



Central Connections

175 years... and still a frontier church

Volume 45 Issue 3

A Sign of God's Kingdom in the Heart of the City

March 25, 2010

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Good Friday or Easter?...What's a pastor to write about at this point in Holy Week? It's Wednesday as I write this article, and if the newsletter goes out today it could reach mail boxes by Thursday or Friday. However, we've got a small technological issue to be resolved that could delay us by a day. And then there's the matter of the U.S. postal service, whose timing can be a bit mysterious.

The counsel I'm taking from all of this is not to try to orchestrate too carefully the experience of Holy Week! Granted, it is the center of the Christian story, the reason that the rest of the stories about Jesus' life and ministry, and the ministry of the church, are told. We have spent time during this season of Lent asking ourselves what it is that separates us from God, practicing turning back toward God, and opening ourselves to what God is doing in our midst. In this week we become witnesses once again of the hate that becomes directed toward the one who embodied God's love, and we remember once again the death of this one who came so that we might have life.

We hear the story again in our Maundy Thursday service, and then gather on Easter morning to hear and proclaim the good news that God has broken the vicious cycle of hatred and death. That's a story that's sometimes hard to believe.

Preacher and professor Thomas Long tells the story of a friend whose young son was a great fan of both Captain Kangaroo and Mister Rogers. The boy faithfully watched both of their television shows, and one day it was announced that Mister Rogers would be paying a visit to the Captain Kangaroo show. The boy was ecstatic. Both of his heroes, together on the same show! Every morning the boy would ask, "Is it today that Mister Rogers will be on Captain Kangaroo?" Finally the great day arrived, and the whole family gathered around the television. There they were, Mister Rogers and Captain Kangaroo together. The boy watched for a minute, but then, surprisingly, got up and wandered from the room.

Puzzled, his father followed him and asked, "What is it, son? Is anything wrong?"

"It's too good," the boy replied. "It's just too good."

The news of the resurrection, of Jesus' victory over death may be just too good or too hard to believe. But I invite you to hear it again, and to be resurrected into a life of service and love.

Blessings,
Linda



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Worship: Sundays @ 10:30am

Study: Sundays @ 9:00am

Study: Wednesdays @ 6:30pm



Welcome to our New Members

Donna Prince & Judith Wray moved to Indianapolis from New York City in October, where Donna was born and raised and Judith had lived for over 25 years. Donna worked on Wall Street (you'll have to ask her what a degree in mathematical economics is) before attending Union Theological Seminary, and since then has worked primarily in hospital chaplaincy. Judith is from Indiana and attended Butler and CTS, then earned a doctorate at Union. She has more than 30 years of pastoral experience and especially loves teaching (New Testament and preaching). They have two grown children who live in New York City. In their spare time they enjoy carpentry (Judith), reading and writing, and are sports fans.

Kyle Leslie joined the congregation on January 31. Kyle is a retired firefighter and in a career transition. He recently moved downtown in the neighborhood of the church. His son Devin, who also attends, is 16 years old and a sophomore at Southport High School. Kyle is transferring his membership from Southport Christian Church.

Anne Maschmeyer came forward to join the congregation on March 14. Anne has been active at Central for over a year, singing in the choir and participating in Needles for Love and Keepers of the Ark. Anne works as beautification director for Indianapolis Downtown, Inc., and recently earned the designation of "certified arborist." Anne grew up in the United Church of Christ. She loves the warmth she feels and the embrace she has received here at Central.

Spring Cleaning Helps the Thrift Store

Contact: Marcia Phillips

Have you started your spring cleaning? Before you throw anything away, why not think about donating unwanted items to the **Thrift Store!** Our Thrift Store is open every Monday from 10:00-3:00 and on the last Saturday of each month from 10:00-12:00. Items may be brought during store hours, on Sunday mornings, or any time that the church office is open. (If you've never visited the store, let me know and I can arrange a free guided tour!)

Right now, donations are down. Items in short supply are house wares of all kinds---pots and pans, plates, glasses, silverware, and small kitchen appliances. Even a stray spoon or glass is welcome. Other items we sell include clothes (even gently used undergarments of all kinds), games, puzzles, books, jewelry, radios, CD's, videos, greeting cards, knickknacks, purses, backpacks, suitcases, craft items, toys, baskets, etc. We take holiday items year-round, so if you get one too many Easter bunnies this year, we'll be glad to take it off your hands!



Thank you to...

Our outstanding children's moment presenters during March: Ben & Molly Leraris, Ben, Greg, & Scott Nickel, Jenna, Maggie, Michael, & Sasha Sears, and Morgan Watkins

David Shaff for a beautiful solo this past Sunday

Tom Moit for sharing with us his crocheted work of "The Last Supper"

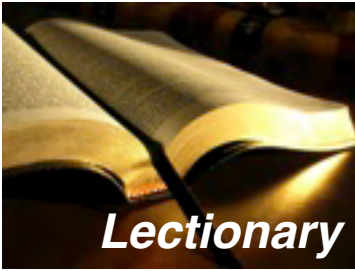


Free Clothing Sunday

Bring Coats

Contact: Phyllis Crocker

Everyone one join in for our First Sunday for Free Clothing by bringing in a used coat - your own or a one from a neighbor, coworker or GoodWill.



Lectionary

April 4

- Acts 10:34-43
- Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
- 1 Corinthians 15:19-26
- John 20:1-18

April 11

- Acts 5:27-32
- Psalm 118:14-29
- Revelation 1:4-8
- John 20:19-31

April 18

- Acts 9:1-6, (7-20)
- Psalm 30
- Revelation 5:11-4
- John 21:1-19

April 25

- Acts 9:36-43
- Psalm 23
- Revelation 7:9-17
- John 10:22-30



Third Sunday for

Food Pantry:

Bring Canned Fruit

Contact: Glenda Survance

Everyone one join in for our Third Sunday for Food Pantry by bringin in cans of fruit.



There for the Long Haul

<http://weekofcompassion.org>

When the levees broke in New Orleans, our entire church felt called to respond.

Congregations from across North America contributed millions of dollars, and more than 1,100 mission groups have contributed 432,000 hours, and counting, in response to the ongoing needs along the Gulf Coast. Through the partnerships of Week of Compassion, Disciples Volunteering, the Great River Region, and many on-the-ground long-term recovery organizations, we have been able to rebuild more than 170 homes and restore hope to countless people in serious need.

Our work is far from complete, though. Most calculations estimate that the recovery process will take at least five more years, and some estimate as many as ten more years will be required to restore and repair New Orleans. Some of us have forgotten about the Gulf Coast. Our news reports celebrate a Saints Super Bowl victory as proof that the Gulf Coast is back, but simply ask anyone who has served with a work group repairing a roof or rebuilding walls, and they'll tell you just how far we have to go.

Disciples congregations have likewise responded faithfully to the earthquake in Haiti. Often noted as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, Haiti has long received disaster- and development-related support from Week of Compassion. The January 12th earthquake compounded a tenuous development situation with a natural disaster. The ensuing displacement of thousands of people to the Dominican border and from the crowded metro area of Port-au-Prince to outlying rural areas with few resources to support such an influx of people has been another wave of the disaster.

The needs are immense. It will not only take many resources, but also much strategizing to put together the most precise, effective, and ethical response. Haiti cannot afford a "do-over" if we respond swiftly yet foolishly. We must distribute the resources we have received in a strategic, wise, effective and sustainable manner. Our partners on the ground have consistently asked us to accompany them for the long-term -- which we know will be years to come. Funds have already been allocated for the initial emergency response phase. Your generous gifts have been put to work on the ground, through our partnerships with Global Ministries (CONASPEH and the House of Hope), Church World Service, the ACT Alliance, and IMA World Health. Vulnerable populations such as children and the disabled have been helped, countless hygiene and baby kits have been distributed, clean water service has been restored to many communities, psycho-social services have been offered, and displaced people have been welcomed, fed and sheltered.

We are, however, in this for the long haul -- as we always are. Your faithful offerings will continue to make a difference. In any successful disaster response, a sustainable and effective response must also include a solid plan for the longer term rebuilding and development phases. For example, as a member communion of Church World Service, we are currently in conversation with Habitat for Humanity International on ways to respond to needs for shelter and housing. The Habitat initiative has three phases -- emergency shelter, transitional shelter, and more permanent housing structures. The permanent housing will take seriously indigenous aesthetic and cultural concerns while employing architecture that is structurally sound and appropriate to Haiti's climate. The initiative will employ Haitian labor and skill in as many ways as possible. Engaging such a problem takes time -- much more time than simply throwing together cookie cutter shelters.

The people of Haiti are at the center of our response, just as the people most affected along the Gulf Coast are at the heart of our Hurricane Recovery Initiative. The trust that

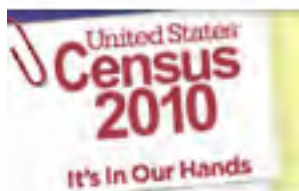
you have invested in Week of Compassion is likewise important -- and we do not take it for granted. We invest your gifts in initiatives that will have a long-lasting, life-changing, and life-affirming effect on the people of Haiti. The contributions received in these few months must be used over the next several years.

Help us prepare for The Next Haiti or The Next Hurricane. We were able to respond directly to needs in Haiti within 48 hours because of your undesignated offerings to Week of Compassion. Your gifts to WoC allow us to respond to disasters when they occur. And they allow us to continue to be there for the long haul. That's who we are as Disciples.



Calling all talented, mildly-talented or shockingly not-talented-at-all Centralites. Sign up for our "Central's Got Talent" Talent Show to be held Friday May 14th. There will be a sign up sheet in the

Fellowship Hall on Easter Sunday, or email Erin Leraris at eleraris@yahoo.com if you are willing to put together an act. We need at least a dozen acts for the show. The idea is Fun! Fun! Fun! and no act is too ridiculous or sublime for inclusion. All ages welcome. Mark your calendars now.



"Accurate census poll means cash for Indiana"

Contact: Lydia Brasher

The headlines in March 9th edition of The Indianapolis Star, screamed at me and since cash has a nice ring to it I read on.

The article pointed out how the census count affects the amount of federal funding states and local governments receive. "About 27% of the federal funding Indiana gets each year is distributed on the basis of census figures. Indiana got \$7.4 billion in census-related funding in 2008. About 47,000 Hoosiers were not counted and that cost the state more than \$227 million in federal funding. Indiana ranked 41st on a per capita basis in census-related funding. The bulk of census-guided federal assistance goes to state governments, making it particularly important that states do what they can to ensure everyone is counted."

"The state is focusing on populations that are particularly important to educate, such as college students. Indiana is the country's second-largest net importer of college students and many students **incorrectly** think they are counted on their parents' census form. A full-time student living on campus or elsewhere should complete a form and report that residence. Local community leaders need to get involved in promoting participation." "Medicaid, funded jointly by the state and federal government, is the largest source of federal funding tied to census figures. Highway and other transportation funding is next, followed by housing programs and education grants."

Census results are used to **decide the number of representatives each state has in the U.S. Congress.**

I was so inspired that the day I received my census form I filled it out and put it in the mail. The Census is seeking people who would like to work on collecting information and it pays quite well. If you are on unemployment that is frozen while you are working for the census and then resumes when the job is over. For further information call 1-866-861-2010 or www.2010censusjobs.gov.



Regardless of our politics, we remember and pray for the families of those who died in military service since the last newsletter. We also remember the countless innocents from every nation who have died in war whose names we will never know.

Lakeshia Bailey, 23
Aaron Arthur, 25
Steven Bishop, 29
Erin McLyman, 26
Richard Jordan, 29
Robert Rieckhoff, 26

"In war, there are no un wounded soldiers."

Jose Narosky



CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

We need 5 dozen more cloth diapers to be able to complete our baby kits for Haitian relief. Cloth diapers are still widely available for purchase at Super Centers. We have collected all the other necessary items. If you can donate a dozen diapers, please bring them to church or contact Erin Leraris at eleraris@yahoo.com

Newsletter submissions may be left in the church office or by eMailing newsletter@indyccc.org. We welcome articles, notes of congratulations or concern, biographical sketches... anything for the good of the church family.

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April 28**



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