
Community of Christ

The Peacekeepers



Association for Ministry to Military Personnel Newsletter

August, 2008

TIM'S SERVICE

by Tim "K9" Kunzweiler, President



"How does all this matter"? Have you ever caught yourself asking that type question? I suspect the answer is "yes," (and no matter what your age). There are days when (approaching 50) I may still wonder what the "big picture" is, where I fit into it and whether or not my piece makes any difference to the entire puzzle.

We all wonder at times. Our ages, and what "mission" we're currently engaged in, doubtless shape the lines of questioning. Wondering may be a very good thing though; the *state of complacency* is probably not the best location in God's creation.

Actually, experience and recognizing "whose" creation this is has taught me a lot about "what to wonder." When I was younger I thought more often in self-centric terms (and again, that was probably influenced a great deal by a lack of experience). Today I at least try to consciously address the impact to others that my actions – or inactions – bring. If I keep "that big picture" I'm usually only wondering "What can I do for you, Lord, that matters today"?!

That concept of "whose creation this is" was driven home for me anew during our family's recent week at a Reunion camp (Theme: "A Community of Peace – Becoming Community"). Our Mission Center uses Camp Bountiful, nestled in the hills of southeastern Ohio. Our son, Alex, had to work but daughter Rachel was able to be with us the entire time – a great joy. I have to admit, there's a lot of benefit to letting the work-a-day world pass by for a whole week (though I was happy enough to

occasionally hear military jets using the nearby airspace!). This Reunion was blessed by the guest ministry of Apostle Ron Harmon and Seventy Larry McGuire – as well as by the fellowship of brothers and sisters in the faith, all of us seeking to be "Claimed by Christ's Vision."

In the U.S., being claimed by that vision can conceivably happen almost anywhere we live, work or worship (though it doesn't typically happen *automatically*, by any means). In the military, the opportunities may be boundless – but the challenges may abound too. The military member is often "somewhere" because peace is being overcome by conflict. Must that stop our *becoming community*?

One person at a time may be the best way for us to pass along *Christ's Vision*. Who, in your unit, simply needs to see the light of Christ reflected by you? Can the community grow by one person today?

What are you wondering today? And, after all, "today" is the only day I can live as part of a community of peace – even when conflict may abound. Today is the day to work at (and to assist our fellow journeyers) in becoming community.

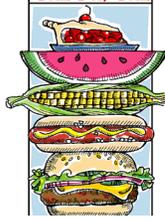
In Christ – Victory! May God bless all Peacekeepers.
Tim "K9" Kunzweiler, President.

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.

Curt's Column

by Curt Heaviland, Vice President

We have just passed the celebration of our independence and are looking forward to the rest of the year. I know this is time for cookouts and family get togethers for a good time. However, I wonder how many of us really sit down and take into consideration how we arrived at this point.



I recently received an e-mail that outlined what happened to the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Almost without exception they were persecuted and in some cases tortured and most died fighting for independence. The ones that were not killed came out of the war bankrupt and in most cases without a home to go to. The British had seen that they were demolished.

Here we are today, inheriting the country for which they sacrificed their very lives and wealth. In addition to the founding fathers there have been and many are sacrificing for our country today. All who find themselves in the military can count themselves among those to be counted in this great effort.

This year is one that stands out to be vitally important to all of us, whether you are in the uniform of the United States military or those at home supporting them. It is an election year and how the country goes after the election is up to us. No matter to which party you ascribe, it is of the utmost importance that you exercise your right (and privilege) to vote. I urge each one that is unable for one reason or another to go to the polls, to get with your election officials to get ballots so that you can cast your vote. Plan ahead to cast an absentee ballot.

It is, in my estimation, one of the most crucial elections we have had in my lifetime. It is a known fact that veterans who are members of congress have dwindled to the point that there are only a few remaining. This fact is of vital importance to those of us who have served and those of you who are now serving. So keep this in your mind when you make your selection of the ones that would serve you and those that would lead you.

I'll climb down from my soapbox at this point and remind all of us that we are living in the

greatest country in the world and God has preserved it for us. We need to thank Him each day for the privilege we have of being free and able to worship as we know best to do.

May the Lord keep each of you from harms way.

God Bless,
Curt

The Cross I Carry by Fred Hamilton

I carry a cross that few can see
It's the cross my God made for me,
It's the same size He made for His Son
The same size He made for everyone.



It's rough hewn with gnarls and knots
And not comfortable in any spot.
I've thrown it down in disgust
Because of the weight and the trail of the dust
Which seems to bother those I most trust.

I go for council that it might be reformed
To a shape that is easier borne
And in that council He let me know
Without the cross I cannot go.

I carry it for Him or I carry it for another
Happiness on one hand, sorrow on the other.
Many harden their hearts and stiffen their necks
Against the very thing they know is correct.

If you reach out to help another
You'll find your cross is not a bother.
He showed me the prints in His nail-pierced hands
And asked that I for Him make a stand.

I picked up my cross and to my surprise
It was the very same weight, shape and size
The knots and gnarls, the roughness still there
But I was no longer the worse for wear.

Yes, my cross I know is still the same
But it's the Joy in Jesus that changed the
game.

Oh how happy I made that choice
My load has been lightened by the Master's
voice.

I reached down to help someone



To my surprise he looked like God's Son.
Physically weakened, not by the load
But by the steepness and roughness of the road.

The weight of my cross was completely gone
As I helped carry the load of that needy one.
My joy is great, my heart does leap
To know we'll meet at Jesus' feet.

My Master, my Savior, my God you see
Yes, the one who made the cross for me
Is the very same Carpenter of Galilee.

Inspired by: Elbert A. Smith & Beatrice Witherspoon

Kid Stuff by Mary Yocum

I realize some of you have children at home and must miss them terribly. I hope that hearing about my 2 ½ year old grandson will lighten your hearts a little. If you don't like reading about children just skip to the next story – I won't be offended.



Dominic is what my Aunt Enid and Uncle Joe used to call "all boy." Yes, that means he is often in trouble. We work on manners, of course, like please, thank you, no thank you, etc. and sometimes our words come back to haunt us. He was frying my nerves one day and I asked him if he wanted me to spank him. Without missing a beat he answered, "No thanks." Well I couldn't do anything but laugh then.

For a few months I drove his Mom, my daughter Beth, to work each day – 1 hour each way – 4 hours a day in the car for us. He often wanted me to "look" at something and "see" what he was doing. My answer was usually, "I'm busy driving, I can't look now."

One day I asked him something while he was playing at home. You guessed it, his answer was "I busy – I driving."

Dominic has an old remote control for an older TV which no longer works. He will raise his "mote" above his head and with a downward "chopping" motion he demands "Elmo, want Elmo." Of course it never works so after trying countless times to demand his preference he finally looks to Grandma and asks "Elmo pleeeeeease"? At which point Grandma picks up her remote control

and finds Elmo for the little guy. "Thank you," he dutifully responds.

Somehow I always find life lessons in his view of the world. We never want to be punished, but we often make mistakes. We're often too busy to answer when the Lord calls us, but we want Him to respond "right now." Some of us seem to want the instant response we get from a remote control. We often forget to say please and especially thank you. Don't we owe God at least as much as we demand from our little ones?

Is Anything too Wonderful for God? by Andrew Shields, World Church secretary

"So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, 'After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?'" —Genesis 18: 12 NRSV

I have never successfully predicted what I would be doing in five years. I make plans, but other opportunities and barriers appear, and my decisions are often sidelined by other possibilities. Sometimes I try to be obedient to what God wants for my life. Sometimes I think of what I want most, or I feel herded into choices I do not want to make. Nevertheless, I can look back and see the hand of God moving through whatever outcome followed.

God speaks to us through unexpected voices and says things that are not sensible, calling us beyond our understanding. We live in a world of trading work and skill for comfort and pleasure. God calls us to live in a world of service, discernment, and wonder. To follow God is to give up an expectation of predictability. Instead, living with God is being open to receiving gifts we wouldn't think to ask for.



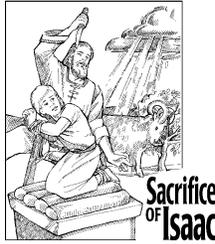
This will never be easy. God calls us to live in faith, trusting a loving God whose perspective is wider than we can imagine. Our lives interconnect in a network so intricate and vast that we will never see the impact of the choices we make. Could God be speaking through you to someone you may not know? As God speaks to us in the voice of a friend or stranger, we must live with openness to a future that belongs to God.



Be a Living Sacrifice by Susan Skoor, Council of Twelve Apostles

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God ..."
—Romans 12: 1 NRSV

For some church members around the globe, baptism is a life-and-death decision that can lead to ostracism, torture, and death. Others convert in the face of broken family relationships and financial ruin. Sacrifice takes many forms. In complacent societies, Christianity is often misunderstood, dismissed as superstition, or ridiculed as a theology of fear and judgment. Those who proclaim Christ encounter a subtle form of persecution and marginalization.



When I told him I was an apostle with the Community of Christ, there was a stunned silence. The easy camaraderie of chance traveling companions iced over. Yet because we had established common ground in the first hour, he listened as I shared our vision of the peaceable kingdom, the continued revelation of God, and the possibility of a relationship with the Divine that went beyond judgment and fear. When we parted, he thanked me. "I still don't know whether I believe in God," he said, "but I believe in you. You are making a difference in the world."

We are not all given the challenge of dying for our faith. Many of us face the equally difficult task of living for our faith day after day. Our bi-vocational ministers donate time and energy in daily sacrifice to the needs of their flock. They serve sacrificially, paying a price each day, for the joy of serving faithfully in ministry. Offer yourself unreservedly as a living sacrifice, proclaiming God's peaceable kingdom to the Garys of the world. This is our challenge and joy.

Gary, my seatmate on a three-hour flight from Sacramento to Kansas City, carried a book titled *The God delusion*. A self-proclaimed agnostic, he shared his abhorrence of churches characterized by judgment, exclusiveness, and a theology of fear.

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 "sustaining" members receive either edition with a paid membership, **\$10.00, due in April.** Archive newsletters also available on our Web site:
<http://www.cofchristpeacekeepers.org/>

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*May God hold you
in the palm of
His hand!*