

# COMMUNITY CALL

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## PM MEN'S RUMMAGE SALE

This Saturday, April 3rd, from 7 a.m. until 2 p.m., the men of the church will be holding their Annual Rummage Sale. It will be held at the Veteran's Memorial Arena, which is located on the east side of WF High School.

Donated items can be delivered to the arena on Friday, April 2nd, from 1 p.m. until 8 p.m. An easy way to bring the items is to turn on 10th Ave. and enter the high school delivery entrance road located at the rear (southeast) side of the school. The arena entrance doors open into our area. If you are unable to deliver your donations, please call, and we will be happy to pick them up. Call 282-4942 or 282-4135, and leave a message. And don't forget to visit the sale to buy items.

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## FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN



I suppose that most of you who are going to see *The Passion of the Christ* have already seen it, and that most of you who haven't seen the movie yet are probably not going to. That said, however, I feel called upon to offer my own comments on this film that, whatever its strengths and weaknesses, has put the teaching of the church about Jesus in the center of public consciousness in a way seldom seen in this day and age.

My seminary preaching professor had a hard and fast rule: when critiquing a student's sermon, she always began with an affirmation, an expression of something positive about the effort, no matter how good or bad it was overall. I find this to be an excellent general rule, as well, and so I will begin by noting that, as a work of the filmmaker's art, *The Passion* is remarkable. It is beautifully shot, despite the disturbing nature of its images, and the cast and crew who produced it undoubtedly put in an enormous investment of time and talent. From every technical aspect, it is a good movie.

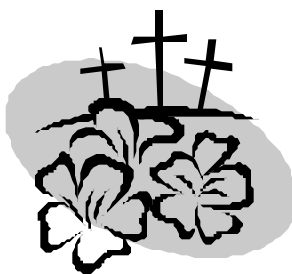
That being said, however, the more important questions for us relate to the film's content. I think it important, especially in light of the public comments of director Mel Gibson, some members of the cast, the film's production and distribution companies, and, in my view, far too many clergy and church members who ought to know better, to note

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clearly some of the things that *The Passion* is not.

- 1) It is not an accurate retelling of the Passion narrative as found in any of the Gospels. Gibson has created a collage of elements taken from each of the four Gospels (among other sources). Such a "harmony" of the gospel narratives is probably unavoidable in making a film, since neither Matthew, Mark, Luke, nor John provided a complete screenplay. However, the church, since ancient days, has resisted efforts to collapse the four Gospels into one harmonized story, recognizing that God has given us the story of Jesus in four distinct books, each written from a different perspective.
- 2) It is not as historically accurate as it could have been. Despite the veneer of historical authenticity created by Gibson's use of ancient languages in the movie, much of what is known about the period of Jesus' death through historical and archaeological scholarship is ignored. Indeed, the Latin in which some of the film's dialogue is presented was not even spoken in Roman Palestine (it would have been Greek). The relationship between Caiaphas, the high priest, and Pilate, the governor, is known to have been quite different than that portrayed in the film; and no Roman crucifixion ever involved the carrying of a massive, complete cross by anyone, as depicted in the movie.



- 3) It is not representative of a theological position that Reformed Christians should be comfortable with. The overwhelming picture of God in this film, reinforced over and over by the hideously graphic torture of Jesus, which goes well beyond what any human being could survive long before he reaches Golgotha, is of a deity who can only be satisfied by unspeakable pain and punishment. This is not the God of grace and glory that is recognized in our church's confessions and proclamation. In addition, the Resurrection receives about eight seconds of screen time in a movie of over two hours, implying that it is the suffering and death of the Messiah that matters, not his victory over death in the Resurrection. Such an emphasis flies in the face of the Gospel, the teachings of the rest of the New Testament, and our Reformation heritage.

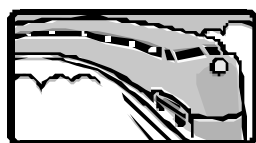
There is much more to be said about the film than there is space in this forum. The very public debate over anti-Semitic images and content, the less-widely discussed reliance of Gibson's script on the visions of a 19<sup>th</sup> century mystic named Catherine of Emmerich for much of its non-biblical content (including some of the more obviously anti-Jewish elements), and, of course, the overwhelming violence of the film all deserve serious consideration. I include here a link to one thoughtful article that addresses many of these questions:

[http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/reviews/gibson\\_cunningham.htm](http://www.bc.edu/research/cjl/meta-elements/texts/reviews/gibson_cunningham.htm)

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However, for me, the most important response I can make to this film is to say this: You do not *have* to see it. It is *not* the Gospel. It does *not* depict the reality of Jesus' suffering and death. It is one person's imaginative interpretation of this episode in Jesus' life, and if you are interested in seeing this interpretation, and have a strong stomach, feel free. Otherwise, I would suggest that our time in this Lenten season would be better spent in reading and meditating on one or more of the Gospel accounts of the Passion—the accounts that are, through the Holy Spirit, God's final word on the subject.

**SOUL TRAIN  
SCHEDULE**

April 4—4-6 pm help run Easter Egg Hunt—dinner afterwards  
April 11—Easter—no meeting  
April 18—regular meeting—Jenna Bar-enthsen will speak about Kenya  
April 25—regular meeting—newspaper night/prepare for Sunday School carnival  
May 2—regular meeting—Toni Stith—influences in our culture/plan for Mother's Day  
May 9—Mother's Day—make a wonderful, scrumptious dinner for your mothers!  
May 16—carnival during Sunday School—last meeting of the year—something really, really, really fun!!! (any ideas???)

We would appreciate meals served on the following Sundays:

- \*April 4
- \*April 18
- \*April 25
- \*May 2
- \*May 16—undecided

**HOLY WEEK  
WORSHIP SERVICE(S)**

Community Presbyterian will observe Maundy Thursday, the service that commemorates Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples, his Passion, and his death, on April 8 at 7:00 p.m. We will celebrate the Lord's Supper and observe the ancient office of Tenebrae, the progressive extinguishing of lights as the moment of Jesus' death approaches. Our Easter Sunday service will be, in many ways, a direct continuation of the Maundy Thursday service, and will also feature the public welcome of new members into our fellowship. Please make plans to attend both parts of our Holy Week worship!

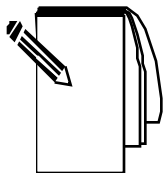
**PRAYER CHAIN**

Community Presbyterian Church has started a prayer chain for all members and visitors. Sometimes we have a concern that we don't want to bring up in church. This is the perfect way to have others ease your concern!

If you have a prayer concern for any person or need, please call Vicki Peihl at 356-0458 or Carol Sterup at 293-6603.

We are also in need of members for the prayer chain. Please call Vicki to become a member by April 11.

Our church has also been asked to invite intercessors of the community to **Pray Fargo-Moorhead**: a weekly prayer meeting each Wednesday from 11:30-12:30 p.m. at 1014 Tenth St. S in Fargo. Come, pray together for our communities' pastors; against spiritual strongholds; for the salvation of the unbeliever; and for the community to turn to prayer, asking Jesus Christ to transform us.



## CLERK'S CORNER

The Session and Trustees met March 17th at 7:00 p.m.

The trustees reported that the \$3000 refund for faulty carpet installation had been received. They will be checking on the amount of money on hand to redo the sanctuary carpet as soon as possible. If you haven't contributed yet, you are encouraged to do so. (Note: the new furnishings in the secretary's office were purchased from Noridian for \$250. Thanks to Susan Gross for finding these for us. )

Elders to serve communion on April 4th will be Lowell Wiese, David Ruhnke, Boots Misheski, and Greg Sterup. Susan Gross will help serve communion at the Maundy Thursday evening service. Dixon Moorhead and Lee Dobrinz will assist if needed. (Reminder: a meal will not be served. See 'Holy Week', p.3.)

The Gideons will be speaking in church on Sunday, May 2nd. A special offering will be received for them on that day.

Cora Ann Carlson will be baptized on Sunday, April 18. She is the daughter of LeAnn and Jon Carlson, and granddaughter of Len and Boots Misheski.

Yvonne Hummel, Dixon Moorhead and Dave Ruhnke were appointed as an Auditing Committee to audit the 2003 financial records. This is required by the Book of Order.

Ads will be published in the Fargo Forum and the West Fargo Pioneer to publicize the services on Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday.

The following dates were approved for Communion for the coming year: June 27 (in lieu of having it on the 4th of

July), Aug. 1, Sept. 5, Oct. 3, Nov. 7 and Dec, 5—all in 2004; Jan. 2, Feb. 6, March 6, March 24 (Maundy Thursday), March 27 (Easter Sunday), April 3, May 1, and June 4—all in 2005.

A special meeting will be held on March 31 to receive new members. This will include a meal so that there will be a chance for session members to get acquainted with the new members who will be recognized at the Easter Sunday service.

The Session approved the recommendation from Andrew Thostenson that we purchase a new printer (The old one has served well but is in need of being retired.), new QuickBooks Financial Accounting Software, and to renew our Payroll Services in June. Purchase of new MembershipPlus software will be put off for the time being. (We recently updated the copier in the secretarial office by leasing a newer model with costs to remain the same.)

Permission was given for the Presbyterian Women to hold an event to hear about Jenna Barentsen's Kenya Trip. Details are still being worked out.

Brent Talley, husband of Caroline, was received into membership by transfer from Trinity Lutheran Church of Lansford, ND. Let's make him welcome.

Barbara Grossman was granted permission to hold an 85th Birthday Party for her father in the Fellowship Hall on April 4 from 2-4 p.m. They will pay the custodian's charge for set up and cleanup.

Several committees made reports on their activities during the last month. Presbytery meeting will be held in Jamestown on April 23 & 24. Any member is eligible to attend. A workshop on

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the 24th will be about Youth Ministry.

Pastor Matt reported that the date of April 26 has been set for the defense of his dissertation for his doctorate degree. The Session granted him an additional day of Continuing Education for travel time to attend this session. The Youth are managing the worship service on April 25, so it does not necessitate hiring a substitute speaker.

Toni Stith reported that a total of \$721.04 was contributed to the 30 Hours of Famine event held in February.

A total of 109 persons were served communion on March 7.

Delores Horn  
Clerk of Session



### THE CASTAWAYS

Come join us for our Youth Sunday program on April 25 during the worship service.

Our youth will present a story in which the characters find themselves on the deserted island of Gandar. The castaways need to decide how to survive until they are rescued.

See you there!

### CAN YOU HELP?

We are looking for pictures of the Confirmation Classes of 1981, 1987 and 1989. Do you have a copy of them? If so, we would like to borrow them to make a copy to add to the display in the upstairs hallway.

If you have one we can borrow, please contact Delores Horn at 282-4501.

## PICTORIAL DIRECTORY



By now you should have signed up for a portrait sitting for April 22, 23, or 24 to be pictured in our church's 2004 pictorial directory. However, there will be more to this directory than simply a booklet full of updated addresses and phone numbers. It is hoped that this will be a resource that we and others can become more acquainted with our members and our church.

With this in mind, we are looking for photographs of church activities which have occurred within this last year and artwork picturing the church which can be borrowed and copied to be displayed in the directory. If you have photographs or artwork to share, please contact Gayle Thostenson at [atgtet@msn.com](mailto:atgtet@msn.com) or at 492-0630.

And if you haven't signed up for a portrait yet, there is still time. Contact Susan Gross, Service and Fellowship Chair, after 4:30 p.m. at 277-0860.



### JOIN THE BUNNY HOP

Hop on over to the church for an "Eggs"-traordinary good time. The annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held on Sunday, April 4 from 4:00 to 6:00 at the church. All kids through 6th grade are welcome to join in the fun. Please sign up to attend in the narthex.

Attention all 'Bunnies' —we are looking for donations of wrapped candy. We would like to have the candy by Sunday, April 4. Thank you for helping.



## APRIL DATES TO REMEMBER

### BIRTHDAYS

- 4-1 Susan Gross  
 4-2 Becky DeJong  
 4-5 Trinity Jaszkwiaak  
 Veril Larson  
 Robert Meyer  
 4-6 Josh Corneliusen  
 Brent Talley  
 4-8 Hazel Yokom  
 4-13 Jon Whitcomb  
 Krista Whitcomb  
 Leah Whitcomb  
 4-14 Cathy Birrenkott  
 4-16 Bryan Reidinger  
 Michael Rubio  
 4-18 Kathy LaCoe  
 4-19 Beverly Montgomery  
 Mandi Montgomery  
 4-20 Ruby Hendrickson  
 Lynn Hummel  
 4-23 Zaryn Hansen  
 4-25 Audrey Binger  
 4-26 Kevin Bruse  
 Debra (Deb) Olson  
 4-27 Emma DeJong  
 Andrew Thostenson  
 4-28 Lorna Wilkinson  
 4-30 Delbert Jenner  
 Carolyn Talley

### ANNIVERSARIES

- 4-2-77 – Greg and Carol Sterup  
 4-3-54 – Bill and Beverly Montgomery  
 4-9-88 – Dwight and Lisa Steffen  
 4-12-95 – David and Nancy Stedman  
 4-13-68 – Denny and Carol Braaten  
 4-21-79 – Larry and Vicki Peihl  
 4-21-89 – Gary and Tammy Bahls  
 4-27-02 – Jon and LeAnn Carlson  
 4-27-02 – Craig and Dixie Pederson  
 4-30-66 – Larry and Uneva Dobrinz

## ATTENTION: CLEARWATER FOREST CAMPERS

Camp time is fast approaching. After visiting with most families it looks as though the two weeks of camp in July work best. (July 11-17 and July 25-31) You may register for any camp session up to 10 work days prior to the start of camp. If you registered before March 31<sup>st</sup>, then your camper will receive a free t-shirt. It is important that you let Becky DeJong know when you are going to camp so that church scholarships can be sent at the appropriate times. If you have questions feel free to call, look at the brochures in the narthex or check out the website at: [www.clearwaterforest.org](http://www.clearwaterforest.org).

Happy Camping, Becky  
 281-8122



## 2003-2004 SUNDAY SCHOOL CALENDAR

Palm Sunday	April 4
Easter	April 11
PreK-6 Youth practice 10-noon for Youth Sunday	April 24
PreK-6 Youth practice 9 am for Youth Sunday	April 25
Senior Recognition	May 16
Sunday School's Last Day Potluck	

## WANTED

We need a piano player to play about 5-6 songs over the course of one hour on the 2nd Thursday of the month at the High Rise. We will pay you for your preparation and playing time.

Dixon Moorhead  
 W: 232-8283  
 H: 277-1414



## IS GOD CALLING YOU?

Our church is looking for someone who finds working with children exciting and exhilarating. We are looking for someone who has a desire to further our children's relationship with God. We are looking for someone who is interested in the two-year position of Sunday School Superintendent or Co-superintendent.

The Superintendent's responsibilities include:

- ◇recruiting classroom and music teachers for the school year
- ◇finding directors for the Christmas program and VBS
- ◇ordering teaching materials
- ◇keeping the congregation informed of educational events through church announcements, the bulletin, and the newsletter
- ◇stocking the supply room: construction paper, markers, birthday surprises, etc.
- ◇handing out attendance sheets and collecting Sunday School money on Sunday mornings
- ◇awarding attendance certificates twice a year
- ◇attending monthly meetings of the Christian Education Committee

As the Superintendent, you would have input on all decisions regarding education, work closely with the Christian Education Committee and receive active support from the committee in carrying out your responsibilities.

Ask yourself and ask God if He is calling you for this rewarding challenge.

Please call any committee member if you are interested or have questions. They are:

Boots Misheski (Session member)	282-5429
Becky DeJong	281-8122
Debbie Matzke	282-9463
Lisa Steffen	282-5308
Toni Stith	282-2715
Gayle Thostenson	492-0630



## SUNDAY SCHOOL SONG CO-DIRECTOR NEEDED

Do you love to sing songs of praise? Have you a particular affection for children? Perhaps you also have musical talent and can play an instrument.

Then, maybe you are the one to help in directing our Sunday School music this coming year. A co-director would assist in leading the children in joyful song for a short time preceding Sunday School classes each week.

Interested? Please respond by calling or singing to any of the Christian Education Committee members listed above.



## PRAYER BREAKFAST

The 27th Annual New Life Center Prayer Breakfast and Evening Dessert will be held on Thursday, April 22 at 9:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. at the Fargo Holiday Inn. The speaker will be Gracia Burnham, who, with her husband Martin, were missionaries in the Philippines when they were captured by Philippine rebels who held them captive for over a year.

Contact Norma Henning, 282-3888, church representative, or call 239-0428 for ticket information.