

Community of Christ

Fairbanks Branch Happenings

December 16, 2004

The theme for this Sunday is "God is With Us"

Union of
Saints

God is with us. What an awesome and comforting thought to always keep in mind and to return to when we forget! What a sense of peace, hope, joy and love does the thought that God is always with us invoke in our hearts and minds!!

My Wednesday night group is studying Daniel and through each chapter there is a constant theme that God is with us. Sometimes we may feel abandoned and alone and evil may be triumphing, but in the end, if we maintain our faith, God is with us and helps us overcome what we need to overcome. A member of this group shared the following Psalm with us. With the busyness of the times, it was like an unexpected gift to me. You see I had not even looked at the theme for this week until Thursday evening and as I read the theme I could hear Steve reading this Psalm. God made us, God knows us, and God is always with us. Please read the following Psalm and consider what it means to you on a personal level.

Psalm 139:

- 1 O LORD , you have searched me and you know me.
- 2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.
- 3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.
- 4 Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD .
- 5 You hem me in-behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me.
- 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.
- 7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?
- 8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
- 9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,
- 10 even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.
- 11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"
- 12 even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.
- 13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.
- 14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.
- 15 My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth,
- 16 your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.
- 17 How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!
- 18 Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand.

**When I awake,
I am still with you.**

He knows us, He created us, He is with us. Believe and be comforted. Rejoice that we are children of an ever present and loving God.

Two Sundays ago, Dottie Davies and Margie White hosted the annual cookie exchange at Dottie's home. Dick Davies served as the official photographer. The table was laden with delicious cookies and all present had a wonderful time in fellowship with each other. Each took home a variety of several dozen cookies to share with family and friends. Many thanks to Dottie and Margie.

Last Sunday a group from Fairbanks went caroling at a local nursing home. The residents of the nursing home really enjoyed the visit, as did the carolers. It is great to be able to share a part of Christmas with another. Thanks to all that were able to participate and bring joy to each other and the residents and staff of the nursing home.

This Sunday, we will gather to share a Christmas brunch with our church community and participate in some Christmas activities. Hope that everyone can join us.

As we "trim" the trees on our Advent calendars, may we pause and reflect about God's presence in our lives and prepare to receive the greatest gift of all. – The birth of our saviour Jesus Christ.

The **worship and nursery schedules** have been **posted** in the family center for December through March, 2005. Please check these. Yep folks- 2005 is upon us !!!

Sunday, December 19th – 9:15 a m – Annual Christmas brunch. Please bring a brunch dish to share. Christmas activities will again be planned. Come and enjoy the fellowship. We might have a *surprise* visitor.....

Anyone interested in **changing the sign** for a few weeks???? If so, **see John Reimer** to be scheduled.

Please review the prayer list in the Sunday bulletin. If you have added someone to the list please update Leo Caesar with any new information and current status of the prayer concern. Please contact Leo Caesar if you wish to add/remove someone from the list. Please continue to keep Kay Baker in your prayers.

Calendar & Mission Center News:

The Coastal Bend Mission Center is proud to announce that the Coastal Bend web site is up and running! You can visit the site at www.coastalbendmc.org

December 19th - Christmas Brunch

January 7-9th – Silent Retreat – Cenacle House

Silent Retreat - January 7-9, 2005

To be held at The Cenacle Retreat House 420 N. Kirkwood, Houston, TX 77079

January 7-9, 2005-Sponsored by Live Oak-Community of Christ Marlene Krueger-Retreat Spiritual Director

Anyone interested is invited to participate in this opportunity to experience the Spirit of God in new ways. This will be a silent retreat except for discussion of experiences during a Saturday evening activity. Some direction will be given on how to direct your thoughts, but the most important thing is that you allow the Holy Spirit to direct you. You may bring inspirational reading materials, Bibles, journals, or other materials that you feel will help you to be in a deeper relationship with God as you meditate during the day. There is an outdoor labyrinth for mediation. Spiritual Directors from the Cenacle will be on hand for individual spiritual counseling to those desiring and administration will also be available. A free yoga class and/or massage therapy (\$35/half hour) may be provided based on advanced interest.

Silence is sometimes a difficult thing for us to do in this busy world of ours and it can be a little scary. The reward can be a quiet reflective time between you and God. You can use the silence to listen for that still small voice or to rest in the Lord. The weekend will be what you make of it and can be a powerful tool for healing and restoring the spirit, if that is what you seek. Check-in will be at 7:15 PM on Friday, January 7th and the retreat will conclude with a Sunday morning communion service followed by lunch.

Registration forms can be found at:

<http://mail.coastalbendmc.org/docs/2005-silent-retreat-registration.pdf>

The following is a schedule of those that are currently scheduled to deliver the message for the 4th quarter. This is not the “official list” and is for informational purposes only. Please refer to the worship schedule in the fellowship hall for changes.

December 19th – John Reimer

December 26th – Leo & Carole Caesar

I will be sending out periodic e-mails letting everyone know what is “HAPPENING” at Fairbanks. Please let me know if your e-mail or other contact information changes.

Mark your calendars and **participate, enjoy, reach out!!!!!!**I pray that everyone have a safe and happy week.

Martha Romig