

The Forecaster

Wednesday, April 8, 2009 - Volume 62, Number 14



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Plus

Ten things to know for Sunday

As we come together at Fairmount to celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord, there are a few things to know as you arrive here Sunday. - Page 3

A Sword will Pierce Even Your Own Soul

By: Mike Langley

This week is celebrated among Christians as Holy Week. There are so many incredible events that take place leading up to Resurrection Day. Some of those events cause you to shout Hallelujah and some of them have you shaking your head in wonderment. For example, on Good Friday we shout Hallelujah because Christ took our sin upon Himself and at the same time we shake our head in wondering why it had to happen on an old rugged cross.

When it comes to celebrating Easter and Christmas, Jesus is the reason, period. However, have you noticed that during the Christmas story Mary gets a lot of play time. Many scriptures speak to her selection, pregnancy and the birthing experience. She has songs written about her that are sung in almost every Christmas presentation. In the nativity pageantry next to the baby Jesus the spotlight burns brightly on her. Now carry your thoughts to the last days before the crucifixion of Jesus the Savior. Scripture is not silent about her but in comparison to Christmas it mentions her only briefly. There may be songs written about her and the experience of her son's last days, but in my 30+ years of ministry none come to mind like the songs sung about her at Christmas. I am not building a case that Mary should have received more page appearances during the crucifixion of her son Jesus but I do want to point out that during Holy Week we often miss considering her. And because of that, we fail to experience a piece of Holy Week that provides insight into a mother's eye witness of her son's death. Simeon makes a prophecy about Mary in Luke 2:24-35. In a portion of Simeon's prophecy about Mary he says,

"...a sword will pierce even your own soul..."

Those words have reference to several things and one of them is a personal

reference to the depth of grief that Mary would encounter over her son's death. We overlook the fact that scripture (John 19:26) says she was on Golgotha when he arrived with his back shredded by the cat-o'-nine-tails and the crown of thorns piercing his head. She was at the cross when they pounded spikes through her son's hands and feet. She watched the soldiers disrobe her precious baby boy and humiliatingly lift him up naked for all to see. Mary was there when people came by and shouted insults at him. Mary, the mother, stayed with her son as he agonizingly suffocated to death.

The heart can be broken but when the sword of grief pierces the soul there is a pain that cannot be explained in words. Only the vision of a sword piercing the soul can portray the horror, pain and severity of the wound. Mary's

son was dead for three days before He rose from the dead as scripture said He would. For three days Jesus was in the tomb and the sword turned and sunk deeper into her soul. The waves of grief from the storm of death must have been churning feverishly in her life. We forget during Holy Week the pain Mary, the mother of Jesus our Savior, became acquainted with. I want you to hold onto the thought of that pain as I share another thought with you. We love our church family here at FCC. We feel for them when they go through the darkness of loss even if those who have died are Heaven bound. When someone in our family is grieving we want to cry with them and sometimes we want to hold them. We want to be their strength when they need to make it through a

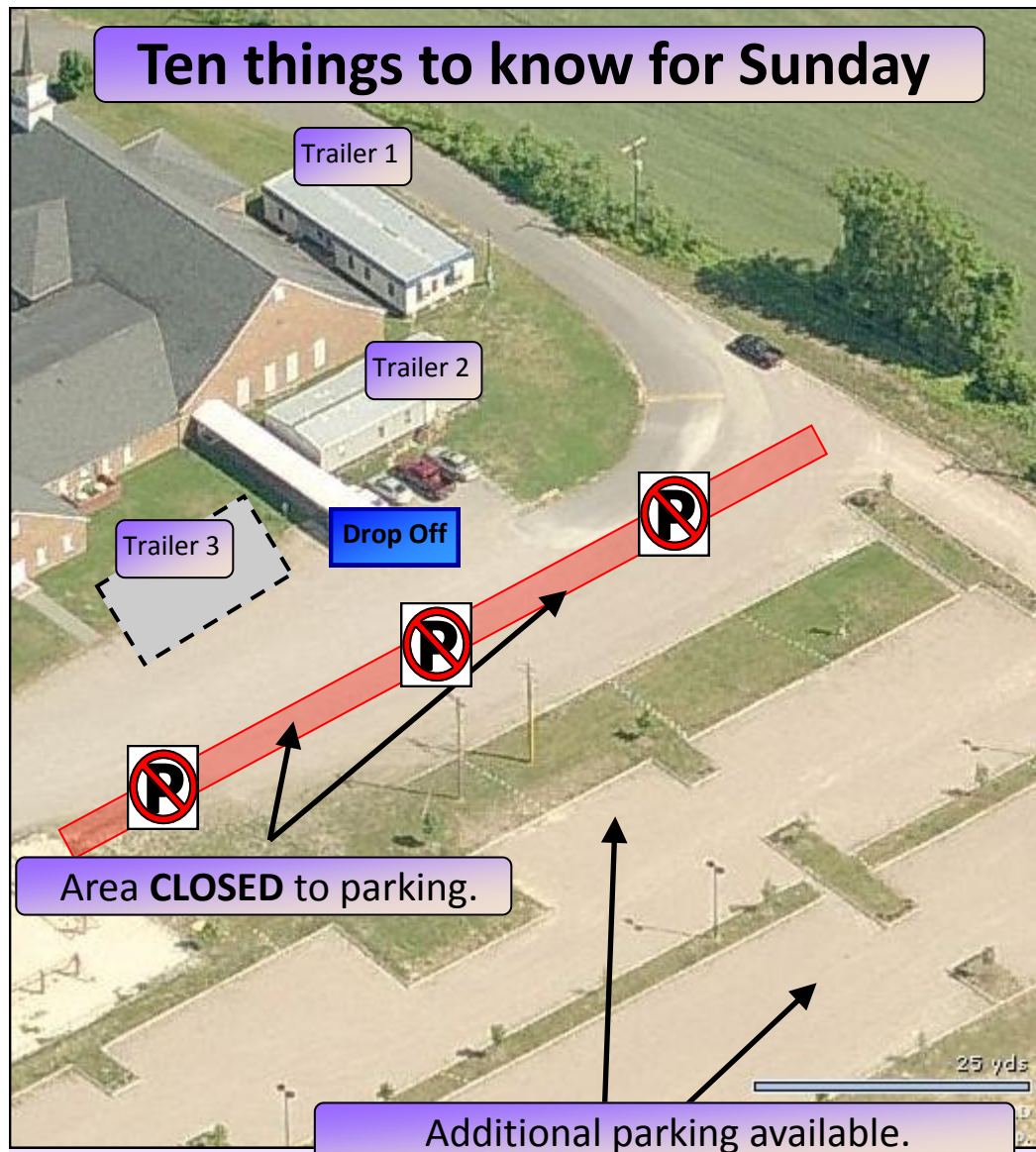


bad moment. We want to be an oasis for them as they experience the searing heat of a lost friend or loved one. In a church family of our size we can't always reach out and intimately respond to someone who is mourning a death, but we can minister comfort as the Apostle Paul says in I Corinthians 1:3-4,

“Blessed be the God...of our Lord Jesus Christ...and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

One way I have witnessed our members reaching out to comfort our church family is through the Bereavement Team. This ministry has teams of people who provide dessert, salad, vegetables and rolls for the family either at their home or here at the building after the funeral service. While I have only been overseeing this ministry since I arrived at FCC 9 months ago, I can tell you it ministers in a profound way to those who have had the sword of grief pierce their soul. The dish you provide expresses your love and support for the family when the pain of death has overcome them. The gift of a dish, bought or prepared, is cherished by those who find themselves struck with the sword of grief to the soul.

As we experience the many sides of Holy Week and consider what Mary, the mother of Jesus, did as she witnessed her son die, perhaps it instills in our heart the need to remember those who are experiencing a sword of death plundering their soul in pain. If the Holy Spirit is leading you to minister to our church family by helping provide nourishment for them, please contact Mike Langley and be placed on a team. This week, we think in part of Mary and her loss. Next week and the weeks following we will need to think about what the sword of grief is doing to the souls of our church family and how we can allow those thoughts to transform into action, as we serve each other with the grace and mercy of our risen Savior. ■



A reminder that with Easter Sunday comes full parking lots. Efforts are being made to allow for smooth traffic flow this Sunday.

When arriving to church on Sunday...

1. Be alert for pedestrians, especially small children.
2. Respect all handicap parking areas. If you have a teen who drives, remind them to be observant of these areas.
3. Obey the Hanover County Deputy that will be directing traffic on to and off of Creighton Road.
4. Be mindful of the new parking configuration in the lot immediately behind Trailers 2 & 3. (see picture above).
5. Additional lots are located in the rear of the building that can accom-

modate 175 vehicles. Make use of these so our guests may use the front lots.

6. The peak traffic times will be: 8:45 - 9:30 am; 10:45 - 11:15 am; and 12:00 - 12:30 pm.
7. Volunteers will be out to direct traffic within the church property. Please follow their lead and be patient if they direct you to an area you do not normally park.
8. Drop off areas are located in the front of the building, the Family Life Center Entrance, **AND** at the rear entrance between Trailers 2 & 3.
9. Make sure your vehicle is not parked in a position to block emergency vehicle access.
10. Above all, celebrate the fact that He is risen!



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The mission of Fairmount Christian Church:

To develop followers of Jesus who:

Love God,
Love People and
Introduce the world
 to **Christ**



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Our Church: Sunday, April 5, 2009

Welcome to our New Members.

Welcome to **Samantha Thomas** of P.O. Box 44, Manquin (23106). **Samantha** was **baptized**.

S.A.L.T. Opportunity

Volunteers are needed for a Mountain Mission School building repair work trip scheduled to take place the week of April 29 - May 2. To volunteer or for more information, contact Guy Cumby, 380-2033.

Attendance & Giving.

8:15 Worship Service: 151
 Children's Worship: 20

9:30 Worship Service: 482
 Children's Worship: 76

11:00 Worship Service: 247
 Children's Worship: 123
 Breakaway: 59

Total: 1158

Bible School: 654

Budget Requirements: \$31,457.00

Budget Receipts: \$33,839.84

Living Cross



Bring your flowers for the Living Cross that will be on display at the Front Entrance to the Fairmount building this Easter Sunday.

Your Church Staff:

- Rick Raines - Senior Minister
- Chris Santasiere - Associate Minister
- Mike Langley - Associate Minister
- Tracy Thomas - Worship/Music Minister
- Joe Thompson - Youth Minister
- Rose Williams - Children's Ministry Director
- Larry Haake, IV - Child Care Program Director
- Jef Powell - Facilities & Grounds Manager
- Barry Will - Technology Director
- Veronica Brewster - Office Manager
- Bob Massey - Business Administrator