

Community of Christ
Fairbanks Branch Happenings
November 16, 2005

The theme for this Sunday is “When Did We Meet You?”

May we
Explore Your ways and
Entrust our lives to You
Til we see Your face

The following was excerpted from sermons given by Paul Church, Chonju, Republic of Korea-
www.comhom.net

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Matthew 2:1-12

Wise men meeting infant Jesus

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Like the three wise men, we are on a journey, a holy pilgrimage throughout our lives to find Christ. The three wise men, the Magi, are from the Persian priestly caste, from the East, from present day Iraq and Iran. They are seekers, wisdom figures, and they are Gentiles, non-Jews.

Epiphanies require following stars, doing something foolish in the eyes of the world. In other words, we too have to be contemplatives if we want to have an epiphany.

Epiphanies require community. Notice that the Magi travel as a threesome, not as individuals. They seek the holy child together as a community. They worship together as a community. They share joy in the presence of Jesus together as a community, and they disobey the war making government that kills children as a community.

Epiphanies are journeys onto the margins of the world, among the homeless, the poor, and refugees. God is found not in the world of the rich and powerful, but among the poor and powerless, among homeless children.

Epiphanies fill us with joy and lead us to worship God and offer gifts to God. When we meet God, we are filled with joy. These are contemplative experiences of prayer and praise because they are encounters with Christ.

Then we are told that the pilgrims go home by a different route. Their encounter with Christ changes them. A movement of the spiritual life according to our story is how our lives change after we meet Christ, how like the three wise men, we go home a different way. Once we meet Christ, like the three wise men. Remember we cannot go back the way we came.

Are we on the road to Christ, are we meeting Christ, or are we going home in a new direction? When did you meet Christ? How has your life changed because you have met Christ?

What have been the epiphanies in your lives, those moments when you encountered God?
How are you seeking Christ in your life now?
What gifts are you bringing to God?
How has your encounter with God, your own epiphany, changed your life?

How have you gone home a different route after meeting God?
How have you changed your direction?

My hope and prayer is that you will see the star in your life and, like the Magi, meet Christ, and be filled with joy.

Glory and Praise to the Lord
Amen.

As we prepare during the Advent season for the birth of our savior Jesus Christ, let us recall the first time we met Jesus and what it meant to us and how it has changed our lives. As we travel through our faith journey; may we meet Him many times on the trail.

Next Sunday marks the last Sunday in this liturgical year, the beginning of a new year and the beginning of the Advent Season. The World Church theme for the new year is “Allow the Spirit to Fill You”. As we prepare for His birth during Advent, open yourself and allow the Spirit to fill you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

No Fairbanks Happenings next week. May everyone have a safe and blessed Thanksgiving holiday. May you find a few minutes of quiet to reflect on all of the things, people and experiences that you are thankful for.

Last Saturday and Sunday, Fairbanks hosted the Vibrant Witness workshop that was presented by John Wight. Over 20 people attended from various congregations around the Mission Center. Lively discussion was held as people explored the missionary outreach spirit that is being supported by the World Church. Several persons from Fairbanks attended. Look around you and invite someone to visit the church or come to a church function. Be attuned to those that might be “unchurched” and searching for something that might be missing in their life. Extend an ear, a kind word, a smile, an invitation, etc.

The Wed night group will meet next Wed, Nov 16th at HOT. Carole Caesar will be in charge. There will not be a meeting on Nov 23, but again on Nov 30 it will be at Steve and Beth Herold's and Beth will be in charge.

As a congregation, we have **committed to** being intentional about including prayer for **Outreach** as an element of each service. We would like to give everyone an opportunity to participate. The Outreach Prayer could be one that asks God to open the hearts of the Congregation so that their hearts and minds can be filled with a desire to bring others into a relationship with the Divine. It could express a desire to become aware of the people in our every day lives who do not now have a relationship with the God. The Outreach Prayer might express a desire to discern the Holy Spirit to help each member of the Congregation grow in the desire to bring others to the Christ. It could also contain a request that God would convict the Congregation of where they fall short in their Spiritual walk so that they can be better witnesses for Jesus Christ. It could also ask God to call to mind the correct words to use in witness so as to touch the life of another. If you would like to offer a prayer for Outreach please contact those listed on the Worship Schedule as presider. The Worship Schedule is posted on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

We will be collecting items through **November 27th** to include in a box that we will send to a cousin of Ina Mae who is currently a soldier in Iraq. A list of items recommended by his grandmother will be included in next week's FBH. Some items to consider are: shelled sunflower seeds, black licorice, trail mix, tootsie rolls, toothpaste, hard candy, lip balm, non-aerosol foot powder, 35 mm film, disposable combs, beef jerky, wipes, and pens. Please bring the items to the church a table has been set up in the fellowship hall.

November 20th – Fairbanks Congregational Conference at **10:00 am** – Agenda items will include review and approval of the 2006 budget, discussion of possible facility “facelift” projects and other business as may arise.

December 2nd - 4th - Are You a Martha or a Mary? – Women's Retreat sponsored by Austin congregation. See detail below.

December 3rd - 5:30 – Family Christmas Party at Fairbanks. Please plan on bringing and appetizer to share. We might A craft activity will be available for the children to participate in. Please RSVP to Jennifer Decker.

December 4th – Fairbanks will once again be supporting HOT for Christmas. Please bring a new, unwrapped toy to the church between now and December 4th. A table has been set up in the family center for your donations. Please do not donate toys that could be construed as violent – such as toy guns, knives, etc. As always, there is a special need for the older children. Children range in age from birth to teenagers. As you start your Christmas shopping, consider those children who are less fortunate. Your gift may be the only gift they may receive. Thanks to everyone that has already brought gifts. Carole will be taking the collected gifts every week to HOT so that the HOT volunteers can sort and categorize the gifts for distribution.

December 11th - Save the Date- Plans are currently in progress for caroling at the Heartland nursing home. More information will be available as the plans firm up.

December 18th - 9:30 am - Christmas Brunch - Bring a brunch item to share.

December 25th - Christmas Service

December 29th – January 1st – Junior and Senior High Yuletide retreat at Camp Sionito. Information and registration forms were sent on separate e-mail or see Mission Center webpage.

January 8th - Ordination of Ron Saur to office if High Priest – Round Rock- See article below

See the calendar on bulletin board in the fellowship hall for upcoming events at Fairbanks and Mission Center events. November & December have been posted.

The worship and nursery schedules have been posted in the family center for October through December, 2005. Please check these.

Nursery Schedule:

November 20th - Sherry & Christy Caesar

November 27th – Jeff and Rena Whitehall

December 4th – Sue and Alex Turner

December 11th – Paul and Angela Baird

December 18th – Dave and Andrea Watson

December 25th – No Nursery

We need volunteers for the nursery. Please see Andrea Watson.

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.

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

Nov 20th – 10:00 - Fairbanks Congregational Conference

Dec 3rd – Family Christmas Party at Fairbanks

Dec 2nd – 4th – Austin’s Women Retreat at Camp Sionito

Dec 9 – 11th Sionito Work Party- Direct questions to Tim Everett- Tim.r.everett@exxonmobil.com

Dec 11th- Caroling at nursing home

Dec 18th – 9:30 – Christmas Brunch

Dec 25th – Christmas Service

Dec 29th – Jan 1st- Yuletide Retreat – Sionito – Jr. & Sr. High

Jan 8th – Ordination of Ron Saur- Round Rock

Feb 10-12th 2006- Silent Retreat at Cenacle House

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.

November 20th- Gary Chatburn

November 27th – David Watson

December 4th- Doug White

December 11th- Sue Turner

December 18th – Leo & Carole Caesar

December 25th- John Reimer

Austin’s December Women's Retreat- Are you a Martha or a Mary?

When: December 2-4 2005

Where: Camp Sionito Lodge

Cost: \$60.00

Guest Minister’s: Barbara Borkowski and Jeanne Davis

Join us for fellowship, fun, food, relaxation, gossip, and more food in the NEW SIONITO Lodge. Will begin Friday night but no meal will be served. Bring a snack to share with friends. Saturday afternoon there will be two classes offered, one art class, which will have a fee of \$5.00. The other is a knitting class, so please bring your own supplies.

To register send by e-mail to: vals78739@yahoo.com or mail to

Val Sundell
6208 Dedham Lane
Austin TX. 78739

The Coastal Bend Mission Center Worship Service for the Ordination of Ron Saur to the office of High Priest that was previously scheduled for the September Mission Center Conference has been rescheduled for January 8, 2006 to be held at the Round Rock Congregation.

Date & Time: January 8, 2006 - 10:30 AM

Location: Round Rock Congregation
Cedar Park Public Library
550 Discovery Blvd.
Cedar Park, TX 78613-2200

Guest Ministry:
Bill and Barbara Gardner (New England Mission Center)
Dale and Jan Jones
Mark Euritt

BBQ Lunch will be provided by the Round Rock Congregation Free Will Offering to benefit Roofs Over Africa. (For planning purposes, we need to know how many will be planning to stay for lunch. Please mail a note or send an email to Cheryl Saur (csaur@nat.com - 7002 Evans Drive, Round Rock, TX 78681) or Betty Beatty (bbhambon@msn.com - 1911 Old Mill Road, Cedar Park, TX 78613-5370) if you will be staying for BBQ.

February 10-12, 2006 - Annual Silent Retreat at The Cenacle Retreat House

420 N. Kirkwood, Houston, TX 77079 Sponsored by Live Oak –Marlene Krueger - Retreat Spiritual Director. Those interested are 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 meditation. 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, February 10th and the retreat will conclude with a Sunday morning service followed by lunch.

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The cost of \$130 per person includes a private bedroom with lavatory, community toilets and showers, and all meals, beginning Saturday breakfast. Towels and bedding are provided.

Number included in this registration: Female _____ Male _____

Interests: Yoga _____ Massage Therapy _____ (\$35/half hour; paid separately to therapist)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State and zip: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email: _____

Please complete the lower portion of this form and send it by January 6, 2006 to:

Community of Christ, P.O. Box 16685, Sugar Land, TX 77496-6685.

Payment should be by check payable to Community of Christ. Please send payment with the registration form. If you have any questions, please contact Marlene by phone at 970-577-0657 or email: markru_99@yahoo.com

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