



The Clarion



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Between the Times

March 2009

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Spending time considering what Jesus had to do to become our Savior

What shall we do about Lent? It's a season that always shows up about this time of year – depending upon the date of Easter. It always begins on Ash Wednesday and lasts through the day before Easter. Our Roman Catholic friends seem to know what they're doing during Lent, but Protestants fumble around in it. Some churches ignore it altogether. Presbyterians usually have some observance on Ash Wednesday, and perhaps some events on the following Wednesdays in Lent. Some churches do ashes. Apparently this church has done ashes in the past. Personally, I don't do ashes. The Directory for Worship is silent about ashes. I don't feel quite so drawn to that particular outward act. But, what are we supposed to do on Ash Wednesday and during Lent?

It's not so much *what* we do as long as we know *why* we're doing it. There is definitely a why about Lent, and the what can follow along on its own. The why of Lent is all about preparation. Lent is an extended time of preparation, and it is inspired by the Temptation of the Lord in the Wilderness after his Baptism and before he began his ministry. The First Sunday of Lent always includes one of the Gospel accounts of that event, and it serves to focus everything that follows.

We prepare for our celebration of Easter. I think that's important because I am always afraid that the Church regards Easter too lightly. It seems to me that there's a greater danger of missing the point of Easter than there is of over commercializing Christmas. Of all things in the world, Christians must not miss the point of Easter. That's a fatal error.

It anticipates spring time, new beginnings,

and rebirth. Bunnies, Easter eggs, candy, new clothes, bonnets, and parades are "extras" that have been borrowed from pagan traditions over the years and "Christianized." That's really all right, as long as it doesn't become an obsession to the exclusion of the main point. As it is at Christmas, so also at Easter the main point is Jesus Christ. But, at Easter the primary point is the discovery of who Jesus really is and how he came to be our Savior.

So, during Lent, we spend time – as much time as possible, actually – considering what Jesus needed to do to become our Savior. It was not an easy matter for him. It was incredibly difficult. It went far beyond anything any other human being would ever be willing or able to do. It was something that only Jesus could do. But, the most amazing thing about it all is that Jesus made an unimaginable sacrifice for ordinary, everyday, unworthy and ungrateful people like you and like me. That's the point that must smack us squarely between the eyes if we are to be able to celebrate Easter as God intends that we should.

We allow ourselves to feel entirely too important. We actually come to the place where we believe that God somehow owes us salvation. Like the culture which surrounds us, we struggle with the notion that it's all about us. We've got an inalienable right to every good thing we can imagine, salvation included. But, that's not true. Salvation and fellowship in Christ's family, the Church, is God's greatest gift to those who are unworthy. Hopefully, during Lent, we discover more about that miraculous truth and grow nearer to our Savior... ***Between the Times.***

--FHS

Required Training for IHN Volunteers

CSPC will host a training session April 2 about prevention of sexual misconduct. The program is sponsored by the Diocese of Covington.

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Covington now requires all volunteers at any of their facilities to participate in this training program. This means that any member of CSPC who wishes to continue as an IHN volunteer at St. Agnes must complete the training.

St. Agnes will allow CSPC members to work at IHN March 18 without the training, but that will be the last session for untrained volunteers.

Session voted to host the two-hour training program on April 2 to provide a convenient way for IHN volunteers to obtain the training. It is free to all who attend. There are two other sessions scheduled by the Diocese for April at other Northern Kentucky locations. Session also encourages any member who works with our children or youth to take advantage of this training.

The Cincinnati Presbytery has a standing policy that states the need for all church leaders and volunteers to maintain integrity in their relationships. The Presbytery is also offering a day-long session for sexual misconduct prevention training on April 23; registration is available at www.prebyteryofcincinnati.org and the fee is \$25.

IHN Night—March 18

CSPC will be the dinner and activity host at St. Agnes Wednesday, March 18. Look for the sign up sheet to cook one of the dishes, serve the meal, lead evening activities or provide housekeeping help.

Our congregation's support of the IHN program is an important part of our Mission efforts.

Contact Brad Neal for more information.

Easter Egg Hunt

The Fellowship committee is collecting candy and prizes for the CSPC Easter egg hunt scheduled for April 11. Please place your donations in the box in the Narthex.

More Help Wanted—Cleaning CSPC

The Building and Grounds Committee is looking for individuals and families to help clean the church building.

This work can be done at your convenience during the week. The deadline is having the building clean and ready to welcome CSPC members and visitors on Sunday morning.

Sharing the chores would be a good way to get to know another church member as you work side by side.

Session is asking the congregation to take on cleaning tasks after terminating the contract for cleaning services. The cost savings will help offset the budget shortfall.

A sign up sheet with a list of duties is available in the Gathering Room. Contact Building and Grounds chair Tim Reed with questions.

Outdoor Clean-up Day—April 4

With spring on the way, there is much work to be done outdoors on our church grounds. More helpers mean less work for all, so mark the date.

Softball Sign-Ups

Spring also means that softball season is on its way. CSPC's men's softball team provides fun and fellowship for both players and spectators. A sign-up sheet will soon be in the Gathering Room. Contact player/coach Tim Reed with questions.

VBS—Help Wanted!

The Christian Education committee has started planning for this summer's Vacation Bible School and needs a general chair person to coordinate the project.

Several volunteers have stepped forward already, so the general chair will have plenty of help.

Last year's VBS provided a wonderful experience for the children of our church and community, and we want this summer's program to continue that trend.

VBS volunteers have fun along with the kids, so contact a member of the CE committee and get involved.

Grocery Rewards Program

You can earn money for CSPC's capital campaign every time you shop for groceries. Register your Remke's preferred customer card with CSPC and we earn 1%.

Purchase a reusable Kroger gift card that's linked to CSPC, use it to pay for your groceries, and CSPC earns 4% of each grocery transaction. Since 1998, we've earned \$20,600.

See Ginny Clark for details or to purchase a Kroger gift card.

Call for Artists - Help Get the Word Out

Entries are now being taken for SpringFling 09. Enter today and encourage your friends to enter. For more entry rules and fees, go to www.cspchurch.net/springfling or email springfling@cspchurch.net.

February Session Notes

At its stated meeting February 17, Session took the following action:

- Approved the "Spring Fling" juried arts and crafts show at CSPC for May 17;
- Approved Kara Olsen as suitable for appointment to PCUSA mission service;
- Approved CSPC's annual report to Presbytery;
- Agreed to host Sexual Misconduct Prevention Training April 2 for all IHN volunteers at St. Agnes (see related article above);
- Renewed the interim contract with Rev. Floyd Starr with annual cost of living increase of 2% (\$858.50 for the remainder of the year);
- Terminated the contract with Donna Clark for cleaning services; and
- Reduced the hours of the church secretary from 20 hours weekly to 16.