

GOOD NEWS CHRONICLE

Statement of Purpose

As a publication of the Gospel Mission, Inc., Nehemiah University, and Camp Jabez, the Good News Chronicle is designed to share the **Good News** in our community.

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Good Friday Surprises

It was a day of surprises, the day Jesus was killed. Luke, the physician and historian, recounts several eyewitness accounts of that fateful day. In each case, there is an element of surprise.

It certainly was a surprise for Simon. He was from North Africa, from Cyrene (modern-day Tripoli) and to be in Jerusalem for the Passover was a dream come true. When a crucifixion parade crossed his path on those unfamiliar streets, it should have been only a brief delay. But a surprising thing happened. Jesus stumbled under the weight of the cross, right in front of Simon. The cross he was required to carry fell to the ground.

Because Jerusalem was an occupied city, Roman law gave the soldiers the right of conscription. They could draft anyone into their service instantly with the touch of a spear blade. Simon from Tripoli was the closest person, so he was forced to pick up the cross and carry it, a humiliating task.

Unforgettable last words - The Roman soldiers—Jesus' executioners—had crucified many men by nailing them to wooden crosses. As the dying men would scream and suffer, the soldiers would sit at the feet of the crosses and play games—desensitized to the incessant curses and pleas. They prided themselves on being people not caught by surprise. Yet never before had any one of them heard what Jesus said.

Soon after his hands and feet were nailed to the cross, and it was lifted and dropped into place in the ground, Jesus prayed audibly for his executioners, "Father, forgive them, because they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34). It was enough to shock the toughest veteran. It was enough to make a man think before he went to sleep that night. So it's no wonder that when the centurion made his final inspection after Jesus' death, he paused at the cross and praised God by saying, "Surely this was a righteous man" (Luke 23:47).

The forgiveness of Jesus was a surprise then, but it is still a surprise today. He knows our worst sins so well, yet Jesus' heart still seeks to forgive.

A gasp and celebration - On the day Christ died, the angels must have been struck speechless at God's sacrifice. But perhaps even more amazing to them was the brief conversation between Christ and a common criminal (Luke 23:42, 43). For the condemned thief on the cross, time was running out. Regardless of what he had said or done before, in the end, he did fear God. He realized that his judgment after death would be totally determined by God.

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Easter on the Early Cycle this Year....March 23rd.

With Easter just a few weeks away, we naturally begin to think of Spring time, flowers and sunrise services. This year Easter is on its early cycle so we may not see much in the way of mild weather and flowers this Easter. In this part of the world Easter dates are between March 22 and April 25. Next year Easter is on April 23.

From the Christian perspective, a better term is the Resurrection Day. It is the day the Lord rose again with victory over sin. The Apostle Paul sums it up in I Corinthians 15:3:4. *Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day.*

Over time, many non-religious cultural elements have become part of the celebration and those aspects are often celebrated by many Christian and non-Christians alike....Easter eggs being one of them. Americans will spend about \$2 billion on Easter candy this year. About 700 million marshmallow Peeps will be made and 16 million Jellybeans.

The Resurrection Day is our nest egg for eternity.

Investing in Our Community

Over the 30 years that the Gospel Mission has been in the South Park community it has worked to make many improvements in buildings, land, housing, safety and living conditions. Actually, the Gospel Mission has made several million dollars worth of improvements on the block.

It is the goal of the Gospel Mission to keep on improving in every area we can. There is always room **for good improvements to maintain our community.**

Our greatest investment is in eternal matters. The Book of Matthew says, *But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt...* 6:20. There will come a time when all of earthly investments come to nothing and only eternal investments in Christ will last. How is your portfolio?

Good Friday Surprises - Continued

Like the convict on the far side who insulted Jesus (Luke 23:39), this man must have come to the cross with some advance knowledge of who Jesus was and what he could do. He must have realized Jesus was God's Son who was headed back home to the paradise from which he had come. Believing this, the thief asked Jesus to save him when he arrived back in heaven. What an interesting contrast between the criminal who mocked Jesus to save him physically and this man who sought Jesus to save him spiritually. Of course, Jesus said yes. He was being crucified for this very purpose-to save sinners and to promise heaven to all those who ask.

Two thousand years later, the invitation still stands.

Area Youth Attend Victoria Theatre

Our community youth will have attended six sessions at the Victoria Theatre this season. The next performance is the exciting adventures of **The Wizard of Oz**. We will join Dorothy, Toto, Tinman, Scarecrow, Lion and the rest on the yellow brick road. This is an excellent presentation of the great American classic that everyone will enjoy.

Our goal is to get our youth exposed to quality times that might inspire them to make something of their lives. As we know from the camp...we can lead a horse to water but we can't make him drink...**But we love to drown them in good things.**

Camp Jabez Getting Ready for Summer 2008

For the third summer in a row, the Gospel Mission will open Camp Jabez with more fun and excitement than ever before. We have added new courses to our challenge areas. We have added a new and very big horse for our older youth; we now have 15 horses at the camp...and we could go on and on with the anticipation of a great summer ahead for our campers.

Many of our neighborhood youth have the opportunity to attend Camp Jabez and enjoy the **good things that God has done**. The woods are awesome as well as all of the things that we find there! What a great experience! We are thankful to our many supporters for paying the way for our youth.

Historically, the camp ministry has always been a winner in youth work and Camp Jabez is no exception.

Nehemiah University Spring Quarter Computer Classes

The Nehemiah University's spring computer classes will begin March 29th. Registration is March 8th and 15th from 9:00AM until 11:00AM at Nehemiah University, 750 South Main Street. Computer 101 with Keyboarding, Word 101 and 102, Excel 102, Computer 101 and Hardware are the classes being offered during the spring quarter on Saturdays. (Pre-requisites may apply).

This is an excellent opportunity to start or brush up on your computer skills. **As usual, there is no charge for these classes** except your commitment to stick with them.

Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation Donates Area Park to the Gospel Mission.

Churchdell Commons Park at the corner of Lincoln and Pulaski Streets has been donated to the Gospel Mission, Inc. In the normal tradition of the Gospel Mission, we will improve the property and maintain it as **a good, safe and quality place for the community**. As soon as the weather permits, we will start to work on it. It will be available for general public use during daylight hours. Special events can be scheduled through the Gospel Mission.

We look for God's blessings on our community.



King's Table Restaurant Hours

The King's Table schedule for the community:

Good food... Good people

Monday, Wednesday,
Friday, Saturday* Starting time: Noon
Tuesday, Thursday Starting time: 5:30 PM
Sunday Starting time: 2:30 PM

****Doors open 30 minutes prior to starting time.****

***Closed the 3rd. Sat. of each month for maintenance.**

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16