

Community of Christ



The Peacekeepers

Association for Ministry to Military Newsletter

February, 2007

Curt's Column

This is the last newsletter before conference. It does not seem possible that another year has passed so quickly. Because of health reasons Joyce and I have not been able to return to Arizona for the winter. Since we have been traveling out there for the past 12 years, we had just about forgotten what it was like here in the Midwest during the winter. Old man winter has reminded us what it is like during the past week or so. Oh, well, spring is not too far away.

We will not be able to see many of you who will be coming to conference this time as we are not going to be able to have a booth anywhere convenient. The only chance we will have to get together will be at the dinner on Wednesday night of conference. It will be held in the East Alton church as usual. The cost of the meal will be \$8.00 per person. This is an increase of .50 cents of three years ago. Our caterer advises that due to the cost increase of food it is necessary to raise the price. I feel certain that those of you that have attended the banquet in past years realize how good the food is and there is plenty of it.

We would appreciate any who plan to attend the banquet to let our treasurer know of your intentions. That's Lehman Heaviland – 309 S. Shrank – Independence, MO 64056. It would be helpful if you would enclose your check for the meal along with your reservation. We will have to have a final number by 5:00 pm on Monday of conference. This is necessary so the caterer will know how much food to purchase. We will have a speaker for the evening but at this writing nothing has been tied down.



It has been a long time but we will be having the election of officers. Tim Kunzweiler, our VP has consented to let his name stand for president. He has my endorsement for the office as he sure has been a help to me and it would assure continuity. If there are others that would like to have their name presented please get the information to me so we can have information available at conference time. If Tim is elected we will have to have another take his place as VP. The secretary is also up for election but the treasurer will not be for another two years. The odd year conference knocked us out of our normal sequence.

If there are any pressing issues that you would like to see covered, please either let me or Tim Kunzweiler know. Our e-mail addresses are at the end of the newsletter. We welcome your thoughts and again we solicit articles from any of you. They do not have to be literary masterpieces but rather something that has happened to you or an experience that you have had and would like to share with the rest of us. We know that many of you have been involved in good things where you are but the media only reports the worst.

I have been with this organization since its inception and it is my hope that I have brought some good thoughts and have been of some service to those of you who are serving. My service ended in 1977 but I still look back on it with some fond memories and some not so great. Some of the times have been humorous and others have been fairly tragic but nevertheless memories that cannot be replaced. It is my prayer for all of you that you will be kept out of harms way and you will return safe and sound to your loved ones.

See you at conference.

Curt



The Community of Christ Association for Ministry to Military Personnel
is dedicated to bringing ministry to military members on active duty throughout the world.

The Impact of a Chance

Meeting by Tim Kunzweiler

Winter had been blessedly mild in Dayton for much of the 2006-2007 season, at least until last Sunday, the 21st of January. Of course on that day (when I needed to depart on a temporary duty trip) we had our first snowfall of any significance — about 2 inches. The highway department had salted but, when it came time to drive to the airport, the roads were still pretty icy and snow covered. I don't mind driving in that — but I do sort of worry about the other folks out on the road with me. Those worries are sometimes well-founded!



I was northbound on I-75, just a few minutes from the airport really, when winter-driving reality “struck.” I'd been in the left lane, tooling along pretty fine in spite of the white covering. Alas, traffic in the center lane suddenly experienced a quick slowdown and a red Jeep Liberty in that lane had to brake hard in what looked like an attempt to avoid rear-ending someone. The slow-motion replay: Jeep continues forward, wheels locked, but with the front end now veering left — toward me. I knew I could not brake hard myself (not wanting two vehicles sliding in an out-of-control formation) so I continued straight and used what throttle I could to try to outpace the car now heading into my lane. A sharp thump on the right side of the pickup indicated I had not been able to elude the Jeep.

In a minor miracle, all other vehicles in the near vicinity apparently managed to avoid us. Fortunately for the Jeep driver, a lady about my own age — with a young daughter — her impact with me probably straightened out her trajectory and may have even prevented her from hitting the wall between the north and southbound lanes. As traffic permitted we both vectored for an additional meeting on the right shoulder — this time with the vehicles parked.

You never know how you may meet another member of the Lord's family — I was actually thinking in those terms as I exited my truck and walked back to the Jeep. Both the driver and the little girl were OK (Thank you Lord) but they were also both pretty shaken. A Sheriff's deputy, going to another call, stopped and provided us documents for exchanging



information — which we did. In the next few moments we also did what brothers and sisters in Christ probably need to do more often. We confirmed that the other was OK; we comforted the little girl and reaffirmed to her that — though cars sometimes hit each other — that doesn't mean that the remainder of the interaction has to be a “collision” too. We exchanged the pertinent accident information and light-hearted conversation that helped keep things in perspective and on track. I mentioned that I was a veteran and a minister and that I especially needed to live out both those “service” callings in times like this. She told me it was actually her birthday and so I wished her a happy one — and one with no more problems than we'd already experienced! At the end of the visit I bade them farewell and God's blessings and we continued on our separate ways — indeed more blessed than battered. The damage was light. We made sure no more damage was done. That's the kind of impact I like to see between people!

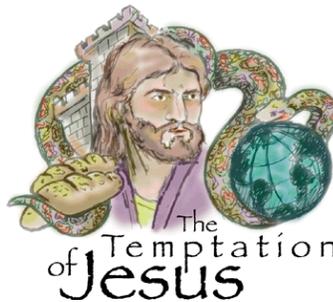


Tim

Led by the Spirit by Richard A. Brown, Blue Springs, Missouri

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil

When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time. —Luke 4:1-2, 13 NRSV



Even Jesus was not fully equipped for ministry immediately after his water baptism and Spirit confirmation (“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ...”).

Like the people of Israel centuries before, Jesus was led into the desert wilderness to prepare for what would come after.

Of course, Jesus wasn't *sent* into the wilderness; he was *led*. The Holy Spirit would accompany him, giving him the strength to endure physical hardship and spiritual temptation. John's Gospel makes no mention of this episode. Mark does so only briefly, leaving it to Matthew and Luke to expand the story. Luke, in particular, focuses on what it means for Jesus to be the Son of God. To make this point, Luke turns the story around and shows us what Jesus *does not* do.

The Son of God does not grasp divine power to satisfy personal desires. By saying that humans do not

live by bread alone, he recalled his Hebrew ancestors who were given manna as God’s gift to keep them alive. Nor does the Son of God seek political power to bring about his peaceable kingdom. Those same ancestors would later demand a king and all the trappings of nationhood so they could be just like their pagan neighbors. Finally, the Son of God does not twist scripture (in this case Psalm 91) to command divine protection from harm. Certainly, if the Son of God would not act this way, then neither should those who seek to follow him.

Luke concludes by telling his readers that when the devil had finished these tests “he departed from [Jesus] until an opportune time.” Jesus would do battle with the power of evil again. Fortunately, the Spirit was with him constantly from that moment on.

Don’t forget—the spirit is with *you* as well.
—Mary Yocum

Come to Hear Jesus by David Schaal, First Presidency

He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed. —Luke 6: 17-18 NRSV

The electricity had failed and the glow of the freshly lit lamps was accompanied by the unmistakable aroma of kerosene. Undistracted by the change in ambience, the group of youth from ten nations continued their discussion on the matter of the church’s desire to “care for children and youth.”



There, in the flickering light of the lanterns, they made it quite clear that they were not interested in being “cared for,” if that meant taking a passive role in which they were to be only the recipients of ministry. Quite the contrary, in the minds of these young disciples (and many like them throughout the world), the church will evidence its care for them by teaching, equipping, and supporting them as disciples and ministers in their own right.

As the above scripture indicates—people came from all over to hear Jesus and to be healed. Today ... is a day for all of us to reflect upon what we can do to support a young person in their ministry. In so doing, we help create new avenues for people to hear Jesus and be healed.



Share the Blessings by Richard A. Brown, Blue Springs, Missouri

[Jesus] stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.” —Luke 4: 16-18 NRSV

The stage is set in the gospel of Luke. By this early point readers know about the prophecies directed to his earthly parents and other relatives, the familiar narrative of his birth, his childhood visit to the temple, the coming of John to baptize him, and his wilderness period of spiritual preparation. It is now time for the ministry of Jesus to begin.

After establishing a reputation as a teacher, Jesus goes home. Friends and neighbors no doubt were curious about “Joseph’s son,” and so there must have been quite a crowd in the Nazareth synagogue. Luke wants to make sure we get the point: Jesus’ ministry is all about prophecy. Jesus is not only the one prophets looked for, but his presence actually begins the kingdom of God on earth. The richly poetic words of Isaiah offer an ideal platform for Jesus to say what needs to be said: The kingdom has arrived, and from this point on *everything* changes. Literal and metaphorical understandings carry equal weight here. There’s good news for the poor, sight for the blind, and release for the oppressed. We do well to return to Isaiah chapter 61 to ponder that passage.

The great beauty of Isaiah’s words, however, may obscure the even greater power behind them. Jesus speaks a prophetic word of truth and power to those comfortable with the status quo, and those in the synagogue don’t at first recognize it. Soon the light begins to dawn; Jesus’ ministry is both unwelcome and dangerous to some folks. The same is true today for the community that bears his name.



Available in an E-mail and a “snail mail” edition. Active-duty military members who join the association can receive either edition for free. Non-active-duty members receive either edition with a paid membership, **\$10.00, due in April.** The newsletter is also available on our Web site: <http://www.cofchristpeacekeepers.org/>

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