



THE BIG IDEA

By John Kester, Pastor

Imagine if you will that you are a person who is on a quest. You have decided that you are going to find out once and for all what this church business is all about. You figure that if you go to several different churches on consecutive Sundays and then compare what you have observed, you will know what the “Big Idea” is. After all, all churches should be presenting pretty much the same idea, shouldn’t they?

The first service you visit spends a lot of time going over a list of upcoming events. There are a lot of activities planned in the near future for families and kids. In fact, the service seems to be focused on meeting the needs of families. You come away from the service thinking that maybe the church is about building strong families. The next week you visit a service where the focus of the service is on an update of a recent short-term mission trip. People tell about their experiences helping others who are in need. You go away from the service thinking that maybe the church is all about performing service for others. The next week you visit a service with the best Christian band you have ever heard. A lot of time is spent on singing worship songs and on listening to the music of the band. People even get up and dance while the music is playing. There seems to be a great sense of joy in the gathering and you wonder if maybe the church is all about worship that brings joy. The next week you go to a service that spends twenty minutes taking prayer requests for the sick and the needy. You wonder if maybe church is about getting what you want from God.

Week after week, you attend different groups and each time you come away with a different impression of what the church is all about. Maybe it is about being obedient to the rules. Maybe it is about political activism. Maybe it is about being blessed by God. It seems to you that each week a different idea is presented as the “Big Idea.” After a couple of months you just quit trying to figure it out because there seems to be no coherent, unifying message common to all churches. You just can’t figure out what the “Big Idea” is.

I don’t think this is such a far-fetched scenario. I think this tends to happen, not only from group to group, but it even happens from Sunday to Sunday in our congregation. In an effort to promote a number of worthy ideas and goals, we forget to focus on the “Big Idea.” I believe the “Big Idea” is as simple as the first Bible verse most people learn. **“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”** (John 3:16) I got to thinking about what I would want someone to learn if they visited church just once. This was it. God loves you so much that he sent His son to die so that you could live. Nothing else matters nearly as much as sharing this life-changing message. All the other things that we might want to communicate in church – love for our families, service for the needy, worship of the creator – all gain their significance from the fact that God loves us and wants to save us. This is the “Big Idea.” I hope that no one will ever come to the Cleveland Church of Christ without being confronted by the “Big Idea.” God loves you and wants to save you. If we fail to make that message clear, I believe we have missed what really matters. Let’s make sure the “Big Idea” is the main idea in our church.

Congratulations to Angela Aanas and Andrew Hewitt who were married on Saturday, September 5, 2009 at our church. Mr. and Mrs. Hewitt are making their home in Valentine, Nebraska.

Our sympathy goes out to Eddie Hall for the unexpected death of his son-in-law, Ryen Huggins, on September 2. Also, condolences are extended to Wally Krenik for the death of his sister, Jane Krenik, on September 15.

OCTOBER 2009 CALENDAR

All events are at the church building unless otherwise noted.

* Indicates an article is elsewhere in this newsletter.

- Elders meeting – October 4 at 12:30pm
- Great Communion event at Valley Christian Church, Lakeville, MN – October 4 at 4:00pm
- MN vs. GB football party at Mark and Mary Howells – October 5 at 6:30pm*
- Wednesday night Bible Study – October 7, 21 & 28 at 6:30pm* (Note the change to Wednesday night)
- Choir Practice – October 7, 14, 21, 28 at 7:30pm*
- New Orleans Mission Trip – October 10-18*
- Randy Hardy preaching – October 11
- Building Offering – October 11*
- Operation Christmas Child presentation – October 11*
- Dorcas Fellowship – October 13 at 1:30pm*
- Church Board Meeting – October 13 at 7:30pm*
- Women of Faith Conference – October 16-17
- 1st Annual Carter Kern Fun Run/Walk and Family Festival – October 17*
- Brad Dewing preaching – October 18
- November newsletter articles due to Lisa K – October 22
- Congregational Annual Meeting – October 25
- HEART TO HEART item distribution – October 31

COMING IN NOVEMBER

- Daylight Savings Time Ends – November 1
- International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church – November 8
- Fellowship/Potluck Meal – November 8
- Filled Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes need to be returned to church – November 15
- National Missionary Convention – November 20-21
- Thanksgiving Day – November 26

MN / GB FOOTBALL GAME

On Monday, October 5, come watch the Big Game outdoors on the Big Screen at Mark and Mary Howells at 506 Division Street, Faribault. The party will start at 6:30pm. Just bring your appetites and cheering voices.

BUILDING OFFERING

Our monthly building offering will be received on Sunday, October 11. Thanks to all who have faithfully given to the building fund.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY – "3:16" by Max Lucado

In the first chapter of his book, Max says, ***"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*** "A twenty-six-word parade of hope: beginning with God, ending with life, and urging us to do the same. Brief enough to write on a napkin or memorize in a moment, yet solid enough to weather two thousand years of storms and questions. If you know nothing of the Bible, start here. If you know everything in the Bible, return here. We all need the reminder. The heart of the human problem is the heart of the human. And God's treatment is prescribed in John 3:16. He loves. He gave. We believe. We live." Come join us on Wednesdays at 6:30pm as we fellowship, pray and study the height and breadth and depth of God's love for us.

CHOIR PRACTICE

We welcome you to make a joyful sound in choir this year. Practice will begin on Wednesday, October 7 at 7:30pm and meet again on Wednesdays October 14, 21, and 28 at 7:30pm.

NEW ORLEANS MISSION TRIP

On Saturday, October 10, Pam Aanas, Graydon Dickie, Laura Dickie, John Kester, Marilyn Kluntz, Judy Lloyd and David Lloyd will depart for a week of ministry in New Orleans. They will be teaming up with Habitat for Humanity. Please keep them in your prayers. In John's absence, Randy Hardy and Brad Dewing will be ministering on October 11 and October 18.

DORCAS FELLOWSHIP

Dorcas Fellowship is open for all women. It meets monthly, typically on the second Tuesday of the month, in the afternoon. The Dorcas Fellowship offers a time to get together to visit but also it is a time to minister. The focus of their ministry is praying for needs they are aware of and sending cards of encouragement. Dorcas Fellowship will meet Tuesday, October 13 at 1:30pm at the church.

**1ST ANNUAL
"TEAM CARTER" 5K RUN/WALK**

Saturday, October 17, 2009
9 am Start Time

Cleveland Pubic School
Cleveland, MN

All individuals and families are
invited to participate in the activities.

5K Run/Walk (strollers welcome!)
including a **Kid Stroll**

Kids Activities at 9:30am
with games, treats & balloon release

Music by KBE DJ
Kern Brothers Entertainment DJ

Visit Carter's website at
www.gocarter.homestead.com

CHURCH BOARD MEETING

Members of the Church Board will meet on Tuesday, October 13 at 7:30pm at the church.

ANNUAL MEETING for OUR CONGREGATION

The annual meeting of the Church of Christ has been scheduled for Sunday, October 25 following the worship service. A light lunch will be provided. We encourage all members and other interested individuals to attend this meeting. Those who are responsible for submitting reports for the annual meeting are encouraged to have them in the church office by Sunday, October 11.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

PREPARE - Get ready to pack a shoebox or two or twelve to give to Operation Christmas Child. In 2008, this ministry of Samaritan's Purse collected close to 8 million shoebox gifts for poor, sick, and suffering children in over 100 countries. In its 16 years, almost 70 million boxes have been given out! In the 8 years that our Cleveland church family has participated in OCC, we have given 620 boxes. Last year, our Cleveland congregation delivered 94 shoeboxes to the Mankato drop-off location. What will we do this year ???

BOXES – This year, we have a number of official OCC shoeboxes you may use for filling. They require no Christmas wrap. Also, if you have empty shoeboxes at home you wish to donate them for this project, bring them to church now. See the OCC shoeboxes in our display at church to get an idea of what size of shoebox is best.

PICK-UP, SHOP & RETURN - See our OCC display at church set up by Sunday, October 11. It will have instructions for packing a shoebox and other helpful information. Empty shoeboxes will be available for you to take, or use one of your own shoeboxes. Filled shoeboxes need to be returned to our church building by Sunday, November 15.

OR DONATE INSTEAD - Julie Dittrich has agreed to shop & put together shoeboxes for those who would rather just donate a gift of money. Any amount is welcomed. Julie will buy & pack according to what donations she receives. Money donations can be dropped in the black mailbox by the OCC display at church and Julie will go from there. Try to do that by the first week in November, or sooner, so Julie will have time to shop & pack & return them by November 15.

If you have any questions about Operation Christmas Child, visit www.samaritanspurse.org or contact Betty Lloyd.

YOU ARE WELCOME!



SUNDAY BIBLE CLASSES

Children under 2 years are welcome to come to any adult class with a parent.



8:45 A.M.

FROG Fun: 2 Years – 6th Grade in the Fellowship Hall
EARN, TRADE AND COLLECT BIBLE TRADING CARDS

9:00 A.M. 2-3 Yrs Singing and Classroom Time
For 2-3 Yr Olds in the Nursery

9:00 A.M. 4 Yrs – High School
Singing in the Sanctuary with
Classroom Time to Follow

ROOMS ARE:

- 4 - 5 YEARS **in Room Three** (Annette Swedberg)
- 1 - 3 GRADERS **in Room Five** (Julie Dittrich)
- 4 - 6 GRADERS **in Room Two** (Ellen Dickie)
- 7 - 12 GRADERS **in Room Four** (Dan & Jolene Christensen)

9:00 A.M. STUDY For COLLEGE & CAREER AGE
NEW! STARTING DATE TBA...

9:00 A.M. STUDY For ADULTS in the Fireside Room
WORLD RELIGIONS

9:00 A.M. STUDY For WOMEN in the Library
WALKING FAITHFULLY WITH GOD

MISSION NEWS from Zimbabwe

Fanny & Martha Nyamutora of one of our 6 monthly supported missions, African Harvest – Zimbabwe, have an urgent need for funds to pay school tuition for their 3 sons in Zimbabwe. If you wish to make a donation for this need, a check can be written to the Cleveland Church of Christ with “Zim school fees” on the memo line. We can send your gift to their forwarding agent for you.

MISSION NEWS from Crossroads

Crossroads College in Rochester, MN, is one of 6 missions our Cleveland congregation supports financially on a monthly basis. Crossroads is a nondenominational, coeducational, post-secondary institution which spotlights its purpose as “Education with Christ at the Center.” Learn more about Crossroads at their website at www.crossroadscollege.edu. Quoting from their *Compass POINT* for the week of Sept 14, 2009:

Crossroads College welcomed a very large group of new and former students for 2009-2010, 77 new or former students into the daytime and Compass programs, and the campus is buzzing with people and activities for Fall Term. The numbers are, in detail, as follows:

- Actual Head Count of Students, Traditional and Non-Traditional: 172
- New or Returning Former Students, Traditional or Non-Traditional: 77
- Single Student Housing On-Campus: 95 beds
- Single Student Housing Still Available: 4 beds
- Number of Faculty: 11 Fulltime and 20 Part-Time Adjunct
- Number of Staff & Administration: 21 (5 also serve as Adjunct Faculty)

Good news and great growth! Praise God for the opportunity to be here “for such a time as this.” And celebrate with us the potential of these leaders serving around the world, and right next door.

Mark your calendars now for our annual Crossroads College day at church on Sunday, November 8, 2009. We will give our entire morning offering to the college that day, and enjoy a fellowship/potluck meal together after the morning service.

Compass POINT* is a weekly email for friends of **Crossroads College and **Compass Adult Studies**.

DID YOU KNOW . . . ?

- We had 45 campers attend Pine Haven Christian Assembly in the 2009 camping season. Special kudos to Laura Dickie who went to 3 different sessions of camp this year! Thank you to those who contributed to our camp scholarship fund and the many people who helped by transporting our youth to & from their camp sessions.
- The “HEART TO HEART” personal need products for children and adults are distributed the last Saturday of every month here at the church from 10:00am to Noon. If you wish to donate items to the HEART TO HEART project, information and a place to put donations are located in our church foyer. Donations are welcomed and encouraged on an ongoing basis. Thank you for your help in this ministry!
- We had about 250 attend our annual FRIEND DAY held on Sunday, September 20, 2009. We worshipped under the tent and ate good food and visited with our friends.

BIRTHDAYS: October 1– Brody Esser, Evan Koppelman; 4– Ellen Dickie; 6– Julie Rogers, Ben Taylor; 7– Art Davis; 8– Rupert Goodrich; 9– Pam Burns; 11– Kelsey Schmidt, Roger Schmidt; 12– Deb Ely; 13– Dale Marshall-retired missionary, Reid Nelson, Mathan Schoknecht; 14– Fanny Nyamutora-missionary to India; 16– Stella Poonyo; 17– Megan Ely, Patrick Ely, Mamie Schoknecht; 19– Mary Den Herder; 22– Ken Draeger, Sharee Siebert; 23– Brady Schmidt; 29– Josten Schmidt

ANNIVERSARIES: October 8– Art & Amy Poll; 9– Kurt & Mary Nelson; 12– Jim & Karen Rogers; 14– Ryan & Jocelyne Chadderdon, Peter & Lisa Koppelman; 15– Mike & Kim Wobbrock; 25– Ryan & Krysti Brockberg; 27– Ken & Lislie Draeger; 31– Roger & Andrea Schmidt

CHURCH OF CHRIST
900 State Highway 99
Mail to: PO Box 307
Cleveland, MN 56017
OUR HEAD: Jesus Christ
PASTOR: John Kester

ALL SUNDAYS unless noted otherwise
9:00am Bible Classes for All Ages
10:00am Fellowship Time
10:30am Worship Service

www.clevelandchurch.net

OFFICE: (507) 931- 5924
GENERAL: clchurch@live.com
PRAYER CHAIN: clchurchprayer@live.com
SECRETARY Lisa Koppelman: clchurchlisa@live.com

You may receive our monthly newsletter via email each month. Just email us a note to below address to request it. If you wish to no longer receive our email newsletters **OR** to update your email address, please reply to this address: clchurchnews@live.com