

**32963 Faith Column, March 8, 2011**  
**by Rev. Drs. Casey and Bob Baggott**  
**Community Church of Vero Beach**

### ***Waddle or Soar?***

Danish theologian, Soren Kierkegaard, told a fable of a wild duck who, while flying north with his flock one year during annual migration, alighted one evening in a farmyard and joined some tame ducks who were eating corn provided by the farmer. What a pleasure to find himself so amply provided for, and with no effort on his part at all. The duck enjoyed it so much that he stayed for another meal. Then he decided to delay his departure until the next day, then the next week, then the next month. He ended up staying all summer. In the autumn, his old companions flew over the farmstead on their way south. They called to him and he tried to rise. He flapped his wings but they were weak. He reached the roof of the barn, but he had to simply float back to earth again. He was too flabby, too feeble for anything more. His easy life had taken away his ability to fly.

Every spring and every autumn the duck watched wistfully as his former comrades flew overhead, going north, going south. Oh, how he wanted to join them, to soar again in open skies. But gradually even this desire became dim, and he settled down to the dull life of a tame duck. Kierkegaard drew this point: you can make wild ducks tame, but it's hard to make tame ducks wild again.

Kierkegaard's little fable of the tame duck has some obvious applicability to our lives, doesn't it? We watch with enthusiasm each year as the young people in our church prepare themselves for graduation and for flying away on their first real quests away from the nest. Many head off for further education. Some enter the military. Some are ready to pursue other dreams. They are neither flabby nor feeble, and virtually all are ready to test their wings and are anxious to fly.

We often find ourselves just a little envious. All that energy. All that opportunity. All that promise of adventure and discovery. It's their time to soar – while we seem to be left waddling around the farmyard!

Yet Kierkegaard's tale is not intended so much to convince us of the inevitability of domestication and dullness, as to remind us of the choices we are capable of making each day. Today will we take the path of least resistance? Will we risk little? Dream little? Content ourselves with easy pickings? Or will we heed the inner call of the God who made each of us "fearfully and wonderfully," full of marvelous potential, endowed with gifts and abilities needed for the world's well-being and our own fulfillment.

No, it's no use bemoaning our fate if we have clipped our own spiritual wings and allowed ourselves to grow flabby and feeble. But neither is it impossible to rejoin others who are still journeying, seeking, growing, and enlarging the scope of their vision.

If you've become a tame duck – take heart. You needn't waddle your way through the rest of life. Look up. Rise up. Soar.