

Community of Christ
North Houston Happenings

March 30, 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

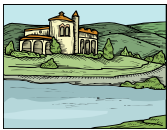
- March 5 Presider – Mike Turner Speaker – Rhonda Radliff
- March 12. No church at North Houston due to Spring Break
- March 19 Presider – Jimmie Radliff Speaker – Carol Nelson
- March 26 Presider – Olivia Turner Speaker – Teri Portz

- 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/>>

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 The theme for this Sunday is “For This Reason I Come”

Is it all about me?

For This Reason I Come – The Bible tells us the reason that Jesus came. Jesus understood and knew the reason why He came. Do we know the reason why we come?

The question can have a very easy, well ingrained and rehearsed answer. But the answer can also get a little complicated when delved into.

For example – I need to define what it is I am coming to before I can analyze the “why”. Jesus had a specific charge. What is our charge and is it much different? Jesus appeared to have a focus and for the most part was able to sustain it. What is our focus and are we able to sustain it?

I come to Christianity, to the Community of Christ denomination, to the congregational worship services, to Sunday school, to church social activities and other functions, to God in prayer, to God in times of need and joy, to my knees in times of despair and futility....

Why do I “come”? Is it even important to understand the “whys” or is just the coming that is important? I don’t know. At times it seems that just the act of coming is all I am capable of and all that really matters, yet at other times I need to know in my heart and mind the why of it all. Does this happen to you? Did this happen to Jesus?

Does this start to get a little complicated or am I making it more complicated than what it really is?

I think I come because I have bought into this Christianity concept. I believe that Christ came for me and you so that we could have eternal life. I believe that God is a merciful God and through His grace, mercy and “major assistance” all things are possible in my life and in your life. I believe that though He is a great and compassionate Being that protects me and you; in His greatness He has given us the power to get things a little “messed up” by allowing us to make choices. I believe that He is ever forgiving to me and to you but that I have responsibility and will suffer consequences of actions. This Christianity thing is great, but with the great comes the accountability and the responsibility. Great is not always easy or fun.

I think I come to Community of Christ denomination because it is the denomination of choice for my husband. Being able to worship as a family has proven to be important as the years have gone by. Though there are many things I question about the denomination, as long as the basic and fundamental Christians beliefs are taught and held in belief it is “ok” for me. You see when you start to look at religious denominations; you can see things that you can agree with and things that you can disagree with. The focus can be on the differences or on the similarities. It isn’t perfect.

I come to congregational worship services because I need the sense on worship in community, the connection to hopefully “like spirited” people, the sense of belonging to a spiritual family. Sometimes I come even when it would be much nicer to sleep in or to have a lazy morning with the paper and a cup of coffee. Sometimes I come because I was raised that you show up every Sunday no matter what. Sometimes I come in need and sometimes I come to give.

I come to Sunday school to learn more about the Bible and to come to a better understanding of the teachings of Jesus Christ. To me this is a forum to explore my beliefs - to either validate them or to understand why I might be a “little off base”. I come because I need to know that I am not alone in my beliefs. I come to receive but hopefully I also come to give. I come to question and to gain deeper understanding as to the “whys”. At times I have come because I had to. Sometimes I come because I am “supposed to”. Oddly enough even when I have come because I was supposed to; these were probably the times I felt I really needed to be there – either for me or for someone else.

I come to church activities because they are usually fun. Yeah – it is ok to have fun in church. But it is really more than just because it is fun. I come to support the planners and the persons that went to all of the effort to organize the activity. I come to try to know the persons I worship with in a more personal way. I come because in order to be part of a community or a church family I need to participate. I come to service projects because I feel that it is important to give back. I come because it makes me “feel good” to see something accomplished and hope that the “feel good” feeling is passed forward.

I come to God in prayer. Not as often as I should. But I still come. I come because I need it. Sounds selfish... But it really is not. You see I believe that God offers to us an open audience and yearns that we take advantage of it. So maybe it might be more selfish if we don’t think that we “need it”. As a young child we

are taught to say nightly prayers. As a child attending Catholic school, we prayed every day and attending church every morning. As we “grow up” our perceived need for prayer and daily conversation with God seems to diminish. As life throws us around and beats up on us, thankfully we remember that we have a place to go, a place to regroup, a place to heal, a place to regain confidence, energy and purpose. Sometimes prayers are of thanksgiving and joy. Sometimes prayers are supplications for help and forgiveness. Sometimes prayers are just conversations with a “Friend or Father” that hears us and understands us. Long or short, audible or inaudible, scripted or unscripted – all that matters is the connection, the conversation, the openness to God, to the Spirit and to Jesus.

The above are some of the things I come to and some of the reasons why I come. The reasons can be many or few, they can be justifications or excuses, they can be for selfish or unselfish, they can be important to you or not.

Do the reasons really matter? Is it that complicated or multi-dimensional? Or is it simply that we have been told to come and we are obedient children of God; just as simply as Jesus was told to come and He obeyed. He purely believed and obeyed. He did not interject His personal agenda, rationalization or “feelings”. Yes, even He questioned and grew weary, but He knew how to refocus on the real reason He came and stayed the path. Because He came we have the opportunity to have eternal life and salvation. Granted we may not be able to absolve the world of sin and grant salvation to the world. But maybe, just maybe, because we come, one person will come to know Christ. It might be us, it might be the person next to us or it might be someone that we will never know. The fact is that we came, we obeyed.

What do you come to? Why? Is your focus defined? Is the reason you come that different than Jesus'? Are you obedient? Is it all about me? In some respects I hope so and hope not!!!

For this reason I come. Why do you come? Why did He come?