



# Saints Alive

December 2007

## I'm An Explorer

by Carol Burdick

In 2006 Jim and I made a commitment to be involved for 2 ½ years with the Mission Center-sponsored "Exploration Group." Our Exploration Group sessions take place at the home of Alice and Steve Phillips of Houston for a total of 8 weekend get-togethers and the purpose of the sessions is to meet with the same group of people each time and discuss a selected book/books/or topic that we've all read in preparation for the session. The reading material might be written by a Community of Christ author or someone outside our church community; but in all cases the material is academically valuable and meant to expand our thinking and broaden our understanding. The weekends are always facilitated by a World Church appointee who may or may not be the author of the book(s) we are discussing. Housing is provided for some of the attendees and some people stay at hotels. The weekend begins on Friday evening, continues all day Saturday and concludes on Sunday with a noon worship service.

Here are some of the facilitators we've gone "exploring" with over the past couple of years: Apostle Andrew Bolton; Mark Scherer, World Church Historian; Mark Euritt, Coastal Bend Mission Center President; Dave Schaal, Counselor to the President of the Church; Don Compier, Dean of the Community of Christ Seminary; and Apostle Susan Skoor. All of these individuals spent the entire weekend with us and encouraged us to share our thoughts, feelings, and understanding of the text.

As we became more and more comfortable and familiar with the members of our group we felt accepted and "safe" to express our views and know that we would not be ridiculed or "thought less of" because of our perspectives. In addition to the overall learning that has occurred as a result of our "gatherings" we have also experienced rich friendships with the members of our group. Over the course of our meetings some individuals have experienced illness; others have had personal family issues and through it all we "explorers" have supported one another and become a close knit group.

In the most recent Exploration session Apostle Susan Skoor led our weekend retreat and, you may remember, a year ago her husband was pulled out to sea by a rogue wave while the couple was vacationing at Cabo San Lucas in the Pacific. It was such a joy to be instructed by this gentle, sweet woman. As our session was winding up with the book of Revelation, Susan described the pervasive use of symbols, codes and allusions and that these symbols were easily recognized by the first readers, because the meanings had been familiar to the people throughout Jewish history, as can be seen frequently in the Old Testament. Susan said that to read the Word of God in this book, we need to understand the symbolism the same way the first readers did so that we don't experience misguided interpretations. I, like many of my fellow students, found this very interesting. Here are a few examples of the symbolism used in the Book of Revelation.

1. 1000 = a large amount
2. Seven = fullness, complete amount
3. 10 Days = a short time
3. Lion = noblest of God's creations
4. Lion of the Tribe of Judah = victorious Jesus
5. Human being = wisest of God's creations

As Susan mentioned how both the lion and the lamb represent Christ my thoughts turned to our church seal. The lion and lamb, two animals (noble and gentle and also a symbol of Christ) together with a child (wisest of creations) . . . PEACE. Sometimes

I forget that we've long been a PEACE church. I'd like to suggest that you check out the World Church web site ([www.cofchrist.org](http://www.cofchrist.org)) soon and discover the many suggested avenues for anyone wanting to pursue the cause of justice in a peaceful manner.

I'm sure that as our Explorations come to a close in 2008 I will have many insights and a broadened view concerning Christianity (and other world religions). As a result of my participation in this program I know I have considered concepts and grown in understanding that I never would have contemplated if I'd not been involved in this program. For what it might be worth to you I urge you to accept the opportunity to attend an Exploration Program if it is extended to you. Or, do some "exploring" on your own and broaden your horizons.

"You are called to create pathways in the world for peace in Christ to be relationally and culturally incarnate. The hope of Zion is realized when the vision of Christ is embodied in communities of generosity, justice, and peacefulness."-Doctrine and Covenants 153:3a

## December

### Greeters

2--Marilyn McCrimmon

9--Callier Family

16-Patty Walker

23-Pat Campbell

30-Doris Jackel



<b>November Receipts</b>	
<b>INCOME</b>	
November Receipts	\$5,484.90
Fundraising	\$96.65
Interest Income	\$5.46
Less World Church Funds	\$1,288.00
<b>SubTotal</b>	<b>\$4,299.02</b>
Less Coastal Bend Mission Center Funds	\$228.00
<b>Total Net Income</b>	<b>\$4,071.02</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Christian Education	\$50.36
Herald-In-Every Home	\$90.00
Holiday Ministries	\$294.51
Housekeeping/Groundskeeping	\$400.00
Pastoral Care	\$76.38
Repairs/Maintenance	\$75.00
Utilities	\$328.13
Worship Commission	\$29.90
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,344.28</b>
<b>Total Net Income</b>	<b>\$4,071.02</b>
Less Total Expenses	\$1,344.28
<b>Variance</b>	<b>\$2,726.74</b>

**Dates for upcoming  
work parties are:**  
December 7-9, January 11-13  
February 8-10, March 14-16  
See you at Sionito.  
Joseph Postnikioff



## **December Birthdays**

2--Brenda Higginson  
3--Genevieve Thomason  
Ann Yerrington  
4--Ray Jackel  
6--Lisa Clark  
8--Leah Higginson  
10--Sydney Callier  
11--Leilani Loveless  
12--Lynne Pallas  
Darrel Negaard  
14--David Sixt  
17--Robert Jackel  
20--Doris Jackel  
23--Bob Riley  
24--Jacob Thomason  
29--Sara Higginson  
30--April Runcik  
31--Terri Jackel  
Margot Spiekermann

## **Busy Workers at Sionito**

At our work date in November, a crew of 14 worked miracles (or at least came close) at the Sionito campgrounds. Mike Thrutchley reports:

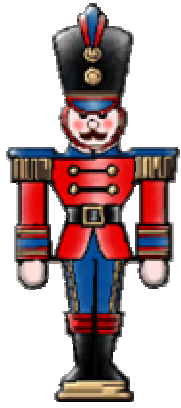
We trenched for the underground phone line, caulked and painted Block Cabins 9-12, started prepping and priming Block Cabins 13-16, painted the trim on Cabins 20 & 21, installed half the hand rail for the sidewalk between the Lodge and Tabernacle, ran the phone lines from first floor to the second floor in the Lodge, installed phone jacks throughout the camp for the new phone system, put up the bracket and curtain rod for the girl's bath in the Lodge, modified and installed a cabinet in the Lodge close to the closet for cleaning supplies and hymnals etc., cleaned out the storage area in the RV Bathhouse to get ready for AC installation, worked on drainage at the Barn area, leveled the area in front of the Nursery, put some mulch in front of the Lodge, hauled some brush to the burn pile and burned the pile, cleaned out the stumps in the Children's Area, cleaned out old tables outside in the Children's Area, painted the bulletin board in the Dining Hall, worked on the mural at the Clipper Room, re-stretched the phone line to the Dining Hall, put some trim around the floors at the Lodge, fixed several picnic tables, cleaned and rearranged the Lodge kitchen, installed new switch plates in the Cook's Suite and probably a few other things I forgot.

You can join in the next miracles at Camp Sionito:



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## Core Values of the Community of Christ Church We are Kingdom-Builders.

The Community of Christ has prided itself in the knowledge that we are a church without a specific creed or dogma. This means we don't have a specific set of dogmatic statements to which we must correctly answer to be considered 'orthodox' members. We have some basic beliefs, such as belief in Jesus Christ. However, we are pretty non-specific about defining beliefs rigorously.

This can sometimes make us appear to a curious outsider as though we believe in anything or nothing. However, the church does have a set of beliefs that we call Core Values. These values do a good job of describing what members of the Community of Christ believe. This four-part series describes our four Core Values.

Please <http://www.cofchrist.org/ourfaith/core-values.asp> on the Internet, for more details about Community of Christ core values.

Value Three: We are Kingdom-Builders.

God intends his children to live together in a way that each person values the other with the incredible value our Creator sees in everyone.

The condition where God's children live together requires that connections of community be built between diverse persons. In spite of, or because of, our diversity we are able to strengthen the community and become the kingdom of God on earth.

To cause the kingdom of God to be realized, we build individual lives that enable, support, and cause group relationships (community) and responses that reflect the life of Jesus Christ, respecting all God's children as Jesus taught us, and offering the community to all who are in need of sharing the kingdom experience.

The peaceable community of love we are called to live out is one which restores all of creation into oneness with our creator.



### Spread Cheer for Christmas

The Shenandoah congregation will pitch in to make Christmas a cheerier time for youngsters in the Bel Air congregation in the far South Side of San Antonio. We will be buying and wrapping gifts for the children of the church. As you launch your Christmas shopping, take time to allocate some of your gifts to Bel Air.

Good news: **Lafe** and **Evelyn Williams** have a new car. The bad news is the old car was totally crunched in the wreck, but no one was seriously hurt—really sore, broken finger...but okay.

The **Walker** family had a low-key Thanksgiving at home, and their Christmas will also be celebrated at home. But watch out! They have a spring vacation planned. We'll have to get details later.

**November Attendance:**  
**We had average of 36 members attending the 4 Sundays in November**  
**We had average of 2 visitors per Sunday.**

### A Beautiful Church

The church is beautifully decorated thanks to some church members who worked together on December 1<sup>st</sup> under **Marilyn McCrimmon's** direction. Marilyn says she enjoys the decorating, because she doesn't decorate much at her own house. She'll be in Austin for the holidays.

### News from the Pews:

On November 17, **Sydney** and **Ruth Callier** went to "The Corn Maise" in Hondo with the Girls Scouts.

**Samantha, Sydney, Ruth Callier** and **John** and **Kelly Patten** went to Euless, Texas to visit family for Thanksgiving. While there they visited with Cecil Alford and his family and Vera Bohnet. Nineteen friends and relatives were there for Turkey day dinner.

**Wayne** and **Lisa Talcott** travelled to South Korea for their son **Jon's** wedding to Mimi Hong. The weather, the bride and the ceremony were all beautiful. Jon and Mimi currently plan visit and renew their vows here at Shenandoah, maybe in August of 2008. Jon has committed to remaining in Korea through March of 2009, teaching English

The **Talcott** house will be full of visitors at Christmas. Although Jon and Mimi can't come (visa issues!), **Matt, Marcella** and **Lafe** will be here from Las Vegas, and Wayne's brother **Kevin** and family will be in from Houston.

**Carol** and **Jim Burdick** had lots of guests for Thanksgiving this year. Then they'll be celebrating with Carol's family on the Sunday before the actual Christmas holiday.