



News from the Blue Ridge

Claire & Lorin Cranford



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Family Events:

With Labor Day came the close of summer activities, and for us, the end of visits from kids. We now try to look over that long stretch of time to the Christmas season when we hopefully will get to see family again. Exactly how all of that is going to evolve we're not yet certain, but we do hope to have some time together.

The fall season, however, is not going to give us a lot of extra time on our hands to get homesick. Both Claire and I have a large number of extra activities on tap this fall. At the end of September Claire will be in a teachers' workshop at USC in Spartanburg, S.C., then the first of Nov. a two day workshop in Ashville, N.C. The second weekend of Nov. we both will be in New York City where I will preach a weekend revival at a Baptist church there. We plan to do some shopping on Sat. morning in the Big Apple. The following weekend, then, I travel to Orlando, Fla. to the national S.B.L. professional meeting from Fri through Tues. I look forward to seeing former students and colleagues from all over North America. Then comes Thanksgiving, with Christmas not far behind. Tucked in between will be some pleasurable Saturday and Sunday afternoon drives up in the Blue Ridge Mts. to enjoy the dazzling array of fall foliage, perhaps even a get-away weekend in the mountains. We are eagerly looking forward to the beauty of the fall foliage in the mountains.

Continued from University Happenings

larger academic community stimulate and broaden one's horizons.

The third week of Sept. brought another enjoyable experience. The state convention of NC Baptists sponsors a meeting of all the professors working in the seven Baptist universities and colleges in the state. The meetings are by department and usually are bi-annual, but the religion professors have been meeting annually for several years because of the mess at the national SBC level.

The Friday evening and Saturday morning meeting this year of the religion professors was at Wingate University, just east of Charlotte. About thirty of us enjoyed a banquet Friday evening and heard a lecture from Dr. Amy-Jill Levine, professor of New Testament at Vanderbilt University on "Jesus, Sex, and Gender." Sat. morning Prof. Levine, a feminist Jewish NT prof, lectured on "Anti-Judaism and the New Testament: Sinful Scholarship." The presentations were stimulating as well as the discussions. By design a person outside Baptist life is invited to lecture to the group in order to enlarge our perspectives on various issues. Especially enjoyable was the fellowship with colleagues from across the state.



University Happenings:

What a refreshing experience in Baptist life! On Sat. evening Aug. 29 Claire and I had the opportunity of being a part of GWU's victory celebration of the \$33.4 million fund raising campaign. The convocation center (LYCC) was decorated out wonderfully. And the food was plentiful and in abundant quantities. No formal program, just a film clip with only music. Lots of fellowship -- and a 15 piece orchestra with live music and dancing. Dr. and Mrs. White along with several other administrators and faculty led the way to a wonderful time of swings, fox trots etc. The evening was capped off at 9:00 with a fifteen minute fireworks display as good as any I've seen on July 4th. The rest of the evening belonged to the students with a live band and dancing til midnight!



The healthy, life-affirming stance of GWU is one of the many reasons I'm proud to be associated with the school. Genuine spirituality and good fun are not contradictory at GWU! How refreshing! Claire and I came home with a renewed determination to once again pick up our ballroom dancing.

What an inspiring experience! During the first full week of classes a couple of ceremonies made a deep impression. First, was the Theological Education Convocation service in the chapel on Monday. A joint service of both the divinity school and the religion dept, the annual service officially launches the academic year. An important part of the service is the installation of new faculty in both schools. Three new religion faculty, including myself, were officially installed as members of the Dept. of Religious Studies, and a new music professor was recognized in the divinity school. The new executive director of NC Baptists brought a wonderful message on leadership. During the luncheon afterwards announcements were made of record enrollments for both the university and the divinity school for 98-99. The divinity school full accreditation with ATS should be completed during this year. Immediately plans are taking shape to put in place a Doctor of Ministry degree program soon afterwards.

The next day was the university wide Fall Convocation. The emphasis for the entire university family was on academic achievement with recognitions for various present students' academic accomplishments. Especially impressive was the presidential scholarship announcements of the ten incoming freshmen students receiving this scholarship worth several thousand dollars each.

The combination of both religious and academic emphases is quite healthy and invigorating. Religious studies done in the

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For all kinds of info about us as well as a PDF copy of this newsletter, check out our homepage [Cranfordville at http://www.shelby.net/cranford/index.htm](http://www.shelby.net/cranford/index.htm)

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Claire's Musings:

It's been hard keeping up with Lorin on the Newsletters, even though he does all the hard work, while I just work on my one section. I got behind, so I am backing up a little.

Well, I certainly am not missing my college classes. I miss the learning part, because it really is fun to learn new things, but I don't miss the pressure, which seems to get worse with age. Another thing is that I don't mind always being the oldest student in the class, but when I am old enough to be the professor's mother, I believe that is pushing it a little bit too much.

It has been so exciting about getting my new teaching position. Right after I accepted with the Shelby school district, I was called by Cleveland County and Kings Mountain. After worrying about getting a job, it was a nice feeling to be in demand. And, after all my substituting, I realized that I knew a lot more people than I realized. Every meeting that I am attending I keep seeing people that I have met in various schools and different places. Lorin says that I know a lot more people in Shelby and around the college campus than he does. Sometimes when he is introduced to people, he is introduced as Claire's husband. Wow, I never thought that would happen. I guess all the places I have been has really given me excellent contacts. And the contacts that I made gave me some excellent recommendations. Then, in addition to that my salary is the same as it was in Birdville and yet the cost of living is lower here. I am just amazed at how everything has begun to work out so wonderfully well.

We began our new-teacher meetings the week of July 27. I couldn't believe that the weather was so nice that they left a door open. I was able to look out the door at the beautiful trees and watch a squirrel playing. I was just glad that he did not decide to come in and join us. The first week in August began our other teacher meetings and I was able to work in my room a little. I am having a little bit of a tough time, though, adjusting to 4th graders--they sure can be funny at times.

Things are getting a little better in my classroom now that there is more of a routine. I know more of what to expect from the schedule, from the children, and even from myself. I have learned which children to expect more trouble from and watch them more carefully. I have learned which ones I can trust to do what they are supposed to do, including handing in their homework on time. I got a great idea from Angie. I put the word "Lunch" on the chalkboard and each time the class as a whole begins acting up, I simply walk to the board and erase one letter. It's amazing how fast they calm down and get to work, and how they get onto each other for causing problems. If the whole word is erased by the end of the day, the class gets silent lunch the next day. I do not like the idea of silent lunch, because I believe that the children need this time to socialize, but I have discovered it works.

I went to Spartanburg, S.C. Friday, Sept. 25, for a teacher workshop on Guided Reading. I really enjoyed it and learned a lot, and it was nice to do something different. When I got back to the school (after the kids got out), I learned that they had not been very good with the substitute. I figured that would happen, because I had a half-year experience of being a substitute. They just did what most seem to do when things are different. Boy, what stinkers!

Lorin and I went walking later than usual one evening and really enjoyed it. Flocks of geese were flying in for the night on the river. It was a fascinating sight (and loud). We were glad to have seen it. Lately, we have not had as much time to walk and we both miss it. Things should calm down soon and we hope to get back. Especially now, we are hearing that it is almost time for the leaves to start turning. I can hardly wait! Fall is really on the way with cooler weather, it's great!



Lorin's Musings:

The slaughter goes on! Word continues to pour in concerning the sad plight of colleagues at Southwestern. The rogue

regime running the seminary now continues to move down its 'hit list' pressuring professors of deep spiritual integrity and extraordinary skill to leave or face being fired. Several have received their 'walking-papers' to be gone by next summer or face a humiliating dismissal. What a sorry, deplorable state of affairs! Those of us with connections to this institution grieve deeply to have to watch the decimation of a once significant force for the Kingdom of God. It is being gutted into an empty, hollow diploma mill with neither academic substance nor spiritual integrity. For our trapped colleagues on seminary hill we say, our prayers go up to our God daily for His strength and deliverance for you. Unceasingly we pledge to work for your deliverance from this living hell for a chance to serve the Lord in freedom and dignity and respect.



What an exciting new adventure! A new venture this month for me has been the plunge into web authoring. After studying web design and htm authoring for the past three or so years, I finally took the plunge in Sept with the launching of Cranfordville. Intended initially as an opportunity for my students to do better quality classroom work, it has evolved like an octopus with tentacles spreading out in numerous directions encompassing academic, general information and family interests. It has now grown to the point that all class syllabii and handout materials are accessible to the students via cyberspace. The developing skills for design hopefully have become evident with the modifications taking place at the web site. With the addition of some very powerful software etc. soon, the web site should take off like a rocket into a new level of sophistication and ease of use. If you haven't yet checked it out, you can find it at <http://www.shelby.net/cranford/index.htm>.

One quite fascinating new adventure for me opened up the third week of September: participation in a German speaking Hauskreis for Bible study. The director of language ministries for the Charlotte Baptist association asked me to work with the association in a joint effort with Lutheran churches and other Christian groups in the metro area to begin exploring ways to reach out to the over 20,000 German speaking residents in metropolitan Charlotte. Some 89 German based companies are located in Charlotte, along with almost that many companies and German speaking residents in the Greenville-Spartanburg, S.C. area where the large BMW auto plant is located. For those unfamiliar with this European tradition from the pietistic movement, on the European continent the tradition is not a Sunday morning Sunday School. Instead, couples et als meet in homes one night a week for Bible study, prayer and fellowship. The meetings are conducted in German and thus a challenge for me to rekindle my oral skills with the language. We had a good beginning and hopefully the group can grow to minister to this segment of our population. Being the only Baptist present was a good opportunity to make new Christian friends beyond my own heritage.

