

Community of Christ
North Houston Happenings

March 2, 2006



The following important announcement is from the congregational leadership team:

Based upon a desire to share information and explore possible joint activities, the leadership teams from the North Houston Congregation and the Fairbanks Congregation have met to discuss concerns about the future of both congregations. Two meetings have taken place, during which much discussion has been held regarding ideas that could strengthen both congregations, including outreach and growth. In addition, the idea of possibly merging both congregations into one has been considered.

As many of you know, the leadership teams from each of the congregations have been talking with many members of their respective congregations to solicit input to ensure that all ideas are considered. While there have been no conclusions reached and no recommendations made, there has been a good exchange of ideas and the group believes that further dialogue is appropriate.

While the possibility of merging the congregations has been discussed and will likely continue to be a possibility, the primary focus appears to be on exploring joint activities. In fact, when mission centers were formed a couple of years ago, the formation of cluster groups of congregations was suggested as a possibility.

Issues where there seems to be apparent consensus within the discussion group:

- The ultimate purpose of the discussion is to strengthen both of the congregations.
- The discussion group has no authority to make decisions in behalf of the congregations.
- The purpose of the discussions is exploration and exchange of ideas.
- The possibility of a merger of congregations is one alternative considered.
- Possibility of joint activities or ventures without a merger are of interest.
- Traditions, leadership style and structure, and utilization of priesthood in the two congregations is different—which can be both positive and negative.
- Both congregations have expressed a desire to grow.
- Both congregations have expressed a desire for outreach.
- A growing concern about the dwindling size of both congregations is evident.
- While there is some desire for training and education, there is also a growing anxiousness for some type of action relevant to growth.

Please be assured that no decisions will be made without giving each member of both congregations an opportunity to be involved in any decision. We would ask for your prayerful consideration as we continue to explore ways to enhance our Community of Christ.



The time for Family Reunions is quickly approaching. So, the Reunion Registration Form is attached for your convenience. Register early so you can get a great cabin.



The Coastal Bend Mission Center (CBMC) has established a Youth Campership Fund to assist youth attending summer youth events. This program is not tied to any local congregational campership program. Any youth, member or friend of Community of Christ, residing within CBMC, may apply for one (1) campership per youth event (Sionito Youth Camp, IYF or Spec). Each eligible camper will receive up to \$50 per event, depending upon demand for camperships. To receive the campership, the youth must complete the application information shown below.

Please complete the application information by April 30, 2006 and forward to the Mission Center President and Financial Officer, Mark Euritt.

The options for completing and forwarding the application are:

1) online using the website form
2) send a copy you can get HERE via mail to:
Mark Euritt, Coastal Bend Mission Center 311 West Annie Austin, TX 78704



March Birthdays

- Erien Alexander March 5
- Nikolas Garcia March 10
- Cheryl Hibbard March 13
- Mason Gilliam March 19
- Presley Hibbard March 25
- Mike Turner March 30

April Birthdays

- Janine Turner April 5



March & April Service Schedule

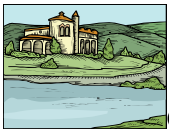
- March 5 Presider – Mike Turner Speaker – Rhonda Radliff
- March 12. No church at North Houston due to Spring Break
- March 19 Presider – Jimmie Radliff Speaker – Carol Nelson
- March 26 Presider – Olivia Turner Speaker – Teri Portz

- April 2 Presider – David Siddall Speaker Gary TenEyck
- April 9 Presider – David Siddall Speaker Rhonda Radliff
- April 16 Presider – Dorothy Hibbard Easter Service
- April 23 Presider - Bob Turner Speaker – Janine Turner
- April 30 Presider – Mike Turner Speaker – Jimmie Radliff



DON'T FORGET

- Please review the prayer list in the Sunday bulletin. If you have added someone to the list please update someone on the Church Leadership Team with any new information and current status of the prayer concern. Please contact Church Leadership Team if you wish to add/remove someone from the list. Pray that we will recognize what we can and should give and be able to give freely with love and joy.



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 <<http://www.coastalbendmc.org/>>

.....

The theme for this Sunday is “Hunger for the Good News”

Needs, desires, hungers
 Ever growing, never quite fully satisfying,
 What if it were
 Simpler that we thought....

Yesterday was Ash Wednesday – the beginning of the Lenten Season that is observed by many Christian denominations. Did you know that the Community of Christ web page has a section devoted to daily devotionals/mediations that can be followed as we journey through this 40-day journey of reflection, introspection and penance? This period can be dedicated to evaluating what it is that we are really hungering

for and what we hold as priorities. At end of this period is Easter Sunday, a day of rejoicing of the good news that Christ was resurrected. What do you hunger for? What is good news to you?

The following was taken from the world church web page:

What better time for intentional life reflection and searching than the Lenten season. Beginning with Ash Wednesday...this period leading up to Easter extends six and a half weeks....

Lent is a time to contemplate the reality of our humanity. As we do this, we begin with the greater reality of God who is not only creator but also the One who, by caring for all equally and without limit, defines the essence of love.

Lent is a time for confession, which is never an easy thing to do. In fact, on its own, confession is neither practical nor possible. None of us can be objective in looking at our own weaknesses, failings, dependence, or sin. We much prefer to conceal these things from ourselves and from others.

Yet confession is possible because we start out by confessing God. By affirming our belief in God and by worshiping God, we are brought face to face with our unworthiness. Knowing that God never gives up on us, we can be honest about how we have not lived up to the demands of discipleship. Assured that God loves us unconditionally despite our unfaithfulness, we can confess those actions, words, and thoughts that have separated us from God and our neighbors.

During Lent we acknowledge when we have been too busy, self-serving, and preoccupied to find room in our lives for God's gift of Jesus Christ. We confess not always being willing to sacrifice our self-interest for the well-being of the community. Lent is a time to be humble and to say, "I'm sorry," even when we feel we have done nothing wrong.....

Sadly enough, the church is too often the last place where we feel we can confess our sin. Yet our congregations should be the places where we look for support as we share openly and honestly with each other about our struggles to follow Jesus.

There really is no Lent except as seen through the eyes of what follows. Our reflection and confession during this season is informed and made possible by the witness of the crucifixion and resurrection. It is only through these pivotal events that humbling ourselves before each other and before a forgiving God makes any sense at all.

Confession is not a despairing thing. Rather it is cause for rejoicing. For in being honest with ourselves before God, we become open to God's forgiving grace and mercy. Without confession we cannot recognize and receive these bounteous gifts even though they are always freely offered.

As we journey through Lent this year, may we take the time to reflect on our discipleship. Let us consider how generous we have been in sharing our witness and our resources. As we do this, may we open ourselves to God's presence in our lives through new, even surprising opportunities. And let us respond to God's invitation in ways that are generous and worthy of the divine trust. **By** : Peter A. Judd, "Up Front." *Herald* (March 2004), 5

16"When you practice some appetite-denying discipline to better concentrate on God, don't make a production out of it. It might turn you into a small-time celebrity but it won't make you a saint. 17If you "go into training' inwardly, act normal outwardly. Shampoo and comb your hair, brush your teeth, wash your face. 18God doesn't require attention-getting devices. He won't overlook what you are doing; he'll reward you well.

19"Don't hoard treasure down here where it gets eaten by moths and corroded by rust or--worse!--stolen by burglars. 20Stockpile treasure in heaven, where it's safe from moth and rust and burglars. Matthew 6:16-20
The Message

As we partake in the bread and wine from the communion table this Sunday, let us consider what it is that we hunger for. Is it what we need to nourish us in body, soul, and spirit? Could it be that we already have it and don't know it?