



N A R T H E X

FLOSSMOOR COMMUNITY CHURCH

Where Christ is Central and Diversity is Cherished

February 2006

God's Amazing Grace reflected at FCC

In November the Guatemala Planning Team and the Board of Outreach Ministries invited the congregation to assist in providing full-year scholarships for students at Bezaleel Education Center in Guatemala. We also gave the option of providing K'ekchi/Spanish language Bibles and songbooks for the 154 students. The invitation was accepted in amazing ways.

We exceeded our goal of 25 full-year scholarships and will provide for almost 33 students. The Board of Outreach Ministries matched donated funds which will allow us to send an equal amount in June for the second semester. God is good!

With the help of individuals, families, and our Promised Land offerings, we will provide 156 Bibles for the students this year and some new students next year. We also gave funds to permanently place 156 songbooks in the assembly hall to be used for worship.

There are many "happy hearts" among those who have been to Bezaleel and know the vital ministry of learning and faith development that goes on there. There will be many "happy hearts" at the school as the students and staff are reminded again of the support of Christ's body for their efforts. Pictures of the students will be coming soon and will be on display.

You, too, can go to Guatemala!

The first informational meeting about the Guatemala trip this summer (July 14-22) was a positive one with good response. If you were not able to attend and are considering the possibility of your involvement, there is still time. The application deadline is March 17. Packets are available in the church office. Any of the planning team (Mike Rogers, Ray Laabs, Sharon Madderom, Holly Howard, Brendan Sweeney, Kurt Mason, and Barbara Johnson) is willing to talk with you. Watch the Sunday bulletin for another informational meeting later in February.



The Board of Congregational Life wants YOU for



Flossmoor's First Finest

Fantastically

Fabulous

Far-out

February

Family

Fun

Festival



For FREE!

**Saturday, February 18
6:30 - 9:30 p.m.
In the Community House**

This event is for the CHURCH FAMILY, not just your family! Spend the evening enjoying fellowship and games for all ages of children, youth and adults. Everything from Jenga to Euchre, from Yahtzee to Backgammon. Games will be provided, but bring some of yours to share as well! Snacks and beverages will be provided.



Please sign up between worship services on February 5 & 12 at the Fellowship Time in Fellowship Hall.

Sunday Adult Education Offerings

Encountering God in the Psalms *Where can I go from your Spirit?*

February 5, 12 & 19, 10:30 a.m. Location: Fellowship Hall

In this series we will explore the psalmists' experience of God in three well-known Psalms: 23, 104 and 139. We will retrieve the meanings of the psalms' ancient images to make them more accessible for contemporary study, prayer and worship.

Leaders: Drs. Paula & Ted Hiebert
Paula teaches at Loyola University and Ted teaches at McCormick Theological Seminary.

Seekers Forum

Ongoing, 9 a.m. Location: Parlor

The Seekers Forum will start up again on Sunday, February 5, with shared leadership provided by Keith Cox and Steve Pesick.

Discovery Forum

Ongoing, 10:30 a.m. Location: Family Room

The Discovery Forum will continue discussion of sermons from Barbara Brown Taylor's *Bread of Angels* on February 5, 12, and 26. All are welcome and materials will be available to read during each session. On February 19, the group will discuss Mary Doria Russell's *A Thread of Grace*. The novel tells a little known story of a group of Italian citizens who sheltered more than 40,000 Jews during World War II.

Leader: Trina Hayes



Spirituality Center

*"Since we live by the Spirit,
let us keep in step with the Spirit."
Galatians 5:25*

The Spirituality Center facilitates the deepening and enrichment of our relationship with God in Jesus Christ through experiential activities. Our spiritual selves develop as the Holy Spirit breathes life into our very beings.

Are you too caught up in your daily activities? Sometimes a place where we will not be distracted, a place where we can experience solitude, a place for inner quietness, beckons us to seek God. Our restlessness drives us to discover a power beyond ourselves, and we find we are trying to get in closer touch with God. Our relation to God affects our relationship with each other as we seek to contribute to God's spiritual creation.

Since opening this fall, the Spirituality Center has given meaningful experiences to congregation members and others. Flossmoor Community Church invites you to participate in the programs being offered at the Center.

The Prayer Shawl Ministry is moving ahead with a very committed group of knitters. They have given the Stephen Ministry five shawls to share with those needing the comfort and warmth that the shawls bring. Some former members of our church, who have moved away, are also helping to make them; for example, Alayne Pearson completed two and sent them to us. Join the group on Friday mornings from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the larger room of the Spirituality Center; the sessions are ongoing.

Two offerings -- the Advent series led by Donica Van Voorhees as well as MorningSong in the fall led by Jerri Greer--included participants who are non-church members. MorningSong includes the study of scripture, movement to music, creative expression, and sharing if desired. In March, April and May, it will again be offered on the second and fourth Monday mornings of the month from 9 to 11 a.m.

If you have suggestions, please contact any member of the Spirituality Center Ministry Team: Janet Duchossois, Jerri Greer, Judith Hanzelin, Trina Hayes, Jan Johnson, Bob Norby, Gary Sattler, Otto Thilenius, Craig Yoder, and Jim Hartley as pastoral advisor.

Family Fun Event
Saturday, February 11
10 a.m. • Community House

The Weekday Preschool Parents Auxiliary will help blow your Winter Blahs away with a visit from storyteller, Grant Fitch. His program, "Stories for Life" is intended for all ages. Grant Fitch gives a memorable one-man performance that includes fables, folk tales, classic literature and songs. Admission is \$4 per person, or \$13 per family to be paid at the door. Bring grandparents, neighbors, friends, and past and future Weekday Preschool kids.



Teaching our Kids to Care

On Sunday, January 22, the Sixth Graders of Acts2Crew prepared and served the evening meal for our PADS guests. We had a great turnout of students and family members for this annual event. Our Promised Land offerings this quarter are going to the Heifer Project, and another shoe drive and visit to Share Your Soles are on tap for this spring.

Promised Land (9 a.m. service)

February's Promised Land explores the wonderful story, "Jesus Feed the 5,000". In addition to our usual ways of telling the story on February 5 and 26, our wonderful Sophs group from Youth Ministries will be creating and teaching the lesson on February 12 and 19. It's a great opportunity every year for our younger kids to spend time with our teenagers, as we grow together in faith and fun.

Camp Gray

Yes, it's early, but many of you have asked about this year's dates, for vacation planning purposes. Our campers will leave FCC on Monday, June 12, and return on Friday, June 16. Registration materials, health forms, etc. will be mailed in March to families with eligible children.

Women's & Men's Association Wednesday, February 8

Can you imagine whose important birthday the Women's and Men's Association is celebrating this month? A clue: he was the subject of last November's program. If you guessed Abraham Lincoln, right on! You are invited to a wonderful theatrical event starring Max and Donna Daniels in "An Evening with Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln." The setting is the White House – just before they leave for the Ford Theatre. This enactment is not to be missed as we continue to learn, even more intimately, about one of our greatest presidents during a difficult period in our country's history.

Max and Donna Daniels have an extensive background in theatre, and have been portraying Abraham and Mary Todd Lincoln professionally since 1988. They have been featured on C-SPAN Cable Network, ABC/Channel 7 in Chicago, and the "Investigating History" series on the History Channel. They took part in the dedication of the Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield and performed for a week at the Discovery Theatre for Children at the Smithsonian in Washington, DC.



Purchase your tickets (\$8) in the Lobby for this exciting luncheon and program on Wednesday, February 8th, with lunch a 12:15 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday, February 5

Youth Ministries is participating in this national fundraiser on Sunday, February 5! Church youth groups around the country collect funds in a "Soup Pot," as



people leave worship. The money is donated to local organizations that assist the hungry and hurting. We are asking everyone to drop \$1 (or more!) into a soup pot as they leave worship. All the proceeds will go to Respond Now. Since becoming a national event in 1993, the Souper Bowl of Caring has

generated over \$24 million to help hungry and hurting people! Thanks for your support!

Youth Group News

The month of February brings some "regularity" back to the world of Youth Ministries.

Disciples Confirmation Class will be preparing for their World Religions Retreat, February 17 - 19!

Sophs takes off February 3-5 for their Winter Retreat. Their time together will be spent working on planning to teach Promised Land and doing part of the "Life Keys for Teens" curriculum. Sophs will lead our younger kids in the Promised Land on February 12 & 19. They will lead workshops on the "Feeding of the 5000."

Genesis (7th grade) & **Exodus** (8th grade) will begin meeting again on Sunday mornings!

Youth Ministries



Mission Opportunity in February

Saturday, February 4 – Greater Chicago Food Depository Trip for youth and adults ... leave church at 8 a.m. and return about 1 p.m. to package food containers. Lifting not usually involved. Contact Bill Lindstrom (798-8461) by Wednesday, February 1.



Our sympathy and prayers to the family and friends of Daniel MacMaster, who died on December 26, 2005.

Fellow Church Members,

I remember with great joy the many years I was privileged to serve Flossmoor Community Church as Director of Music and the Arts, including a few of those years as Director of Development and Renewal. In those years I recall a dedicated church membership dreaming of ways to make worship more vital, to celebrate and explore the meaning of our faith through the arts in worship.

It is with greater joy that I see how earlier dreams have become reality: our church organ was restored with a more vibrant voice; our sanctuary was remodeled to become brighter; our sound system was totally re-designed to enable all to hear clearly; and we now have a recording ministry that enables us to share the sounds of our worship through the availability of compact sound disks almost immediately following worship. These realities have enabled a warm, friendly congregation to welcome newcomers and more easily join our voices in praise to our God.

Some of our dreams have not become reality, however. In the years since being on staff, I have also served the Board of Worship and the Arts where we continued some of those earlier discussions and then refined and added to our dreams. To summarize where we fall short, I would say that our current worship space has architectural obstacles that isolate worship participants from each other, muffling our praise.

One of the main architectural spaces for concern is the *apse*. (Thanks, Lesley and Phil for the great architectural explanation of this part of our worship space!) To be specific, the choir is split and separated from the congregation, and the organist is obscure from nearly everyone, including the pastor and liturgist. Our current “altar,” in reality a communion table, is often inaccessible with added worship participants. When we enhance our worship with cantatas, chancel drama, or video presentations, the isolation becomes more severe because of inflexible, partitioned space in the apse. Here are some suggestions that have been made to remove this isolation:

1. The organist needs to be at a level with the choir, so that it is possible to see the piano, other instrumentalists, and the back of the congregation for processions.
2. The organ should be connected with an “umbilical cord” that allows the console to be moved when needed.
3. The piano needs to be at a level with the choir, so that the choir can hear it without moving to the steps, and so that the pianist can see the choir, the organist, and other instrumentalists.
4. The communion table needs to be moved in front of the worship participants so that our offerings can be placed there when music and other needs expand in the worship space. The move would make it possible for the director to stand in front of the choir without obscuring the communion table, too.
5. The choir should face the congregation so that members can see each other, so that the choir can hear all singers and instrumentalists, and so that the congregation can hear the choir. As it is, the choir turns sideways to be heard, cannot hear from one side to the other, and feels isolated from the congregation during most of worship.
6. An open, flexible space for choir and instruments would allow us to continue the beautiful cantatas and varied worship music, to provide distinctive visual presentations with screens visible for all, and to create the flexibility to do meaningful chancel drama.

It is my hope that our inspired dreams will become reality with the proposed renovation, and that all who worship will be united to

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord...

Serve the Lord with gladness...

Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise; be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. (Psalm 100)

With hopes for an invigorated worship,
Mike Rogers

FEBRUARY 2006 † CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

Worship from 9-10 a.m. & 10:30-11:30 a.m.
Adult Education: 9 & 10:30 a.m.
Fellowship Time in Fellowship Hall: 10 a.m.
Youth Groups: 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Promised Land Church School: 9 - 10:15 a.m.
Children's Activities: 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Nursery Care: 9 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Wed 2/1	Cherub Choir (FH) Jubilate Choir (RRA) Chancel Ringers (RRB) Youth Leadership Meetings	4 pm 4 6:30 7:30	Sat 2/18	Family Game Night (CH) see pg. 1	6:30 pm
Thur 2/2	Ladies of Note (RRA) Chancel Choir (RRA)	10:30 am 7:30 pm	Sun 2/19	PADS (FH)	7 pm
Fri 2/3	Prayer Shawl Ministry (SC) Sophs Retreat to Tower Hill	10 am	Tues 2/21	PEGs Bazaar Workshop (stage) Leadership Staff Lunch (SPO) Church Staff Meeting (FR) PEGs Bazaar Workshop (stage) Stephen Ministry Supervision (FR,PA, 23)	9 am noon 1:30 pm 7 7
Sun 2/5	Communion Sunday Fellowship of the Tortilla (FR) PADS (FH)	11:45 am 7 pm	Thur 2/23	Ladies of Note (RRA) Chancel Choir (RRA)	11:30 am 7:30 pm
Tues 2/7	PEGs Bazaar Workshop (stage) WPS Auxiliary (FR) Church Staff Meeting (FR) Board/Committee Gathering Time (CP) PEGs Bazaar Workshop (stage) Board & Committee Meetings	9 am 9:15 1:30 pm 7 7 7:30	Fri 2/24	Prayer Shawl Ministry (SC)	10 am
Wed 2/8	Women's & Men's Association Luncheon (FH) Cherub Choir (FH) Jubilate Choir (RRA) Chancel Ringers (RRB) PEGs Evening Teens at Art4Soul Youth Leadership Meetings	12:15 pm 4 4 6:30 7:30 7:30	Sun 2/26	PADS (FH)	7 pm
Thur 2/9	Ladies of Note (RRA) Chancel Choir (RRA)	11:30 am 7:30 pm	Mon 2/27	WMA Exec. Board (PA) PEGs Council at Strathman's	1 pm 7
Fri 2/10	Prayer Shawl Ministry (SC)	10 am	Tues 2/28	PEGs Bazaar Workshop (stage) Church Staff Meeting (FR) Governing Board (FR) PEGs Bazaar Workshop (stage)	9 am 1:30 pm 7 7
Sat 2/11	WPS Family Fun Event (CH)	10 am			
Sun 2/12	PADS (FH) <i>Narthex</i> deadline for March issue	7 pm noon			
Tues 2/14	PEGs Bazaar Workshop (stage) Church Staff Meeting (FR) Board/Committee Gathering Time (CP) PEGs Bazaar Workshop (stage) Board & Committee Meetings	9 am 1:30 pm 7 7 7:30			
Wed 2/15	PEGs Day Grads Bazaar Workshop (FH) Cherub Choir (FH) Jubilate Choir (RRA) Chancel Ringers (RRB) PEGs Sprigs at Marks' PEGs Saplings & Evening Grads at Hartley's Youth Leadership Meetings	12:30 pm 4 4 6:30 TBA 7:30 7:30			
Thur 2/16	Ladies of Note (SA) Chancel Choir (RRA)	11:30 am 7:30			
Fri 2/17	Prayer Shawl Ministry (SC)	10 am			

Our Chancel Choir will once again be participating in the annual **South Suburban Choir Festival**. This year's gathering will be on Sunday, February 26 at 7 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church of Homewood, hosted by Hazel Crest Community United Methodist Church. Each church choir will perform two selections, followed by several combined numbers. While space is limited, the public is welcome to attend!



Don't forget to mark your calendars for the annual **Lenten Service and Brunch** sponsored by the Parent Education Groups and the Women's and Men's Association. This lovely service will take place on **March 8**, the Wednesday after Ash Wednesday.

The worship service will begin in the Sanctuary at 9:30 a.m. and will include communion. It will be followed by a tasty brunch. Please look in the March *Narthex* for details.

CALENDAR CODES

A2C	Acts2Crew (Rm. 10)	FR	Family Room	PEGs	Parent Education Groups	SPO	Sr. Pastor's Office
CH	Community House	GE	Genesis Room	RRA	Rehearsal Room A	TR	Tower Room
CP	Chapel	MPT	MasterPeace Theater (Rm. 14)	RRB	Rehearsal Room B	WMA	Women's & Men's Association
CS	Creation Station (Rm. 15)	NU	Nursery	SA	Sanctuary	WPS	Weekday Preschool
FH	Fellowship Hall	PA	Parlor	SC	Spirituality Center	YC	Youth Crossings

Dear FCC family and friends,

Lewis Carroll delightfully captures a profound truth in this conversation between Alice and the caterpillar in his *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. "Who are you?" said the caterpillar... "I - I hardly know, Sir, just at present," Alice replied rather shyly, "at least I know who I *was* when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then."



We can almost feel Alice's bewilderment at the staggering truth of the constancy of change - one way of life ends, giving way to a time of uncertainty that opens the door to a new beginning. As our lives change, so our church changes. How grateful we are for all who stepped out in faith and worked so diligently to provide us with an exquisite sanctuary in the 1940's... what a dramatic change from the Community House across the street that had been FCCs worship home since the 1930's!

In the 1950's our courageous faith family recognized the need for more space and added a wing for Sunday School classes in what is now our office wing. In the 1960's the church again stepped out in faith, pushed out the walls of our sanctuary, added new music space, and a large new education wing. I have been told that the 1960's renovation was quite controversial (not to mention expensive)! In 2001 the church again remodeled to add the elevator and make the building accessible to all. This change also enlarged and modernized the second floor kitchen. But, how grateful we are for their vision and sacrifice - it is difficult to imagine our church without the changes they brought to pass. Their legacy enables us to be a church that meets needs and heals hurts... a church that brings people closer to God and each other... a church whose arms stretch around the world with compassion and hope.

Previous generations have been so good to us - it is now our turn to imagine the church we will be passing to generations to come. When the invitation to be a part of defining the dream for our worship wing is issued, please lend your voice and vision to the conversation. What an exciting year 2006 will be as we step out in faith and allow God to do in and through us, as the Scripture puts it, "beyond what we could hope or imagine."

Expectantly,
Lynn

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