

# CLEVELAND CHURCH OF CHRIST

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## GOD MEANT IT FOR GOOD

*By David Kester, Minister*

When Joseph's brothers came to him after their father Jacob died, they were terribly afraid. After all, they had sold Joseph into slavery. Now, while he had gained great power, second only to Pharaoh in the land of Egypt, years of famine had left his brothers at his mercy. Joseph's brothers thought he might take this opportunity to get even with them. They did not know what Joseph would do. Joseph calmed his brother's fear saying, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. So then, don't be afraid." (Genesis 50:19-21)

You intended it for evil but God intended it for good to save many lives. No words more clearly describe what happened on the cross outside of city of Jerusalem some 1600 years later. Satan, Judas, the chief priests, Pilate and the crowds conspired to kill Jesus and expunge His memory from the face of the earth. They acted with perfidy and brutality. Their actions were inexcusably sinful and evil. They meant to harm Jesus but God worked to do good through their evil. They meant it for evil but God used their evil acts to save the lives of many. Acts 2:23 says, "This man (Jesus of Nazareth) was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross."

John Piper, in his book *The Passion of Jesus Christ* wrote, "The lash on his back, the thorns on his head, the spit on his cheek, the bruises on his face, the nails in his hands, the spear in his side, the scorn of rulers, the betrayal of his friend, the desertion by his disciples — these were all the result of sin, and all designed by God to destroy the power of sin.... There is no greater sin than to hate and kill the Son of God. There was no greater suffering nor any greater innocence than the suffering and innocence of Christ. Yet God was in it all.... His aim, through evil and suffering, was to destroy evil and suffering.... There is no sin and no evil too great that God, in Christ, cannot bring from it everlasting righteousness and joy."

The cross is the reminder that God is still in it all. He is with us always, in every situation both good and bad. Sometimes, when friends desert us, or betray us, when we are afflicted by sickness, when one financial crisis after another leaves us reeling, when marriages crumble, when loved ones die, we wonder, "Where is God?" Why does He allow these terrible things to happen? Where is He in our pain and suffering? The answer is, "He is with us. He is always with us." The answer is that He is working for our good and our salvation even when the world seeks to destroy us. He is greater than the world. The words of Romans 8:28 are true. "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." How do we know that God is working for our good? We know that by looking at the cross. Should you doubt that God is working for your good, remember that out of the greatest evil and injustice ever done, God accomplished your salvation. The cross reminds us "there is no sin and no evil too great that God, in Christ, cannot bring from it everlasting righteousness and joy."

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### March 2008 Calendar of Events

- March 2 — Free Movie night, [\*One Night with the King\*](#) – 6:30pm
- March 5 — Wednesday Program – 5:45pm Meal and 6:30pm Bible Study
- March 6 — Bible Study at Centennial Plaza in Le Center – 6:30pm
- March 8 — Church Workday beginning at 9:00am
- March 9 — Daylight Savings Time begins – set your clocks ahead one hour
- March 9 — Monthly Building Fund Offering
- March 9 — VBS Organizational Meeting in church Library – After Worship
- March 9 — 7th-12th Grade Youth Group at church – 6:00pm
- March 11 — Dorcas Fellowship at church – 1:30pm

- March 11 — Board Meeting – 7:30pm; Mark H will host
- March 17 — Church Elders' Meeting at church – 7:30pm – Sherm will lead devotions.
- March 20 — Maundy Thursday Service and Meal – 6:00pm
- March 21 — Good Friday Service – 7:30pm
- March 23 — Two WORSHIP SERVICES – 8:30am & 10:30am — No Bible Classes  
Continental Breakfast after the 8:30am Worship Service
- March 27 — Ladies Nite Out at China Buffet in Mankato – 6:00pm
- March 28 — Nursing Home Service, Central Health Care, Le Center, MN – 11:00am
- March 30 — Free Movie night,  
[The Chronicles of Narnia, The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe](#) – 6:30pm

### COMING LATER THIS YEAR

- April 4-5 — [Minnesota Christian Convention](#) at Rochester, MN
- April 6 — Lifeline of Hope - Orphan Presentation during 9:00am Sunday School time
- April 11 — Game Night for Adults at 6:30pm
- April 13 — Church Children Musical during 9:00am Sunday School time
- April 19 — Free Clothing Distribution at church from 9:00am–Noon
- April 25-26 — Annual Christian Student Fellowship Retreat at our church
- June 15-19 — Vacation Bible School at church in the evenings

**OUR SYMPATHY** We express our sympathy to the family and friends of **Dennis Dickie** who passed away February 14, 2008, at age 58. Dennis was the son of Maurice and Delores Dickie. A memorial service will be held in the spring.

**ANNUAL YOUTH FUNDRAISER** On Sunday, March 2, the 7-12 grade youth will serve a brunch from noon to 1:00pm. Money raised will be used to support a child sponsored through World Vision. \$360 is needed to support a child for a full year. Additional money raised will go to the youth fund for future activities

**WORKDAY AT THE CHURCH** is planned for Saturday, March 8, beginning at 9:00am. We will be doing some painting and other small maintenance projects. We can use your help.

### CELEBRATE WITH THE HARRINGTONS

The Harringtons are returning to Minnesota to finalize Ameena's adoption. Bring some food to share and celebrate with the Harringtons following the Worship Service on Sunday, March 9.

**BUILDING OFFERING** We will receive our monthly building fund offering on Sunday, March 9. In January, \$3,775.00 was given to the building fund. As of February 1, \$355,600.91 remains to be paid on the building loan.

**NEW ORLEANS UPDATE** Those going to New Orleans in October are reminded that the first nonrefundable payment of \$110 needs to be made by March 12 so we can get the money to Southeast Christian Church by March 16. Make your check to *Church of Christ* and write New Orleans on the memo line.

**VBS DATES SET!** Mark your summer calendars now for this year's Vacation Bible School! The dates are Sunday, June 17 – Thursday, June 19, and we will run in the evening. As always, this program is only as good as it is volunteers, which is why we have been so successful in the past and why we need you now! Please consider lending your time and talents to this very worthwhile and fun ministry. Especially if you have always wanted to wear a patch over your eye, carry a sword and say "arrrgh."

An organizational meeting is planned for Sunday, March 9, following the worship service in the library. If you are unable to attend, but want to add your name to the list of volunteers, please talk to Connie P directly or call at 931-6394.

**30-HOUR FAMINE** Youth in grades 7-12 will be participating in World Vision's 30-Hour Famine on March 28-29. After eating lunch on Friday, the kids will not eat again until Saturday evening. The young people should gather at the church, Friday, March 28, at 6:30pm (or as soon as they can arrive) for the official start of the famine.

The 30-Hour famine helps the young people better understand what it is like to be hungry. They also raise money to help World Vision combat hunger around the world. In addition to many fun activities, the young people will go to Mankato on Saturday to help **Kids Against Hunger** pack meals for hungry children around the world.

Remember to bring a sleeping bag, pillow, towel, toiletries, a change of clothes, and warm clothes for outside activities if the weather permits. Bring your favorite beverages to drink during the famine. Milk, juice, hot chocolate are usually better choices than pop.

We encourage you to bring a friend or friends if you desire. Sign their name on the list on the church bulletin board if they plan to come. Make sure they know what to bring!

#### **HOW YOU CAN HELP WITH THE 30-HOUR FAMINE**

- Contribute to the kids' fund raising efforts on Sundays, March 23 or 30.
- Loan us a video camera. We need two or maybe three cameras.
- Volunteer to help with the meal to break the fast on Saturday, March 29.  
Contact Pam A if you are able to help in this way.

**CHILDREN'S MUSICAL** On Sunday, April 13, at 9:00am, children ages 3 years through grade 6 will be presenting a musical entitled "Down By The Creek Bank." Rehearsals have already started on Sunday mornings from 9:00 - 9:15am, before Sunday School classes begin. A secret adult will guest star in the play. You won't want to miss this one! It is filled with fun songs and a spirit filled message. We are also preparing two songs to be sung Easter morning, March 23, at the 10:30am Worship Service.

**FREE CLOTHING DISTRIBUTION** at the church on Saturday, April 19, from 9:00am – 12 noon. Good used clothing infant through adult can be donated any time. Saturdays, April 5 and April 12, volunteers will meet at 8:00am to sort and organize donated clothing. If bags were labeled with gender and size, it would be helpful. Contact Mary H if interested in helping with this project. You also help by donating grocery bags for the clothing distribution.

**NURSERY WORKERS** We are always interested in finding more individuals willing to help in the nursery during the worship service on Sundays. Individuals work about one Sunday every four months from 10:20am to approximately 11:40am. Contact David K if you are interested in helping with this ministry.

#### **MISSIONS UPDATE**

As the church board prepared the budget for 2008, it also reviewed our monthly mission giving. The board realized that the missions we support face additional expenses just as we do. The church board decided to increase the support of each of the missions we support monthly.

Chinhoyi Christian Mission (Zimbabwe, Africa) will receive a fifteen dollar a month increase to \$365 each month. Chinhoyi Christian Mission is led by Dale Marshall, a former minister of the Cleveland Church of Christ. Over 200 churches have been planted during Dale's forty plus years working in Zimbabwe.

The other three missions we support will all receive a ten dollar a month increase. Crossroads College will receive \$285 each month. Crossroads College's mission is to serve "Christ and His church through academic excellence in a Christ-centered education, by developing Christian leaders who impact the world for Christ, and by providing resources that strengthen churches and enrich the community." Several individuals from our congregation have attended Crossroads College (formerly Minnesota Bible College).

Christian Student Fellowship will receive \$150 each month. Christian Student Fellowship (CSF) is a non-denominational, Bible-based, Christian ministry at the University of Minnesota for college students and college-age people. CSF says, "The scriptural admonitions to "love the Lord your God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength," and "to love your neighbor as yourself" form the foundation for both the methods and the desired outcomes of our ministry."

Minnesota Christian Evangelizing Association (a church planting ministry) will receive \$115 each month. The vision of the MCEA is to partner with like-minded churches and/or organizations for the purpose of starting a Church Planting Movement in the upper Midwest.

In addition, the board decided to add Grace Christian Ministries (Kerala, India) to our mission giving at \$100 a month. Grace Christian Ministries works with over twenty churches, has a Bible College for training young men and women for ministry, and sponsors a Children's Home. We are excited to add a new mission to our regular monthly giving for the first time in quite a while.

We are also pleased to announce that ten individuals from our congregation have committed themselves to go to New Orleans in October to help rebuild homes there.

**WEBSITE HAS NEW LOOK** If you have not looked at the church website in a while, check it out at [www.clevelandchurch.net](http://www.clevelandchurch.net). The website has a brand new look with easy to navigate drop down menus and hundreds of new pictures from the past and present. Also, go to **Events**, and click on **Calendar** to see an up-to-date list of things going on at the church building. This list is also posted on the bulletin board in the foyer.

**GENEROUS GIVING** We have had several special offerings lately and each time, people have given generously. We deeply appreciate the generosity of this congregation. We are also aware that higher home heating costs, gas prices, the housing market and other financial issues have challenged many individuals and families in our congregation. While we strongly believe that giving to the Lord's work is an important part of Christian discipleship, we are also aware that the amount any person or family can give widely varies. This probably means some of us should give more than we do because God has blessed us financially. It also means that others may not be able to give as much as they desire. We understand that. We certainly do not want "special offerings" to be a burden to anyone.

Remember what the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians. "If the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have. Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality." (1 Corinthians 8:12-13) We know we do not all have equal means. Nor do we want anyone to be pressed beyond his or her ability. God knows what we are able to give. Jesus accepted and honored the two pennies the widow gave and said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others." (Mark 12:43)

The sizes of our gifts do not matter as much as our heart. God knows our hearts. Thank you for your generosity. Each gift, no matter the size is an act of worship.

#### **DID YOU KNOW...?**

- Kim Bultman has recorded a CD of original songs and made it available to us for a donation to the PTL fund (Praise the Lord or Pave the Lot). Pick up a copy of the CD in the foyer of the church building.
- We recently received memorial gifts from the family of Merritt Davis in his memory. Merritt died January 24 and his funeral was held at the church on January 28. We express our sympathy to the family and friends of Merritt Davis.
- Grant DenHerder claimed Cleveland's National Geographic Bee title for the third consecutive year.
- Austin Goettlicher was Cleveland's Spelling Bee champion.
- Emily Phillips was recently chosen as a 2007-08 winner of the ExCEL Award for Cleveland High School. The ExCEL Award (Excellence in Community, Education and Leadership) recognizes

Minnesota high school juniors who are active in school activities who show leadership qualities and are model citizens.

- \$812.00 was given to Pine Haven Christian Assembly on February 3 to help with the Lodge Restoration. Thanks to all who contributed.
- We recently received gifts in memory of Bea Lloyd from Don, Lois, Mel, Monie, Russ, Judy, Betty, Norm & Kim Lloyd towards the kitchen window closure and camp scholarships. Thanks to the Lloyds for these gifts in memory of Bea.
- Following the Gideon presentation on Sunday, February 24, over \$400 was given their ministry of placing Bibles.
- After a long search, Crossroads College has named a new president, Mike Kilgallin. Congratulations Crossroads!

**PINE HAVEN CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY** Plan to attend summer camp! We have camp programs for all ages and for families. Camp weeks correspond with the grade the students will begin in the fall of 2008. Registration forms can be downloaded from the camp website at [www.pinehavencamp.org](http://www.pinehavencamp.org).

#### 2008 CAMP SCHEDULE

11 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Grade Camp	June 15-21
9 <sup>th</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Camp	June 22-28
Family Week	June 29-July 4
Adventure Week	July 20-25
Ladies Retreat	July 25-27
7 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Camp	July 27-August 2
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Camp	August 10-13
Family Weekend	August 14-17
5 <sup>th</sup> - 6 <sup>th</sup> Grade Camp	August 17-22
Last Chance Camp	August 29-24

#### 2008 EASTER SCHEDULE

**MAUNDY THURSDAY** What is Maundy Thursday? How did it get its name? Maundy comes from a Latin word *mandatum* which means command. So, literally, Maundy Thursday is “Commandment Thursday.” Perhaps more accurately, it is “New Commandment Thursday.” For on the night Jesus celebrated the Passover with his disciples, the last time, he gave them a new commandment. John 13:34 says, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” Three times that evening, Jesus commanded his disciples to love each other. On Maundy Thursday, we gather not only to remember Christ’s love for us, but also to remember his command to love each other.

On Thursday, March 20, at 6:00pm, we will celebrate Maundy Thursday by sharing a meal together. Sign up in the foyer to bring some of your favorite soup or bread. During the meal, we will share the Lord’s Supper and remember His command “to love one another.”

**GOOD FRIDAY** Why is the day on which our Lord was crucified, known as Good Friday? Some think the name was originally “God’s Friday,” although we do not know that for sure. It seems more likely, that the “good” represents the good gift of salvation brought about by Jesus’ sacrificial death on the cross. It is a reminder that God transformed what wicked men and Satan meant for evil, and used to accomplish the greatest good, our salvation. Good Friday reminds us that God can transform and use even our darkest days to accomplish His will.

Friday, March 21, we will gather at 7:30pm to remember Christ’s sacrifice on our behalf. We will celebrate the Lord’s Supper and thank our Lord for dying in our place.

**EASTER SUNDAY** What does Easter mean? It seems that the word Easter probably came from the name of the goddess of spring, Eostre. The springtime themes of rebirth, new life, new hope and light connect

closely with the themes surrounding the resurrection of our Lord. Over time, the term Easter has come to designate the day we celebrate Jesus' resurrection. Perhaps, it would be better for us to refer to Easter Sunday as Resurrection Sunday for we are not celebrating the coming of spring, but we are celebrating the glorious resurrection of our Lord.

On Sunday March 23, we will conduct two worship services, one at 8:30am and another at 10:30am. There will be no Sunday School on Sunday, March 23. We will share a Continental Breakfast of rolls, muffins and fresh fruit following the 8:30am Easter Service. Sign up in the foyer to help with Easter Breakfast.

**SNACKS are needed** for the Sunday 10:00am Fellowship Time. Bring 8-10 dozen snack items. Coffee will be made. Volunteers are responsible for setting up, serving and cleaning up on your service day.

**CASSETTE TAPES** of the worship service are available upon request. **PRINTED COPIES** of each Sunday's sermon are also available. Contact David K if you are interested in a copy of the sermon. You may also receive a copy of the sermon each week via **EMAIL**. Send your request to [office@clevelandchurch.net](mailto:office@clevelandchurch.net)



**PRAYER** is an important ministry of the church. We have many people who are willing to pray for you if a special need arise. To activate our prayer chain, call David K at the church office (507) 931-5924, or the parsonage at (507) 931-4044, or (507) 380-1985, with your request. If you are unable to reach David, please call Carrie M at (507) 357-6296 (H) or (507) 357-6444 (W) or (507) 261-0279 (C).

**BIRTHDAYS:** March 2 – Darlene S, Sage A; 5 – Tom E; 10 – Ryan R; 14 – Jordan P; 15 – Dayton Hale; 16 – Wendy E, Kaylin S; 18 – Helen B; 20 – Liz R; 24 – Neysa S; 25 – Samantha B, Stephanie B; 26 – Mark C; 28 – Jordan G; 29 – Elsa E; 30 – Kole S; 31 – Marcella L

**ANNIVERSARIES:** March 10 – Lowen & Dorothy R; 18 – Dan & Jolene C; 19 – Melissa & Brad W

#### SERVING LIST

A PDF file of our December 2007–March 2008 Serving List Chart may be downloaded from [www.clevelandchurch.net](http://www.clevelandchurch.net). This hyperlink → [Serving List](#) ← will take you straight to the page.

#### CHURCH OF CHRIST

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#### SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00am – Bible Classes for all ages

10:00am – Fellowship Time

10:30am – Worship Service

Office Phone: (507) 931-5924

Parsonage Phone: (507) 931-4044

If you wish to no longer receive our email newsletters **or** to update your email address, please reply to this address: [newsletter@clevelandchurch.net](mailto:newsletter@clevelandchurch.net)

If you wish to email our minister and / or the church office use: [office@clevelandchurch.net](mailto:office@clevelandchurch.net)

Thank you, Church of Christ meeting at Cleveland, Minnesota, USA