

CELEBRATION NEWS



May, 2012 - Volume 22 - Issue 4

On **Saturday, May 19th at 6:30 pm**, everyone is invited to **Movie Night**. We will view a film on the large screen in the sanctuary! The film to be shown comes highly recommended. It is called *Courageous*. It will be especially meaningful to young families. It centers around a group of men in law enforcement who are good at their job but are struggling with how to be the best husbands and fathers that they can be.

This is a heart warming film with much to offer anyone trying to make family relationships and modern life work. The evening will provide a rare opportunity to watch a thought provoking film AND a venue to discuss it afterwards with others who just shared the experience. And, of course, there will be **FOOD!!** Light refreshments will follow in the Fellowship Hall so that we can really talk.

Don't miss this opportunity!

Jim Deering, Facilitator



Leading Congregations in Mission

Early in the year, the Pastorate received an invitation from Community of Christ Headquarters to join 79 other select congregations throughout North America in a new training effort to **Lead Congregations in Mission** (LCIM). This leadership training would entail a three year commitment by a team of five people per congregation to attend workshops and sessions to learn how we can, through the power of the Holy Spirit, become prepared and equipped to implement the Mission Initiatives in active ministry. We accepted the invitation, because we believe that the mission of Jesus Christ really is what matters most in our world today.

I must admit, I am excited! Even though the days and months seem to pass in the blink of an eye, and I sometimes question my own sanity, I know that God is calling us to move forward, or as the apostle Paul so aptly says, "press on" in our witness of the living Christ. Even more important, I am so aware that the Holy Spirit is urging me to live out my servant ministry to the fullest measure of what God has provided, and from Him I will receive the strength, courage and wisdom to fulfill the mission of Jesus Christ.

Ginger Robertson, Outreach Ministries

We learn to Share, Love, Witness and Speak in May

The joy of the Easter season remains with us as we go forward into the month of May. We have followed the stories of the appearance of Jesus to his disciples following the resurrection. The following themes for the Sunday morning worship services lead us to the celebration of Pentecost.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER - May 6

The story of Jesus is meant for everyone. We need to look for opportunities to *Share Boldly* with those who are searching for the gospel message. Evangelist **Al Mount** and Elder **Carol Law** will be sharing boldly with those who come to worship on this Communion Sunday.

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER - May 13

The life of Jesus demonstrates the power of God's love. God invites us to experience the abundant joy in sharing that love with one another as we *Abide in Love*. Priest **Megan Chlebina** and Elder **Jim Deering** will be sharing with love.

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER - May 20

As true and living expressions of Christ, we are called to proclaim joy, hope, love and peace. We are called to serve as apostolic witnesses of Christ. High Priest **Nanette Dizney** will share a message on the theme *Join in Apostolic Witness* on the Sunday before Pentecost. Deacon **Melinda Creel** will preside on this Sunday. Are you sharing your witness?

PENTECOST - May 27

Luke tells us that as the disciples were together "suddenly...there came a sound like a rush of violent wind." Join us in celebrating Pentecost as Evangelist **Al Mount** and Priest **Linda Mount** *Speak of God's Power*.

The Wednesday evening Prayer and Praise group invites you to join them for a relaxed, but meaningful time of worship starting at 7:00 pm. Consider adding this experience to your weekly activities to keep yourself focused for the coming weeks on becoming Easter people.

Jo Fenn-Martin for the Worship Team



Spiritual Growth Retreat

at Deerhaven Retreat Center

May 11-13

"Personality and Prayer:

Two P's in a Pod!"

Guest Ministers: Sharon
Troyer and Timothy Kooch

Register at www.cofchristfmc.org

Breakfast on the Beach

What could be nicer than sitting at a Cafe, looking out over the water, and eating breakfast with friends?

Join us on **Saturday, May 5th at 9:00 am** for **Breakfast on the Beach**.

We will meet at Anna Maria Beach Cafe which is located at the end of Manatee Avenue (4000 Gulf Drive).

Enjoy pancakes, eggs and anything else you would like for breakfast; then sit back and enjoy the beautiful scenery and lovely people.

If you have questions, see **Fay Beers**.



A Mother's Path

Her children rise up, and call her blessed... Proverbs 31:28



When May comes around my thoughts automatically go to my mother. It is her special month because it is also her birthday and anniversary month, but more important to me, it is Mother's Day month. I would like to share a story from *Streams in the Desert* that relates to some of the precious gifts of a mother.

A young mother set her foot on the path of life. "Is the way long?" she asked. Her Guide said: "Yes, the way is hard, and you will be old before you reach the end of it. But the end will be better than the beginning."

The young mother was happy. She would not believe that anything could be better than these years. So she played with her children and gathered flowers for them along the way. The sun shone on them, and life was good. The young mother cried, "Nothing will ever be lovelier than this." Then night came and a storm came. The path was dark, and the children shook with fear and cold. The mother drew them close, covered them with her mantle, and the children said, "Oh, mother, we are not afraid for you are near and no harm can come." The mother said, "This is better than the brightness of the day for I have taught my children courage."

Then morning came and there was a hill ahead. The children climbed and grew weary and the mother was weary, but at all times she said to the children, "A little patience and we are there." So the children climbed and when they reached the top, they said, "We could not have done it without you, mother." The mother, when she laid down that night said: "This is a better day than the last for my children have learned fortitude in the face of hardness. Yesterday I gave them courage, and today I have given them strength."

The next day brought strange clouds which darkened the earth -- clouds of war, hate and evil -- and the children groped and stumbled. The mother said: "Look up. Lift your eyes to the Light." And the children looked above the clouds and saw an Everlasting Glory. It guided them and brought them beyond the darkness. That night the mother said; "This is the best day of all, for I have shown my children God."



The years went on and the mother grew old. She was little and bent, but her children were tall and strong and walked with courage. When the way was hard, they helped their mother. When the way was rough, they lifted her. At last they came to a hill and beyond the hill they could see a shining road with a golden gate flung open. The mother said: "I have reached the end of my journey, and I know that the end is better than the beginning for my children are courageous, strong and they have known God."

It is said that a mother's work is never done. I am blessed that my mother believes this. She has spent her whole life teaching, caring, comforting, guiding, loving and praying me through the ups and downs of my life, and continues to do so every day. I thank God for allowing me the honor of such a devoted mother.

To all the women who have touched a child's life, we wish you a very happy Mother's Day. God bless you as you continue to serve Him as an example of His precious love.

Carolyn Deering, Editorial Staff

Hostesses: Bradenton/ Sarasota Women

Imagine yourself lounging before a warm fire on a cool evening, snuggled in with good friends laughing, caring and sharing. God is inviting us into the shelter of his love and care at the Cozy Mountain Lodge in Deerhaven campgrounds during the weekend of October 5-7, 2012. This year we will host the retreat with lots of fun, relaxing and spirit filled activities.

All of our women, of all ages are invited to come to a **Planning Luncheon on Saturday, June 9**, at 11:00 am. We will receive an overview of the retreat materials and share some "brainstorming" ideas. In the weeks ahead we will be meeting together regularly to plan and organize. This is going to be an opportunity for us to extend our ministry to other women throughout the Mission Center. Through the years many women have received Christ in their lives because a friend invited them to our Women's Retreat. Mark your calendar now!



Keeping the Beat

In the Bradenton-Sarasota congregation there are three creative artists that provide and exhibit their ART every Sunday. They have been devoted for many years in what Leonardo Da Vinci called *the shaping of the invisible*. They provide spirit and mood, color and energy to any and all worship services. They are such an integral part of worship and do things so smoothly that at times it seems they might be taken for granted.

They have practiced their art for many years. To do what they do requires time and devotion. Who are these three creative artists? None other than **Elaine Gregg, Nanette Dizney and Charyn Walker**. We appreciate their ongoing gift of music which adds to our worship week after week. An ovation of thank you goes out to our artists.

Carey Chaney

Support Our Youth

Circle Sunday, **May 27th**, on your calendar to show your support for our youth. The youth are sponsoring a **Soup and Dessert Dinner** following the morning worship service. Donations will go to help them raise monies for the expense of summer camps and Spectacular. Plan to come and help them in this endeavor.

A Challenge

Remaining grounded in Christ in the face of turbulence of any kind in your life (disease, personal emotional attack, etc.) is the saving grace for disciples. It means not being undermined by negative forces of destruction. That is why a relationship with Christ is the bedrock of our salvation. No matter the storm, no matter the loss, no matter the struggle to understand, when you turn your eyes upon Jesus, when you know his promises and trust them, the voice of the Holy Spirit will eventually say to any storm, *Peace be Still*. The Holy Spirit of Peace will come to quiet and heal the inner turbulence. With the Lord, we will come through any experience spiritually much stronger.

To let the Spirit breathe is to hang on for the ride, because it will take you into your history to see grace through new eyes. It will take you into new places of understanding and new revelation that you have never known. It will be poured out on you in new ways that are both unfamiliar and frankly, quite scary. You will hear of and see unfolded mysteries never before revealed to you. And what if the Holy Spirit says to you personally and to us as a congregation, "Come with me, I will expose you to healing and redeeming ways you have never before experienced." Will you be courageous enough to say, "Not my will, God, but your will for me?"

Words of encouragement from modern day counsel to the church:

Test my words. Trust in my promises for they have been given for your assurance and will bear you up in times of doubt. (155:7)

Therefore, continue to be strong in faith. To you who hear my voice and know my promises, I will reveal myself and give my peace, even in the midst of your uncertainties. (158:11a)

Bob Slasor, Evangelist

Congregational Financial Update

Local Budgeted Income through March	\$14,582
Actual Local Income through March	13,277
Amount Short of Budget	(1,305)
Actual Operating Expenses through March	9,004
Actual Local Income to Expenses Balance	\$4,273
Our Father's Cupboard Income through March	\$ 462
Expenses through March	<u>451</u>
March's Ending Balance	\$ 11

May God continue to bless you and your contributions in our mission for Christ.

Bob Beers, Congregational Financial Officer



After the procession of children bringing palms into the sanctuary on Palm Sunday, and while the speaker was telling of the gathering of Jesus and his disciples, a few people stood up. They greeted each other with hugs and waves across the room as they made their way to a table prepared for the Last Supper. No words were spoken by those gathered around the table, but the speaker continued the story of the Last Supper. When the words, "today one of you will betray me" were spoken those around the table were shocked! They looked at each other with puzzled looks. We, as observers, also questioned who would betray Jesus. It made real the feelings of the disciples so many years ago. We were then reminded that as the disciples were called by Jesus, so too have we been called. And, yes, we will betray him as we go through life, but because of the Easter story we will be forgiven, and we will be given the opportunity to try again.

As the speaker continued the story, the modern day disciples began sharing in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The disciples then brought the bread and wine to all those gathered. We renewed our covenant to be a better disciple. Each person was given a small cross made from palm fronds to remind us of the Holy Week and God's wonderful gift of love that was given to each one of us. It was the beginning of our Holy Week observance which included a very meaningful service on Good Friday. The week ended Easter Sunday with a bounteous breakfast, a colorful Easter egg hunt and many fun activities for children, a movie, and the celebration of the resurrection at the morning worship.

Holy Week gave us an opportunity to remember the sacrifice that was made for us. As modern day disciples we were challenged to always remember the gift of God's love for each of us every day.

Dates for 2012 Summer Camps

Junior Camp	June 17 - 21
Senior High	June 24 - 30
Junior High	July 8 - 14
SPEC	July 20 - 28

Information regarding the above summer camps can be found on the bulletin board in the Information Center.

Pre-register and download forms at www.cofchristfmc.org/announce.html

Modern Day Disciples



Exploring Faith

A new **Young Adult Church School Class** has begun. They have been studying current events, but now have added a new study book called *Understanding the Way Exploring Our Christian Faith* by Anthony J. Chvala-Smith. This is a new revised edition.

Our goal for the class is to explore the current events, scriptures and the *Community of Christ* theology. As we explore, study and rationalize, please pray that the teaching will help lead our young adults to become disciples for our Lord and Savior Jesus.

Larry Bell, Facilitator

Young Adult Retreat

A **Young Adult** (age 18 - 40ish) **Retreat** was held April 13-15 at Deerhaven Retreat Center in the Ocala National Forest. Blake Smith was the guest speaker this year. He had great enthusiasm which he shared with the group of about 40 attendees. We were so pleased with Blake's ministry that we asked him to come back next year to share again with us.

Our congregation had an awesome representation with **Luci Gutierrez, Cody Morgan and Jonathan; Hunter Morgan; Brittney Morgan; Heather, Daryl, Liam and Lennon Quinn; Heather, Tim and Matthew Devine; Megan Chlebina; Santiago Gonzalez; Jonathan Robertson; and Karla, Jason, Zoe and Cole Van Beek** attending. **Stu and Nancy Skene, Jo and Dan Willetts, Frankie Scholl, and Patrick James** came to help with taking care of the children. We were also excited to be able to visit with Shelley and Olivia Loudermilk and JaAna and Rick Schwartz with Hayden and Annalea Parham, former members of our congregation who have moved to South Carolina.

We enjoyed hiking, tye dying, Bible exploration, making wood crosses, yummie food, campfire, fun and fellowship. The children enjoyed themselves as well and the younger ones look forward to the day when they can attend camps at Deerhaven.

The following statements were received from a few of the attendees:

Looking forward to next year. Karla Van Beek

I had a good time enjoying the fellowship with other young adults. I always enjoy the nature when I am at Deerhaven. Jason Van Beek

I went to the Young Adult Retreat for the first time, and I loved it. I tie dyed a shirt for myself and for my nephews. I made a cross in woodworking which turned out really good. Karla did a good job organizing the whole thing. The weekend was amazing - I can't say it enough. I definitely will be going next year. Brittney Morgan

Delivery Day

Ginger Robertson, **Outreach Ministry**

In a previous issue of the *Celebration News* you were introduced to our Saturday distribution volunteers for **Our Father's Cupboard**. This month you will find out how we get our food and who does all that unloading and shelving.

We purchase our food from the Manatee food bank, Meals on Wheels Plus. The actual cost 18 cents per pound. Quite a bargain compared to grocery store prices! Every other month we receive government commodities that supplement our purchases. The Pantry is open on the third Saturday of each month.

After distribution, a report is filed on how many clients we served, and an order placed for the monthly food. **Brad Martin**, on the third Wednesday of the month, picks up the food at the food bank. We have a volunteer crew of about seven people waiting to unload and shelve the food. Any commodities must be shelved separately from purchased food, and shelves labeled with "Use By" dates.



The many boxes are unloaded from the truck to a conveyer by about four of the volunteers. As the boxes come down, volunteers open the boxes and begin shelving the food. Empty, broken down boxes are then taken to the cardboard recycling center. At 10:00 am the following day, Thursday morning, yet another group of six or seven volunteers arrive at the pantry to pack the food into large paper grocery bags for the Saturday distribution.

As you can see, it takes many willing hands, feet and backs to ensure that those coming to our pantry are served with dignity and efficiency. This is truly a ministry of love and hospitality.

This year we have been blessed with **Lara Yu** an exchange student from China who has faithfully volunteered with us. Her time spent volunteering allowed us the opportunity to get to know her, and, in return, gave her an opportunity to learn about this ministry. In May Lara will be returning to her homeland. We will miss her earnest willingness to help and insatiable curiosity. We thank Lara and wish her well in her academic future.

DID YOU KNOW ???

- ◆ **Kaitlyn James** made the Junior Varsity Cheerleading Squad at Braden River High School and also played Mrs. Greer in Haile Middle school's performance of Annie?
- ◆ **Zoe Van Beek** preformed in Rowlett Elementary School's presentation of *The Music Man*?
- ◆ **Ginger Robertson and Nanette Dizney** recently reupholstered the stools that are used in worship services, and it is rumored that Ginger yelled "ouch" at least 86-1/2 times while working on them?
- ◆ **Karen and Charles Palko** welcomed their second grandchild, Alexandre Palko Spiguel, born on April 18th in Chicago?
- ◆ **Barbara and Mervin Smith** made crosses out of palm fronds for those in attendance to wear on Palm Sunday?

A New Look

The contributor's Quarterly Statement has a new look. It is no consistent with the five Mission Initiatives which are listed as categories on the recently revised offering envelopes.

Contributions made for support of the World church are recorded on the right side of the offering envelope titled "Worldwide Ministries." There the five Mission Initiatives are listed along with the category "Use Where Needed Most." If you record your contribution on the line titled "Use where Needed Most", your contribution will be allocated to the Mission Initiatives by the World church. Funds from these six categories are sent weekly to the World Church for use in worldwide ministries.

These categories are listed on the first lines on the new Contributor's Quarterly Statement with the amount of your contribution for the indicate period.

Contributions made for Local (Bradenton/Sarasota) and Mission Center (Florida) ministries are listed on the left side of the offering envelope. Your contribution to funds such as the congregational operating budget, building fund, 2 cents a Meal, Deerhaven Campground, camperships, Our Father's cupboard, and Outreach International (to name a few) are recorded on the left side of the offering envelope titled "Local & Mission Center Ministries." These funds remain locally for use in the local congregation and Florida Mission Center.

These categories are listed on the new contributor's Quarterly Statement following the listing of the World church categories. Each of these two sections is subtotaled with a grand total at the end. Amounts received by the world church on a world side level are also shown on the statement.

The Contributor's quarterly Statement will be issued this week. If you have any questions, please contact me, and I will be glad to offer further explanation. Your future contributions will continue to support our mission for Christ.

Bob Beers, Congregational Financial Officer



May

- 04 Dale Morgan
- 08 Liliana Rodriguez
- 08 Charlie Walker
- 09 Bettie Chlebina
- 17 Jacob Rodriguez
- 18 Cole Van Beek
- 23 Joan Wooderson & Ray Daniels (anniv)
- 25 Wanda Fenn
- 28 Tobin Cooper

June

- 05 Bill Williams
- 07 Jonathan Robertson
- 09 Patty & Glenn Day (anniv)
- 16 Bob Beers
- 16 Carolyn & Jim Deering (anniv)
- 25 Megan Chlebina
- 28 Lisa & Joel Rodriguez (anniv)
- 29 Karen & Charles Palko (anniv)

July

- 02 Nancy Peters
- 03 Heather & Tim Devine (anniv)
- 06 Zoe Van Beek
- 07 Coral Blackmore
- 11 Fred Wenzel
- 13 Mark Bee
- 15 Brad Martin
- 15 Jean & George Botelho (anniv)
- 16 Lisa Rodriguez
- 17 Esther Bender
- 19 Amy Smeralda
- 25 Genevieve & Fred Wenzel (anniv)

Community of Christ
% Elaine Gregg
8075 36th Street Cir E
Sarasota FL 34243-6309

Address Correction Requested

Wishing many sunny days to:

SHINE
This Summer



Vacation Bible School is Coming!

JULY 30 - AUGUST 3
AT
5817 33RD STREET EAST



Protecting Children

All activities for children and youth that take place in the name of the church are covered by the *Community of Christ Child Protection Policy*.

In accordance with the policy, ALL persons who work with children and youth in such activities must be registered as youth workers. This requires references, informal interviews, and a short training opportunity.

If you would like to work with children/youth and are not registered, information on this process is available from **Ginger Robertson** (941.756.8276).