

The Communicator



Haiti, A World Changed

Being an Unexpected “Sanctuary of Peace”

– by Sharon Troyer

By now most of us know the devastation that has occurred on the island of Haiti. On January 20th a 7.1 magnitude earthquake shook the island causing significant loss of life and damage to many structures. It is estimated the death toll alone could easily reach over 200,000 people. Again on January 20th a 6.0 aftershock shook the island. Community of Christ has a significant presence on the island. With over 300 congregations and 25,000 people associated with the church our presence is felt. Many of these congregations are dealing with the loss of life, injuries and complete devastation of the homes, church and school buildings. Currently the direction has shifted from rescue to healthcare and fighting disease. It is estimated there are over 1.5 million homeless refugees now in Haiti. The Government there is struggling with the task of feed, clothing and caring for all these people. Through oblation funds the church as of January 20th has donated over \$51,000. We know this does not offset the loss or even come close to repairs that are needed. The Church will continue to donate the oblation through February 7th to the needs in Haiti. At that time further direction will be sought.

It was Wednesday night just a few minutes before we started our monthly worship planning meeting, when the phone rang. The voice on the other end was Sister Mary Alice from the Murphy Center for Hope, asking if Community of Christ could possibly have a memorial service for a 51 year old local Fort Collins man who passed away that day, January 6th. She had just learned that a well known chronically homeless man, Mark “Red” Johnson had died, and that care providers were certain there would be a grieving community with no place to gather to celebrate his life. He was not known at that time to have any family, not even someone to claim his body.

We discussed it all of five minutes before we were in agreement that the answer was “yes”. We are in our second year of housing the Winter Day Shelter sponsored by Catholic Charities Northern Colorado. Already we knew there would be community support, but where could we learn enough about Red’s life in order to plan a service? And how would we notify his friends so they could join us? We certainly underestimated the power of word of mouth! By the next morning, Jim Stanley who was volunteering in our church office, was making posters, using pictures of Red and his beloved companion, a dog named Sable. A woman in Nevada named Robin, who had known Red for years referred us to a local man who was trusted enough to know most all of the locations where homeless people camp out. He came and met with me, and after hearing stories about his friend Red, I began to understand why it was important to offer a “sanctuary of

Sanctuary of Peace continued:

peace” to this unique population. Unable to come herself, Robin wrote *A Tribute to Red*, which became the obituary which followed my words of welcome on Saturday afternoon.

People streamed into the church, some over an hour early. It was clear that many were extremely grateful to enter a sanctuary reserved solely for them, the friends of someone whose absence would be felt, but whose presence had touched them all.

The most amazing process began. It didn't take long to recognize that we had opened our doors to a unique cross section of folks who would otherwise probably not find their way into our church. As Tom Beck played the organ, men and women, many of whom were inebriated, began to hug each other as they shared their sorrow at the death of a loved one. Several men were dressed in black leather and we soon learned they represented a Brotherhood that brings street ministry to alcoholics and those not accepted into the day or night shelters because of substance addictions and mental illness.

By God's grace and in the Spirit of love and hospitality, we celebrated the life of a man who had known immense hardship. Despite his alcoholism and personal suffering, Red had brought hope and goodness into the lives of many he touched. After the sensitive ministry of both Dave Simons and Dick Foster, we listened to remembrances shared by Red's community. One of the most touching stories was shared by a woman who had been homeless, new in town, and without money or food. She accepted an invitation to sleep at Red's night camp. In sharing his tent, she testified that he never touched her, but offered her kindness and mercy, insisting that she sleep in his sleeping bag. Red had slept in a garbage bag. Another young man who now actively serves the poor in numerous ways attributed his recovery to the fact that years ago Red had recognized his gifts and encouraged him to take a different path in life. Red became a kind of

father figure to the young man who encountered the love of God through Red's actions.

After the service, guests were invited to the fellowship hall where Julie Foster and others had prepared a beautiful reception, including lots of coffee and cake decorated to remember Red in bold letters! An hour or so later, when guests began to leave, several of us were touched at the deep appreciation they expressed for the **lack of judgment** toward those who are often marginalized as outcasts. Gratitude continues to be expressed, even though weeks have passed. I gained a new understanding of what it meant to stand on holy ground and what Jesus might have meant when he said, “Blessed on the poor in spirit, for they shall inherit the Kingdom of God”. The next day, when we gathered in congregational worship, it was difficult to put into words what we experienced the day before. Some said it was a mix between an Irish wake and a Baptist Revival. But it also had the warm welcome of a Twelve Step meeting, the zeal of the Salvation Army, and the anguish sometimes felt in a jail, all blended into an unexpected sense of sacred community. Dick Foster in his remarks, “Finding Hope in Community”, told how Jesus responded in love to the tired crowd when no provisions had been made for feeding the hungry. As he talked of their bread and fishes being multiplied, so were our hearts filled with gratitude for this unexpected opportunity to be the hands of Jesus, and to witness love poured into hungry souls. The courage to say “yes” was an act of faith that turned mourning into dancing!

Lenten Season – February 17th

-by Kay Bunch

Lent is usually viewed as a time of giving up something as a form of fasting. The writer of Isaiah had a different take on fasting as presented in the 58th Chapter. The author talks

Lent continued:

about a fast that feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, caring for the poor, opposes wickedness, etc. Perhaps this Lenten Season suggests an opportunity to ask ourselves, what is our passion? What are we willing to commit to pursue that passion? Then, in the spirit of sacrifice, what is required of us personally, be it sacrifice or offering, in pursuit of that commitment?

**Puppet Ministry****– A Proposal**

(by Joyce and
Don Worthington)

During early February an inquiry will be made about interest in creating three or four small teams or “puppeteer families” consisting of both youth and adults. Each team would work together to prepare two or three short plays during the year. A number of new hand puppets would be purchased, as well as a new “stage” or platform constructed in such a way that it is mobile. In that way each group could practice at one of their member’s home, promoting interaction among families and lessening trips to church to rehearse.

If enough interest is shown for this project to begin, we anticipate that humorous and instructive short plays would be provided for some of our worship services. Fifteen years ago the Fort Collins congregation had an active marionette/puppeteer group that provided plays for worship as well as special occasions for other congregations and the district.

We will complete our inquiry by asking for your specific feedback. If there is sufficient interest, we are willing to help guide the process. No experience would be required, and everyone would be welcome to participate.

2010 World Conference**April 10-17, 2010****Theme: We Share**

In Community of Christ, when we become disciples of Jesus, we do not just become members of a local congregation. We become members of a worldwide faith community. The 2010 World Conference theme:

"We Share," will focus us on what we share with one another as members and participants in Community of Christ and our call and commitment to share our witness, ministries, sacraments, resources, and message with the world.

All are invited to experience the blessings of community with your sisters and brothers from around the world. We will also celebrate the 150th anniversary of the 1860 conference, where Joseph Smith III accepted his prophetic calling. His fifty years of wise, pastoral, visionary leadership provided the tone and direction that continue to shape the church. Come to International Headquarters to participate in worship, discernment, and decisions for our future as we continue to become who God is calling us to be. Please register at the World Church website:

<http://www.cofchrist.org/wc2010/default.asp>

**Prayer List**

We are changing the way the Prayer List is recorded each week in the bulletin. Please phone in your request to the Church Office anytime through the week. Those requests will then be listed for a two week period in the bulletin. If there is need for them to remain longer please contact the office.

February Birthdays



Maria Wood	02/02
Susanna Garner	02/04
Hoss Davis	02/05
Jacee Davis	02/05
Marie Ytell	02/05
Donna Palmer	02/06
Don Worthington	02/10
Brett McKenzie	02/14
Janny Kay McKenzie	02/16
Gene Bridwell	02/17
Jean Newman	02/19
Teri Bridwell	02/20
Marcia Bridwell	02/22
Joyce Worthington	02/24

Nursery, Sunday School Teachers and Assistants

Beginning with February, Marilyn Garner will be coordinating our wonderful Nursery Volunteers and assigning them to their Sundays. There was a LOT of switching in Dec. and Jan., so please bear with her as she tries to re-establish the rotation. Also, please understand that if you were unable to fulfill your original assignment but filled in at a later date, your slot in the ORIGINAL list will probably be used in the future rotation. It is your responsibility to arrange your replacement and then to let Marilyn know. If you are unable to facilitate a switch, then please do call her.

Sharon Fulton will be assigning Teacher Assistants for children's Sunday School classes. If you volunteered last year, you will probably be contacted about helping again on assigned Sundays for the rest of the church school year. The teachers really appreciate the help with facilitating lessons as well as with providing special attention to our young people.

A Personal Look at the "Counsel to the Church"

-by Jim Stanley



I anxiously waited to hear this message. I had heard from Sharon for the past couple months it would be forthcoming and I had a vested interest in the direction President Veazey would have to the Church especially in requirements of membership.

Maybe it would help to know a little about me. Yes I am the guy with the service dog, yes I am musically inclined. I may seem quiet, and reserved but let me assure you I am well spoken, somewhat opinionated and always learning. My circumstances for suddenly being in Fort Collins, joining with this congregation and life may not have been totally my choosing. I believe there is possibly a little divine direction taking place here for reasons I still do not know. I was raised Lutheran, joined the LDS church for several years. After a divorce and disagreements with the LDS church joined the Presbyterians. I have a degree in Computer Science, a minor in Music and a BA from Emmaus Bible College on Religious Studies. I have been a choir director for over 25 years. I play guitar, recorders, bagpipes, and a group of other miscellaneous instruments. I am a father of 2 girls, one married living in Japan the other single living now in Chicago, I also have one that passed several years ago. Well I have digressed enough about me.

My sense of belief has always been for the need of baptism, yet I find no two denominations seem to totally agree on what is the right form of baptism. I was baptized with water as a child and then again as an adult in the LDS church. The Power of the Holy Spirit took somewhere in my teen years. Had I ever lost the power of the Holy Spirit? Was I ever in need of a re-baptism? The power of God in the Holy Spirit I feel has always been vested

Counsel Continued:

through me and with me. Somewhere we seem to get away from the church Jesus Christ developed and turned to an assortment of groups each professing they are the correct way Jesus has envisioned.

I was pleased to see President Veazey lead to a similar conclusion. Baptism is a personal item between you and God. How are we to proclaim that your previous baptism is not proper in God's view? Is not the Power of the Holy Spirit what we are seeking here?

I see Community of Christ attempting to break the barriers of discrimination, political views and truly become the God loving church I believe the New Testament directs us to be. It took centuries to build the discrimination and barriers; realistically it will take centuries to remove them. There is always a force out there to deprive us from God's direction and love. It is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that we find the one true church of God.

**CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

A HUGE THANK-YOU to everyone who made our Children's Christmas Program so special. Again, gratitude goes out to teachers Shauna Clark and Marilyn Garner for preparation in class, Debbie Jones for a fantastic set and awesome lighting, and Nancy Miller and her brigade of first-class cookie-bakers for providing a delightful reception. Of course, the most credit goes to our creative and willing children who put so much effort into bringing to their church family the true meaning of the celebration of Christ's birth.

Sharon Fulton

Mention of thanks:

Rory Kelley the homeless man that was with us at the December, 2009 5th Sunday forum wishes to express his thanks to the anonymous donor of the gas coupon. It really helped him find 2 career job leads.

Bill Brown, Communication Officer for the Interfaith Council wishes to thank:

"Jon Mendenhall is not visible but is the most efficient website manager ever. He is present by keeping us in touch with the larger community. If the website needs an update it is usually done within the hour after it is received by Jon if he is in town. We cannot thank him enough."

February Calendar

February 3rd: The Upper Room
at 9:30 a.m.
Worship Coordinators meeting
at 7:00 p.m.

February 5-6: Youth Team Building event
at 5:00 p.m. Activity Center

February 7th: Worship Service and First
Sunday giving at 11:00 a.m.

February 10th: The Upper Room at 9:30 a.m.
Prayer Shawl Group at 1:30 p.m.

February 11th: Women's afternoon group at
1:00 p.m.

February 14th: 2nd Sunday Social/Valentines
Day 5:00 p.m.

February 16th: Soup Supper at 5:30 p.m.

February 17th: First Day of Lent
The Upper Room at 9:30 a.m.

February 18th – Leadership Meeting 7 pm

February 19th: Friday Morning Breakfast
Club at 8:30 a.m. Perkins Restaurant

February 21st: Communicator Items due
Designated as a day of prayer and
fasting for World Conference.

February 24th: The Upper Room at 9:30 a.m.

February 28th: 4th Sunday Children's
Activity

Directory Updates

BIRKS (970) 223-0939

Josh & Jenn

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STANLEY (970)817-3072

Jim

Jastanley9@msn.com

Fort Collins, CO

The January 24th Loveland Reporter Herald, shows a picture of Glenn and Shari Smith visiting the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem in October.

Offerings

\$245.00 was received in the January 17th offering for the oblation fund - which is earmarked for Haiti.

The food bank received 57 lbs of food from us this month.

We Saw It in the Paper!



Homeless Children

As our building supports the Homeless Day Shelter, I found this fact interesting:

According to the Poudre School District, the increase in families who don't have a stable home is growing, which means more and more children in PSD schools are becoming part of Larimer County's homeless population.

To date, about 680 students have been identified by PSD as being homeless, said Jan De Lay, program coordinator for the Title I/McKinney office in PSD. At this time last year, the number of homeless students was about 100 less than this year's, she said.

The North Forty News for January speaks of Bob Fulton as a "Master of track". We all knew he was speedy.

The congregation and Mission Center can be proud to have several authors in this year's Daily Bread.

Rich Kohlman

Robin Linkhart

Shirley Remmenga

We look forward to your divine inspiration on us this following year.

December Financial Report:

World:

World Ministries	\$1663.00
Oblation	\$400.00
World Hunger	\$200.00

Local:

Local offering	\$4,666.50
Building Fund	20.00
Bazaar	25.50
2 cents a meal	75.50
Family Assistance	75.00

Second Sunday Socials

By -Marilyn Garner

Second Sunday Socials are an opportunity to get to know each other better in an informal setting of fun and fellowship. Those who volunteered to serve on a Fellowship committee at the last business met recently and set up a schedule for the year. The following are the events, dates and coordinators for each. If you see an activity you would like to help with feel free to call an reserve your place on the committee (publicity, food, entertainment, set up, cleanup). The coordinators will be calling YOU if you haven't made the first move.

February 14-Valentine's Day- Coordinator
Debbie Jones

March 14-St. Patrick's Day - Coordinator Jean Newman
April 11 - Volleyball and Potluck - Coordinator Bonnie Thomas
May 8 (Saturday) - Mother's Day Brunch prepared by "sons" - Coordinator Steve Thomas
June 13 - Cake Walk and Karaoke - Coordinator Marilyn Garner
July 11 - Annual Picnic - Coordinators Sharon Fulton & Pat Miner
August 8 - Line Dance and Potato Bar - Coordinators Voni Simons & Nancy Miller
September 12 - Bowling Party followed by food at the church - Coordinator Pat Miner
October 10 - Annual Harvest Party - Coordinator Nancy Miller
November 14 - Service Project Night - Coordinator Marilyn Garner
December 12- Holiday Dinner - Coordinators Marilyn, Pat, Nancy, Bonnie

Appreciation

The following message comes to us in regards to the Memorial service our congregation sponsored for the homeless man Mark (Red) Johnson on January 9th.

*Dear Sharon,
You, your team, and your whole congregation are so warm and welcoming. Nancy and I both commented last night that you definitely live up to your Covenant of Welcome. Thank you so much for everything you are doing. You are an inspiration!*

Ken John
www.homelessgear.com

Walking TOGETHER as a Congregation?

Did you hear Shandra Newcom speak on January 24th? **Did you feel the passion of her invitation for YOU to join her on February 16th for a special evening with our congregation?** As background, some members of our congregation met with Shandra Newcom and Tim Ashburn from RMMC, to explore being one of the congregations to receive focused RMMC staff support for a deeper kind of growth. In that discussion someone said, "If the leadership team recommends this decision, the congregation will most likely support it." At that moment we realized we needed a much deeper sense of interest and commitment than what could come from only the leadership! We knew that to make a decision that could potentially transform our congregation, the decision to step out in new ways needed to come from ALL of you! In order for the giftedness of each individual to become part of weaving a new fabric, as it were, we recognized the need to **make that decision together as a body of Christ, not as separate parts.**

On Tuesday, February 16th, at 5:30 p.m., we are **ALL asked to be present for a time to consider, "Walking Together as a Congregation"**. We will share a simple meal of bread and soup with Shandra. Lent begins the next day on Ash Wednesday. Rather than having Lent symbolize a "giving up" of something in order to prepare for Easter, we are invited to look at HOW we can more fully LIVE OUT the sense of call that may rest at the center of our recently adopted Covenant of Welcome. PLEASE put it on your calendar, and join us for this important evening! **Will you BE there?**

Addendum

2010 World Conference Legislation Introduction

The following legislation, proposed by one Community of Christ team and 14 mission centers from across the world, has been submitted to the 2010 World Conference, April 10–17. Delegates and members are asked to join the World Church Leadership Council in prayer, discussion, and discernment, believing the Holy Spirit will move in World Conference legislative sessions to help delegates make decisions that will bless all of creation.

World Conference leaders acknowledge the following resolutions may cause individuals and groups frustration because of differences in their personal, scriptural, theological, legal, and sacramental perspectives. As an international community of faith, this issue is complicated further by the diverse customs and languages of Community of Christ members.

As the body of Christ, it is imperative that Community of Christ approaches legislative issues with great care, understanding, and sensitivity to the voices and perspectives of members throughout the world. As an international church represented in nearly fifty nations, it is important that we learn to talk about divisive issues without separating from the body.

We have been counseled as a church to “Listen together to one another, without judgment or predisposition. Do not assume that the answers to matters of conflict have yet been perceived. There is much labor to be done. Reason together in love, and the Spirit of truth will prevail” (Doctrine and Covenants 162:5c).

Whatever the outcome of these legislative issues, Community of Christ members must commit to ongoing dialogue while lovingly upholding our common faith in Jesus Christ and the mission of the church.

2010 World Conference Legislation Index

- G-1 Marriage Couple
- G-2 Priesthood Authorized to Officiate at Same-sex Marriages Where Legal
- G-3 Request for Periodically Updated Information
- G-4 Legal Marriage and the Sacrament of Marriage
- G-5 Policy on Priesthood
- G-6 Equal Access to Church Sacraments
- G-7 Policy on Same-sex Marriage
- G-8 Policy on Ordination of Homosexuals
- G-9 Resolution on Human Rights
- G-10 Human Trafficking
- G-11 Abolition of Nuclear Weapons
- G-12 Full Inclusion
- G-13 Policy on Priesthood
- G-14 Legal Marriage and the Sacrament of Marriage
- G-15 World Trade Day
- G-16 Request to Authorize Ordinations
- G-17 Abundance
- G-18 Blessing of Committed Relationships
- G-19 Referring Matters of Ordination
- G-20 Referring Matters of Marriage
- G-21 Common Consent on Definition of Marriage
- G-22 Common Consent on Officiating Same-sex Marriages
- G-23 Common Consent for Not Ordaining Homosexuals
- G-24 Structural Support for a Mission of Holistic Ministry
- G-25 Same-gender Marriage and Commitment Ceremonies
- G-26 Giftedness, Diversity, and Priesthood

Please see the World Church page for in-depth information on each resolution.

<http://www.cofchrist.org/wc2010/legislation/index.asp>

*or in your recent **Heralds**.*