



Community of Christ

JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI WINTER 2009

“ASK, AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN YOU; SEEK, AND YE SHALL FIND;
KNOCK, AND IT SHALL BE OPENED UNTO YOU.” — LUKE 11:9

Pastor's Niche



DURING THE TIME THAT I WAS SEARCHING, praying and seeking God's will about whether to join this church or not, I was reminded of this scripture. It's one I was taught growing up; and as I was asking God to show me what He wanted me to do, where He wanted me to go, He led me into this church.

I am reminded again now to ask, to seek, to knock, to listen and to step out in faith. When we seek God's will on a matter, listen, and then step out in faith, amazing things happen!

Seeking God's will as a congregation. We hear a call to service – within and without the walls of our church building. As we've done that, we've been so richly blessed by the addition of our college students, their joy, their enthusiasm, and their wisdom as we share together. We've been

blessed by our joining with the Community of Neighbors in our quest to serve God in our local neighborhood. We've been blessed by our youth. We've been blessed through special guest ministry (visiting/outreach). We have been blessed by the rich heritage afforded us through the lifelong service of members who have gone before us and shared Christ with us. We have been blessed by one another – in the sharing of our lives, our gifts, our hopes.

Called to Serve Where We are Planted. Our congregation has been called to serve in this place and time, where God has planted us – individually, as a congregation, as a member of the Gulf Mission Center and as a member of the World Church. God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things when we put our faith and trust

in Him and step out in faith to do the things He asks us to do. We are asked to join Him in his work – to be participants – not to go it alone – but to join Him in His work.

During a recent priesthood retreat, Bro. Jim Slauter shared the testimony and a painting of the Lord's supper. The artist painted some children he saw in his community sitting around the Lord's table looking up at Jesus. Then Bro. Slauter asked us to share with each other the people we saw in our community sitting around the Lord's table. As we went through that exercise, I could see each member of the congregation's face, some of the faces we've recently met through the Community of Neighbors, family members and friends – each looking up toward Jesus with their hopes and dreams and gifts, and Jesus looking back in love to each one.

We are called to go where He is calling us to go, to be His hands and feet in this world, to share hope with each other and those who know no hope. Where, we may ask, or how? He will lead us as we put our hand in His and step out in faith – seeking His will and sharing His love.

I am so thankful for each one of you!

With Love from your Sister in Christ,
LIZ CRABTREE

LET THE SPIRIT MOVE

IT WAS WITH GREAT JOY that members of the Community of Christ Gulf States Mission Center gathered in Baton Rouge, La., on August 24, 2008 to celebrate the dedication of Baton Rouge Branch's Activity Building. ☞ The new building contains a large meeting area, classrooms, a well equipped kitchen and restrooms with showers. The building can easily house groups as needed for Youth Retreats and Mission Center or community events. Hurricane evacuees could also use this building as a place of refuge. ☞ Rich testimony and praise filled the weekend. Members shared memories of many years of dreaming of such a facility, and of how they were blessed by God's Spirit throughout their growing and building process. ☞ Apostle Linda Booth was present to share throughout the weekend. She challenged the Baton Rouge Branch to dedicate themselves, as well as the building, to providing the enriching activities of Christ centered living. Such ministries will bring wholeness and peace into our troubled world. ☞ The dedicatory events of the weekend were a moment of pentecost: renewing those present, and sending them forth into mission. Apostle Booth reminded us of Christ's words: *“Just as the Father sent me, so I send you.”* The calling to the Baton Rouge Branch, and to all of us, is to become generous disciples and “Invitational Ministers”. Great things can come through our invitation and witness. ☞ May we trust God with our whole heart. He will bless us as we seek to reconcile the world unto Him. — SONJA PORRAS

COMMUNITY *of* NEIGHBORS

AFTER MUCH PRAYER SEEKING GOD'S WILL FOR us in reaching out into our community, Julie received a letter in the Fall of 2007 from Virginia McGrane, a member of the Briarwood United Methodist Church, inviting our congregation to join with them and other churches within a mile stretch of each other to form a "Community of Neighbors," that could work together in serving our community for Christ. The Briarwood United Methodist Church hosted the first Community of Neighbors event in September 2007 and also a Thanksgiving Service in 2008. We're excited at the possibilities that we as a neighborhood can do as we seek His will and guidance in reaching out into our communities. Virginia wrote an article for our "Community of Neighbor's Corner":

COMMUNITY OF NEIGHBORS CORNER

What is a Community?

What makes a Community?

Why do we have Communities?

Are we a Community?

Community is from the root word commit. A community is a group of people with a common/same interest and is willing to work toward achieving that goal or furthering that interest to others. Commit is a strong word. It does not mean maybe we will do something if it suits us. It does not mean that we will only commit if we get something back in return. A commitment is a promise. The Community of Neighbors have made the commitment of service to our neighbors and to those who come our way with what ever need. We are to be the shepherd of God's sheep. We are to love them, feed them, and keep them from harm.



The Churches in the Community of Neighbors have made such a commitment/promise. There are seven churches within the mile's distance between Ridgewood Road and North State Street. Each Church is assisting those in need however they can. Whether it is just an ear to listen, a need for prayer, guidance in the direction to take in their lives, food, gas, hug or a safe place to stay, we are all doing what we can. If someone comes to us that needs more than we can do/give, we give them the names of agencies that can possibly help them and we help them to make contact with these agencies. We are to use the resources we have in service to others.

Lets look at the work "Service". What does it mean? It means, according to the good old Dictionary, to do something that needs to be done, a task done because of need, an act of kindness or love. We are capable of doing that.

We know what a Community is and what it is suppose to do, but what is a Community really? And are we one? A community is a group of people with a like idea/plan for action to protect, assist and encourage their neighbors. It is people who are interested in the well-being of the people who live around them. In the olden times, before cars, internet and phones and electricity and just about any modern convenience that you can think of, a community was a group of people who regularly gathered together for the common good of the group and met their needs with no expectation or payback or rewards. Their common desire to serve, protect and love each other was their common goal.

Are we a Community? Do we seek to meet the needs and provide services to those of our community and to those who God directs to us? Have we made a commitment to serve and obey as directed by God?

Not only do the members of the Community need nurturing and love and services, but others do too. By combining together into a Community of Neighbors, we are stronger, bigger and more capable and better able to serve our fellow human beings. We will strive to keep our Servanthood alive and growing. We have made a commitment and we are committed to it. With God's help we will succeed in following His command to feed His sheep, tend them, keep them safe and love them. — VIRGINIA MCGRANE

CARING PEOPLE MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

MULTIPLE HURRICANES which have devastated many areas in the last few years have made me reflect on the disastrous hurricane "Camille" that my husband, Bob, and I endured on August 17, 1969. Camille completely devastated the town, Pass Christian, Mississippi in which we lived. We lost our home, car and everything we possessed. All of our belongings had been submerged in salt water. We had only been married a year when it hit. We were unable to get out of the area for a week. There was a nearby open well we could use for water (washing and cleaning). ☹ When we were finally able to get out, we lived with Bob's brother, Sonny and Jean in Mobile. We were informed that a church representative wanted to meet with us in Ocean Springs. I don't recall who it was. When we met, he questioned us about our experience and spent some time visiting. At the end of the visit, he handed us a check for \$500.00. This was not a loan, but a gift from the Community of Christ Church. Forty years ago, \$500.00 was a lot of money. Those funds enabled us to get back on our feet and gave us a new beginning until we could re-establish ourselves in new jobs. At that time, I was not a member of this church. I will be forever grateful for the funds. The church so generously gave to us in a great time of need. Caring people made all the difference! — MISSY GOFF

MEMBER FOCUS

Mattea and Michaela both got All As for 1st semester. Michaela got 3rd place in her division in the school science fair. Mattea plays clarinet, and was chosen for the River City Band, an honor band made up of students from the Vicksburg School District.

Brooke loves helping with smaller children, so she's been helping a close friend who fosters kids every chance she gets.

Whitney graduated December 19, 2008 and works as a nurse in Mobile, Alabama. Dusty Coleman and Sarah Porras will be graduating May 9, 2009.

RUDY CELEBRATES HIS 90TH BIRTHDAY

And Jesus answered him, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all of thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second commandment is like this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." —

MARK 12:30-31

Rudy turned 90 on January 27, 2009. HAPPY BIRTHDAY RUDY! Anyone who has been around Rudy for any length of time at all has probably heard him repeat this scripture. It's one of his favorites and one he and Charlotte exemplify. They have dedicated their lives in service to Him and to others because of their love for our Lord. We have been tremendously blessed.

Rudy was born in Chicago, IL on January 27, 1919. He and Charlotte were married on May 30, 1948, had two sons born to

them, Mike and Mark. Mike and Judy have two children, Matt and Lori; and Mark and Lauren have two children, Shannon and Jeremy. Lori has two children.

Rudy worked as a chemist with the Corp. of Engineers, and Charlotte taught school for 33 years. Rudy and Charlotte helped organize the Vicksburg RLDS group where they met in homes for many years. Rudy served on the Vicksburg Crisis Hotline, Charlotte served as a tour guide at the Vicksburg Battlefield Park. Rudy and Charlotte also served as tour guides at the Kirkland Temple for a year.

They helped organize the Jackson congregation. We are forever grateful for their love and dedication. It is important to be reminded by word and example of what it means to follow Christ. Rudy and Charlotte have been and are true leaders in this sense.

One more thing, Rudy reminds us that "We Need Thee Every Hour," as he walks from one place to the other. Yes we do, no matter where we are, how old or how young. Thank you Rudy and Charlotte. We all love you!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Jackson, MS

Upcoming Events

March 8

Apostle Booth

March 28 – 29

Seventy Steven Smith

March and April

Feinstein Challenge 2009

Gulf Mission Center

Upcoming Events

Feb. 27 – March 1

Young Adults Retreat
BSCG

March 7

GMC Conference
Ocean Springs, MS

March 9 – 13

Azalea Reunion
BSCG

April 24 – 26

Discipleship Formation
BSCG

FIRST QUARTER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Sal Porras – January 12

Rudy Richter – January 27

Mia Hammond – February 17

Anna Allen – February 23

Bill and Alecia Porch – February 25

Leslie Mobley – March 5

Rebecca Sasnett – March 8

Roy and Marilyn Johnson – March 10

Brooke Allen – March 15

Mattea Mobley – March 24

Michaela Mobley – March 28

DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER ARTICLES April 1, 2009

GULF MISSION CENTER
NEWS AND CALENDAR
www.gulfmissioncenter.org

Linda Booth to Visit the Jackson Congregation

APOSTLE LINDA BOOTH WILL BE OFFERING HER ministry in our congregation on March 8, at 10:00 and 11:00 a.m.

Linda L. Booth is a member of the Council of Twelve Apostles, the lead missionary quorum of the Community of Christ. She is assigned to the Southern USA Mission Field which includes the Alabama-Northwest Florida USA Mission Center, Ark-La-Tex USA Mission Center, Central Missouri USA, Florida USA Mission Center,

Gulf USA Mission Center, Mid-South USA Mission Center, South Central USA Mission Center, and Southeast USA Mission Center. She is also responsible for Church Planting Ministries and Contemporary Christian Ministries. In June 2005, she was elected secretary of the Council of Twelve.

Ordained as a member of the Council of Twelve in March 1998, her past assignments include serving as director of Communications Services and Herald House, liaison with Contemporary Christian Ministries, and Graceland Campus Ministries; Central USA Mission Field; and the Central Development Area. Before ordination into the Council of Twelve, she served

as the assistant director of Communications Services at the church's international headquarters.

Linda's other church activities include serving four years as pastor of the Olathe Community of Christ and four years as counselor to the president of the Quorum of High Priests.

Linda is married to Douglas J. Booth. They have three sons, Burnie, Benjamin, and Bart; three daughters-in-law, Gretchen, Anna, and Shawna; and two grandsons, Brock Douglas and Corbin Walker. Her hobbies include reading, reptiles, writing, and meeting new people.

It will be an honor to have Sister Linda here to share with us. Don't miss this special opportunity to come and be blessed.



FEINSTEIN CHALLENGE

IT IS THAT TIME OF YEAR TO BEGIN PLANNING to participate in the Feinstein Challenge which raises money to feed the hungry. For all donations in March and April to hunger causes, including donations of food and cash/check, and all pledges to donate during the rest of 2009, we are eligible to receive part of the Feinstein Foundation's \$1 Million matching funds. Last year we collected \$285 in donations of food, money and pledges and as a result received another \$265 to give to Gateway. Beginning the first Sunday of March and continuing through April, there will be a basket at the back of the sanctuary for your food donations. Money donations should be indicated on your offering envelope. Money contributed to the World Church Hunger Fund, counts in the total as well. If you have any questions, please see Julie. — JULIE WRIGHT



SAUSAGE CALZONES Makes 4 Calzones

1 & 1/3 pounds Italian sweet Sausage
A drizzle of Extra Virgin olive oil
2 cups ricotta cheese
A handful of fresh flat leaf parsley, chopped
2 garlic cloves chopped or finely grated
A handful of grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg (optional)
A few grinds of black pepper
12 pitted Kalamata olives, chopped
2 tubes of prepared refrigerated pizza dough
2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
2 cups tomato marinara or pizza sauce, warmed for dipping

Preheat oven to 425°

Brown sausage in a skillet with the olive oil. Transfer crumbles to a paper towel-lined plate to drain.

Combine the sausage with ricotta cheese, parsley, garlic, grated Parmigiano, nutmeg, pepper, and olives.

Roll out pizza dough on 2 separate non stick cookie sheets and cut each dough in half across. Spread 1/2 cup mozzarella and a 1/4 cup of filling on each dough rectangle. Work on just half the surface of each dough rectangle. Then fold the dough over the top of the filling and pinch the edges firmly to form a seal. If your dough tears remove a little of the filling and repair. Repeat the process for all calzones spacing them evenly on baking sheets and bake 12 to 15 minutes or until dough is golden brown. Serve with warm marinara, or pizza sauce for dunking.

— MICKEY WRIGHT

Community of Christ

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