



THINKING ABOUT THE CROSS

By John Kester, Pastor

Some years ago my brother David and I were leading week of church camp. As part of that week, we emphasized the importance of the cross. One night following the vespers service we had the campers carry a large cross from the chapel to the far side of the ball fields. We had an idea of how this would happen, but we discovered some things that night that we had not expected.

The campers carried the cross in groups of 10 or so. They switched off every few hundred feet. We expected that. What we hadn't expected was that they would carry the cross with arms extended over their heads. We also hadn't expected total silence.

When we arrived at the designated area, the cross was stood upright in a hole. Voices from the crowd began to read a litany of sins. Lust, envy, gossip, disobedience, pride, jealousy, hatred, spite, greed, lies, and the list went on and on. When each sin was announce the booming sound of a sledgehammer striking a chunk of wood would resound. We hoped it would be sobering to think about specific sins nailing Jesus to the cross. What I didn't expect was that this would bring tears to my eyes as I heard the sins and as I swung the hammer.

When the list of sins was completed, we offered campers the opportunity to nail red ribbons to the cross to signify that Jesus took their sins on Him when He hung on the cross. Our plan was that in the night David and I would sneak out and take the red ribbons off the cross and replace them with white ribbons. What we hadn't anticipated was that many of the campers did not just tap the nail enough to hold the ribbon. They drove the nail into the wood. Some even buried the head of the nail beneath the surface of the wood. There was something cathartic in hammering their sins to the cross. Dave and I tried to pull the nails from the cross, but in some cases it was nearly impossible. We had to tear the red ribbons off and then replace them with white ones.

The next morning we went back to the cross. Some of the campers were amazed that the red ribbons were now white. We told them that though their sins were once red as scarlet they are now white as snow.

The cross had a great impact on our campers that week. As we approach Easter, I wonder what kind of impact the cross has on our lives. The cross is not just some insignificant piece of jewelry that suggests we have some belief in God. The cross is the defining event in history, for on the cross Jesus sealed our pardon. On the cross we were freed from our bondage to sin. By the cross we are cleansed from all unrighteousness and we are made clean. And by the cross we are called to sacrifice everything to follow Jesus.

When I think of the cross I find myself wavering between two contrasting views. On the one hand, I love the cross. It is the symbol of my salvation. But on the other hand, the cross accuses me. Jesus said, "Let a man deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." I like the salvation part. I am not so good at the denying self and following part.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL 2011 (updated 04-02-11)

All events are at the church building unless otherwise noted.

* Indicates more info is elsewhere in this newsletter.

- April 1-2 – Minnesota Christian Convention, St. Cloud Civic Center www.mnconvention.org *
- April 2 – Men’s Fellowship at church 7:30am
- April 3 – Remiger Family, new missionaries to Africa presentation after Fellowship meal
- April 6, 13, 20 – Choir Practice 6:30pm
- April 6, 13, 27 – Bible Study 7:30pm
- April 9 – KJLY Women’s Seminar at Hillside Church, Mankato, MN <http://www.kjly.com>
- April 10 – Monthly Building Fund
- April 12 – Dorcas Fellowship at Country Grille *
- April 12 – Church Board meeting at 7:30pm
- April 14-15 – Crossroads College College Days, Rochester www.crossroadscollege.edu
- April 17 – Palm Sunday*
- April 21 – Have May newsletter articles into Lisa
- April 21 – Ladies Night Out at the Little Dandy*
- April 22 – Good Friday Service *
- April 24 – 2 Easter Sunday Services *
- April 29-30 – Women’s Conference “For Such a Time as This” by *Devoted Hearts*, Autumn Ridge Church, Rochester, MN www.devotedheartsrochester.com

YOUTH GROUP CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL 2011

- April 6, 13, 20 – Office hours for Katie 3-6pm
- April 6, 13, 20 – ALPHA Youth meeting 7:15-8:30pm
- April 9 – ALPHA “Day Away” 10:00-4:00pm*
- April 17 – Youth Group will meet after worship service*
- April 23 – Movie Night “Passion of Christ” 6:00pm*

Coming in May

- May 5 – National Day of Prayer for America
- May 6 – Crossroads College Dream Banquet
- May 7 – Crossroads College Commencement 10:00am www.crossroadscollege.edu
- May 12-14 – Pine Haven Christian Assembly Work Weekend www.pinehavencamp.org
- May 13 – Set up for FREE Clothing distribution*
- May 14 – FREE Clothing Distribution at church*
- May 16-19 Crossroads College Prime Timers on Campus, Rochester, MN
- May 27-30 – Pine Haven Christian Assembly Fishing Weekend www.pinehavencamp.org

LONG RANGE PLANNING

- June 12-16 – Vacation Bible School
- June 17 – “Go Fish” Concert
- August 28 – Friend Day

MINNESOTA CHRISTIAN CONVENTION

April 1-2, 2011

St. Cloud Civic Center
St. Cloud, Minnesota



For more information & registration go to: www.mnconvention.org



By Katie Swedberg, Youth Associate

The youth ALPHA course was designed to give students the opportunity to learn more about the Christian faith and have the opportunity to ask questions about Christianity in a safe environment. During the course, there is a “Day Away” giving students a great opportunity to develop deeper relationships in small groups and to learn more about the Holy Spirit. Our “Day Away” event will be April 9 from 10:00am-4pm. There will be teaching times, prayer time, food, and fun. If you’ve been attending youth Alpha, you won’t want to miss this event!

After church on April 17, all youth and members of the congregation are invited to make parachutes which will be used to deliver Christian Bibles and material into areas of Colombia controlled by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Because of the violence in these areas, this may be the only way that the gospel will be heard by local residents and FARC guerillas. We will make 30 parachutes and learn more about the needs of Christians in Colombia. Even if you can’t attend, you can sponsor a parachute for \$5. This cost covers the cost of shipping and materials to fill the parachutes. We will eat together before we begin our project, so bring a salad to share or fixings for sandwiches (bread will be provided).

The season leading to Easter is a time to reflect on the crucifixion of Christ and the painful, agonizing hours before Christ’s death. This reflection helps us gain a deeper understanding of what Christ went through on the cross which deepens our understanding of the depth of His love for us. The movie, “Passion of the Christ,” provides a graphic picture of these final hours and helps us to reflect upon the cross. The youth (7th-12th Graders) will be watching this movie at the church on April 23 at 6:00pm. Because of the graphic nature of the film, all students that attend must have a permission slip signed by a parent. Parents of 7th and 8th graders are encouraged to attend with their students. All parents are welcome to come and watch this film with the youth.

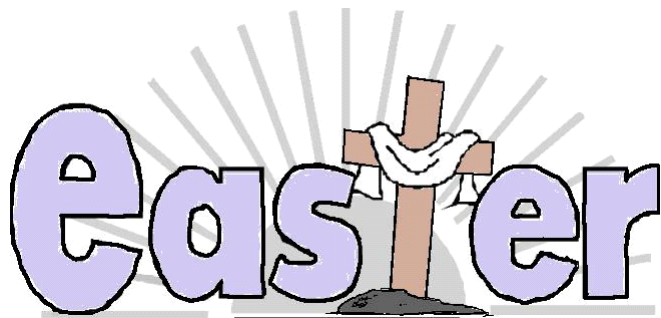


DORCAS FELLOWSHIP

After taking the winter months off, the Dorcas Ladies will meet on Tuesday, April 12 at the City Grille in St. Peter (formerly The Country Kitchen) at 11:30am. Welcome back, Everyone!

LADIES NIGHT OUT

On Thursday, April 21, at 6:00pm, the ladies will be meeting at the Little Dandy in Le Center. Come and enjoy a fun time of visiting.



One of the greatest times of the year for Christians is the Easter season. During the days and weeks leading up to Easter we focus our minds on God's gift of Jesus to us and Jesus' gift of His life for us. We invite you to join us for as we remember the cross and the empty tomb. A Good Friday service will be held on April 22 at 7:00pm that will focus on the cross. On Resurrection morning, we will hold two services - at 8:00am and 10:30am sandwiched around a pancake breakfast at 9:00am. We hope many will come to remember the grace of our Savior.

EASTER SERVICES

April 22
Good Friday
(Communion will be shared)

April 24
8:00am Worship Service
9:00am Pancake Breakfast
10:30am Worship Service

FREE CLOTHING DISTRIBUTION DAY



We will hold our annual free clothing distribution on Saturday, May 14. Start saving gently used clothing items now. We will begin to accept the donations at the church in May. Please volunteer to help with set up on Friday, May 13 and the distribution day May 14. See Pam Aanas, if you can help.

2011 CHURCH FAMILY GRADUATES



If you, or a family member from our Cleveland church family, are graduating this spring from high school or college, please tell our church secretary Lisa K (clchurchlisa@live.com). We would like to know from what school you are graduating, when you graduate and your degree & major, if graduating from college. If you graduated between summer 2010 and now, we would also like to hear from you.

NOLA 2011

Minnesota Christian Churches/Churches of Christ are again planning a mission trip to New Orleans this fall October 15-23. This year the focus is a bit different than in the past. The churches will be partnering with Crossroads College. 10-12 students plus faculty advisors are expected to be part of this trip. The reasons for this partnership are numerous. We hope students will gain real life experience in seeing the variety of people God uses to build His church. We hope regular people will gain deeper connections to students invested in preparing themselves for service in Christ's church and the high value of Crossroads to the mission of the Church. We hope relationships will be formed that strengthen students, churches, and college.

You can be part of this trip in several ways. You can join the work crew and spend a week working and serving in New Orleans. You can help fund half scholarships for the Crossroads students. 10-12 \$250 scholarships are needed to help students be part of this great experience. You can pray that God will use this group to advance his kingdom. If you have questions about the trip, please talk to Graydon Dickie.

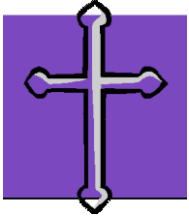
PINE HAVEN CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLY



2011 CAMP SCHEDULE

Based on grades going into Fall 2011
Cleveland is in Zone A

May 12-14	Work Weekend
May 27-30	Fishing Weekend
June 12-18	11th & 12th Grade
June 19-25	9th & 10th Grade Zone A
July 3-8	Family Week
July 8-10	Ladies Retreat
July 15-17	Adult Weekend
July 24-30	7th & 8th Grade Zone A
Aug 7-10	4th Grade
Aug 11-14	Family Weekend
Aug 14-19	5th & 6th Grade Zone A
Aug 19-21	Motorcycle Weekend
Sept 2-5	Last Chance Camp
Sept 9-11	Scrapbooking 1
Sept 11-13	Min Leadership Retreat
Sept 16-18	Scrapbooking 2



CHURCH OF CHRIST

900 State Highway 99
PO Box 307
Cleveland, MN 56017

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 am – Bible Classes for all ages
10:00 am – Fellowship Time
10:30 am – Worship Service

Church Website: www.clevelandchurch.net
Office Phone: (507) 931-5924
Office Email: clchurch@live.com
Prayer Chain: clchurchprayer@live.com

OUR HEAD: Jesus Christ

PASTOR: John Kester

YOUTH ASSOCIATE: Katrina Swedberg

CHURCH SECRETARY: Lisa Koppelman

BIRTHDAYS: April 2- Donna Polenske; 4- Caleb Dickie; 5- Calissa Guentzel; 6- Tony Dittrich, Sherm Rupe; 7- Brenda Davis; 8- Carter Pribyl; 9- David Crow, Marshall Heldberg; 13- Kim Wobbrock; 16- Jeff Jaster; 18- Wally Krenik, Gab Schettler, Glory Schettler; 19- Dan Christensen, Ryan Nelson; 23- Brianna Christensen, Simba Nyamutora, son of missionary in India; 24- Lisa Sprague; 25- Larry Filter, Brandon Koppelman; 28- Jim Schmidt; 29- Kelly Esser; 31- Emily Phillips

ANNIVERSARY: April 7- Graydon & Ellen Dickie

Link to all 2008, 2009, 2010, and prior 2011
Cleveland Church of Christ monthly newsletters
http://www.clevelandchurch.net/index.php?p=1_212