

"THE WEST SIDE STORY"

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY
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(Disciples of Christ)
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"They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus." (Luke 24:2-3)

I bet you didn't know I once worked as a bunny, did you? No, not one of Hugh Hefner's Playboy bunnies! I was an Easter bunny for the Downtown Merchants' Association and in the weeks before Easter I walked – rather, I hopped – up and down High Street in a bunny suit handing out brightly-wrapped candy eggs. It wasn't a bad job. Kids love the Easter Bunny (except for that one little boy who always ran around behind me to pull my tail).

The Easter Bunny is appealing to kids. He isn't confrontational. He doesn't keep lists of who has been "naughty or nice," and he (or she!) is soft and huggable, and speechless (obviously this was hard for me). Children eagerly flock to the sides of mall Easter bunnies while sitting on Santa's lap is often a terrifying experience for small children. Hugging the Easter Bunny, after all, is a guaranteed "warm fuzzy."

All the strange and seemingly nonsensical (to adults) traditions that go along with the Easter Bunny are kept alive and reinvented each year by children. How many households without children color eggs and hide nests around their living rooms? How many households with children would color eggs and hide nests if children didn't insist on these messy and bothersome rituals?

The Easter Bunny's appeal is illogical, while Santa on the other hand, fits neatly into adult-centered systems of rewards and punishments:

be nice -- get presents; be naughty -- get nothing. And Santa Claus has a job -- he employs elves to work for him, crafting all those gifts we receive. Santa is a successful guy. Adults can relate to Santa.

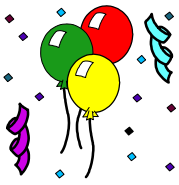
How different is the Easter Bunny! He comes to children without a set policy for behavior. His egg tokens are left everywhere -- easily accessible to even the smallest child or the worst seeker. The mute Easter Bunny doesn't appear to espouse any particular system for punishments and rewards, and his symbols don't seem to make any sense. And, besides, rabbits don't lay eggs!

But perhaps we ought to take a cue from our kids. The empty tomb on Easter morning doesn't make sense either. It presents Christians with a vision that has much more in common with the illogical Easter Bunny than the easily comprehensible Santa Claus. The abandoned burial site is itself mute -- a visual testimony to the power of life over death. Like the Easter Bunny's ridiculous basket of eggs, the very place that surely seems to be a dead end -- Jesus' tomb -- suddenly becomes the symbol of birth and new life. The Christian life is, in a sense, one long Easter egg hunt!

Alleluia, Christ is risen! The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!

Blessings and Happy Easter, Jane

(Editor's note: Rev. Jane has been invited to be the speaker at the City of Portsmouth's service in honor of the National Day of Prayer on May 6, 2004. What an honor for West Side CC!)



MEMBERSHIP

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! We appreciate all the support this committee received

the weekend of March 12-14, 2004. People opened up their homes to the Creative Ministries Team members who came and served us that weekend. Thirty youth and adults from West Side and West End Methodist attended the lock-in Friday night. The Fellowship Center was packed with people and good food on Saturday night for the potluck supper and Praise Service that followed. It was an awesome weekend and everyone at West Side was responsible for the success. Thank you, also, for your generosity in giving; the love offering for the Summer Missions Project was \$387.00.

On April 21, 2004, there will be a **POTLUCK SUPPER** at 6:30 p.m. Remember to bring two dishes to share and invite a friend to come with you.

There will be a Praise Service after the dinner. The theme will be "We are called to be stewards of the earth." There will be music, both contemporary and old favorites, as well as a time to thank God and to lift prayer concerns up to Him. If you are interested in participating in the service through special music, praying, or reading scripture, please give Fran or Cheryl a call. Come out and enjoy an evening of food and fellowship.

Fran and Cheryl



MARY'S WELLNESS CORNER

"Do you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? You are not your own; you were brought with a price. So glorify God in your body." 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

Think about this scripture and God's charge to each of us. We have been given the precious gift of life and God wants us to enjoy His gift of wholeness.

Sometimes we question this wholeness when illness strikes, but God wants us to do our part too by listening, observing and knowing our body's

signs. God in His expert craftsmanship has created our entire being with warning signs that "rough times" may be ahead. If we heed the signals and be proactive, we may decrease our risk for some diseases.

During April, National Cancer Control Month, lets begin being proactive and listen carefully to our bodies and begin taking those steps that will help decrease some of our cancer risks. The three (3) most important steps in reducing our risk are:

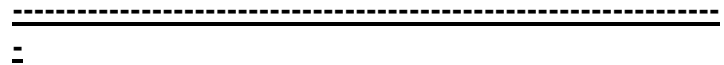
- 1) self-awareness (this includes family history), and self-exams
- 2) screening and early detection by medical professionals and special diagnostic procedures
- 3) finally, you guessed it, diet.

As we listen to our bodies be aware of these cancer warning signs; change in bowel or bladder habits, sores that do not heal, unusual bleeding, thickening or lumps in any area, difficulty swallowing and frequent indigestion, changes in a wart or mole, and nagging cough or hoarseness. Continue to monitor your diet. The National Cancer Institute recommends eating 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Make your diet low in fat and high in fiber and whole grains.

Cancer of the colon is a major health problem in the U.S. It ranks as a leading form of cancer, along with lung and breast cancer. Other common cancers are prostate and skin cancers. Colorectal cancer is one of the most curable forms of cancer, if detected early.

EARLY DETECTION AND PROMPT TREATMENT ARE THE KEYS TO CANCER CONTROL.

Mary W. Peris, Parish Nurse



APPLICATIONS are now being received for the Edna Shearin Scholarship Fund. You must have your request in writing and it must be turned in to the Education Department no later than May 1, 2004.

ARTICLES FOR MAY NEWS-

CWF NEW

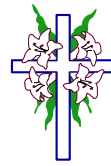
The Lydia Group had 8 present. Offering was \$66. They read 8 books, 2 Disciples, 3 Daily Devotions, 1 craft magazine. Spent 6 hrs. cooking/funeral and had 40 visits/calls/cards.

Rebekah Group had 8 present. Offering was \$55. They read 12 books, 7 Daily Devotions, 3 Disciples, 5 Regional Papers, 2 teaching and 1 leading magazines, and made 18 calls. April meeting is with Elnora Phillips.

Sarah Circle CWF gathered at Jennifer Larsons on March 4, with 7 members present. Our offering was \$40.00. We continued the study of "The ABC's of the Bible". We will meet with Theresa Honeycutt in April.

OUR SHUT-INS: Hazel Jarvis, Sentara, Greenwood; Leona Brodie, The Heritage, 515 S. Warley, Florence, SC 29501; Mary Mingis, 4107 Heritage Rd., Richmond, 23227; Ruth Blackman, 1 Bon Secours Way, Cedar Pt. #241, (P); Martha Gray, Maryview Care Center, (S); Sandy Cotton, Sentara Nursing Center, 4201 Greenwood Dr., (P); Sylvia Dickens, Autumn Care, 3610 Winchester Dr., (P); Oleta Cook, Pasons Assisted Living, 1005 Deep Creek Blvd., Chesapeake, 23323.

OTHERS ON OUR PRAYER LIST: Norman Dickens; Betty McCrickard; Melanie Grace Hatfield; Beverly Baker Jones; Jack & Pat Patterson.



OBCCM LENTEN SERVICE

The Lenten Service/Luncheons sponsored by the Olive Branch Cooperative Christian Ministries will conclude on Good Friday, April 9 at 12:00 noon. Please bring a food item which will be donated to the food bank. Service is at Simonsdale Presbyterian Church. Call Frances Wells to make a lunch reservations on Monday prior to the service.

HOLLY WEEK ACTIVITIES

*PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP
April 4, 11:00 A.M.*

*MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE
April 8, 7:30 p.m.*

*GOOD FRIDAY OBCCM SERVICE/LUNCHEON
April 9, 12:00 noon*

*24-HOUR PRAYER VIGIL BEGINS
April 9, 12:00 Noon*

*24-HOUR PRAYER VIGIL ENDS
April 10, 12:00 noon*

*EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE/BREAKFAST
April 11, 6:30 a.m.*

*EASTER WORSHIP
April 11, 11:00 a.m.*



APRIL

- 1 Barbara Powell, Diann (Johnston) Borden
- 5 George Pyles
- 6 Brian Hayes
- 7 Sam Wiseman
- 8 Allison Nutting
- 14 Lois Pyles
- 16 Shannon Stidham
- 17 Debra Trevino, Brooke Kays
- 18 Stephen Henderson
- 19 Jerry Thornton, Jr.
- 20 Kelly Wallace
- 21 Nina Milam

LECTIONERY TEXT

April 4: Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 22:14—23:56

April 11: Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24; I Corinthians 15:19-26; John 20:1-18

April: 18: Acts 5:27-32; Psalm 118:14-29; Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31

April 25: Acts 9:1-6 (7-20); Psalm 30; Revelation 5:11-14; John 21:1-19



THANK YOU

We would like to thank each of you for the love and support you shared with us as we mourned

the loss of our father. The flowers you sent were beautiful. Thank you!

The family of Hervy L. Gray, Sr.

On PALM SUNDAY, April 4, the beginning of Holy Week, the congregation is invited and encouraged to gather together

In the Fellowship Center to take part in a procession of the palms into the sanctuary for the 11 o'clock service. Please come and help us celebrate this special day in a special way as we remember Jesus' triumphful entry into Jerusalem!

WANT TO TRULY EXPERIENCE THE WONDER OF EASTER SUNDAY? Don't miss the Maundy Thursday Service! The glory of Easter cannot be fully appreciated without going through the emotions of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Don't get just half of the greatest story every told. Maundy Thursday service, April 8, 7:30 p.m.

OUR EASTER OFFERING GOAL IS \$2,000 AND WILL BE RECEIVED APRIL 4 AND 11.

DISTRICT VIII CWF/DMF SPRING WORKSHOP

Workshop will be held on April 25 at Grafton Christian Church. Registration begins at 2:20 p.m.

WANTED:

West Side Christian Pre-school is looking for a substitute teacher for the remainder of this school year. Please contact Jennifer Larson if interested.

EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday, April 10, 2004

2:00-4:00 p.m.

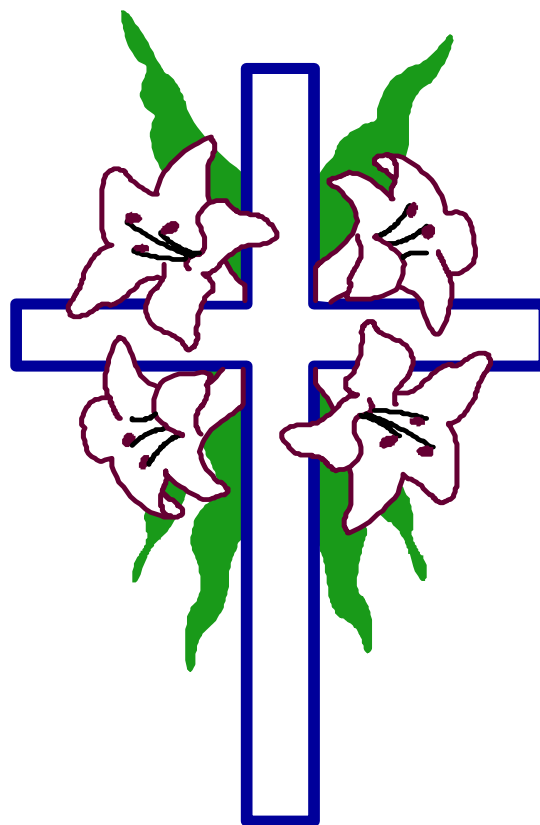


Toddlers through 5th grade may participate. Bring a basket to collect eggs in. Snacks and crafts will follow the egg hunt.

HALLELUIAH!

CHRIST

AROSE



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**Rev. Jane Cherry,
Interim Minister**

