



A Place for Recycling

*- by Henrietta Huff
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This past Tuesday as I was seated in the sanctuary for Church Council, my eyes were drawn to the altar. The topic being considered was the necessity for the Church to be able to change if it is to survive and prosper. My mind was carried back to the many changes that have occurred here at Belin Memorial.

First, there was the recycling of a church building, one in which the Reverend James Belin had preached, no longer home to a congregation, being brought from Pawleys Island to Murrells Inlet and taking in the entire congregation of nearby Bethel Methodist, adapting, adding on, and building a new Education Building, a new Sanctuary, and a new Family Life Center. As the years passed and the membership and needs changed, so had the ways in which these buildings were utilized.

Getting back to the altar - this is the same altar which was in that original church building. Changed, yes, and added onto with new moldings, shelves, etc. to make it "fit and function" for the new Sanctuary, but with the same foundation. It really serves as a reminder of how important a good foundation is, not just boards and paint, but a centering place for our worship.

I next thought of the iron cross we have in the garden. It once was atop our steeple. A tendency to attract lightning was its downfall, and after doing so twice in one worship service, it was removed and replaced. It languished in a shed for years until it was recycled to be a focal point in our garden.

The stone bench which now welcomes us in the small garden in front of the Sanctuary was once a step leading to the old Sanctuary. Prior to that, it was a step to the St. John's Chapel at Wachesaw Plantation, built in the 1800s. It was hidden under soil and ivy until it was unearthed and recycled.

The new worship center for The Harbor has a background of recycled wood, much different than its original use. I recall the pile of pallets, once used for holding heavy boxes or other equipment, sitting in the parking lot, just a pile of cast offs. I marveled at the new form and life those pallets brought to this space as the men worked, cutting and nailing, making a simple, barren stage into a place for worship. Recycled!

The best news of all is the recycling God can do with our lives, changing us, molding us into wonderful, beautiful tools to be used to make this world, this Murrells Inlet, this Belin Memorial a place where our primary purpose is to win souls for Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to God for a recycling place!