

Network

Volume 12 Issue 4

April, 2011

Dates to Remember:

APRIL 7 & 21

Community Kitchen Dates

APRIL 16

Rummage Sale

APRIL 17

Palm Sunday

APRIL 21

Maundy Thursday

APRIL 22

Good Friday

APRIL 24

Easter Sunday

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Lenten Resurrection Days

"Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise." (Luke 23:42-43)

This year lent brings us far, through most of April; Easter takes its time. This gives us time to contemplate what it means that even Lenten days are resurrection ones. Here, on the cross, on Good Friday, in the middle of crucifixion, comes the news of resurrection. "Today" is the hopeful word of promise the dying Jesus gives to another dying one at his side: "Today you will be with me in paradise."

Even these Lenten days of ours are resurrected ones. Whenever we gather, it is as Martin Luther said, that we celebrate another little Easter. Resurrection is the word Jesus speaks not after death, but right into the middle of it. Paradise is the joy that the living and the dying have in experiencing the startling and wonderful news.

One ordinary day years ago I sat at Margaret's bedside on her dying day. She had no other family or friends to be with her. As her breathing became more shallow she slipped in and out of consciousness, and as the day went on sitting with her, so did I. I was napping around 2 p.m. when she awoke to startle me. She could not open her eyes, but she began to talk to me.

"Pastor, pastor, look! Look!" She spoke with urgency as I asked her what she was looking at.

"Can't you see, pastor, oh, look. There is Jesus there!" She pointed at the ceiling. "And look at how beautiful he is. Oh, pastor, I wish you could see what I see."

Had Margaret been able to open her eyes, she would have seen my tears, and she would have lost this vision God gave her of where death was leading. I will never forget that day, or Margaret's dying, ecstatic face in seeing Jesus, her eyes closed, her reaching out for glory. She was not crazy, she had not lost her sense of reality, no, Margaret was experiencing resurrection a bit early.

It was about an hour later that she slept away. Never before and never since have I so rejoiced over a death. I think of Margaret all the time, almost every day, and always when I am at another deathbed. Even at the grave we make our song! One day we will be with Jesus Christ in paradise. We look forward to the unending day when the limitations of this mortal life are over. And while we wait for that great and glorious day, is it not true that this resurrected life of yours and mine has already begun? Is God not free to grace us along with Margaret with resurrection a bit early?

As another Easter comes, can you gain a sense of all that is just in front of us! What of this life keeps you from being able to see it, and take in that glory?

Peter Hawkinson

CHRISTIAN FORMATION NEWS & EVENTS

CHRISTIAN FORMATION MISSION STATEMENT of WINNETKA COVENANT CHURCH
To teach the Christian faith and develop disciples growing in Jesus Christ
through the Word of God, through the witness of teachers, through the family of faith,
by the power of the Holy Spirit.

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ALL AGES: 9:45 a.m. (No Sunday School on Easter Sunday)

FOR ADULTS:

March 13 - April 17: Max Lee (Assoc. Professor of New Testament at North Park Seminary) teaches a class entitled "Faith and Discipleship in the Gospel of John". The Bible study series will focus on the various memorable characters of John's gospel, and what real faith looks like. It explores why faith is so difficult at times, and we find in the characters of John's gospel warnings, assurances and the exhortation to genuinely trust God and live out our calling as true believers.

1st Sunday: The Incarnation as the Place for Grace and Truth: Introduction and the Prologue of John (John 1:1-18)

2nd Sunday: The Paralytic and the Man Born Blind (John 5:9)

3rd Sunday: The Dawning of Nicodemus' Faith (John 3:7, 19)

4th Sunday: The Samaritan Woman and the Mission of the Church (John 4)

5th Sunday: Grace and Truth for Peter (John 18:21)

Ongoing intergenerational class: Pastors Erik & Andrea lead a time of experiential learning, storytelling, relationship-building and intergenerational fun. Please consider joining them in room 203 (for high school students and adults of any age).

FOR CHILDREN: Children's Sunday School Rotations

April: "Paul on the Road to Damascus" - workshops will include Games, Art, Drama and Science.

May: "Witnesses Today" - Do you have a story to tell? Telling stories is a traditional way of passing important information from person to person and from generation to generation. When we tell stories of our faith we are passing wisdom and our understanding of God to others.

Sunday School rotations in May are focused on the theme "Witnesses Today." WE NEED STORYTELLERS!! These are some types of stories you could tell:

- ◆ an experience you had at camp or on a mission trip or in youth group
- ◆ a time you felt close to God, Jesus and/or the Holy Spirit
- ◆ how you came to faith
- ◆ how you came to Winnetka Covenant
- ◆ a "God-sighting"
- ◆ a person that you feel exemplifies Christ-like living or who has had an influence on your life of faith
- ◆ a piece of art or music that has had spiritual significance to you
- ◆ explaining how you see or feel God
- ◆ a Bible verse that is special to you
- ◆ and many more stories that you might feel called to tell

Storytellers can be of any age (we'd love to have some high school kids!). Storytellers can tell their stories to all age groups (4's & 5's, 1st & 2nd grade and 3rd-5th grade) or to just one of those groups. Stories can be short or long. Stories can be simply told or enhanced in any way you see fit.

So, do you have a story to tell? Please let Polly McClellan, Andrea Johnson or Linda Johnson know if you do. We can't wait to hear them.

There are no Wednesday night activities on April 13. Please plan to come help with Rummage Sale setup.

MUSIC NOTES

The renewal of Spring is upon us - so welcome, refreshing and promising. While we celebrate God's revival of nature and our spirits, we are reviving many anthems from our library: from John Helgen's "Let Us Break Bread" to "Lift High the Cross" of Easter. Reminding us of God's life-giving work is the great story of Ezekiel's vision of God breathing life into those dead, dry bones. April 10 we will sing Mark Hayes' arrangement of that catchy spiritual, "Dry Bones" and Vicki Tucker Courtney's calming "God Breathe." Palm Sunday, a quartet of singers whom Janet Eckhardt accompanies at Moody will join us for the first portion of Randall Thompson's "Garment of Praise" for double choir: "Break forth into singing, ye mountains!"



We welcome Harold Anderson as a new chorister and remind you that you are welcome too.

Parents of young children, watch for a letter and special invitation to bring your children for choir. I have heard from a couple of you who are interested, but didn't see my request in the Annual Report. The budget was so over-riding, I don't think anyone read my plea in Annual Report to resume children's choir. I know you are all very busy, but I do so hope that you can make room for choir for your children.

Rejoice and sing out His praises!! Dawn

Holy Week Schedule

April 17 - Palm Sunday

Services of worship and celebration at 8:30 and 10:45
Sunday School at 9:45

April 21 - Maundy Thursday - 7:00 p.m.

Worship service, including celebration of the Lord's Supper

April 22 - Good Friday

Community Good Friday worship service at Christ Church on Sheridan Road in Winnetka from noon-3:00.

The service is in half-hour segments. You are welcome to come and go on the half-hour.

Parking available at 784 Sheridan Rd., on Humboldt Ave., Bryant Ave. or Lloyd Place.

Pastor Hawkinson will give one of the meditations. Please watch the bulletins for the time.

April 24 - Easter Sunday

8:30 - 10:15 a.m. - Swedish Pancake Breakfast, sponsored by the senior high students.

Proceeds will benefit youth mission activities. All are welcome!

8:30 and 10:45 - Worship Services

Covenant World Relief Offering

During Lent we are giving special attention to the work of Covenant World Relief to meet needs of all kinds around the world, including disaster relief for Japan. As part of your Lenten discipline you are encouraged to make a gift to Covenant World Relief. A variety of options for giving are available: 1) Online: www.covchurch.org/relief; 2) By check: envelopes are included in this newsletter; 3) "Soup can" banks: lids and labels will be made available to the children of the church, and may also be found at the missions display in the narthex. These are particularly good for families with young children, as they help the children to participate and be aware of the giving. Gifts can be given anytime throughout Lent, but we will also have a special offering during worship on April 10.

A JUST HARVEST COMMUNITY KITCHEN

On the first and third Thursday of April, the 7th and 21st, we will be cooking up our familiar meal to serve approximately 170 patrons of the Community Kitchen of A Just Harvest. Any and all are welcome to join us on one or both days from 1:00 - 3:30 p.m. in our kitchen here at church. On the 21st we are also responsible for serving this meal to our friends at the tables of A Just Harvest.

Please join us if you can to cook, serve, or just see what happens at the Community Kitchen. Ted Garrison is the contact for the 7th and John Anderson on the 21st.

Thanks, John

Vacation Bible School June 20-24, 5:30-8:00 p.m.



Announcing... the Hometown Nazareth Job Fair Sunday, April 10, after 10:45 worship, in the narthex.

Hometown Nazareth wants YOU! We will be accepting applications for the following positions:

"Part of the action" positions:

Tribe leaders - 3 adults, 2 youth (accompany "Tribes" of age-grouped kids each evening)

Preschool leaders - 3 adults, 1-2 youth

Marketplace Shopkeepers (Shape your character as one of ten different shopkeepers. Welcome kids to your shop and help your "apprentices" make an item and learn about what life was like when Jesus was a kid.)

Song & Motion Leaders (youth)

Mini-drama participants (Mini-dramas happen "spontaneously" in the Marketplace)

Fun & Games leaders

"Behind the scenes" positions:

Supper: shoppers, kitchen cleanup

Decorating (opening celebration area, Mary's House, Marketplace)

Publicity

Recruitment

Marketplace Coordinator

Detailed job descriptions will be available at the Hometown Nazareth Job Fair display in the narthex. Although VBS is 5 evenings, applications will be accepted from those who can participate any of the days.

If you have imagination, like kids, like to have fun, and want to share God's love with others, we encourage you to apply!

We'd love to have you on our Hometown Team!

MISSION NEWS

Following is a story that came to us in a letter from Gary and Mary Lou Sander, Covenant missionaries to Colombia who are supported by Winnetka Covenant Church. It demonstrates how the most simple things for us to do, such as donating a pair of used glasses, can be life-changing for the recipient.

Pastor Porfirio Cassares was traveling on the bus from the small town of San Carlos, on his way to attend a ministry couples encounter. He chose his seat on the bus and got comfortable for the 90 minute trip. He overheard one of the passengers on the bus responding to a comment from another passenger regarding Evangelical Christians. His ears perked up and he paid attention.

The passenger was saying that he really had no use for the Church. It hadn't ever done anything for him and he saw it as a lot of words about things that he didn't understand and that he wasn't interested in. That was the case, however, until three weeks earlier. You see, this passenger was constantly looking around him, out the window, as he was talking. One month earlier the passenger never would have looked out the window of the bus. His eyesight was not good enough to see any real distance. So he usually just paid attention to what was around him in his immediate vicinity. But this day, this Thursday afternoon, the passenger was talking out loud on the bus and was looking around him.

Three weeks earlier, while he was walking through the town of San Carlos on his way to work, he noticed a lot of people in the back yard of a house. People don't usually gather in San Carlos in the back yard of a house unless something really interesting is going on. So the man headed behind the house to find out what was going on. He found out that there were some people from the U.S. there giving away eyeglasses. Since he couldn't see very well he decided to forego working and try to get a pair of glasses. When his turn came, he was examined, tried on a few pair of glasses and found the pair that corrected his eyesight. Just like that he could see!

The passenger admitted that he didn't really understand what was going on in that back yard (it was a Dental and Eye-sight Brigade, put on by the Shekinah Covenant Church, in partnership with the Sacramento First Covenant Church Men's Ministry). He didn't know he was entering into anything having to do with an Evangelical Christian Church. But once he got in line, he was willing to forego any prejudice he might have, because he could see enough to know that people were leaving there seeing!

So the man was responding to a comment from another passenger on the bus and saying that, "you can say what you want about the Evangelical Church, but for me, I couldn't see before three weeks ago and now I can. And the only reason I can see is because this Evangelical Church in San Carlos had these people there helping people to see for free! The only place I know of that has done something like that is the Evangelical Church in San Carlos. Something good must be going on there."

Pastor Porfirio wants to track down that passenger (he got off the bus when he finished his story) and tell him what is going on in that Evangelical Church (the Shekinah Covenant Church). We want to continue partnering in putting hands and feet and eyes to the Gospel and bringing it to the people.

We have an ongoing opportunity to donate used glasses for use by missionaries around the world. There is always a box on the counter in the mission display area in the Narthex.

GREATER CHICAGO FOOD DEPOSITORY - Saturday, May 14, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

Every other month our congregation volunteers at the Greater Chicago Food Depository, packaging food that is then distributed to area food pantries for those in need, especially benefiting the North Park Friendship Center. We have committed to sending 20 volunteers each time we serve. If you are interested, sign up on the bulletin board near the kitchen, or call the church office. Age 13 and up are welcome. Please wear long pants and closed-toe shoes.

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES NEWS

QUILTERS, KNITTERS, ETC. - Join us on the **second Thursday of each month** for fellowship and service. Watch the bulletins each month for details and location of the meeting.

SHARING GROUP - We cordially invite all WCC women to join us on the **fourth Thursday of each month at 12:00 noon** for lunch and fellowship. This month we meet on April 28. Watch the bulletin for the location. You'll enjoy the fellowship! Call Marian Eckhardt with questions. New participants are always welcome.

STITCH AND STUDY - Stitch and Study, combining Bible Study, conversation and craft/needlework projects, generally meets the **first Tuesday of each month** at the home of Marilyn Nelson at 7 p.m. This month's meeting will be April 5. We continue to use our own Covenant hymnal as a resource for the study. We always welcome new participants.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY AND FELLOWSHIP - Thursday afternoon women's Bible study is currently studying "Daniel, Lives of Integrity, Words of Prophecy", a 12-week study by Beth Moore. The 1st six chapters of Daniel model how to develop integrity in an enticing world. Chapters 7-12 explore the thrilling prophecies from the time of Daniel through the 2nd coming of Christ. Member workbooks can be ordered from LifeWay.com or Amazon.com for \$14.95. New participants always welcome. Questions, contact Claire Macfarland.

TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY - Tuesday morning Women's Bible Study is currently studying Hebrews. The study begins at 9:30 a.m. - come at 9:15 for coffee and conversation. New students are welcome to the class at any time. Please call Sue Abram for details.

BRIDAL SHOWERS

Women of the church are invited to the bridal shower for Kat Magnuson on Thursday, April 7 at 7:00 p.m.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Men's Fellowship continues to meet the first three Saturdays of each month, 8:30 a.m. in the Upper Room. All men of the church are welcome. Contact Richard Spears with questions.

ATTENTION SENIORS!

The Leisure Class breakfasts, scheduled monthly on the second Thursdays, has begun meeting at the Bistro at Covenant Village of Northbrook. So for coffee, conversation and confection, come to our next meeting on Thursday, April 14 at 8:30 a.m. at the Bistro. For further information, contact Sam Paravonian.

ALL-CHURCH FAMILY CAMP

Registration for our All-Church Family Camp is now open! This August, we are excited to be continuing our 4th annual week of camp together as a church-family. Covenant Point Bible Camp in Michigan's Upper Peninsula will become our home during the week of August 8th-13th. During these five days, we'll enjoy the best of camp life together: singing, the lake, the ropes course, the Island, interaction with the summer staff, really great food, games, naps, conversations, work projects and boating. If you haven't participated before, talk with those who have or direct questions to Pastor Erik. Registration information was mailed to your homes, and there are extra forms available in the narthex. Space is limited, so sign up early!

LENTEN ART EXHIBIT

An exhibit of art created by church members and friends will be on display in the narthex for the season of Lent. An interactive "Lenten prayer table" created by Drake Johnson is included in the exhibit on the east side of the narthex. Anyone is welcome to express prayers to God by writing/drawing on paper provided and placing them in the display. None of these will be opened or seen by others. Prayers can be added any time during Lent.

WINNETKA MAILBOX

Hello Winnetka Covenant Church,

Thank you so much for your prayers and the beautiful plant! I am feeling better every day! Praise God!

Your brother in Christ, Jerome Nelson



Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for the time, gifts, preparation and the journey you make to Friendly Towers every year at Christmas. The senior residents are so blessed by the music and children, a real celebration they may not ever have experienced before. It is the high point for both residents and staff each year.

Blessings, Debra Strahan and all of us at Friendly Towers

Who's going to the symphony with us? Someone was kind enough to bid on symphony tickets and dinner with the Hunts at the last auction, but we don't remember who. If it's you, please let us know as the CSO season is flying by.

Recently we have been getting inquiries about the possibility of receiving the Network by e-mail instead of the paper version sent in the mail. Already about 60 members and friends who live at a distance from the church are receiving theirs by e-mail and we could expand that list to include local folks. We are developing a list of people who would prefer to receive not only the Network but other church mailings by e-mail. If you are interested, please e-mail Joan at wccjoan@juno.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, April 30 at 3:00 - Volleyball in our church gym with Chinese students. All are welcome.

Saturday, April 16, annual Rummage Sale!! Now is the time to start going through your homes to clear out and set things aside for donation to the Rummage Sale. Drop-off of your donations will begin Monday, April 4. Until April 11, donations should be brought to the stage in the Fellowship Hall. Tables will be set up and labeled with categories - it would be most helpful if you sort your items as much as possible when you bring them in. Once the set-up begins in the entire Fellowship Hall we still appreciate your bringing your donations to the appropriate spot. Preparations will occur throughout the week of April 11-15. All congregation members and friends are invited to help out at any time of the day or evening throughout that week. Pick-up of large items can be arranged by calling the church office.

Spring sign-up is taking place for the children's professional culinary classes and school-day-off events offered by Creative Kids Corner, here in our church. Contact Linda Kusel for more information at www.creativekidscorner.org.

Church Membership!

The Church will be welcoming New Members on Sunday, May 8.

If you would like to be a part of that group, please fill out an application for membership and return it to the church office. Applications are available in the office, or from any of the pastors.

Welcome!

OUR MISSION

*To be a Christian community and to proclaim the gospel,
Worshiping together in love,
Nurturing people in faith,
And serving others as Christian disciples,
Building a world of justice and hope in the name of Christ.*

GUIDELINES FOR LOVING RELATIONSHIPS

We hold grace as our highest value.

We practice honest, open, direct communication.

We speak the truth in love and listen in love.

We believe the best about each other, valuing others above ourselves, as Christ does.

We allow room for mistakes, acknowledging that mistakes are part of the growth process.