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Early Winter 2005 Edition

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Mike's Meanderings

I read about a family that sets up their little nativity scene and leaves the manger empty awaiting the birth of Jesus. Throughout Advent, family members do good deeds, and for each good deed a piece of hay is placed in the manger. The more good deeds, the more hay. And the more hay, the more ready the stable is to receive Jesus.

I thought the practice was delightful, but I mentioned it to a friend who had quite a different reaction. He snorted, "What a perfect way to turn Christmas into a season of good works instead of a time of grace!"

Maybe my friend is right. We like to be in control rather than in need. We love knowing—or pretending—that we have earned our own way in life. Most of us are more comfortable giving than receiving. Don't misunderstand. Acts of kindness, deeds of helpfulness, and gestures of charity are always fitting, no matter what season. I'm glad Christmas nudges us to do a little extra for those in need.

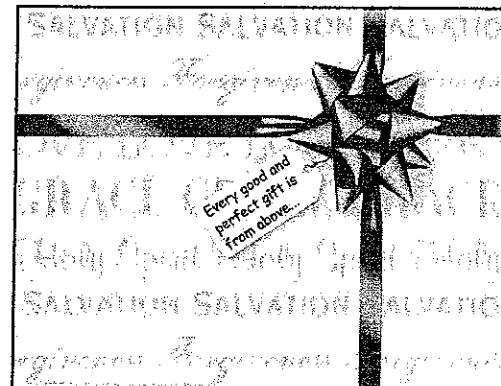
But Christmas isn't about our goodness. It isn't about working harder or earning God's favor. I love the spiritual disciplines of Advent, but let's not kid ourselves that we can ever be entirely ready or worthy for the coming of Jesus. We can't do enough good deeds or pile up enough hay to deserve this gift from heaven.

That's the whole point of Christmas—the great gift of Jesus Christ sent from God. A gift disarms us because a true gift is always unearned and unmerited. A gift strips away our pretensions and renders our hard work irrelevant. When Christmas arrives, we can only say Thank You. Christmas is grace pure and simple, and nothing pleases God more than our acceptance of that grace.

Feel like doing some good deeds today? Go for it! But remember that whatever you do or don't do today, whether or not you measure up to your own expectations, God already loves you and has sent Christ to prove it. You can bask in God's love and you can spread it around, but nothing you do can ever add to it.

Peace!

—Mike



Christmas Growth by Steve Clark

Growth - Evangelism - Inviting - Sharing. These are words that seem to send shivers to even long-time Christians.

Before we kept time God had a gift that he wanted to share with the world. He led his creation through thousands of years to show us just how special this gift is. Just over 2000 years ago God gave the first Christmas gift. Jesus the Son of God! This is the Jesus who would take our punishment and in obedience, defeat, and death.

Jesus, the first earthly Christian evangelist, started His church, sharing His message through the years with every man, woman and child who listened. Enlisting people of all walks of life, God wants us to continue spreading the "Good News", entrusting this task to those of us who know Jesus as Savior and Lord, the Church of today.

We (God's Church) are spread throughout the world, but need to remember that those of us at CSPC still have an important role in continuing what Jesus started, right here where we live!

Here we are, Christmas 2005, heading into a new year and we still have something special to share with our neighbors, family, co-workers and friends.

Your Growth Committee is working on helping each of us realize how special our church is and how we can learn to share with others.

Here are some ways the Growth Committee plans to implement God's word:

- 1- Our efforts will center on the people of CSPC, not just our Pastor or programs.
- 2- We are planning a unique survey to gather information about our congregation and its member's beliefs to create a portrait of who we are.
- 3- We will invite others to compare themselves via website or on paper, and come visit to learn more about us.
- 4- We will ask for prayers of support for our work remaining open to ideas and suggestions.
- 5- We will share information and suggestions

with our church members that will allow anyone to invite, or share with other people.

Take a minute to remember that you have the most special gift in history to share. God's word says it this way, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."



God gave us the first Christmas gift, now it is up to us to share the most special gift the world has ever known.

Sunday School Offers Benefits For All by Carol Buckhout

Sunday School is a staple in the list of church activities. We all know about Sunday School, so it's not really "news" for the newsletter, right? But, even though the program is familiar, it's worth thinking about it. What is Sunday School?

First of all, Sunday School is Christian education. It's a time set aside for learning, a process that continues all our lives. That's why there are Sunday School classes at CSPC for all ages. It's not just for kids.

Yet, Sunday School offers kids early experiences in the life of our church family. Yes, there are Bible stories, and then Bible study and lessons on church history. And that's the focus, even when games, crafts and other learning activities get noisy or seem silly.

Sunday School is also a small group of Christians learning together, so classes offer fellowship, support of each other, prayer by and for one another, and a place to develop relationships within the congregation. These elements are a common thread.

IHN Offers Opportunity For CSPC To Serve Community

The words "community service" are words we see and hear a lot but how can we as individuals and as a church put these words to good use? We have all made charitable contributions to different causes such as hurricane and tsunami relief and have placed a few dollars in the Salvation Army bucket during Christmas, but we know there are other ways to help people in need. A great way to reach out to others is by offering a few hours of our time on a Wednesday at the Interfaith Hospitality Network at St. Agnes Church in Ft. Wright. IHN of Northern Kentucky provides emergency shelter, meals, and assistance to families without homes through a local network of shelters. IHN also provides a family day center to assist families with housing, employment and other resources.



Carol and Dan Points arrive early in the day to prepare for the guests. Housekeeping duties include dishwashing, stripping and making host beds and cleaning dining and living room areas. The Points have volunteered at IHN for the past 6 years. Carol enjoys the "hands-on" approach in helping families in need.



Dawn Miller and Nancy Reed prepare for the arrival of the guests at dinner time. The meal is provided by CSPC volunteers and is transported from CSPC to St. Agnes. A sign-up sheet is located in the Narthex at CSPC if you would like to provide a covered dish, meat, drinks, or dessert.

CSPC is a supporting church of IHN. Volunteers are needed on IHN night which occurs on a Wednesday every 9-10 weeks. CSPC members help by serving as housekeepers, dinner hosts, cooks, activity hosts, and even helping children with homework. There are volunteers from CSPC who regularly offer time who enjoy the opportunity of helping others as well as the comradery between other CSPC church members.

How can we help?? Announcements will be made in the church bulletin and a sign-up sheet will be posted in the Narthex. Dawn Miller and Stephanie Boyd also provide information such as directions to St. Agnes, and instructions for each duty which can also be found on the church website at www.espchurch.net.

Dawn and Stephanie are always happy to answer any questions concerning IHN.



Rae King and Nancy Reed often team together for IHN night. Rae loves interacting with the children and claims that Nancy is wonderful with fellowship of the adult guests.

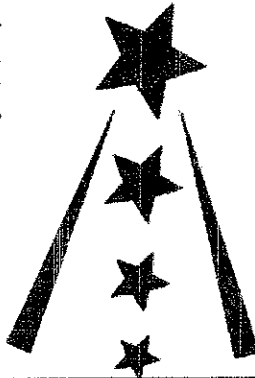


Carol Buckhout serves as activity hostess. The Buckhouts often volunteer together as a family and enjoy this time together as they help other families in need.

Make the words "community service" a reality in your life by volunteering a few hours of your time every two months at IHN night with other CSPC volunteers. The rewards will exceed your expectations and you will find yourself a terrific way to help others who will benefit greatly through the loving help of other fellow Christians.

Reaching Out To Help Others by Leslie Marquardt

On Tuesday, January 17th, CSPC will host a meal for the STARS meeting (a free Grief Support Program for Kids.) The STARS program helps children ages 5 through 17 deal with the death of a loved one by helping young people to grieve and to cope with loss, as well as helping them to find strength and joy again. The program,



CSPC will host a pizza meal for the STARS program January 17. Donations Needed!!

coordinated through St. Elizabeth Hospice Program and Linnemann Funeral Homes, meets twice a month at 6:30 pm. at the Gloria Dei Church in Crestview Hills with trained facilitators and volunteers. This program includes children and their caretakers and can range in size from 60 to 80 participants. (www.starsforchildren.com) To host this meal, we need your help! If you can donate money

toward the meal (pizza and salad), please place a few dollars in the envelopes marked STARS Grief Support Meal and place in the offering plates. (We will distribute the envelopes in the worship bulletins after Christmas.) If you can prepare/donate a dessert for the meal (cookies, etc.) or your time to help serve the meal, please sign the sheet in the Gathering Room or contact Leslie Marquardt (586-2747.) Thank you for helping young ones in their journey of understanding and healing.

Recipes Wanted For CSPC Cookbook

The Mission Committee is collecting new recipes to update the CSPC Cookbook which began in the mid-1960's and revised in 1990. This cookbook will also serve as a much-needed fundraiser for the Mission Committee.



Volunteers are also needed to enter hand-written recipes in Word format.

To submit your favourite recipe, please e-mail to cspc@cspchurch.net or place in the Mission Committee or Deacon mailbox located in the church office.

Stay tuned to the church bulletin for more details...

Nominating Committee Seeks Candidates For Vacancies by Kim Martin

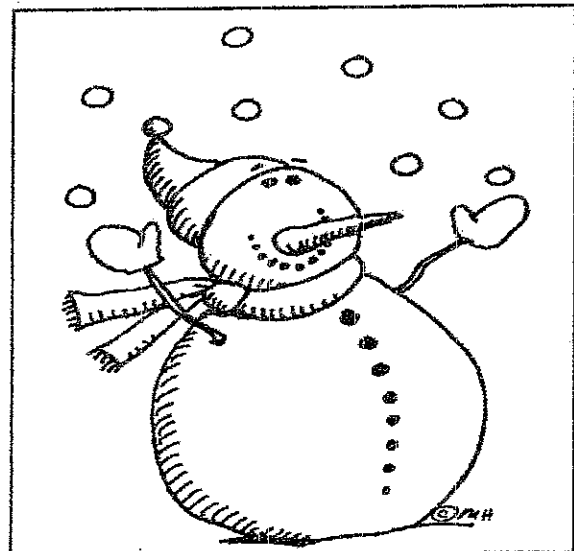
The nominating committee will begin the process of selecting candidates for upcoming vacancies for Elders, Deacons, and committee heads. If you would like to submit the name of a well qualified candidate, please forward the name to your nominating committee members. Those persons serving on the nominating committee this year are: Kim Martin, Steve Thrasher, Carol Points, Billie Grant, Jerry Hinners, Valerie Pence, and Becky Morrison.

Fellowship News

The adult Christmas party was held December 10th at the home of Betty and Ernie Elliott. The dinner was a catered affair enjoyed by approximately 35 CSFC adults who were wined and dined. Special thanks go to Alan and Kathy Vicory, Ruth Crowder (mother of Kathy), and Jeannie Harr(friend of Kathy), and of course Betty and Ernie Elliot

The next fellowship event will be held in mid-February which may include a Chili cook-off and possibly a silent auction. More details will soon become available.

-Kim Martin



"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire"

A Movie Review by Monica Pence

"Everything's going to change now, isn't it?" Oh, yes. Harry Potter's fourth year at Hogwarts is the pivotal point for the whole series. Why? Voldemort is back, but not just as a parasite or a memory. He's back in his original body, more powerful than ever. Witnessing this rebirth is just one of the many visual delights of the fourth Harry Potter movie installment, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*.

Because of my love for the books, I am a big critic of the movies. Yet, I believe that this Harry Potter movie outdid the others by far. They did cut out Mrs. Weasley, the Dursleys, and S.P.E.W., but overall, director Mike Newell (*Four Weddings and a Funeral*) did a good job fitting a several hundred-page book into two and a half hours.

The movie may not be for younger children, however, because many scenes are very dark, seeing as every book gets darker. As Maddie Weiner so eloquently puts it, "Lots of scenes were totally intense!" I had expected the First Task to not be very good onscreen, with a really animated-looking dragon, but instead it turned out to be an excel-

lent example of a totally intense scene, not to mention my favorite of the tasks in the movie.



Harry walks into the ring, everything is silent, and it seems as if the dragon isn't there. Then, suddenly the brilliantly done Horn-tail jumps out with a crash and nearly turns Harry into a piece of fried bacon with a pillar of fire-breath. I even let out a squeaky scream in the theater at this part. This scene was nothing compared to the ending scenes in the graveyard, however. Those scenes are totally, *totally* intense. Ralph Fiennes is an amazing Lord Voldemort.

Not everything is dark and sinister, though. I actually found this movie to be very funny. Neville has some hilarious scenes, and the Yule Ball makes for a lot of funny moments between the girls

and guys. Also, I busted a gut during the famous bath scene.

My only complaints would be that Dumbledore is too rough, there is no yelling of "Constant vigilance", and Victor Krum has a buzz cut. I found that Michael Gambon's Dumbledore in the movie does not possess the calm, gentle disposition that Dumbledore has in the books. As Pastor Mike puts it, "I loved Richard Harris (Dumbledore in movies one and two) in that role, and I miss his combination of seriousness and self-deprecation." Alan Rickman is, however, the perfect Professor Snape, as always. I really hope he stays for the sixth movie...

Overall, the movie was above and beyond my expectations. Pastor Mike comments, "I think it is the best movie yet in the series. The sweeping, panoramic scenes worked so well—a feast for the eyes!" And, as always, the breath-taking scenery of Glencoe, Scotland was a fantastic backdrop for all the magical happenings at Hogwarts. Maddie Weiner puts it to the point with an excessive, but honest amount of exclamation marks: "the movie was G-R-E-A-T!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

Bret Olson Seeks Help With Hurricane Relief

Happy Advent! For those who don't know me I attend CSPC when in town between adventures. I am participating in Americorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps), a ten month service program with great educational benefits that are provided upon completion. Presently I am working at the Mississippi Hurricane Recovery Hotline answering phones. We get a lot of calls from people still in need. Despite it being three months after the storm we still have a very high call volume.

At the hotline we have an "adopt-a-stuff" center. They match organizations that want to adopt-a-family; school, church, city, whatever. We also have a department that matches peoples' donations with people in need and a volunteer department that places volunteers where they are needed.

Here is where you come in if you so choose:

If your organization, church, family, club, etc (anyone you happen to be involved with) can help directly by participating in the adopt-a-stuff program (especially around the Holidays) you can call the **Mississippi Hurricane Recovery Hotline** at 1-866-230-8903 or email me at s05.bolson@wittenberg.edu and I will get your information to the right people.

Also, if anyone has connections with the shipping or trucking industries please call us. One of the biggest problems is finding transportation for getting donations down to the Gulf.

If you or your group want to volunteer over winter break or even spring break call the hotline and the volunteer department can get you in contact with many organizations that are in need of volunteers.

The need is still very great. I spent this past Sunday down in Gulfport, MS helping to gut a woman's home. She hadn't been able to enter her house of 15 years for three months. She is living in a trailer provided by FEMA. The inside of her house looked like a blender with warped floors, refrigerators, washers, couches, pictures, everything just muddy and molding. She is one of the lucky ones because she can salvage some things.

The rubble in many neighborhoods is still 5-6 feet tall as a result of the estimated 25-27 foot storm surge that hit the Gulf Coast. Words are not enough to express what I saw and what I have experienced in the call center. Nevertheless, there is still work to be done. Talk to your organizations and families and if you think you can help in anyway or call the hotline (again 1-866-230-8903).

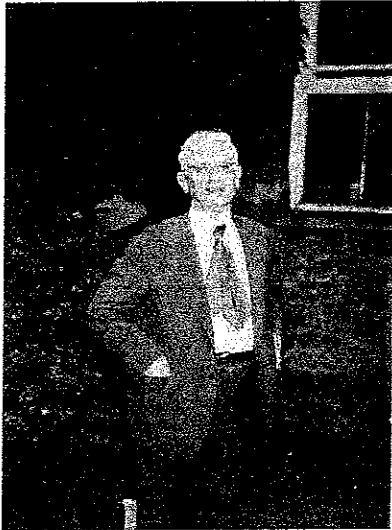
Peace to you all,
Bret

Thank You From Chris Boyd

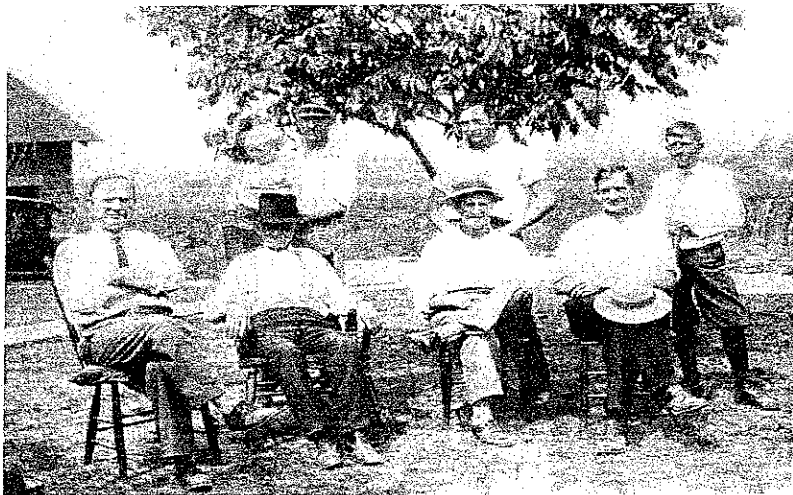
Chris Boyd offers a big "Thank You" to the congregation for all the care packages, cards and prayers he has received. He wishes everyone a safe and Merry Christmas. You may continue to write to Chris at:

SPC Boyd, Christopher
Aco STB, 1BCT, 101 ABN
OIF 4 (FOB Warrior)
APO AE 09335

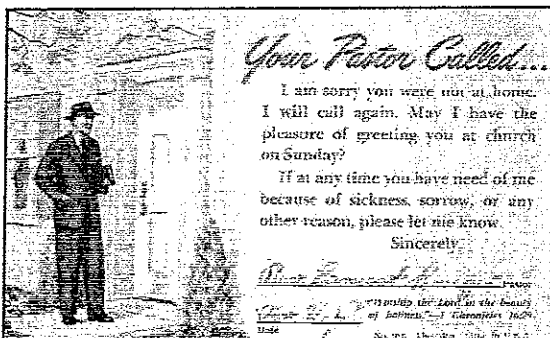
Pieces of Our Past



Our First Pastor, The Rev. Charles E. Diehl, installed Jan. 20, 1901 This picture was actually taken at CSPC in 1948, Diehl was 76 at the time Notice his hat in the bush behind him.



June 12, 1935 (Front row) The Rev. A.M. Stout, Joseph Eubanks (CSPC Charter Member), Charles Thirs, George Eubanks. (Back row) Baby George Eubanks, Carl Eubanks, Joe Eubanks, Franklin Hines.



Pastor Earnie Krueger's calling card dated April 26, 1958.

PASTOR INJURED

Crescent Springs Clergyman

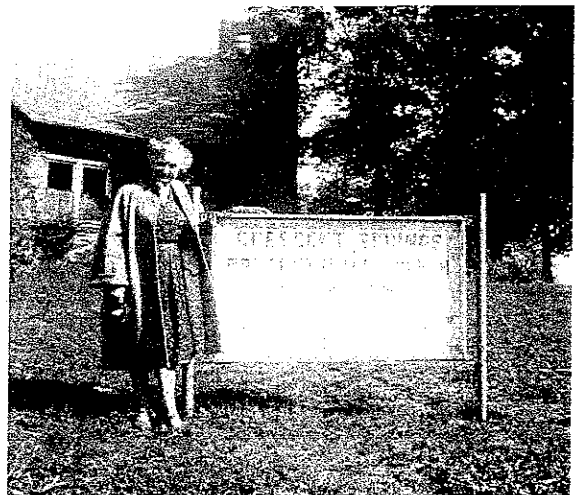
Hit by Train

Rev. Noah A. Warren, pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Crescent Springs, was recovering Tuesday from several painful injuries that he received shortly after noon Monday when his auto was struck by a Cincinnati Southern R.R. train at the Beechwood crossing one mile from Crescent Springs.

The auto was demolished and how Rev. Warren escaped being killed is a mystery. The pastor was able to crawl from the wreckage and climb into the car of a passing motorist who took him to the Booth Memorial Hospital, Covington.

Hospital attaches say that Rev. Warren sustained several cuts about the face, hands and body, but that his condition is not serious. The minister stated that he did not hear the approach of the train.

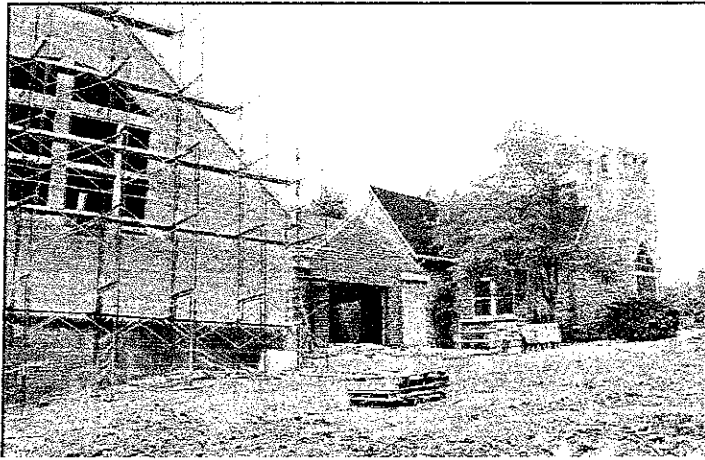
The Kentucky Post, November 6, 1928.



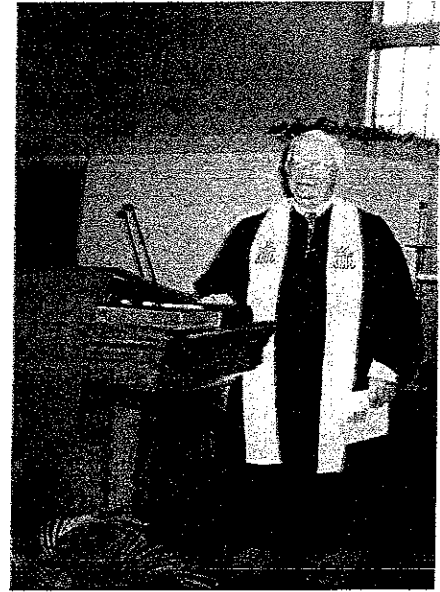
A Sign of the Times: This photograph was taken October 25, 1955.



The CSPC Choir of 1968 proudly displays it's new robes. Front row: Mary Jane Smith, Evelyn Ellis, Elmira Reinhardt Scott, Kay Scott, Beverly Maegly Glen. Middle row: Shirley Krueger, Frieda Glaser, Alice Thirs, Aileen Thirs, Carolyn Harding, Ruth Schweitzer. Back row: Rev. Earnie Krueger, Robert Scott, Frank Burdick, Thornton Lynch, Bill Glaser.



A new sanctuary and a fellowship hall in the basement of CSPC were constructed in the mid-1990's. The dedication service was held on Pentecost Sunday, 1996.



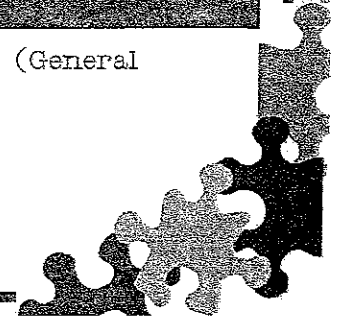
Déjà vu?? Well, sort of... Former CSPC Pastor Earnie Krueger filled in at the pulpit several months ago to the delight of the congregation. Following the service, Pastor Earnie admitted he enjoyed preaching again, but opts for the pleasures of retired life



CSPC Sack Race 1951 (Women of the Church Picnic)

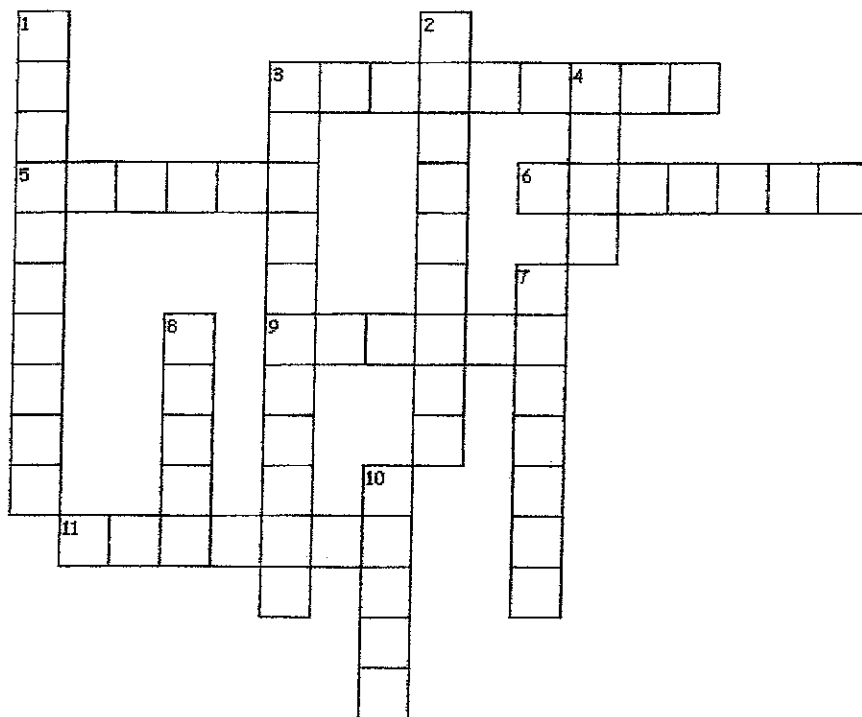


CSPC Sack Race 2004 (General Church Picnic)



Calvin's Clues

A classic collection of conundrums for the entire clan.



DOWN:

1. CSPC high school youth group
2. City which Paul was arrested (Acts 28:17)
3. CSPC Clerk of Session
4. Isaac's favourite twin (Genesis 25:25,28)
7. Previous pastor Earnest _____
8. CSPC's first minister installed in 1901
10. Walked on water to reach Jesus (Matthew 14:29-30)

ACROSS:

3. H. Michael Brewer: "Who Needs A _____?"
5. CSPC organist
6. This area leads to the sanctuary
9. CE Committee head
11. The architecture of CSPC forms a _____ cross.

Church Search

N R K Y G I H G S J S D Q Z P M S Q F C
 O B E R O T S A P G T G G K F V X L J X
 L Y T C X N H S N C N L P D Q V U Z A D
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Advent	Deacons	Handbells	Praise Band
Bullriders	Elders	Meanderings	Softball
Clarion	Flames	Pastor	
CSPC	Goldsparks	Piecemakers	

Help the Purple Monkey find his guitar!!

