

THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER

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Newsletter of the Washington Christian Church

APRIL 2006

2006 - YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION

Easter Services

Join us as we start the Easter Celebration on Palm Sunday, April 9th with our regular Worship and Sunday School times.

Then join us for our Maundy Thursday Candlelight Service held here at WCC on Thur, April 13th at 7 PM.

On Friday, April 14th at 7 p.m. St. Mark's Lutheran Church is hosting a community wide Good Friday Worship Service, sponsored by the Washington Ministerial Association.

Then we would like you to join us here at Washington Christian Church on Easter Sunday, April 16th for our Easter service. Come discover how peace really is possible from the Prince of Peace, Jesus.

Our service times are:

1st service-8:30 a.m.

Sunday School from 9:45-10:45 a.m.

2nd service-11:00 a.m.

Please join us and invite your friends and family as we worship our risen Savior, Jesus Christ.

Find 'Real' Peace This Easter!

Focus on Our Family

by Betty Hoyt

An Interview With Rick & Tami Mason

Rick Mason was born on October 22, 1963 in Peoria, Illinois to Dick and Cloanne Mason. He has a younger brother, Ron Mason, and two younger sisters, Kelly Gulley, and Kathy Benson. Rick graduated from Washington Community High

School. While at WCHS, Rick played football and basketball. He then went on and graduated from Worsham College of Mortuary Science. After graduating, Rick joined his father in the family funeral home business in Washington, Illinois and also helped out when needed in Metamora.

Tami was born on October 8, 1963 in Tuscola, Illinois to William Alexander and DeeDee McPheron. She has a sister Robin Simpson and a brother Bill Alexander. Tami also graduated from WCHS where she was active in the Pantherettes. She went on to Illinois State University where she graduated. Tami was also quite active in pom-pon while attending ISU.

Rick and Tami started dating in high school around 16 years of age. Tami attended the Highview Church of God and Rick attended Calvary Mennonite with his family. Tami began going to the Mennonite church with Rick as a teenager around 1981. They were married on August 31, 1985 at the Calvary Mennonite Church in Washington.

When asked about special things while growing up, Rick shared that the family always ate dinner together. He also shared that they were read Bible stories at bedtime, which were usually from a special book, which was given to the children from Cloanne's parents, the Hises. Rick mentioned that his Grandparents gave the same book to Tami and him when A.J. was born.

While focusing back on his childhood, Rick shared that whenever Grandpa Hise would take the children in the car, whether to the store or the park, he would always say a prayer before putting the car in reverse. His grandfather usually prayed for several hours daily, which Rick feels is why his whole family has been so blessed. He shared that as

Grandpa got weaker while in the nursing home, his prayer life slowed down (only 1-2 hours daily!), but still felt so blessed through Grandpa's prayers.

He also mentioned that his family (siblings and parents) spent a lot of time together rather than his parents going one way and the kids another. He felt this was very important in growing up. He feels that he had a great upbringing in the Work from the very beginning and holds dear to his faith today. He stated that prayer has been a big part in his life and that he became a born again Christian around 11 years of age, and even though he might have side stepped along the way, he held close to God, and felt guilty if he started to slip. He felt very proud to state that he held dear to his faith while attending college, which many youths tend to fall away quite a bit.

Rick and Tami shared that they started seeking out a church where their needs could be met as a young couple, when they began attending WCC. While attending WCC, they felt God was calling them towards New Mexico. They approached Jeff about being baptized, and before leaving Washington, they were baptized in the presence of their families at Rick and Tami's home, in their pool. Tami says this is when she accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior and was definitely a turning point in her Christian life as well as her roles as wife and daughter.

While in New Mexico, Rick and Tami shared that they had everything a young couple could have. Good jobs, adventure, and money. They felt something was missing. They had wanted children but somehow it wasn't the time and then they were blessed with three beautiful children: A.J. on March 25, 2000, Lily on April 12, 2003, and Lexi on September 5, 2003. They felt their lives were filled with blessings from the Lord during these years.

While in new Mexico, they attended a non-denominational mega-church, Calvary of Albuquerque. Once they had their children, they felt the church was too big. They sought another smaller church and attended a local church in the Baptist faith. While there, A.J. attended Awana and loved it!

While in New Mexico, Rick's father became ill and died. Rick loved his father very much and misses him. He questioned if his dad knew his Jesus while standing at his dad's bed, and his uncle took him

aside and put his arm around Rick, and said, "Yes, he knows your Jesus," and Rick feels very strongly that his dad did but just didn't talk about it openly, and is now there with Him and he will see him again some day.

Rick and Tami mentioned that there was still something missing in their lives and they know it was family, so they left all the earthly things they had, "jobs, adventure, and money," and moved back to Washington in October of 2004. Rick quoted, "So much more with so much less."

As the Bible states, "the man of the house should be the spiritual leader of our home", and Rick is indeed the Christian leader of his home. He feels he has been so blessed with a Christian upbringing, a "great" grandfather who was a preacher of the Word, and now a family with whom he and Tami can continue their strong walk with the Lord and lead their children.

Rick was asked to fill in for Jon Gillespie in their Sunday School Class, and he has drawn others back into the church fold. While teaching, his sister Kelly, who lives in this area with her husband, came this past Sunday, February 19th to support him in his teaching of the Word.

Please take time to get to know this part of our church family. They are a special family and have a lot to share with others in their walk with the Lord. This church is blessed to have them as part of our church family.

"While interviewing the Masons, A.J. wanted to share something. He told me that his sister Lily, had fallen off the couch and had gotten hurt. He was concerned but so glad that she came home all right after seeing the doctor. He is a caring brother although the girls out-number him. It was good to see him wanting to share something also. Children are very important in all of our lives. Get to know A.J. and you will see what a great big brother he is, even at his young age."

REFLECTIONS FROM THE MINISTERS

Many guys wait all year for the Superbowl, the playoffs, the World Series, Wimbledon, the Stanley Cup, the Indy 500; I wait all year for the Oscars. The Academy Awards are my Superbowl. I have watched them every year since I was about ten

years old. Like most Superbowl fans, I don't watch the Oscars because I have an inordinate respect for the participants or the voters or the presenters. Instead, like Superbowl fans who love football but not necessarily football players, I love movies, but not necessarily movie makers, actors, etc. I like the tributes, the movie clips, and the inside jokes (which is why I also love DVD's; watching an excellent movie, then learning more about the filmmakers' motivations and the movie-making process is like a movie geek's dream!), but I'm often annoyed by the celebrities and their causes and their misplaced sympathies.

This year, unlike years when I have a clear favorite I am rooting for, like *Return of the King*, I found myself rooting against a movie. I was cheering for *Anything but Brokeback Mountain*. Even though I had not yet seen either movie, I was really happy that *Crash* won Best Picture just because it wasn't *Brokeback Mountain*. It isn't like me to shun a movie based strictly on its subject matter, but I just can't get behind a movie about gay cowboys. Sue me.

I had heard good things about *Crash*, and now it had won Best Picture, so I ran out and rented it and I am so glad I did. *Crash* is a complex movie - the language is rough and there are some scenes that are difficult to watch - but it is an important movie. Take this passage, spoken by Graham (played by Don Cheadle), at the beginning of the film, "It's the sense of touch. In any real city, you walk, you know? You brush past people, people bump into you. In L.A., nobody touches you. We're always behind this metal and glass. I think we miss that touch so much, that we crash into each other, just so we can feel something."

On the surface, *Crash* looks like a story about prejudice and hatred, but it is actually a modern-day retelling of the Parable of the Good Samaritan. It takes place in a fictional Los Angeles where everyone is the beaten man in the ditch and everyone is the priest or Levite, but maybe everyone could also be the Samaritan. People are walled off and emotionally distant. The characters are products of our 21st-century American culture. All of their connections are either inappropriate or impersonal or illegal; their relationships are all defined by prejudice and distrust until they find themselves in a ditch and have to reach out to the

untouchable Samaritan man for help, only to find out that they are just as untouchable to someone else. There is fear and there is pain, but there is also hope.

This is what being human is all about. It is what Christ showed us when He risked His reputation to eat with prostitutes and tax collectors. It's what He modeled when He shared His life and ministry with His circle of twelve comrades. We must share ourselves. We must risk our safe lives behind all this "metal and glass" and touch. Otherwise it will be our fate to crash into each other just to feel something.

What are you doing to reach out? What are you doing to overcome your prejudices? Could you reach out to the prostitute or the tax collector? How about the gay cowboy? Maybe I will see *Brokeback Mountain* after all.

God bless,
Ed

"A Vessel of Honor"

Christian Women's Conference
Wednesday, April 26, 2006

Check out the poster in the Foyer to see just who will be there and what the topics will be at this year's Christian Women's Conference to be held at Lincoln Christian College and Seminary. It promises to be the best yet! There will be 4 key speakers this year along with noon-hour elective opportunities, two main sessions in the morning and two in the afternoon. Box lunches will be provided during the noon hour.

An offering will be taken up to help with the purchase of indoor and outdoor furniture for the student center and the courtyard.

To register, send your check for \$25 per person to:
Christian Women's Conference 2006, Lincoln
Christian College and Seminary
100 Campus View Dr., Lincoln, IL 62656

by April 19th, or \$30 after that date. Or you may register on line at: www.lccs.edu, click on event.

Note of Special Interest!!! Benjamin Browning will be doing the music this year!!!!!!!!!!!!

MissioNews

by Steve Peterson

Restoration House Ministries

This month's Missions focus is on Restoration House Ministries, headquartered in Manchester, New Hampshire. The goal of RHM is to partner with churches in New England to transform the spiritual landscape with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. RHM has been in operation for nearly a decade (their 10 year anniversary celebration is October 7 of this year) and has already made a strong impact by directly planting or helping to plant 12 churches in New England!

Dan Clymer, Executive Director of RHM, grew up in Fairview Heights, Illinois, and has an extensive history with Lincoln Christian College. He received both Bachelor of Arts and Master of Divinity degrees there, and began teaching as a Professor of the New Testament in the fall of 1975. In July of 1996, Dan Clymer moved his family to Manchester, NH, and began RHM. God has done great works through RHM, and in their 10 years of existence not only have they planted 12 churches, but also offered college classes and internships to many students. Students may enroll in one of two internship programs that vary in length. The first program is a short-term program that lasts one semester and allows the student to help out at one of the new church plants. The second internship option available is for one to two years and is good for students who have just graduated and are looking for an opportunity to minister under a mentor before heading out on their own.

Washington Christian Church has a special connection with RHM. As many of you may know, our own Curt Nordhielm, Bert and Joyce's son, serves as Director of Cross-Cultural Ministries for RHM. Curt joined the staff of RHM in 1999, and is responsible for starting church plants among various ethnic groups living in New England. Thanks to Curt's efforts and the Lord's blessing, there are currently four cross-cultural RHM church plants. They include Korean and Chinese churches in Manchester, New Hampshire, a Cambodian church in Lowell, Massachusetts, and a Liberian church in Providence, Rhode Island.

One of the most rewarding things about being involved in mission work is seeing the enthusiasm

of the Holy Spirit passed on and carried by those that have been ministered to. Wing Wong is a Chinese evangelist who has helped RHM's Chinese church grow, but his work is not limited to the States. Recently he has helped believers back in mainland China purchase an old deserted building and convert it into a house for the Lord, where worship services are now taking place. Stay tuned for the Mission Moment here at WCC in April to see some photos of this good work in China!

WCC is proud to support the efforts of Restoration House Ministries. Please keep this mission in your prayers to help bring the gospel to seekers in New England and beyond.

Washington Christian Village News

WCV Theme Party

We need to have helpers on Wednesday, April 12th at 1 p.m. to help with the WCV Theme Party. We will probably serve ice cream and play Bingo with the residents. We need enough people to supervise the game while others will serve ice cream to residents who stay in their rooms. If you are willing to donate a cake, please see Anamarie Morris. We will need one Angle Food and four additional 9 x 13 cakes.

I hope to collect a total of \$55 for the refreshments, gifts, and decorations that were made for the table decorations.

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

WCV will hold the Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on Thursday, April 20. See Anamarie Morris or Mary Fisher if you plan to attend the luncheon. Other than the monthly Tuesday morning Volunteer Service time, May will be the last special service until the Fall table decorations.

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Don't forget to set your clocks ahead 1 hour before going to bed on Saturday, April 1st as Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday. We want to be sure you get to church on time!

Youth Page

Sr High Youth Group

Don't forget!!! The High School Youth Group is meeting at the Pittman's on Sunday evenings from 6:00- 8:00 p.m.

Mission Mexico Meeting

April 19th @ 7:30 p.m. (after FISH). All those planning to go on the Mission Mexico Trip need to be there.

April's Youth Team Meeting will be held Wednesday, April 5th at 7:30 PM. This is for all the Youth Ministry Teams. Please see Cory Hynek if unable to attend.

Annual Easter Party/ Egg Hunt

Kids!! Be sure to get this date on your calendars - the Annual Children's Easter Party / Egg Hunt will be on Saturday, April 8th from 10 am-12 pm. This event is for Preschoolers thru 4th grade. If planning to attend, please sign up in the foyer and bring 1 bag of wrapped candy per child by Sunday, April 2nd.

WCC 2005 VBS is Coming!

Let's get fired up about Jesus! Mark it on your calendars! Fiesta! will be a 6-day adventure beginning Sunday, July 30 and ending Friday, August 4th. Each Crew member will learn Jesus is our friend, our life, our leader, our Savior and our helper!

There will be daily challenges in Chadder's Desert Drive-in Theater, Cactus Crafts, Grande Games, Hot Bible Adventures, Maraca Munchies and lots of awesome music in Sing & Play Ole'!

Our mission for the week will be Mission Mexico 2006.

We need a lot of volunteers in order to make this a successful VBS, so please visit the VBS table in the foyer on April 2nd and 9th. Please prayerfully consider joining us this year!

Thank you in advance for your prayers and support! If you have any questions, please contact either Jess Bochart (444-8531) or Jess Pittman (444-5868).

Aluminum Can Drive

If you are saving cans for our Youth fundraiser you may bring them in plastic bags to the South

Parsonage (Jon & Jessica's) garage. Please, we can only take aluminum cans. No other aluminum will be accepted. Please do not leave the cans in or by the new storage building. Thank You.

PRIME TIMERS PERSPECTIVE

Prime Timers Calendar of Events for April

April's Prime Timers Prayer Breakfast ~ Saturday, April 1st @ 9:00 a.m.

WCV Volunteer Lunch: Thurs, April 20 @ WCV

WCV Volunteer Day ~ Tuesday, April 25 @ 9 a.m.

At Easter Time

by Laura Elizabeth Richards

The little flowers came through the ground,
At Easter time, at Easter time;
They raised their heads and looked around
At happy Easter time.
And every pretty bud did say,
"Good people, bless this holy day,
At happy Easter time!"
The pure white lily raised it's cup
At Easter time, at Easter time;
The crocus to the sky looked up
At happy Easter time.
"We'll hear the song of heaven!" they say,
"It's glory shines on us today.
At holy Easter time!"
'Twas long and long and long ago,
That Easter time, that Easter time;
But still the pure white lilies blow
At happy Easter time.
And still each little flower doth say,
"Good Christians, bless this holy day,
For Christ is risen, the angels say
At blessed Easter time!"

Mary at the Tomb

by Kay Hoffman

She came with burial spices
While the heavens yet were gray.
Heart filled with grief, she pondered
Who would roll the stone away.
But lo, the tomb was open;
The great stone was set aside.
With fearful heart, Mary stooped

And tried to peer inside.
"Why seekest thou the living
Here among the dead?"
She heard the angel say.
"He has risen as He said."
When Mary saw her blessed Lord
Within the garden fair,
Her heart was filled with rapture
As she knelt and worshipped there.
The words He spoke to Mary
He still speaks to us today:
"Go tell the others that I live."
The stone is rolled away.

No man can tell whether he is rich or poor by turning to his ledger. It is the heart that makes a man rich. He is rich according to what he is, not according to what he has.

- Henry Ward Beecher

Reflect upon your present blessings, of which every man has many; not on your past misfortunes, of which all men have some.

- Dickens

F.Y.I

For Your Information

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ARTICLES:

Turn into church office by the 15th of the month.

Suggested length of the articles:

Typewritten-1/2 pages / Handwritten-1 1/2 pages

Pictures should be black and white if possible.

Articles must be signed - name will be withheld from publication upon request.

Editor reserves right to condense, edit, or reject articles.

Annual Deaconess's Organizational Meeting

ALL Deaconess's: Please put this meeting on your calendar and plan to attend!!! ~ Monday, April 17th @ 7 PM @ WCC ~ We will be setting up the schedule for the upcoming year for serving. Also, we will be setting up the committees for various activities we do around the church. If unable to attend that night you need to contact Pati Heller (444-7700) or Nancy Groff (383-4327). Otherwise we will select a job or schedule a time for you.

Mother & Daughter Banquet

All Ladies of the church: Whether you are a mother or not, you are still a daughter so please keep Thursday, April 27th open for a Mother and Daughter Night Out.

Plan to attend a wonderful meal and have an opportunity to see slides about the continent of Africa.

Keep your eyes and ears open for further information about tickets. Why not try for four generations in attendance?

Circle of Friends

On Thursday, February 23, thirteen women - a baker's dozen, enjoyed the 'SSSS' meeting of Circle of Friends at the Church.

Starting at 6:30 p.m., the women sipped, snacked, and sorted the remaining 65 pounds of crayons. Mary Fisher, Terri Zotz, Debbie Brown, Sherri Frazier, Laurie Rau, Laurel Gillespie, Betty Hoyt, Jessica Pittman, Kim Taylor, Debbie Walker and Kim Rickey, snipped paper from, snapped into pieces, and sorted by color numerous crayons.

Beth Howley and Anamarie Morris spent time in the kitchen performing alchemy. The variously formed new crayons were to be ergonomically correct. Small children who have some physical problems often have difficulty holding the regular circular crayons.

Using muffin tins and paper cones, both alchemists melted the crayons and mixed colors. Beth also made colorful race car shaped and heart shaped crayons. The cache is composed of 265 cones, 31 hearts, 53 cars, and 110 muffin shaped crayons.

The crayons will be donated to Easter Seals and will be used in their therapy programs.

Besides reaching out to the community, the women enjoyed reaching out to each other. All women of the church are welcome to attend Circle of Friends. We meet the 4th Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Some items of information:

A. Nominations were taken at the March meeting.

(cont'd)

B. Angie and Olivia Hobbs shared about their mission trip at the March meeting.

C. Father and Son Breakfast was Saturday morning, March 25th.

D. We will have a Mother & Daughter Salad buffet and program Thursday, April 27.

E. New officers will take office May 25th, 2006.

F. We need people to sign up to help in the Diaper Station at the Cherry Festival at the end of May.

Washington Christian Nursery School Annual Spring Program

You are cordially invited to join us on Tuesday, May 2nd for the 4-5's and/or Thursday, May 4th for the 3's Annual Spring Nursery School Programs.

The children are working very hard on their songs and fingerplays and it's such a joy to see them perform. Refreshments will be served after the program in the Fellowship Hall. Check the church bulletins closer to the date for times.

F.I.S.H. News

The F.I.S.H. menus for April are as follows:

April 5th: Hamburger Pie, Relish Tray, Dessert;
April 12th: NO F.I.S.H.; April 19th: Pizza, Salad, Dessert;
April 26th: Potato/Salad Bar, Dessert;

Please sign up in the foyer by the Sunday before the meal, and if you have to cancel, please call the office as soon as possible so we can plan accordingly. Cost: \$3 per person or \$7 per immediate family.

Join us after the meal (6:15 p.m.) for the Adult Bible Studies and Youth Groups.

DOING LIFE TOGETHER . . .

LIFEGROUPS are the basic building block of ministry at Washington Christian Church.

We aren't just "doing small groups" and they are not just another ministry we provide. We believe that LIFEGROUPS are the best way for today's church to express the unity and community described in the

Biblical accounts of the first-century church. For this reason, we encourage everyone to join a LIFE-GROUP and discover what Jesus had in mind when He established the church nearly 2000 years ago.

LIFEGROUPS meet weekly to pray for one another, share one another's burdens, and encourage one another. LIFEGROUPS usually consist of 5-15 members and study how to apply Jeff's Sunday message to their daily lives. You don't have to be a Bible scholar or an extrovert. No one will put you on the spot or make you do something that makes you uncomfortable. . . .

. . . Come as you are.

LIFEGROUPS MEET AT THE FOLLOWING TIMES AND LOCATIONS:

LIFEGROUP 1

Wednesday, 6:15 to 7:30 p.m. At the church, 1012 N. Main St. Using the WCC curriculum.

LIFEGROUP 2

Monday, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Location rotates (call 444-8531) Using the WCC curriculum.

LIFEGROUP 3

Monday, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. At 208 W. Holland St. Using the WCC curriculum.

LIFEGROUP 4

Sunday, 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. At 109 N. Pine St. Variable curriculum.

LIFEGROUP 5

Thursday, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. At 208 W. Holland St. Using the WCC curriculum.

LIFEGROUP 6

Sunday, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. 1506 Kern Rd. Using the WCC curriculum.

There are three more groups that plan to launch. Stay tuned!

LIFEGROUP Questions? Contact Ed at worship@washingtonchristian.net or 309-712-6495 (cell) or 309-444-2550 (office) or on the web at <http://washintonchristian.net>

Put this date on your calendar. We will hold our Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, April 30th at 9:45 a.m. during the Sunday School Hour.

The 2005 Annual Reports are finished and available to be picked up in the foyer starting Sun, April 2nd.

Please take a copy and read it. This is what your Church Teams have been doing the past year and some of the goals they wish to accomplish during this coming year.

If you are not involved in a Team or Organization of the Church yet, read through the Annual Report and get familiar with our Teams and what they do, then talk to the Chairman of the Team you might be interested in joining. Get involved!

Men's Workday

The Property Team is planning a Men's Workday for Saturday, April 8th, starting at 8 a.m. Several things around the church need to be done, like hanging new fluorescent lights, putting in a new ceiling in the kitchen, plumbing, general maintenance, etc. If you are interested in helping, please sign up in the foyer, or call Bill Groff at 383-4327.

Little Galilee Christian Assembly

CAMP!!! It's right around the corner!!! And it's time to making your plans for this summer's camping experience! There are plenty of fun, exciting camps to choose from at LGCA. They even have camps for adults!!

There are two Family Camps again this year. The first one is over Memorial Day weekend and the 2nd over Labor Day weekend. Plus there are many adult retreats throughout the year, ranging from Senior Saints Day to Ladies Retreat to Men's Retreat. Also, they have a retreat for Singles, and for Mom/ Daughters and Dad/Lads. Surly you can find one that meets your needs.

This year they have a new experience for the Scrapbooker. Yes, they even have a Scrapbook Retreat! They also have their specialty camps: Bike Camp, Fishing Camp, Equestrian Camp, Athletes Week and Fine Arts Week. If you are interested in helping at the Bike Camp this year talk to Sheri young. They are looking for some one to help.

Then there are the usual kids/youth camps ranging from Day Camps for the new 'just-getting-started' campers, Overnight Camps, Partial Week Camps, to Full Week Camps. All are chocked full of learning experiences that your kids won't forget. They can enjoy a new Activity Center and a new 'Game Room' along with the Olympic size swimming pool with a great water slide and a 16 foot climbing wall and a 5 acre stocked lake complete with canoes, paddle boats, and fishing poles too! In your spare time you can walk/run the miles and miles of trails and camp fire areas and just pretty much wear yourself out with fun!

So, make plans now to join us at LGCA sometime this summer and have a lot of fun, make new friends, learn about Jesus from top notch Christian leaders, and just enjoy God's beautiful creation. All these things are here for one reason: so that you and your children will see God and Jesus in a new way.

Check out the camp schedule on the Youth Bulletin Board in the Fellowship Hall. You can also take a Virtual Tour of LGCA on their web site at www.littlegalilee.com.

Scriptural Paradoxes

He who is the Bread of Life began His ministry
hungering.

He who is the Water of Life ended His ministry
thirsting.

He was weary, yet He is our rest.

He paid tribute, yet He is the King.

He was called a devil, and cast out devils.

He prayed, yet He answers our prayers.

He wept, yet He dries our tears.

He was sold for 30 pieces of silver and redeemed
the world.

He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and is the
Good Shepherd.

He died and gave His life, and by dying destroyed
death.