



## **THE PURPOSE OF PAIN**

By John Kester, Pastor

You receive some rather odd looks when you approach the admissions desk at the emergency room on your hands and knees. The triage nurse and the person who came to take blood samples and the ER doctor all looked at me as if I was crazy when they entered the room and found me on my hands and knees. Almost immediately, the question that I would hear repeated dozens of times over the next couple of days was voiced. On a scale of 1-10, with ten being the worst pain you can imagine, what is the level of your pain?

Because I have a pretty good imagination, I never said 10. I could always imagine that the pain could have been worse. But there were times when I said the pain was up to a 9. I got tired of answering the question. It seemed too subjective to have any real value. But for the doctors and nurses it was an important question. It helped them know if the things they were doing to help me were having any positive results. When I reported that the pain was only a 3 or 4 they knew the medications they were giving me were finally taking effect.

The pain also served another positive purpose. By isolating where I hurt, the doctors could begin to determine what was wrong with my body and then they could do something to fix the problem. With the pain focused in my back and right leg, they did not spend much time looking at my arms or ears or nose. That wasn't the source of the pain. They did tests on my back and hip to try to find out why I hurt. The pain helped them diagnose my problem.

I recently heard Tony Dungy, the former coach of the Indianapolis Colts, interviewed. In that interview, Tony talked about his 10-year-old son who has a rare medical condition. His son does not feel pain. Tony said a rather startling thing in that interview. He said, "I hear people question why God would allow them to experience pain in their lives. I know for a fact that there are worse things than feeling pain." Pain is a gift that helps protect our bodies from doing serious damage to them. Because of what his son must deal with, Tony has come to understand that pain can be a gift from God.

In 2 Corinthians 12, the Apostle Paul told about a physical affliction that troubled him. I imagine that his problem caused him discomfort and pain. It was bad enough that he prayed three times for God to remove the problem. But instead of eliminating Paul's pain, God told him, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." In the midst of his pain and suffering, Paul came to understand something important about his relationship with God. The pain and suffering helped him understand how completely dependent he was upon God.

Perhaps that is why God lets me experience pain too. Maybe the reason He allows me to go through things that I do not welcome is to help me understand how desperately I need Him. It is in my moments of greatest weakness that I appreciate His power the most. When my strength is exhausted, then I rely on Him. Perhaps that is why God allows me to experience pain.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### SEPTEMBER 2010

All events are at the church building unless otherwise noted.

\* Indicates an article is elsewhere in this newsletter.

- Sept 3-6 – PHCA Last Chance Camp
- Sept 5 – Elder's Meeting
- Sept 6 – Labor Day (USA)
- Sept 9-12 – PHCA Scrapbook Weekend 1
- Sept 12 – Friend Day\*
- Sept 13 – Crossroads College Fall Golf Outing, Rochester
- Sept 14 – Dorcas Fellowship
- Sept 14 – Church Board Meeting
- Sept 16 – Ladies Night Out\*
- Sept 16-19 – PHCA Scrapbook Weekend 2
- Sept 19 – Fall Kick Off for Sunday School\*
- Sept 19 – Monthly Building Offering
- Sept 19 – 7-12 Grade Youth at Dan & Jolene's\*
- Sept 23-25 – PHCA Fall Work Weekend
- Sept 24-25 – Crossroads College Homecoming & Parent's Day, Rochester
- Sept 25 – Heart to Heart distribution
- Sept 26 – Prayer Meeting
- Sept 30 – MN Teen Challenge Gala at Verizon Wireless Center, Mankato



### COMING IN OCTOBER



- Oct 9-17 – New Orleans Mission Trip
- Oct 10 – Operation Christmas Child Presentation
- Oct 14-15 – Crossroads College Fall College Days, Rochester
- Oct 22-23 – Women of Faith Conference at the Excel Energy Center, St. Paul, MN
- **Oct 24** – Congregational Annual Meeting
- Oct 30 – Heart to Heart distribution
- Oct 31 – Our annual Crossroads College Day
- Oct 31 – Fellowship/Potluck Dinner



Congratulations to Mamie Schoknecht, Joston Schmidt and Jacob Schmidt who were baptized at Pine Haven Camp during 7th-8th Grade week.

### OUR SYMPATHY

Our sympathy to John & Lisa Sprague for the death of John's father, Charles Sprague, on August 2, 2010.



## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL REPORT



Our August 1 - 5 Vacation Bible School "CELEBRATION PARK" featured holidays through out the year, showing how Jesus and His Love can be celebrated all the time. VBS students got to visit Birthday Island, Christmas Country, Valentine Village, Thanksgiving Acres and Easter Cave. Our director Ellen Dickie did a great job pulling us all together — we had 51 different students who attended at some point during the week along with 41 different persons serving as staff!

The offering total for our VBS sponsored child Fritzner from Haiti was \$401. Thank you so much!

Our final night we celebrated with a carnival of games, prizes and food followed by a program of singing, memory work and guest Christian magician the Amazing Jeffo. It was a grand finale to a GREAT CELEBRATION. Enjoy pictures of our 2010 VBS on our website at [www.clevelandchurch.net](http://www.clevelandchurch.net).

### FRIEND DAY



One of the most anticipated days of the year at the Cleveland Church of Christ is the day we call Friend Day.

On Friend Day, we make a special effort to invite our friends, family, and neighbors to join us for a day of worship and celebration outside under a big tent. I love this day because it reminds us of what can do when we combine our efforts and undertake something bigger than any one of us could do alone. So many people work to make the day a success. From those who serve in the kitchen to those who prepare food, from those who share as part of the worship service to those who help set up the worship space, from those who send out dozens of invitations to those who pray for God's blessing on the day, scores of people are involved in helping make this day a success. If you have not yet been invited to attend Friend Day this year, I hope you will accept this article as your invitation to join us for Friend Day on September 12.

John Kester, Pastor





## SUNDAY SCHOOL FALL KICK-OFF

Our new Fall Sunday School year will begin on September 19. We are excited to be able to offer 4 groups/classes for kids this year and 2 groups/classes for adults. Our 4-8 Year Olds will get the chance to be part of a new opportunity called the Donut Man. The Donut Man and Pam Aanas will be having donut parties every Sunday. They will share the wonderful news Jesus has for everyone. Together they will work on some fun projects, hear Bible stories and make new friends. Our 4th-6th Graders will be learning about some of the important characters in the Bible as they build on what they learned last year from their teacher Ellen Dickie. This class also helps kids understand what it means to be a follower of Jesus. This year we are offering a class for 7th-8th Graders. This class will be taught by John Kester. Our fourth youth class, will be for 9th-12th Graders, will be led by Katrina Swedberg.

Two adult classes are currently offered. A ladies class is currently studying from the book of Romans. A second adult class for both men and women is studying from the book of Job. Additional adult classes may be added if there are groups who would like to meet for study.



## PINE HAVEN PROJECT

Pine Haven Christian Assembly, the camp our church attends and supports, is undertaking a huge project. Beginning in September, the Dining Hall will undergo a huge facelift. The faculty bathrooms will be completely rebuilt. New windows and siding will be installed. An addition that will provide dining space for approximately 50 additional campers each week will be added. Air conditioning and heat will be put in the building to potentially lengthen the camping season and make it more comfortable for people who struggle with extreme heat or cold. And finally new electrical service will be installed that will give the camp the capacity needed for these upgrades and future expansion. All these projects are costly. Total cost is estimated to be \$170,000-\$190,000. The good news is that the camp has received about \$120,000 in a single gift to be applied to the project cost. However, that means \$50,000-\$70,000 needs to be raised from the churches and the supporters of the camp. If you would like to contribute to this needed upgrade of the camp facilities, donations for the project are currently being accepted.



## YOUTH GROUP

7th-12th Grade Youth are invited to Dan and Jolene Christensen's for an afternoon of fun, food, and fellowship on Sunday, September 12, immediately following the Friend Day activities (approximately 1:30 - 5:30pm). Bring your swim gear!

## LADIES NIGHT OUT

On Thursday, September 16, at 6:00pm, the ladies will be meeting at the Boat Landing in Madison Lake. Come and enjoy a fun time of visiting.

## YOU'RE INVITED!



The church family is formally invited to a Come & Go Bridal Shower in honor of Carrie Muell's upcoming marriage to Chad Reid (at our church on October 1, 2010). Please join her from 2-4 p.m. on Sunday Sept. 19. The couple is registered at Target.

## CHAD REID AND CARRIE MUELL



Would like to invite you to Attend their wedding reception on Saturday, October 2, 2010 starting at 2:00 p.m. Come and Go as you please  
25383 Lexington Road  
Le Center, MN 56057  
RSVP - Requested at 507-665-4177  
The couple is registered at Target.



## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

With school supplies on sale everywhere, right now is a great time to get a jump-start on your shopping for Operation Christmas Child. Something as simple as filling a shoebox with school supplies, personal care items, and toys might be the open door through which the Gospel can be shared with a child. Watch for more details about Operation Christmas Child in October with a November due date for package delivery.

**CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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**OUR HEAD:** Jesus Christ  
**PASTOR:** John Kester  
**CHURCH SECRETARY:** Lisa Koppelman

**SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

9:00 a.m. – Bible Classes for all ages  
10:00 a.m. – Fellowship Time  
10:30 a.m. – Worship Service

**BIRTHDAYS:** September 3– Kim Swedberg; 4– Grace Samuel (missionary daughter in India), Lenny Schmidt; 6– Ashley Huettl Anderson; 7– Rachel Heldberg; 9– Vadis Rozsa, Ken Schmidt, Jr; 13– Amanda Heck; 15– Ardis Ely; 18– Linda Bloom; 20– Bill Anderson, Joycelyn Chadderdon; 26– Mike Ely, Fritzner Ideas (VBS sponsored child in Haiti)

**ANNIVERSARIES:** September 5– Linda & Bill Bloom; 9– Tony & Julie Dittrich, Ken & Sandy Krenik; 11– Bruce & Rose Oles; 18– Tim & Sara Possin; 20– Rich & Becky Kern; 21– Eric & Roxanne Goodrich; 23– Brian & Kelly Esser; 30– Mike & Selena Ely