

Community of Christ

Association for Ministry to Military Personnel



The Peacekeepers

Newsletter

November/December 2014

TIM'S SERVICE

by Tim "K9" Kunzweiler, President

I apologize. The entire November/December 2014 Peacekeepers edition is being published late due to nothing more than my poor planning (though I'd have preferred to be able to tell a sordid tale about paralyzing winter storms or befuddling computer keyboard failures...). In consequence, this article is actually going to be a retrospective.

The U.S.A.'s Thanksgiving and our world's Christmas 2014 are already matters associated with our past. If I'd been more timely in drafting this article I'm sure I would've been speaking to you in terms of *future hopes* for those parts of our traditions. I'll still speak of hope—but this hope will be more current in nature.

I hope you are already blessed by special memories of your respective recent celebrations. I hope others have been blessed by their associations with you.

No matter where we find ourselves, sacred celebrations can change our focus—perhaps even change us. They can also change the ones around us.

A day with a shared meal, centered on fellowship and giving thanks, can give us a greater appreciation for all we've been blessed with. Pausing to give thanks to the source of all our blessings is right and good. It should bring us joy. Even so, within that very acknowledgment we may realize the joy we feel—at having plenty—is not evidenced everywhere in our world. As disciples of Christ, we may use that reminder to share our



abundance—so that others may also be blessed. This, by its very nature, is Christ-like.

A day recalling the birth of our Redeemer, the greatest gift of all, may cause us to want to bless others with special gifts, tokens of our own efforts at selfless love. We take the traditions of our youth and of our families and we grow them into our own. New generations are taught about the Lord and their relationships to His creation. As each one learns the old, old story, they can join the efforts that can better shape this creation to honor its Creator and His vision for it.

Within our own circles, we enjoyed these recent holidays. We visited my mother—who likely did not even recall that visit because of the condition she has been in lately. Still we shared time with her and simply stroked her forehead and offered words of love. We celebrated with other church friends, military associates and neighbors. Some knew the Lord, some did not. However, by our sharing, we hope that each one felt something akin to the love that is offered so freely by the God of all. We are, after all, His hands and feet, His very face to the world.

I ask for this blessing: that the Spirit of hope will guide us in all our steps ahead. May we all strive to be the blessings that this world continues to need. After all, we are called to represent hope to our Creator's world.

In Christ – Victory! May God bless all Peacekeepers.

Tim "K9" Kunzweiler, President.

OTHER NEWS AND NOTES

World Church Web Site. Have you checked out the newest rendition of our Community of Christ web site (<http://www.cofchrist.org/>)? The Communications team has done a wonderful job in crafting the site a format that should appeal to both church members and seekers. If you happen to be wondering it's still easy to find this Association - it is!: Mouse-over "Connect" click on "Ministries, Services, Teams, and Affiliates" and on the resulting page, under "C" click on "Community of Christ Association for Ministry to Military Personnel." Note that Associations are currently color coded in light green. On the same "Ministries, Services, Teams, and Affiliates" page see also the "Ministry to the Military" page. It currently highlights Chaplain Ministries (under fellow Peacekeeper David Anderson).

Peacekeepers Web Site. As you might imagine, when Community of Christ updated the denomination's web site that resulted in changes to some of the page addresses we link to. We've made an effort to ensure the Peacekeeper site (<http://www.cofchristpeacekeepers.org/>) has been updated accordingly. Please let us know if you spot something we've missed! Come to think of it, what else would you like to see on the Association's web site?

In The News. The church is making a great effort at keeping us informed of happenings on its web site at <http://www.cofchrist.org/official-announcements>. You may be blessed (for example) to hear about progress with some of the most recent World Conference Resolutions.

Where are you? It has been some time since we've heard from our active duty military members. I recall receiving earlier versions of this newsletter while I was on active duty and hearing from others about their current assignments and ministry or fellowship activities. It was actually a good resource for staying connected with other members I knew. Do you have a Gospel story to tell, or simply an interesting anecdote from your military or other experiences? Let us hear from you. The best examples in a newsletter like this are stories for and about you — the reason for this ministry!

Living by example. In this season we may find a number of organizations doing good things for the military. Some organizations also help remember the fallen. For your consideration a U.S. example: Wreaths Across America (<http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/>). This organization indicates: "Our mission, Remember, Honor, Teach, is carried out in part by coordinating wreath laying ceremonies a specified Saturday in December at Arlington, as well as veterans' cemeteries and other locations in all 50 states, ceremonies at sea, and 24 national cemeteries on foreign soil."



Photo: Representative members of the armed forces by the service wreaths (NPS Public Domain)

Kid's Stuff by Mary Yocum

I can't believe it's the New Year. Dominic turned nine years old on December 13th, and Ian turns three on January 26th.



One of Ian's favorite things to say now is actually his imitation of Grandpa Don's phone. Don has his phone set up to with different rings for different people's calls. Anyone not on his family list rings as a little voice saying "Let me out, I'm stuck in your pocket."

Ian repeats this over and over, laughing at himself. I think he knows by now how cute he is.

Not long ago he became a bit frustrated with me. I kept falling asleep while he watched his morning shows. He kept shaking my shoulder and

saying, “Wake up Gamma, wake up”! After three or four tries to wake me up, he climbed up on top of me and started snoring. Three or four snores into this he sat up and said, “Wake up”! Then looking me in the eye he said, “NO MORE SLEEP”!

Dominic just had a karate tournament. He did kata and sparring. Sometimes he loses his focus and has to be reminded to pay attention, but he is such a sweet boy, with such a loving spirit.

Our boys are a great joy to us and made this season even more meaningful.

One of my greatest blessings was having both boys with me during the school Christmas break. We played games, went out and about, bought boots for them, and got haircuts. It’s the joy of these little normal things that reminds me how very blessed we are.

Best wishes to all of you and yours. I hope your holidays were filled with peace and comfort from the great peacemaker Himself.

“Here I Am” by Lu Mountenay, Independence, Missouri, USA

There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed ... God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Then (God) said, “Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” ... Moses said to God, “If I come to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?’ God said to Moses, “I am who I am.”

—Exodus 3: 2, 4 – 5, 13 – 14, NRSV adapted



Entering the Worshiper’s Path at the Temple in Independence, Missouri, one of the first artworks is a three-layered tapestry of the burning bush. The

artist, Linda Henke, entitled it, “I Will Be Wo I Will Be.” As you would expect, she made it with bright oranges and reds, warm and hot colors overlaying the strong black silhouette of the bush, which stands firmly, unconsumed by the flame.

Before Linda created this work of art, she came to see the place where it would hang. She immediately took off her shoes in reverence of the place she sensed as holy. She looks back on her work today and shares this:

One of my favorite scripture texts, the Exodus 3 account of Moses’ encounter with God in the burniiiiing bush, inspired this design. In response to Moses’ inquiry about how God wishes to be known, God responds in what typically is translated as “I Am Who I Am.” I, however, prefer the Hebrew translation of “I Will Be Who I Will Be.” For me, the difference between the two is significant and powerful. Humankind will not limit God by its perceptions of who God was, is, or yet shall be. God’s identity will be determined by the endless possibilities of the divine will as it unfolds over time. The quest is to discern how God is seeking to be known in our world.

Shortly after hanging the tapestry at the path’s entrance, a gathering of international leaders held a worship service in the Temple Sanctuary. As the first worshipers entered the path, they responded to the image of the burning bush by spontaneously removing their shoes. They left their shoes at the foot of the path, and everyone who followed that day did the same.

How do we respond when we sense we are in sacred space or on holy ground? When God reveals God’s self to you, will you answer, “Here I Am?”

Quote Corner

- ❖ The soul should always stand ajar, ready to welcome the ecstatic experience.
—Emily Dickinson
- ❖ Vision that is rooted in values is the only vision that will last.
—Dave Ramsey in *More Than Enough*
- ❖ Join the great company of those who make the barren places of life fruitful with kindness.
—Helen Keller

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 Association membership; those dues are **\$10.00/yr, due in April (multi-year discounts available)**. Archive newsletters are also available on our Web site: <http://www.cofchristpeacekeepers.org/>

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