



# Celebration News

March, 2013 - Volume 23 - Issue 2

## We Live in Resurrection Times

The following article was written by Jim Deering, for our congregation's newsletter in 1993. The message is still current for us in 2013.

Ever hear the expressions we use when we sense change - "There's a spirit in the air!" or "feels like rain?"? It's like that now as we approach the celebration of Easter.

I once saw an unusual Easter card which looked like a Christmas card. On the upper half of the card was a nativity scene which featured the shepherds who had come to worship the newborn babe. The lower half of the card depicted those same shepherds, who were young in the nativity scene, now middle aged and those who were middle aged now old. Moreover, instead of standing before the new born babe in the manger they were standing before Jesus' empty tomb. Earlier, they had stood in awe before the revelation of God's love in the Christmas event. Now it was time to go forth to proclaim the awesome good news of the Easter event.

The deep root of our joy is that Easter is not only something that happened long ago, but something that happens today - right now! And, if it isn't, we have missed the point. God acted then and He is acting now to confirm the life and ministry of Christ through his resurrection. He is here, in your life, and in mine at this very moment.

Easter is a time to surface the conviction deep within us that God is in charge and God is good, and God will take care of us in life and death. The tomb, after all, is empty! We live in resurrection times. Christ is alive in us!

### Holy Week Activities

10:55 am	March 24	Palm Sunday worship service
7:00 pm	March 28	Maundy Thursday service
9:00 am	March 31	Easter Breakfast
10:00 am	March 31	Children's Easter Activities
10:45 am	March 31	Easter worship service

## Help Us Help Deerhaven

Hopefully you have heard that *Community of Christ* is coming out with a new hymnal this year. Per World Church, one of the primary reasons for embarking on the hymnal project is the need to clearly articulate the church's message, mission, and identity in songs that help us sing what we believe. We take very seriously the responsibility to help shape future disciples through song.

What a better opportunity to reach out to future disciples than at **Deerhaven Retreat Center (campground)**.

Many of us have had the opportunity to go to one or more functions held on the Deerhaven grounds. During these visits to the campground many of us remember singing together utilizing the hymnals. As a congregation, we are blessed with the funds to purchase the new hymnals for the our use. Deerhaven, unfortunately, is not as blessed.

**Bob Beers** is currently accepting donations towards the purchase of hymnals to be donated for Deerhaven. If you would like to donate towards our goal of five (5) new hymnals to be donated to Deerhaven, please give your donations to Bob or **Melinda Creel**. Wouldn't it be great if we could donate more than five?

**Melinda Creel**, Head Deacon

## We Made It!

The Fund Raising Committee set a goal for February's Yard Sale Plus. Well, at least one of the members did. That goal was that at the end of the day there would be 2,000 dollars more in our congregation's pocket. After a couple of weeks of preparing, one week of sorting and pricing, and one day of working by many dedicated people, the goal was reached. In fact, a few dollars over the goal.

Many thanks to those who helped organize and price the items for the Yard Sale. **Mervin and Barbara Smith** said they had such good help and enjoyed working with everyone. **Jeanette Harris**, stirred up the bakers in the congregation to meet the need of everyone's sweet tooth. The **Morgan Family** and friends manned the food both so that no one would have to go away hungry with the help of cooks **Charlie Walker** and **Jason Van Beek**. **Stu Skene** was chief of the event with **Karla Van Beek** keeping everyone organized.

Here are the final figures for the 2013 Yard Sale Plus: The Bake Sale brought in \$267.30, the Food Bar took in \$180.40, and the Yard Sale yielded \$1,668.56 for a total of \$2,116.26. There was an expense of \$50.00 for advertising. In the end the profit was \$2,066.26! Great job to everyone who donated, worked, and supported the sale in any way.



## Financial Update through January

Budgeted Operating Income	\$5,058
Actual Income	<u>3,967</u>
Difference	<u>\$ 1,091</u>
Actual Income	\$ 3,967
Actual Expenses	<u>(2,836)</u>
Balance	<u>\$ 1,131</u>

## Our Father's Cupboard

Income	\$ 160
Expenses (purchased food)	<u>256</u>
Balance	<u>\$ ( 96)</u>

## Labyrinth Fund

Income	\$ 102
Carry over from 2011 & 2012	<u>2,105</u>
Balance	<u>\$2,207</u>

**Bob Beers**, Congregational Financial Officer

## Refocus for Lent

Give up complaining -- focus on gratitude.  
 Give up harsh judgments -- think kind thoughts.  
 Give up worry -- trust God to provide.  
 Give up discouragement -- be full of hope.  
 Give up bitterness -- turn to forgiveness.  
 Give up hatred -- return good for evil.  
 Give up anger -- be more patient.  
 Give up pettiness -- become mature.  
 Give up jealousy -- pray for trust.  
 Give up gossiping -- control your tongue.  
 Give up sin -- turn to virtue.  
 Give up giving up -- persevere.

--Author unknown

## Upgrading our Kitchen

We're having a "Shower," a kitchen shower that is! Our kitchen has been in need of updating for quite a while. With the help of each one of us, we can have a kitchen that is up-to-date. We need commercial equipment and the proper utensils in the kitchen. The upgrade in the equipment will make working in the kitchen creating meals for fund-raisers, fellowship, and other needs much easier and less frustrating.

During the month of March, we will have a list on the bulletin board in the Information Center of items needed for our kitchen with the price listed for each item.

Won't you help us upgrade our kitchen with the items we need? We invite you to select an item or two you would like to donate. Then instead of trying to purchase the item yourself, **Jo Willetts** will collect your monetary gifts and purchase the items you wish to donate. We should be able to use our new kitchen items beginning in April.

Thank you for helping us with this project so we can have a kitchen to be proud of. If you have any questions, please see **Jo Willetts** or **Fay Beers**.

## Make Me a Blessing

*And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:8*

Several years ago I met a man who is a Vietnam war veteran. His last tour of duty took him to Vietnam where he served, and he is now a retired veteran of this campaign. He was coming up the steps to a facility where I was involved with a charity meeting. He was walking up the steps with a pair of arm braces, and you could actually hear his labored breathing. I asked him if I could be of assistance. He quickly replied, "No thanks". He also added, "God is Great, and I am so blessed to live on his planet."

Sometimes we wonder how can I possibly bless someone else for I am one in a wilderness of humanity. We often feel we have no gifts, time, or inclination to bless someone else. If we turn to the Bible, we read many stories on grace shared and revealed. God can use each of us to encourage the discouraged, slow the busy, and be the light to someone who is in darkness. We need to let him use us in a world that is chaotic. Amid the noise, you and I can be a quieting of the storm. God may not give us prep time or advance notice when we are to be His instrument of grace. But we can trust Him to guide our steps. Now, long after my meeting with this Vietnam war veteran, I am still blessed by the memory of his words that day.

This month may we be the Easter people who share Christ's blessings with those we meet. As disciples of Christ, it is important that we share his blessings with the world.

**Jim Brouger**



*Chartres Cathedral Labyrinth; First Christian Church, Albany, Texas*

## The Labyrinth

There is no gentler place than the labyrinth.

The labyrinth is one more path of prayer.

The labyrinth is a journey to God.

The labyrinth is a nonverbal tool.

The labyrinth is a container for sacred space.

The labyrinth is an experience of wholeness of mystical union.

The labyrinth is a walking meditation for people from all religious traditions.

It is a metaphor for the spiritual journey.

It is an ancient symbol representing wholeness.

It is a way.

It is a way to get in touch with the inner self; the self that knows you best.

It is an ancient archetype.

The labyrinth is a symbol of the earth, womb of the soul, and a dancing ground.

Please consider the future Bradenton/Sarasota congregation's Labyrinth when you are considering your giving opportunities. The future labyrinth will not only provide another pathway to conversing with God for the members of our congregation, it will also be a great tool for the members of our community. We have collected \$2,207 thus far. We need to get to the target of \$30,000 to get a beautiful, useful, spiritual garden complete with the labyrinth that will be available to the public and our congregation.

**Dan Willetts**, Labyrinth Organizer

## Attention Men!

Join the men of our congregation for a **Men's Breakfast Fellowship** at a great Amish Restaurant, the Der Dutchman, at 3713 Bahia Vista Street in Sarasota, on **Monday, March 18, at 10:00 AM.**

Contact **Jeanette Harris** (941.923.3600) to make your reservation.



## Easter Breakfast

The **Willetts Family** has agreed to provide us with a wonderful **Easter Breakfast** again this year. Breakfast will be at **9:00 am on Easter Sunday.** Plan to join us for a delicious breakfast and a time for fellowship before our Easter Worship Service.



## Mark Your Calendar

Make sure you don't miss **Breakfast at the Beach on Saturday, May 4th.** More information will be in April *Celebration News*



## We Continue Our Journey to Easter

We began our Lenten journey on Ash Wednesday in February. Holy Week and Easter will soon be here. Are you ready? There is still time yet for personal reflection, soul-searching, and repentance. The following worship opportunities may aid you in your preparation as we remember Christ's sacrifice.

### *Third Sunday in Lent*

Do you *Thirst for God*? Do you have a yearning for a relationship with God? On **Sunday, March 3**, experience God's love in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Speaker, Evangelist **Karen Palko**, and presider, Elder **Charyn Walker**, will lead us in worship. This is also World Hunger Emphasis day.

### *Fourth Sunday in Lent*

The three parables found in the 15th chapter of Luke about the shepherd who lost one of a hundred sheep, the woman who lost a coin, and the Prodigal Son who lost his way will be shared on **March 10**. The theme *Lost and Found* will be explored by speaker Evangelist Jim Slauter and presider Elder **Ginger Robertson**.

### *Fifth Sunday in Lent*

Extravagant generosity occurs when we faithfully *Accept the Gift* of God's love and grace and share unconditional love and grace with others. Mary and Martha gave us an example of extravagant generosity as they welcomed Jesus into their home. On **March 17** Elders **Jim** and **Marcia Brougher** will bring the lesson with High Priest **Nanette Dizney** presiding.

### *Palm Sunday*

*Blessed Is the One Who Comes* will be heard on Palm Sunday as we begin our celebration of Holy week. Priest **Nancy Skene** and Elder **Rick Jones** will lead us worship on **March 24**.

### *Easter*

*To Bethlehem and Beyond* was the theme of our Christmas celebration in December of last year. Part II of *To Bethlehem and Beyond* will be our Easter celebration. A **service of drama and music ministry will begin at 10:45 am on Easter Sunday, March 31.** Elder Andrea Cooper will preside. Bring your family and friends to worship with us on this special day. Christ Is Risen!

Wednesday evening Prayer and Praise services will be held on **March 6 and 13 at 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.** Come and share with others who are travelling the Lenten journey. Wednesday, **March 20, a Prayer and Blessing service** will be held in the Sanctuary with Elder **Larry Bell** in charge. There will be **NO** Wednesday service during Holy Week. A **Maundy Thursday** service will be held on **March 28 at 7:00 pm.** This service will be a remembrance of the night Jesus spent with his disciples eating the Last Supper. May God be with you on your Lenten journey and may you find attendance at the above worship opportunities helpful in your preparation for Easter.

**Jo Fenn-Martin** for the Worship Team

# DID YOU KNOW ???

- ◆ **Kaitlyn James** was voted Assume Attitude by her fellow Braden River High School cheerleaders and has also joined Pirate Puff, a Braden River High School Powder Puff team?
- ◆ **Bob Beers**, our Congregational Financial Officer, doesn't only keep our budget trimmed, but is also great at trimming the bushes around the church property?
- ◆ **Work Day** brought out about 12 people who trimmed, raked, power washed, and cleaned?



## MARCH:

- 01 Charyn & Charlie Walker (anniv)
- 03 Sandra Rater
- 04 Fay Beers
- 05 Brittney Morgan
- 08 Joan Wooderson
- 12 Fay & Bob Beers ( anniv)
- 15 Karen MacDonald
- 16 Jason Van Beek
- 17 Beulah Wilkins
- 20 Marilyn Wonsitler
- 26 Sydney Evans



Bob Beers, trimming



Jonthan Robertson, washing



**A glimpse of a few busy workers at the recent Work Day.**

Jo Fenn-Martin, raking

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### *God Has Blessed Me with...*

*Opportunities*  
*Freedom*  
*Shelter*  
*Joy*  
*Intelligence*  
*Health*  
*Church Family*  
*His Spirit*



*Love*  
*Family*  
*Job*  
*Forgiveness*  
*SKILLS*  
*MUSIC*  
*Faith*  
*Friends*  
*Peace*  
*Teachers*  
*Golf*

Blessings put on the fruit tree at the 2/17 worship service