



celebration News

BRADENTON/SARASOTA Community of Christ

APRIL, 2009
VOLUME 20 - ISSUE No. 3

The term **Missional Groups** might be a little strange, but the idea is not. It is a time for congregations to share,

bond, and explore their ideas together. Our

congregation will be hosting the

first Western

Central Mission Group beginning

at **9:00 AM, Saturday, April 4.**

The schedule includes gathering, worship, Mission



Share and Support

Center updates by Florida Mission Center President Bob Watkins, lunch, and sharing time.

As we are hosting this first-time Western Central Mission Group, we are hoping that we have a good turn out of our people. If you have questions, contact **Jim Deering**.

Men's Retreat

The **2009 Men's Retreat** to be held at Deerhaven Retreat Center **April 24-26**, will feature two guest ministers. The guest ministers are Howard S. Sheehy, Jr. and Jared Munson. Howard is a former member of the Presidency and has served the church in many positions for many years while Jared is a young man who is known for his ministry to others very early in his life. This will be a wonderful opportunity for young and old to be ministered to by two men who have brought and continue to bring people to know Christ. The theme for the retreat is *Learning to Be*.

Registration forms are available on the bulletin board in the Information Center or you can register on-line at www.cofchristfmc.org. Let's get excited about this opportunity and encourage our men and male youth to be a part of this experience.

President Veazey to Address the Church

As we prepare for the 2010 World Conference (to be held April 10-17, 2010), the church faces many critical issues that could distract us from God's mission for Community of Christ. President Stephen M. Veazey will address these issues in a major address to the church on Sunday, April 5, 8:00 PM EDT from the Temple in Independence, Missouri.

You are urged to participate. See www.CofChrist.org/broadcast/upcoming.asp for details.

Thank You ALL!

Big thanks to **Suzanne Grimmer**, shown below helping a customer, and the Fund Raising Team, plus **Betty Simpson** for running the Bake Sale and all her donators, **Charlie Walker** for the great food, and last but not least, **Amy Smeralda** and her great car wash youth team. Please remember, there is no Yard Sale without all of you and your donations. All those contributing their donations and time made it a Great Success.



Feed the Body and Soul



All are invited to the **Easter Morning Breakfast, April 12th starting at 8:30 AM.**

Come and enjoy the food and the fellowship as we prepare to celebrate and worship the risen Christ. Feed the body and then feed the soul.

The menu will consist of pancakes, eggs cooked-to-order, sausage and bacon, as well as breakfast burritos. There will also be biscuits with sausage gravy, fruit salad and assorted cold cereals. And did I forget to mention assorted breakfast casseroles and pastries?

Scott Cramer, Breakfast Coordinator, and his crew will be waiting to serve you. Please come and join us.

Back by popular demand - **Children's Easter Egg Hunt!** All children are invited to participate in the annual egg hunt. The doors to Classrooms 5 & 7 will open for one and all at **9:30 AM**. Please bring an Easter basket or a sack to put your "eggs" surprises in. Meet **Jerilyn Gregg-Chlebina** and her crew on Easter Sunday, April 12th for a fun time!



Children's Easter Program



Just as Christmas shopping and decorating can overshadow the birth of Jesus, Easter bunnies and baskets often take precedence over our remembrance of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. This year our children and youth will bring the secular and religious together in a

Children's Easter Program that shows us how we can remember the meaning of Holy Week and still enjoy the festivities that are so fun. The **Children's Easter Program** will begin at **10:00 AM**. and is being planned by **Ginger Robertson**.

Worship Opportunities for April

Our worship services in April begin with Palm Sunday, leading us into Holy Week, and Easter Sunday.

Palm Sunday commemorates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem during the time of Passover. Riding on a donkey, his followers jubilantly entered before and after him laying palms upon the ground and singing and shouting their "Hosannas". But when Jesus was arrested and taken away, they all fled. **Nancy Skene** is planning this April 5th **Communion Service**, with **Stuart Skene** bringing the message of *Enter Humbly*.

This year, we will have a special **Maundy Thursday Service on April 9**, that will begin at **7:00 PM**. There will be **no** Wednesday night service that week. Just as Jesus gathered with his disciples for the Passover meal before His arrest and crucifixion, we will gather in His name to share food and experience the servant ministry that was so important in Jesus' teachings. Plan to join us for this evening of love and affirmation.

April 12th is **Easter Sunday**. Following the **Easter Breakfast** and the **Children's Program**, our worship will begin at **10:45 AM**. **Fay Beers** will preside over this service of song and celebration that encourages us to *Rejoice This Day*. **Glenn Day** is sharing his ministry through the Easter message.



Peace Be with You, is the blessing offered on the Second Sunday of Easter, April 19th. **Don Fant**, (whose music ministry we enjoy), is planning this service. Fellow musician **Carey Chaney** is scheduled to offer his wit and insight as he speaks to us about the peace of Jesus Christ.

Bob Slasor and Amy Smeralda are planning the Praise and Worship Service for April 26th. We are all called to be *Witnesses of Jesus, the Risen Christ*, what better way than in uplifting song and praise.

Remember to join us on Wednesday evenings for our **Prayer and Praise Fellowships**, which begin at 7:00 PM. Light refreshments are always available, along with the friendship and sharing.

Ginger Robertson, Worship Team Coordinator

Come Anew to the Cross

Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. And he, bearing his cross, went forth into a place which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha. John 19:16,17

As we move through this season in remembrance of Christ's journey, the cross becomes a focal point of our thoughts. I fear that we do not spend enough time at the foot of the cross, realizing the depth of love that He had for each one of us. We all carry our own cross and, at times, I am sure feel that ours is very heavy. I came upon a poem called *The Changed Cross* which was written by someone who was tired and felt that she had a cross too heavy to bear and wished to choose another instead of her own. Christ might have felt the same in the Garden of Gethsemane.



When the writer went to sleep, she had a dream and was led to a place where many crosses lay, all different shapes and sizes. There was a small one with beautiful jewels and gold. She decided she could take this one with comfort and took it up, but her weak body shook beneath it for the jewels and gold were too heavy. Then she saw a lovely cross with flowers entwined all around. This must be the one for her. She lifted it up, but underneath the flowers were thorns that pierced and tore her flesh.

Finally she came to a very plain cross that had only a few words of love inscribed on it. This one she took up, and it was the best and easiest to bear. As she looked upon it, a light from heaven rested on it, and she recognized her own old cross. She had found it again, and it was the best and lightest for her.

God knows best what cross we need to bear, just as Christ knew what cross He had to bear for all mankind. How blessed we are to have a Lord and Savior who recognized His cross and chose to bear it for us!!

As we come anew to the cross this year, may we remember who it was that died there, and why He died...and find ourselves bearing our own cross with thankfulness is my prayer.

Carolyn Deering, Pastoral Pastor

Financial Update

2009 Financial Update through February

Operating Income	\$ 8,535
Operating Expenses	<u>5,649</u>
Balance after Expenses	\$ 2,886

Our Yearly Budget is \$60,031, and we should have had contributions of \$10,007 as of the end of February, 2009.

Our Father's Cupboard

Operating Income	\$ 1,005
Operating Expenses (food)	<u>855</u>
Balance after Expenses	\$ 150

Annual Fund Raising Yard Sale, March 7, 2009

Yard Sale	\$ 2,339
Bake Sale	237
Charlies' BBQ	<u>231</u>
Yard Sale Subtotal	\$ 2,807
Car Wash for Youth Fund	<u>193</u>
Grand Total for the Day	\$ 3,000

This was the BEST YARD SALE EVER!

Bob Beers, Congregational Financial Officer

Working Youth

The Youth have been busy the last month "working". At the beginning of March, they were found washing vehicles at the church's yard sale. There were many sparkling vehicles in the parking lot Sunday morning thanks to their scrubbing. Following the March potluck dinner at church, the youth offered their services at a "slave auction". Youth are washing windows, raking leaves, planting flowers, etc. for those who bid for their services. So this month they are taking a breather!

In May the youth and their families will be having a Beach Party. The date and time will be announced later. Events being planned include games of all types with teams and individual competition. There will be swimming, and hopefully, rubber-raft riding, good food and some God Time. God Time will include a few songs, a few words, and a blessing. All youth and their friends and families are being invited.

Pray for our youth that they may be aware of Christ's presence at all times.

Charlie Walker, Youth Minister

Start Digging!

This is an old story.....An old man lived alone on his farm in Idaho. Spring was coming, and he wanted to spade his potato garden. The problem was that it was back-breaking work, and his son, who used to help him, was in prison.

The old man mentioned it in a letter he sent his son by saying, "I'm not sure exactly what to do. I'm just getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. It looks like I won't be able to plant that garden this year after all."

A few days later he received a short letter from his son, "Dad, for heaven's sake, don't dig up that garden; that's where I buried all the money I stole!"

About 4:00 AM the next morning a crew of police officers and the FBI arrived to find the money. After digging for hours, they gave up and apologized to the old farmer and left.

That same afternoon the man received another letter from his son. "Dear Dad, under the circumstances that is the best I can do; go ahead and plant your potatoes now! Love, your son."

Sometimes we are like the stubborn earth that stands in the way of experiencing a completely transformed life in Jesus Christ. Instead of being willing to trust, to take direction, and to accept the rewards Christ offers, we remain a POTENTIAL garden...a potential garden in need of resurrection...a potential garden that needs to see the way, the truth, and the life we can have in Christ!

Let us start DIGGING!!

Jim Deering, Administrative Pastor



There were busy willing workers at the recent Work Day at the church. The jobs on the list got marked off quickly. There was such an amazing representation of age groups, i.e. early elementary school, middle school, high school, young adults, and "mature" adults. Everyone worked well together, and the church facility sparkled inside and out by the time the last person left in the early afternoon. Thanks to **Brad Martin** for getting things organized and to the many workers who accomplished much.

Coming Events

May 1-3 *Marriage Workshop* at Deerhaven, "Marriage: a Daily Choice." Come away for a weekend with your spouse! Licensed Counselor Lisa Prosser-Dodds will lead a dynamic and interactive weekend to empower and encourage healthy marriages; open to engaged and married couples.

May 15-17 *Spiritual Growth Retreat* at Deerhaven, "Journey to Wholeness." Specialist Edith Gallaher will lead this weekend encounter.

Keeping in Touch

Bradenton/Sarasota's *Celebration News* can be received any where you may go! Richard Allshouse, former member of our congregation, received his March issue while he and his wife Edi were in Laos as part of their Southeastern Asian trip. Richard wrote "Wow, Great Celebration News with lots of news to celebrate indeed ...and to be all the way over here and read about you back there is just awesome. Love and blessings to all."

Spring Break

The question given to some this month was "If you could take a one week spring break, where would you go and why?" (There was no limit on money or imagination - only a time limit of one week.)



Dale G. Morgan - I would go to Black Lake in Onaway, Michigan, to a cabin on the east side of the lake. This is one of my favorite memories with wonderful fishing, swimming hole, and great beach area. It would be great to take my kids to see such a beautiful place here on earth. We would have a campfire at night on the beach, cook hot dogs, have Somores, sing songs, and together enjoy each other.

Rosalee Long - I would go nowhere, but stay at home. I am waiting for my sister from Michigan to visit and can hardly wait for her to come. We were adopted into different families as children. It means so much to be able to see her now as an adult.

Mark Bee - I would go to Russia. I would want to meet people who were then my enemy as I served in the military there.

Kenyata Evans - If I could go anywhere in one week I would go to Europe. I'd visit all the wonderful things there. People say Europe is the capital of fashion, and I would love to go to some fashion shows while there and see the latest fashions.

Mervin Smith - I would like to spend some time in Independence, Missouri. I have never been to the Temple. It would be spiritually uplifting.

Roberta Hamilton - I would take a flight to the British Isles, Ireland and Scotland, with my daughter Judy and my granddaughter Heather to check genealogical records of our family. Plus I would get a Scottish tattoo!

Larry Bell - I would go wherever I could teach and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Joan Wooderson - For many years I have listened to stories from people who have been to the Holy Land area. I wished that one day I would be able to visit the area where Jesus was born, lived and was crucified, and, of course, was resurrected. I would visit Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and some of the towns or villages where He healed many people. I would like to see first hand how the Jews and Non-Jews treat the shrines, etc., and how they can live in this area and not be affected by Jesus' teaching. I believe all of Jesus' life and teachings would feel more real to me. What a wonderful way to feel closer to Jesus.

Robert Slasor - If I could take a "spring break", I would go to Washington State for the birth of our first great-grandchild who is due in the next two weeks. Of course, I would prefer to take Beth with me!

Shirley Clow - I would go to Oxford and Burbank, California to visit my two sisters who I have not seen for a long time. We haven't been in touch with one another as often as we should have been.

Jim Brougner - I would like to take a spring break and go to the Holy Land for time to reflect and see the land where the greatest story on earth unfolded. It would be great to see first hand the land that Christ walked on 2000+ years ago.

Our Father's Cupboard

Our Father's Cupboard has been busy with an average of 29-30 families being helped per week. A big thank you to all who have helped on Thursdays unloading the food items and to those who have come to help distribute the food on Fridays. It has been a big help, and without you, the Cupboard could not be as successful as it has been.

The Cupboard has been getting more and more families with babies. So when you are shopping for your next donation, please think of size 5 diapers and baby wipes. They are just as important as the food.

The good news is there have been three people who are attending church with the fourth wanting to come but who is currently without transportation. Transportation is being provided for two families so they can attend church each Sunday. Please remember to welcome them and give them your love and attention. They are in the process of changing their lives and recognizing God in their lives. These families are very interested in becoming involved with the church and its activities.

There have been 12 families that have been helped in making a home for their family with dishes, basic furniture, appliances, TV's and clothes. This is not part of the Cupboard's outreach, but is part of Patti's vision of her personal ministry.

Thank you again for the support you have given **Our Father's Cupboard**. Thank you to those who have donated appliances and other things for the Cupboard. Our contribution of food and time is reaching out and changing lives.

Mark Bee and Patti Benjamin-Bovee,
Our Father's Cupboard Coordinators.



June 8 - 12th

Volunteer to help during the week by signing up on the designated sheets on the bulletin board in the Information Center.



A typical line-up at Our Father's Cupboard on Friday mornings!

A Reminder

This is a repeat of an article published in the March issue. It is being repeated to make sure all priesthood members have the opportunity to consider this opportunity.

For all those who serve in the priesthood, there will come a time when we feel that we have reached our physical and/or mental limits. After all, when we accepted our call we knew that we were required to respond to service whenever and wherever it was needed. That is a tall order under the BEST of circumstances! Over time it may become more and more difficult to be able to do that. That's all right, too.

At some point we will all have to eventually admit that "the spirit is willing, but the body is weak." When that day becomes the norm, it might be time to consider that superannuation is what is needed. Remember Superannuation does not take any authority or office away. It simply means that your response to God's call for ministry becomes an act of discretion. It makes it OK to decline if indeed you cannot serve for any reason. It also allows you to continue to serve whenever your circumstances make it possible.

There is one more thing. Even though you have not served your God and his people for any kind of credit, superannuation allows those who have witnessed your service to marvel at God's use of your talents. It allows us as a congregation to thank you for your response to God's calling and the expression you have uniquely given it.

If you think that this time has come for you, let **Jim Deering** know. We will be planning a service of Superannuation for the fall of this year, and we would like to include you in our plans.

Jim Deering, Administrative Pastor

Celebration News

April

- 3 Jim Deering
- 5 Haillie Rodriguez
- 5 Dale Morgan, Jr.
- 7 Jo Fenn-Martin
- 8 Howard Jousma
- 8 Lillian Wade
- 9 Scott Morgan
- 12 Patty Day
- 14 Scott Cramer
- 17 Jeanette Dean
- 20 Frankie Scholl
- 21 Debbie Stevens
- 25 Denise Chlebina
- 30 David Robertson



DID YOU KNOW ???

- ◆ **Senior High Youth** have had their own worship service once a month for the last two months where they share together?
- ◆ **Megan Chlebina, Kenny Johnson, Heather Manfull-Cosgrove and Dani, and Karla Van Beek and Zoe and Cole** participated in the recent Young Adult Retreat held at Deerhaven Retreat Center while **Jerilyn Gregg-Chlebina, Nancy Skene and Nanette Dizney** served as support staff?
- ◆ **Jason Van Beek's** wheelchair basketball team, the Orlando Magic, took first place in the National Wheelchair Basketball Championship held in Denver?
- ◆ **Our "new" sound system** was installed ten years ago this month?

Directory Correction:

John Batdoff:
3901 71st St W, #45, Bradenton 34211

Reconnect with Old and New

The Young Adult Retreat held at Deerhaven Retreat Center was excellent! It consisted of a weekend with old and new friends, fun times, and worship. It was so nice to reconnect with friends that I grew up going to camps with, meeting their families, and mostly spending time with others of faith and my age.

During the weekend, I learned/focused on the enduring principles of the church, received spiritual strength/support from others, made my own custom jewelry, and as time at Deerhaven usually does for me, made a connection with God in my life today. The time just went by too fast!

Megan Chlebina, Young Adult

Engagement Announcements



Congratulations and best wishes to the newly engaged couple, **Scott Cramer** and **Penny Strauss!** Scott has been a member of our church family since he was a young boy. Penny was a member of our congregation a few years back and then moved to Michigan. She has been a "snowbird" this winter, but we look forward to her being a full time member of our congregation again. A wedding is planned for later this summer.

Celebration News is a publication of the
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Address Correction Requested



EASTER

Worship with us
this Easter Season.

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

***Sunday, April 5th
Palm Sunday, 10:55 AM***

***Thursday, April 9th
Manundy Thursday, 7:00 PM***

***Sunday, April 12th
Easter Breakfast, 8:30 AM
Children's Egg Hunt, 9:30 AM
Children's Easter Program, 10:00 AM
Easter Worship, Sunday, 10:45 AM***