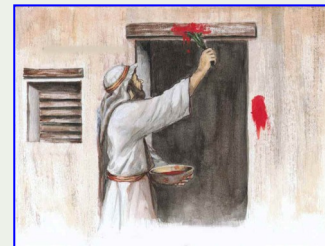


Christ Community Church
Orlando, Florida

*January
2012*

THE BEGINNING OF MONTHS

It was an end and a beginning. The years of the Israelites' slavery in Egypt were over. By one final, powerful sign God was telling Pharaoh, "Let my people go." That night the angel of death would go through Egypt slaying the first-born of every Egyptian. In obedience to Moses' order the Israelites had taken some of the blood from the lamb that would form their last meal in Egypt, and smeared it on their door-posts. The angel of death would see the blood and pass over. The next morning Moses would lead the Israelites out of Egypt, into the desert to begin their journey to the Promised Land and a new life. It was a momentous occasion that would be remembered for thousands of years.



Exodus 12:1 - 2 ¹The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ²"This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you.

600 years before, God had called Abraham and promised to make his family into a great nation. The Bible calls this a *Covenant* – an agreement between two parties. It can be summed up in the words, "I shall be your God and you shall be my people." After leaving Egypt, God led his people to Mt. Sinai where he gave his Law to Moses. The group of escaping slaves were to become a nation – another Covenant. Years later, the prophet Jeremiah looked forward to a time when there would be a New Covenant. Then, one night, Jesus gave his disciples a remembrance in bread and wine of the sacrifice he was going to make to accomplish salvation.

1 Corinthians 11:25 ²⁵In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

At the time of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, churches that placed emphasis on the local congregation, while recognizing that the whole church was the community of the New Covenant, were so aware of God's gracious dealing with them that they covenanted with God as an act of obedience. These were days when such congregations often faced persecution so a local church would also make a covenant between themselves in which they promised to walk together and watch over one another.



In 1663 an English Puritan, Richard Alleine published a book entitled, *A Vindication of Godliness in the Greater Strictness and Spirituality of It* (they went in for snappy titles in those days!). Almost 100 years later this book made a great impact on John Wesley and led him to call his Methodist Societies to live closer to God and to one another. Inspired by Alleine's writing Wesley held the first Covenant Service on Monday, August 11, 1755. The Covenant Service became an important part of Methodism, though the *Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America* a book that Wesley published in 1784 for the use of his followers in America did not contain an order for a Covenant Service.

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While not unknown in American Methodist and other churches in the Wesleyan tradition it was much more usual in British and Commonwealth churches. Although held at different times, it became common to begin the year with a Covenant Service on the first Sunday in January or at a Watchnight Service on New Year's Eve.

The practice spread to other Denominations. I remember a few years ago receiving a publication entitled:

*A Covenant Service
for the People called Methodists.
Published by the Baptist Union of Great Britain*



Wesley issued an invitation to the people to renew their Covenant, then led them in the Covenant Prayer. Like this:

Commit yourselves to Christ as his servants. Give yourselves to him, that you may belong to him. Christ has many services to be done. Some are more easy and honorable, others are more difficult and disgraceful. Some are suitable to our inclinations and interests, others are contrary to both. In some we may please Christ and please ourselves. But then there are other works where we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. It is necessary, therefore, that we consider what it means to be a servant of Christ. Let us, therefore, go to Christ, and pray:

Let me be your servant, under your command. I will no longer be my own. I will give up myself to your will in all things.

Lord, make me what you will. I put myself fully into your hands:

put me to doing, put me to suffering, let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,

let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and with a willing heart give it all to your pleasure and disposal.

I do here covenant with you, O Christ, to take my lot with you as it may fall.

Through your grace I promise that neither life nor death shall part me from you.

I make this covenant with you, O God, without guile or reservation.

If any falsehood should be in it, guide me and help me to set it aright.

Mighty God, let this covenant I have made on earth be ratified in heaven

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen

A HAPPY, BLESSED AND COMMITTED NEW YEAR



Church Council Meeting ~ Monday, January 9, 6:30 pm



Happy New Year from your Church Council!

BEAUTIFUL CHRISTIAN WOMAN

When I say that 'I am a Christian', I am not shouting that 'I am clean living.
I'm whispering 'I was lost, but now I'm found and forgiven.'

When I say 'I am a Christian' I don't speak of this with pride.
I'm confessing that I stumble and need Christ to be my guide.

When I say 'I am a Christian' I'm not trying to be strong.
I'm professing that I'm weak and need His strength to carry on..

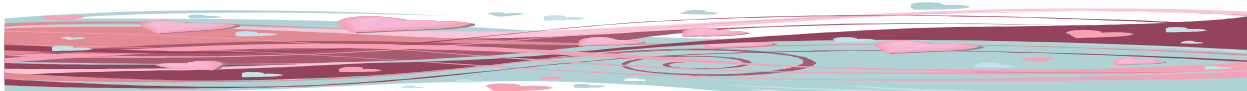
When I say 'I am a Christian' I'm not bragging of success.
I'm admitting I have failed and need God to clean my mess.

When I say 'I am a Christian' I'm not claiming to be perfect.
My flaws are far too visible, but God believes I am worth it.

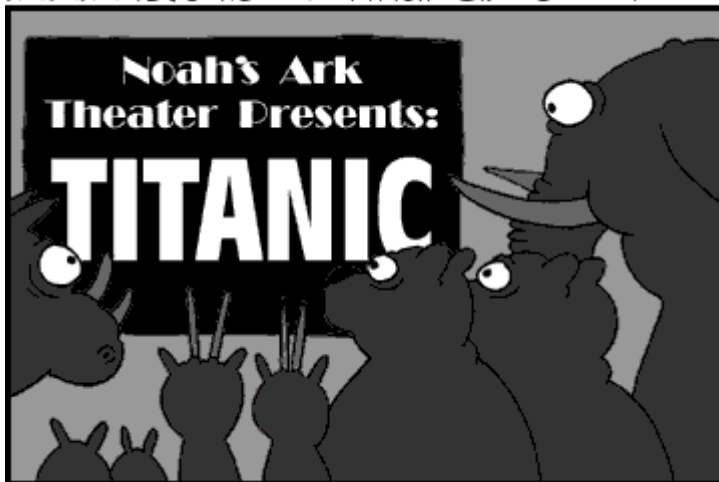
When I say 'I am a Christian' I still feel the sting of pain.
I have my share of heartaches, so I call upon His name.

When I say 'I am a Christian' I'm not holier than thou,
I'm just a simple sinner who received God's good grace, somehow!

"I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me." Philippians 4:13



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Thanks to Marcine

02-11-1998

*If we do not have your
birthday on file, please let us
know so we may wish you
a Happy Birthday
in the coming year!*

January 2012 Newsletter

VISIT US ON THE WEB www.orlandoccc.org

Christ Community Church

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Debbie Pinto, Director of Music
deborahpinto@comcast.net

Charlie Steele, Church Treasurer
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**A HAPPY
NEW YEAR**

Sundays

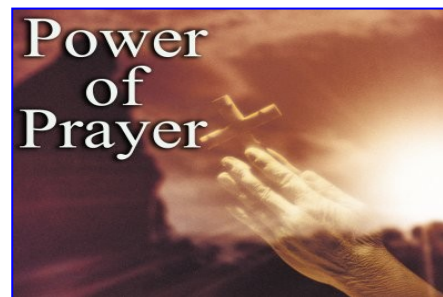
10:00 a.m. Sunday School, 11:00 a.m. Worship Service

Wednesdays

6:00 p.m. Pot Luck Dinner, 7:00 p.m. Bible Study



Every Sunday at 10:00 am



Every Wednesday:

6:00 pm Dinner

7:00 pm Prayer & Bible Study

SERMONS FOR JANUARY

Sunday, January 1 ~ New Baby, New Visitors, New Year; Matthew 2:1-18

Sunday, January 8 ~ God Protects; 2 Kings 18,19

Sunday, January 15 ~ God Restores; 2 Kings 20

Sunday, January 22 ~ God is Forgotten; 2 Kings 21:1-18

Sunday, January 29 ~ God is Remembered; 2 Kings 23:1-23

