

Community of Christ



# The Peacekeepers

Association for Ministry to Military Personnel Newsletter

June, 2008

## TIM'S SERVICE

by Tim "K9" Kunzweiler, President

Hello fellow servants. I've been thinking about discipling lately and that thought process has probably been prodded by three close-proximity factors. One was my attendance at the first Western Ohio Mission Center Men's Retreat in April. I had known our guest minister, Steve Kohler, for many a year already (he'd been an appointee in the former Arkansas-Memphis District back when Sheila and I were newlyweds stationed at Little Rock AFB). Steve reminded "us guys" of our continued special roles in the family, in society and in the unique ways we can provide disciple-welcoming ministries. On 18 May I also had an engagement to be the morning speaker at my Beaver Creek, Ohio Congregation. The theme was "Disciple the World" and, as our North Little Rock former Pastor (Boyce Rogers) used to say, "It's *at least* a coincidence" that two missionaries to Costa Rica showed up to join our service that day. Perhaps the even greater "coincidence" was that I had brought a small carved wooden bowl, with an inlaid lid – a gift from friends who had gotten it from Costa Rica! During my talk I re-gifted that bowl to the two missionaries (Darwin and Tiffany) with the hope that they might find some blessing from it as they ministered in the field. A big self-reminder from any talk on discipleship is the recognition of how discipling must start in the home if it is to be successful anywhere else. With our kids out of school for the summer there's plenty of opportunity for me to practice! And finally, in the UP FRONT section of the May *Herald*, President Steve Veazey highlights how the Community of Christ – a world-wide body



– is focused on efforts that may better enable or movement to minister to the peoples we encounter across the international realm. I humbly ask your prayers for our Prophet, for all serving in the International Church – and for "us" – as we all seek to discern the Lord's will for how we may better "Disciple the World" in the years ahead.

I stood outside HQ Air Force Materiel Command the other day and was reminded how discipling may be accomplished in unexpected ways. As I looked up I noted two F-16s flying together in the pattern. That formation reminded me of the concept of being a "wingman" (a theme the Air Force also touts for team support). *Christian discipling* can develop from something as simple as performing good *wingman* service. Simply by caring for one another, the Church's uniformed members can represent the Christ to a word in need. I'd like to call your attention to Matthew 28: 16–20 – which covers what's been called "The Great Commission." As you take upon you the yoke of this commission "*in the field*" you have unique opportunities to shine the light – whether to fellow service members or to a kindred souls in any part of the world you may reside.



As you go about your military duties may you remember that being a brother or sister in Christ can be a part of every day's service. In that effort I also seek to be a good *wingman* for you.

In Christ – Victory! May God bless all Peacekeepers.  
Tim "K9" Kunzweiler, President.

The Community of Christ Association for Ministry to Military Personnel is dedicated to bringing ministry to Community of Christ members serving on active duty world-wide.

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## To: Community of Christ Members and Friends in the USA

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Dear Sisters and Brothers

During the 2007 World Conference, the First Presidency shared our intent to hold a special assembly of church members in the United States. This non-legislative gathering would give opportunity to confer on issues of importance about the church's mission in this nation.



The need for a USA Assembly is still a reality, and we are pleased to announce that a special USA assembly will be convened during the April 10–17, 2010 World Conference. (Other fields and language groups will also have opportunity to meet at this time).

Our original intent was to convene a USA assembly in 2009. However, the combination of economic concerns, staff capacity at International Headquarters, and other international events scheduled for that year prompted the World Church Leadership Council to look toward 2010 for the USA assembly.

In 2009, members of the church in the United States will have opportunity to study, worship, and fellowship with brothers and sisters from around the world. We encourage the USA church to maximize its support of these opportunities:

-  International Youth Forum (IYF)—July 21–25
-  SPECTACULAR—July 25–August 1
-  International Women's Gathering—October 18–23
-  Peace Colloquy—October 23–25

We thank God for the many ways in which the Holy Spirit is uniquely moving within every nation of the world. We look forward to the USA church having opportunity to discuss issues of importance when it assembles in 2010. May God bless you as you seek to be a blessing to others.

In Christ's peace,  
The First Presidency

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## Curt's Column

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I cannot understand it. Whenever a group of friends get together we tell of experiences and things that have happened to us – both good and bad. But when we are asked to put something like that in writing to share with others, we can't remember or feel we can't write it.

Almost every morning a small group of us gather at the security office at the Independence Center and have coffee or some beverage to drink and just enjoy being together. I have had the opportunity to become good friends with a retired Chief Petty Officer. He tells many of the experiences he had while in the Navy. I guess you could say we swap sea stories.



My point in mentioning this is that there are a myriad of experiences residing within all of you that read this column. WHOA! Maybe I am being told something. Perhaps you are not reading this column. In any event, I'm asking again for some testimonies in writing that we can share together.

Let me relate an experience that happened to me many years ago. It has had an effect on my life and the way that I conduct myself in meetings. I was living in Portland, Oregon and was a member of the First Church. Junior church was going well. I cannot tell you what was discussed or what was taking place. We stood for the closing prayer and as soon as it was over I immediately rushed up to talk to the speaker. It seems as though he wasn't finished and all the other kids looked at me as though I had committed the unpardonable sin. I was truly embarrassed.



Throughout the rest of my life and it still continues today; whenever I am in a meeting and it is concluding I make absolutely certain that it is okay to leave my seat and mingle or whatever. As a result of this I can appreciate the consternation of someone who also makes an error in judgment and have empathy for them.

We are called to understanding and loving toward those who have, for one reason or another, stepped out of bounds and done things that society holds as unacceptable. There are occasions that the act is serious enough to warrant incarceration however, there are times when we do not have the full information so we must err on the side of forgiveness. My point is: Don't condemn someone unless you have all of the facts at your disposal and are absolutely certain of their correctness. Recently there have been a number of cases where the individual has been released because the DNA has proven that the original information was incorrect. Let's hope we are not placed in the position where we have to make those decisions.

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## Be Who You Were Created to Be, by David Schaal, First Presidency

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*“I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”*  
—John 14: 6

As a child, I understood the invitation to “live like Jesus” as encouragement to do the things that Jesus did, such as being prayerful, helping people in need, and forgiving others. All these things are, of course, important.



As an adult however, I am even more impressed with another aspect of Jesus’ life: how it is that Jesus chose to live like Jesus. In other words, he never tried to be someone else. There were certainly times when both his friends and his foes tried to persuade him to be different from what he was. In every circumstance, though, he simply declined the opportunity to walk a different path and lived out his life being true to who he was created to be.

This is amazing! As human beings, we are bombarded with pressure to be like others. Sometimes, our egos get the best of us and we find ourselves wishing we were more like this person or that person. Each of us, though, is a unique treasure, gifted to be a unique blessing in this world.

The life of Jesus certainly provides example and inspiration for us. Part of that example is having the courage to be who we are. Who were you created to be?

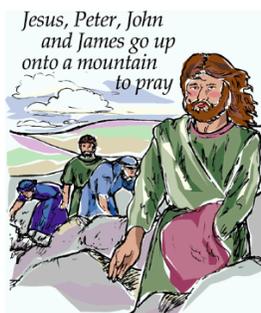
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## Disciple the World, by Bob Kyser, Senior president of Seventy

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*“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost....”*  
—Matthew 28: 18 IV

This “Great Commission” has always seemed to be a huge task. With the diversity of cultures and religious traditions how can this commandment of Jesus be lived out? From the perspective of limited resources, can the call to disciple the world ever become a



reality? I am drawn to what comes before and after this passage: it is in Jesus Christ that we find the resources for this calling, and we have the promise that he is with us always as we invite others to discipleship.

As I visit newly established congregations I note a common element. While there is a sense of calling to be where they are geographically, the more evident call is to make a difference, one life at a time. While those leading the witnessing efforts of these church plants have a vision of bringing people to Christ who live on the same street, in the same neighborhood, or in the same community, they respond to the Holy Spirit in individual disciple formation. Invitation, teaching, baptizing, and supporting people in becoming life-long disciples is strong in these places.

The Great Commission is lived out by reaching out to a child, teenager, single parent, neighbor, or stranger and inviting them to follow Christ. From this perspective, Jesus’ instructions are being followed, and with significant results.

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## Whom Do You Serve? by Jane Watkins, Lakeland Florida

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*“No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other.”*  
—Matthew 6: 24 NRSV

The word “slave” crops up a number of times in the New Testament. The image of slavery would not be lost on these early Christians whose ancestors had escaped slavery by running across the Red Sea with Pharaoh’s army close on their heels.

In America the word “slave” conjures up images of the old South before the Civil War—large columned mansions sitting on plantation grounds with hordes of slaves picking cotton, scrubbing floors, cooking, and caring for the master’s children.

We talk a lot within the church about being servants and servant ministry. But there is a large gulf between being a servant and being a slave. Servants get days off; slaves are slaves 365 days a year. Servants earn discretionary income to spend on whatever they wish; slaves earn no money—anything they need or want must be requested of the

master. Slaves have no possessions, no rights, and are obligated to do whatever the master commands.

Our call is to share the peace of Jesus. Our call is to be generous givers so that our abundance can continue the work of Christ throughout the world. Our call is to be slaves! We may not be called to pick cotton, scrub floors, or cook...but we are called to care for the Master's children. When we care for the least of these, our brothers and sisters, we serve Christ. Whom do you serve?



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## Build with Faith, by Steve Jones, Presiding Bishopric

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*"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for..."*  
—Hebrews 11: 1 IV

John had always hoped to serve the Book of Mormon people. It was the early 1950s. Dr. John Blumenshein was a young practicing obstetrician/gynecologist. Married to Marian and with five young children, how could such a dream that burned in John's soul ever happen?

John came to Marian and told her of his desire. And so John sold his medical practice and their possessions and bought a Volkswagen bus. They packed all that they owned and headed for Latin America. They arrived at a beautiful lake in the country of Honduras. They lived and worked out of the Volkswagen bus until a makeshift A-frame home could be built. Later, a mission house was built for both the medical practice and the first Community of Christ (RLDS) church in Honduras. However, John would not see the fruits of his faith. He died within the first year of moving. But Marian and the children stayed on, and many others came to serve with them.

In April 2007, I was sitting in the congregation at La Buena Fe in Honduras. More than 400 people from several countries were celebrating the fifty-year anniversary of the ministry founded by John and Marian. This family's faith and actions laid the foundation for our Latin American ministry. La Buena Fe, Honduras, has sent many to plant the church in places like Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador. As I watched these countries and others represented in song and dance, I gave thanks to God for touching the soul of a family who gave up everything and moved out in faith to establish and build the church's presence in Latin America.

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<http://www.cofchristpeacekeepers.org/>

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