



Saints Alive

May 2009

Hope Springs Eternal

By Richard Cole

When we lived in Cleveland, one of our favorite times of the year was Spring. After a long cold winter, cabin fever was running rampant and the need to get outside was overwhelming. The main indicator that winter's grip was nearing its end and the days were going to get warmer was following the daily events of the Cleveland Indians baseball team's spring training. When you followed the games on the radio, you began to picture the snow melting and the ballpark in Cleveland opening up for another season. Then, the week before opening day, it was nearly impossible to get your hands on a copy of the movie 'Major League' which was the story of an improbable Cleveland Indians team winning games and making the playoffs. For a town that has come close so many times, but has yet to win a championship, that movie is a more than just a cult classic, it borders on a community religious experience.

Here in San Antonio, the seasons are not nearly as pronounced as they are up north. We enjoy relatively good weather year round. We experience a bit of winter and a lot of summer, but not as much in between. That said, as spring has arrived and school is nearing the conclusion of another year, we too have the opportunity to look forward in anticipation to one of the major strengths that our denomination has to offer. By that, I am referring to the summer camping schedule at Camp Sionito.

Throughout my life, the camp and reunion experience has been a powerful force. So many of my childhood memories are centered around those experiences. The long road trips I endured, the fun I had, the friends I found and the memories I made. Camp Sionito made an indelible mark on so many of us growing up. Regardless of where our paths took us from there, the camp experience was a centralizing experience that could not be taken from us.

For Kathleen and me, Miranda will be attending her final Jr Camp while Cassandra will be joining her for her first Jr Camp. Both are excited for different reasons. Miranda is looking forward to going again. She knows what to expect and can't wait to get back. We'll never forget when we went to pick her up after her first Jr. Camp and asked if she missed us. Her answer was "Hmmm...25%!" While selfishly we

would have liked a higher number, as parents we were glad to hear that she had had such a good time that her first week away from home was not hard on her. For Cassandra, she has heard the stories of camp from Miranda. She has created in her mind an image of what Jr Camp is and how much fun it will be. Her anticipation is focused around being old enough and FINALLY being able to go. Jr Camp is that step towards independence.

There are those in our congregation who will be going to Jr High Camp. This is a tremendous opportunity to experience more freedom and to begin articulating your own, personal beliefs. This is a time of exploration and Jr High Camp facilitates that. Hearing what others believe and incorporating or choosing to not incorporate those beliefs into your own theology. It's an important step and one that is the foundation of our church: That each individual has the right and obligation to seek out and discover their own personal relationship with their Heavenly Parent.

Also this summer will be Sr High Camp. During such a critical time of discovery in one's life, Sr High Camp plays an important role. It provides a guided opportunity for our youth and soon to be young adults to not only learn from each other but also to learn from those who have gone before them. This is a time of critical decisions. It's a time of determining who they are and where they want their lives to go. It's an important time to have the guidance and input of the church on those decisions.

And we can't overlook one of the most important aspects of our camps: THE FUN!!!! Camp Sionito offers so many ways for our children to have fun and simply be kids.

(See the rest of the article on the next page....)

May Greeters

3—MICHELLE THEISEN

10—JEETA CARABALLO

17—MARILYN MCCRIMMON

24—LEAH HIGGINSON

31—DORIS JACKEL

Pastor's article continued...

In addition to all of this, there are the upcoming Reunions. Last year, we heard such glowing reports from the attendees of both first and second Reunion. It is such a relaxing week of families playing, eating and worshiping together. The programs are top notch, the food is incredible and the worship is some of the best you will ever experience. I have had a chance to be briefed on the preparation for the upcoming reunion programs and they promise to be some of the best that have been held on the grounds. First Reunion traditionally has a large attendance and the plans are in place to accommodate even more this year. Second Reunion always has such a strong mix of youth and adults and this year will be hosting the President and Prophet of our church, Steve Veasey as its guest minister.

These are all great programs with the potential to touch the lives of all those who attend. Many of us have reaped the benefits that Camp Sionito has offered in the past. As Spring is upon us and Summer is right around the corner, I would encourage everyone to find the time to make the short trip out to Bandera. Hope does spring eternal. And while we may not have a Major League Baseball team in our backyard, we do have a great blessing just down the road from us that we should all get excited about attending.

Practical Camp Matters:

Patty Walker also reminds us about these upcoming camps and reunions. Get your applications in to the appropriate business manager in order to take advantage of the early bird discounts. This is very important because no exceptions will be made for late applications. If your application is late, you will pay the full fee with no discounts allowed.

WHITE ELEPHANT SALE

Bring that one thing in your house that you have loved for a long time, but maybe it's time to make a change. Support the white elephant sale at the May potluck as a fund raiser for Youth Camps. Let's move our treasures from our house to your house, make some money, and send our kids to camp.

The May potluck will be the third Sunday—different this month because of Mother's Day!

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

The First Presidency of the Community of Christ is communicating with the world wide church body asking for prayerful examination of the church policy requiring re-baptism of baptized Christians who want to become church members. Delegates to the 2007 World Conference

passed a resolution asking the leadership to look into the matter.

In the next few weeks, materials will be available to help the church engage in prayer, study, listening and discernment about conditions of membership. You will be able to download the portions you want at www.CofChrist.org/cofm/. Four modules will be available: One: Individual prayers, Meditations and Reflections. Two: Prayer and Reflections for Small Groups. Three: Facilitated Dialogue for Small Groups. Four: Single-Session Guided Group Discussion.

Family News

The Walkers are going to Daytona Beach May 1st – 6th for the National High School Drill Team Competition. Keep all the kids and adults in your prayers for safe travels and for the kids to do their best. They came in 3rd place last year and are hoping for 1st or 2nd this year.

Then Tom will be competing in the state history fair in Austin on May 8th and 9th. He received a 1st place at both the local and regional levels with his Dwight Eisenhower project but the competition will be tougher at the state level. Say a prayer for him!

May Birthdays

3-Mary Andrus
10-Dominic (Niko) Farrell
12-Marilyn McCrimmon
14-Lisa Talcott
17-Samantha Callier
28-Victoria Smeltzer



THINK GREEN!

Why do so many communities keep harping about plastic bags? Because people keep using them. Experts say we don't have to. Some countries and cities have banned them or apply a surcharge for using them.

1. Plastic bags are a petroleum product and a waste of non-renewable energy. Americans use 100 billion bags per year, requiring 2 million barrels of oil.
2. They don't biodegrade. They photodegrade, becoming bits of plastic dust.
3. They are rarely recycled (only about 1 percent) and become litter pollutions. They sully streams and clog roadside drains and they are a major eyesore along major traffic lanes.
4. They endanger wildlife, particularly sea life. Animals become entangled in them, get suffocated by them or ingest them.

What To Do:

1. Take reusable bags back to your store. Most groceries or have a bin to put bags into for recycling.
2. Choose paper instead? NO! Manufacturing paper bags creates water and air pollution and uses lots of energy.
3. Recycle or Reuse your plastic bags.

Reprinted from The Highlands (Kansas City, MO) newsletter

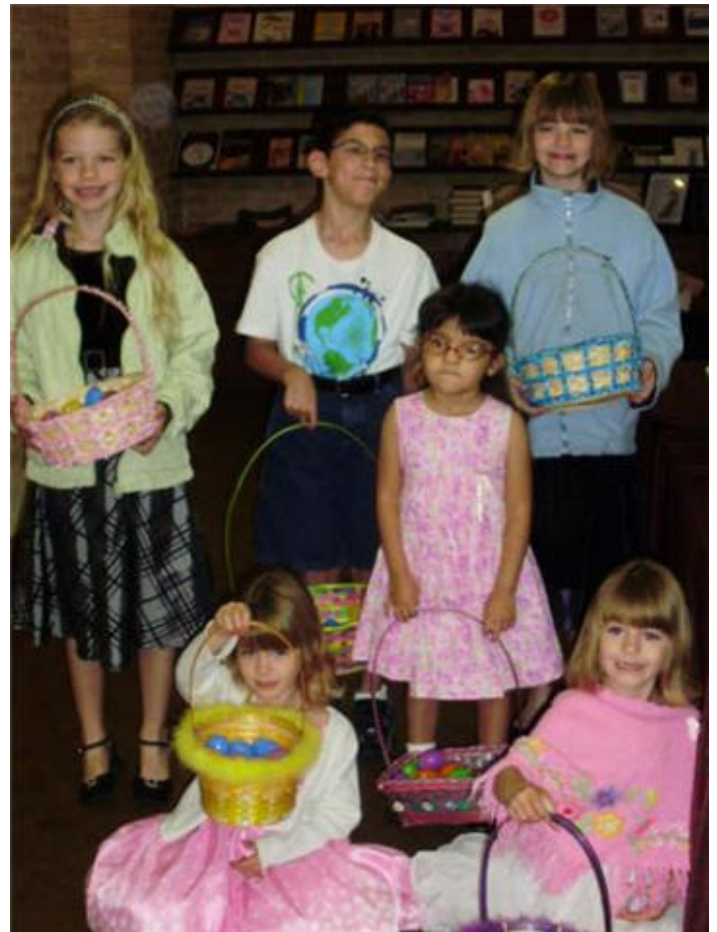
WHO ARE YOU? WHERE ARE YOU?

The 2009 Directories are available in the foyer – please be sure to take one because they contain a wealth of information. Also, do take a few minutes to examine the contents and that way whenever you have a question about something during the coming year you will know where to find the answer. If you discover erroneous information please let Carol Burdick know about it so we can print a correction for everyone in the newsletter.

Easter Celebration:

The Shenandoah church family shared an Easter Sunday with a first for us: an 'indoor' Easter Egg Hunt for the children. Because of inclement weather, the children used the chapel to hunt for eggs hidden by the youth. I happen to know that not all the eggs were found and you might spy one if you look around carefully! If you see one, point it out to a youngster and watch them get excited.

Before the egg chase, we all shared a more traditional Easter brunch with egg casseroles, fruits, breads, juice and coffee. But the highlight was excellent fellowship.



Some Updates from Jim Burdick:

Priesthood Accountability:

I expect that the 2010 World Conference will produce policies to help Priesthood understand their sacred authority and responsibilities. Few priesthood (and I am talking about old-timers and newbies), understand the depth of these. I encourage each priesthood member to seek Richard or me specifically to discuss these issues. These are critical to the spiritual health of the congregation. Priesthood is not a 'Ticket to Heaven' or a reward. Priesthood IS a commitment to servanthood.

The primary responsibility of priesthood is to handle or facilitate delivering the sacraments to the body Christ. You may be serving in a capacity that does not have the authority to actually serve the Communion, but when you fill your priesthood responsibility by enabling that service, you are helping the hands of Jesus serve the Communion.

Another responsibility of priesthood is to represent the Community of Christ. Your priesthood call is jointly a call of and from God and a license from the Community of Christ church. You have a CALL to represent God and you have a LICENSE to represent the church as an organization.

I want to assure you that one of the jobs of the Pastor is to help you understand and fulfill both of these responsibilities.

Wedding Updates

Not too long ago, a family shared a wedding here in Shenandoah and it reminded me of a few things I think we all ought to review from time to time:

- Marriage Preparation. The congregation has a marriage preparation program that the pastorate decided to 'highly recommend' for all couple married in our congregation. This does not bear the weight of World Church policy, but it is our local policy. The program is called FOCCUS. You can get more specific information from <http://www.foccusinc.com/> about what it is and how it works. Shenandoah priesthood performing marriages in our locale are expected to make sure participants do this program. Priesthood performing ceremonies outside San Antonio are not expected to complete the program

with a couple. (More about marriages done away follows.)

The FOCUS program is not (please read that as NOT) marriage counseling. It is a program that enlightens couples on areas of communication that they most and least agree on. It is administered by a trained person (so far, Jim Burdick) and for 8 hours of class, you can become one of the trained folks. It is painless and takes about 4 hours in two, 2-hour sessions.

Now, about marriages in other locales, etc. Here are just a few policies and practices to keep in mind:

- If you are asked to perform a marriage in another area (this happens with families a lot!), you should let your pastor know and you should coordinate (sort of ask permission) of the Pastor and or Mission Center president of the jurisdiction where the ceremony will take place.
- If you are asked to perform a marriage in another area, that area may have policies like our FOCCUS policy, but they may not have the FOCCUS policy, so the best rule is to ask.
- As the officiating minister, you must (please read that as MUST) work with the Recorder of the jurisdiction where the wedding takes place to get the information into the Shelby system.
- Finally, just a reminder, Priests, Elders (including the office of Seventy), and High Priests are allowed to perform this sacrament within the auspices of the Community of Christ church.

