

This coming Easter Weekend there will be numerous opportunities for you and your family members and friends to join us in celebrating the resurrection of Jesus from the grave, and the implications of His resurrection for our lives. Please check out the worship times and dates for these Easter services at our 3 campuses. For those leaving on vacation during “Spring Break,” I encourage you to attend one of our Good Friday services before you leave.

At all of our Campuses we are also asking our regular attendees to park away from the worship buildings so there will be plenty of parking spaces for our Easter guests. Good places to park for Easter Weekend for our Metairie Congregation would be down by our Crescent City Christian School, or under the second I-10 ramp away from the building.

The best things you can do in preparation for our Easter services are: 1) pray that the Holy Spirit will move in great power in our Easter Services, 2) invite your friends, family members, co-workers and neighbors to join us for one of our Easter services, and 3) offer to serve in some capacity at one of our services (parker, greeter, nursery worker, ushers, etc.) so that people who really need to hear about the healing and transforming power of Jesus can be welcomed and supported as they attend our Easter services. If you are willing to serve in some capacity in one of our Easter services, please contact your Community Pastor. Those Community Pastors are:

- St. Bernard Parish Community Pastor – Craig Ratliff (craigr@celebrationchurch.org)
- Orleans Parish Community Pastor – Tony Leverett (tonyl@celebrationchurch.org)
- Westbank Community Pastor – Shawn Johnson (shawnj@celebrationchurch.org)
- East Jefferson Community Pastors – Manley Miller (manleym@celebrationchurch.org), Ruth Hatfield (ruthh@celebrationchurch.org), Bob Carambat (bobc@celebrationchurch.org), or John Mollere.
- River Parishes Community Pastor – Dave Jochum (davej@celebrationchurch.org)

In conjunction with our Easter Services, we are also having *Easter Egg-stravaganzas* at all 3 of our Campuses this coming weekend. At our Metairie and St. Bernard Parish Campuses, our *Easter Egg-stravaganzas* will be on Saturday afternoon (2:00 at St. Bernard and 3:00 pm at Metairie). Many who attend our *Easter Egg-stravaganza* at our Metairie Campus will want to consider attending the Saturday 4:30 pm Easter service that immediately follows the big children’s event. Our River Parishes Campus *Easter Egg-stravaganza* will take place in conjunction with the Sunday morning Easter service. Again, these *Easter Egg-stravaganzas* are great opportunities that you can invite friends and family members to, and hopefully many who attend will attend our Easter services as well.

On Easter Weekend we will be beginning a new series of messages titled *GOOD NEW(S)*. We live in a time when people are “desperate” to hear some “good news.” In these upcoming services people will be encouraged and empowered as they learn how to overcome the challenges of life through the power of the living Lord Jesus. It’s going to be a great series, so be sure to make plans to attend one of our services every weekend.

Our Crescent City Christian School students are going to be involved in some *Great Days of Serving* today and tomorrow. Following their standardized testing they will be doing in the mornings, all of our Jr and Sr High students will be going out into our surrounding communities

to encourage and minister to people. These students will be helping widows, feeding the homeless, ministering to nursing home residents, visiting children with serious illnesses, helping children with special needs, and assisting with some campus and community service needs. Pray for these teens and the School faculty members who work with them, praying for the Lord to utilize the *Great Days of Serving* to touch and transform them as well as the people they are ministering to.

It is always a joy for me to receive cards, emails and letters from our members telling me how the Lord is working in their lives. This past week a lady handed me an envelope, that had in it a letter and a check that is to go towards our A CITY TRANSFORMED: INVESTING IN ETERNITY emphasis. In the letter she wrote that in 2008 she experienced some significant losses – the end of a long-term marriage, broken relationships with some former friends, the unanticipated death of a long time mentor, and the loss of her full-time job. She was helped immensely through our Divorce Care ministry, but also through THE GAME OF LIFE series that we were participating in at that time in our worship services and *Life Groups*. Like many in our congregation involved in that series, she was also reading the book *Chazown*, written by Craig Groeschel. In *Chazown*, she read the fable about a little bird that taught her three lessons: 1) not everyone who drops manure on you is your enemy, 2) not everyone who digs you out of manure is your friend, and 3) when you are in manure, keep your mouth shut and trust in God.

What happened in this woman's life as she put her full and complete trust in the Lord is that God worked mightily to: 1) first give her more work through her part-time job, 2) then provide her with a completely new job, and 3) provide for her an annual management bonus that was given to her by her former company. In her letter she wrote to me that an excerpt from the *Chazown* book best describes what God has done in her life. That excerpt reads: *“Allow God to give you eyes to see His purpose in your experiences – all of them! It is there if you look closely enough. And when you see it, you'll find your experience pointing the way to God's plan for your future.”*

I pray that all of us will turn to and trust in the Lord doing the “good times” and the “bad times” – and when we do we will discover that regardless of our circumstances God still has great plans and purposes for our future, and He will provide for our needs.

Let's pray and plan for a great Easter Weekend with our church family as well as other family members and friends, and believe and receive the “Good New(s) that the Lord has for each and every one of us!

Pastor Dennis