when to remain silent.
4. Comprehension: Similar to discernment, or the ability to know where the other is coming from.
5. Clarification: Helping others clarify their thinking and feeling.
6. Commitment: Willingness to stick in the relationship and do whatever love demands.

There are not many people who are good listeners by nature. However we all can learn to listen and in doing so we might earn the right to speak so that others would listen. Or maybe we just need for others to know that we care enough to listen to them.

If you want to learn more about Faith Sharing, you can attend a training event on October 20 at Mt. Bethel UMC in Marietta. For a registration form visit the Conference website.

Jamie Jenkins

HealthFlex Participants: Time to Take Your Annual Assessment

If you are enrolled in HealthFlex, it's time to complete your annual Web MD Health Quotient Assessment. Just log on at www.gbophb.org and click "HealthFlex/WebMD." Remember, if your spouse is also covered, he or she must log in separately and also complete the Assessment.