



Celebration News

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Pursuing Peace as We Share Our Sacred Creation

Living in Florida, the word "season" has a very different meaning than the conventional, spring, summer, fall, and winter. For us, "season" usually falls somewhere between October and April. This is the time of year our winter residents begin to return, and winter vacationers come to Florida to enjoy the beaches, theme parks, beautiful sunshine and balmy weather. While Florida is becoming an attractive draw for business and industry, we still rely on our tourist industry to keep our economy healthy. During economic downturns, as we have experienced in recent years, our hospitality and entertainment industries suffer financially. Retail businesses suffer huge losses in sales. On the upside, those of us who live here year round find there is no "wait list" at local restaurants, and traffic flows at a faster pace. A ten minute trip across town actually takes only ten minutes. Even doctor appointments are more accommodating.

We have been hearing for some time now that the economy is getting better. I didn't realize how much better until the beginning of this new year. It all started with traffic. I began to notice that there was a dramatic increase in out-of-state license plates. That, of course, means slower traffic, sudden unexpected turns, and frequent "fender bender" accidents. (Do they really drive that slow up north?)

This week I planned to attend a Church Women United board meeting across town out on Longboat Key; normally about a thirty minute drive. I allowed myself just over an hour to account for the extra "season" traffic. As I approached the first bridge leaving the "mainland", the traffic was backed up for about a half a mile and not moving! The draw bridge was down. As we finally began to inch our way across the bridge, my frustration and anxiety began to ease as I realized what a blessing all the out-of-state visitors were to the innkeepers, restaurant owners, and just about everyone else who makes their home here in our beautiful state.

From my open convertible, as I sat on the bridge waiting for traffic to move, I was able to appreciate the beauty of God's sacred creation, and why people come from around the world to enjoy what so many of us take for granted. Instead of fuming over lost time, I anticipated enjoying the beautiful flowering trees and gardens that would be waiting just over the bridge.

We all need to remember that when we welcome our visitors this time of year, we are living our Enduring Principles: *Grace and Generosity, Sacredness of Creation, Worth of All Persons, Responsible Choices, Pursuit of Peace, Unity in Diversity*, and most of all, *Blessings of Community*. Relax. Smile. Leave home earlier. (Call ahead for reservations!) Welcome our neighbors from other places with open arms.

Ginger Robertson, Outreach Pastor



Ash Wednesday, February 13

Join us for a special **Ash Wednesday Service on February 13 at 6:30 pm**. It will begin in the Fellowship Hall with the celebration of Shrove Tuesday. We will enjoy eating pancakes while listening to the traditions of Shrove Tuesday also known as Fat Tuesday.

We will then move to the Sanctuary for a Prayer and Praise service. All are invited to come and begin your preparation for the Lenten season.



Annual Fund Raising Yard Sale Plus

Are you ready for a yard sale? "Ready is as ready does" and the time is quickly approaching. The Sale will be held **Saturday, February 16th, from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm**. Your participation is so important for a fun-filled and successful event. Whether donating sale items or working the week of or the day of the Yard Sale, please be thinking about what and how you can contribute. There are sign-up sheets in the Information Center for you to add your name to a task. The Plus of the sale includes a Bake Sale and the serving of hot sandwiches. Make sure you add your name to that list, too. Remember this is our **BIG** fund raiser and a lot of volunteers are needed to make it a success!

Our storage area is overflowing with items for sale so we are asking you to bring your sale items to the Fellowship Hall after services February 10 through the 15th so items can be categorized for the "big sale day"! If items are large, please contact someone on the Fund Raising Committee and make arrangements for your item to be picked up and taken to the church. Committee members are Jim Brougher, Dave Robertson, Jeanette Harris, Dale Morgan, Stuart Skene, and Karla Van Beek.

Volunteers will be needed early Saturday morning to set up for the sale and after the sale to clean up.

There will be sodas and great food available for purchase along with yummy baked items. Come, enjoy, and share as we fellowship as the *Community of Christ*.

Happy workers at the 2012 Yard Sale



Risking Love

To love is to risk not being loved in return. To hope is to risk pain. To try is to risk failure, but risk must be taken because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing. Love comes to those who still hope even though they've been disappointed, to those who still believe even though they've been betrayed, to those who still love even though they've been hurt before.

Children's Peace Garden

The **Children's Peace Garden** has been a work of joy and a way for our children to express their love for God and His son Jesus. We thank every one for their positive comments and letting the children know their work is appreciated.

The congregation is having a workday on the morning of Saturday, February 23rd. While the adults are working on their projects, the children will be planting and mulching the garden. Flowers that the children would like to plant can be brought to the church on that day. Let us work together to make our church home a beautiful place to worship.

Charyn Walker, Sunday School Director

Financial 2012 Year End Report

Annual Operating Budget	\$58,329
Actual Income	<u>54,741</u>
Difference	<u>\$(3,588)</u>
Actual Income	<u>\$54,741</u>
Actual Operating Expenses	<u>(49,253)</u>
Difference	<u>\$ 5,488</u>



When we look at these figures and the actual income for 2012 of \$54,741, we must keep in mind that our new 2013 budget is \$60,951. This means we will need an additional \$6,210 in income if we are to do all the things planned for 2013. Your generosity and planned giving will help us attain this goal. May God continue to bless us in giving to his causes.

2012 Report for Our Father's Cupboard

Income	\$3,742
Expenses	<u>(2,160)</u>
Balance	\$1,582

2012 Report for Labyrinth Fund

Income	\$1,720
Carry over from 2011	<u>385</u>
Balance (no expenses in 2012)	\$2,105

Thank you for your continued support for our budget and program that others may know of God's love for them.

Bob Beers, Congregational Financial Officer



Photos by Lee Peters



Our organ and piano were tuned recently. Just as we humans have more physical problems in middle age, so does the organ! It is doing well now and, hopefully, will continue to do so for many years to come.

Attention Young Adults

Young adults, take a moment to mark your calendar for the Young Adult Retreat. The retreat will be held at Deerhaven Campgrounds March 15 - 17. The guest speaker is Blake Smith who is back by popular demand. He was our guest last year. and many appreciated the ministry he brought to the retreat.

As a side note, **Jo Willetts** will be giving wonderful ministry to our children as she is heading up the childcare. **Karla Van Beek** will be directing the camp. That makes two from our congregation going to the Young Adult Retreat. It would be great if every young adult from our congregation could attend and bring their friends! If you or someone you know, need financial help, please see **Bob Beers** for a campership.

Come on, young adults, make plans now to join others from around the area at Deerhaven. Register at www.cofchristfmc.org now because March 15th will be here before we know it.



Celebrate

February

- 1 Carolyn Deering
- 2 Jasmine Rodriguez
- 11 Dan Willetts
- 12 Nancy Brougher
- 14 Barbara & Mervin Smith (anniv)
- 19 Christopher Morgan
- 19 Karla & Jason Van Beek (anniv)
- 22 Mason McReynold
- 22 Linda Mount
- 23 Brenda Haskins
- 27 Margie Geiger Boettger

March

- 1 Charyn and Charlie Walker (anniv)
- 3 Sandra Rater
- 4 Fay Beers

Sprucing Things Up

A **Work Day** is being planned at the church for **Saturday, February 23rd, from 8:00 am - noon**. You are probably saying, "Oh, hum, they are having another work day." Yes, "they" are, but it should be "we" are having another workday. If we want to come to church and be greeted with a neat and inviting landscape and a clean and welcoming facility, it does take some work. There will be projects outside and inside that will need to be done. If there were 20 or more people working for four hours, it would make a big difference. Having two people trimming the bushes would make a bigger impact than one person only getting half of the work done. The same goes for the inside jobs.

To summarize the above paragraph - **You are Needed** at the Work Day. Sure you will need to put forth some energy, but you will be able to enjoy working with others. See you there? See you there!!

Enjoy An Evening of Music

Enjoy an evening of music, coffee, snacks, and fellowship at the **33rd Street Coffee House** located in the Fellowship Hall from 6:30 - 9:30 pm on the first Saturday evening of the month. Live acoustic music will be provided by **Carey Chaney**, Tom Kaiser and others. **Our Father's Cupboard** will benefit from any donations received.

Fellowship means sharing of experiences and common interests; companionship and friendly association. If you like music, coffee, snacks or good company this is the place to be and enjoy the experience with friends, new and old. If you missed the February 2nd presentation, plan to attend on **March 2nd** for an enjoyable evening.



Available at a Reduced Price

The songs we sing reflect our faith movement's beliefs and express our mission in the world. *Community of Christ Sings*, the new hymnal will be published and distributed in October, 2013. The new hymnal includes hymns, choruses, and songs that incorporate the understandings, cultures, and languages of our worldwide church through new and familiar pieces. If you are interested in having a personal copy of the new hymnal and would like to take advantage of the early purchase price, you need to check out the information on the bulletin board in the Information Center. You can place your order on the provided sheet. No money is needed until our final church order is placed in April. Jo Fenn-Martin will be handling the purchases/money for the orders. If you have questions, see **Jo Fenn-Martin** or **Bob Beers**.

Peace Garden

Thank you for all the help with the Children's Peace Garden. It has turned out great. So we wanted to let you know that there is one thing missing and that's a sign.

We are looking for the youth to help participate in a contest for the art work that will be placed on the Peace Garden sign. We would like children, elementary school age or younger, to submit their best art work to **Charyn Walker** within the next two weeks. All submissions will be considered and voted upon to be part of the new Peace Garden sign. We can't wait to see what the youth come up with!! Be creative!!

Zoe Van Beek

Listening, Giving and Becoming

Does it seem possible that we are beginning the second month of the new year? It is time to turn our thoughts to the season of Lent. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 13, and ends on Easter Eve, March 30. February 13 is the earliest Ash Wednesday can ever fall. Lent is a season of personal reflection and inward soul-searching and repentance as we remember Christ's sacrifice.

On this first Sunday in February, we find Jesus in the synagogue teaching. The people were expecting to hear that God's grace was exclusively for the Jews. What did Jesus say to them? Elder **Stu Skene** will share how they were *Challenged by the Truth*. Elder **Jo Fenn-Martin** will preside on this Communion Sunday.

In Chapter 9 of the book of Luke, we learn of the words spoken by a voice in a cloud. *Listen to Jesus*, we are told. Transfiguration Sunday will be celebrated on February 10 with Elder **Bona Lee** speaking and Priest **Carolyn Deering** presiding.

February 17 is the first Sunday in Lent. This is a time to remember God's gracious and steadfast love. Priest **Heather Devine** and Evangelist **Al Mount** will lead us in worship around the theme *Give your First Fruits*. We offer our first fruits to God to use for his purposes. We do not give God the leftovers; we give God our best!

In Genesis 12 we learn that God made a covenant with Abram promising protection, reward and descendants. The story of Abram's willingness to follow and have faith in God is an inspiration to us in today's world. God is calling us to *Become a Covenant People*. On Sunday, February 24, the second Sunday of Lent, Evangelist **Bob Slasor** will bring the message. Elder **Elaine Gregg** will preside on this Sunday.

As the weeks approach the time when we remember and celebrate the events of Holy Week, use these opportunities to prepare for this important season in the Christian calendar. Include the Wednesday evening Prayer and Praise services in your preparation. Attendance at the February 13th Ash Wednesday service will be a good starting place.

Jo Fenn-Martin, for the Worship Team



Above, seven of the 21 women who enjoyed having lunch together in January

Below, a meeting of some of the performers who were part of the Christmas drama.



DID YOU KNOW ???

- ◆ **Mervin and Barbara Smith** held a fund raiser for the youth in December where they sold lots of jewelry and sold out of their homemade peanut brittle while raising \$274 for the Youth Fund? Thank you to the Smiths for sharing their time, talents and generosity.
- ◆ **The Fund Raising Committee** spearheaded events in 2012 that raised \$2,679 which will go toward the purchase of *Community of Christ Sings*, the new hymnal?
- ◆ **The Christmas Stocking** project netted \$413 for 2012?
- ◆ **Aluminum cans** are still being collected by the youth? Place your cans in the barrels on the porch located on the south side of the church.
- ◆ **You can be an environmentally good steward** by placing your empty prescription bottles in the designated container in the church office?
- ◆ **The 2013 Congregation Directory** has been distributed to members and friends of our congregation? If you did not get your copy, see **Fay Beers**.

Community of Christ
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May God's love be you.

