



Immersed and Drenched in Grace

The 27th General Synod of the United Church of Christ — Marylen Marty-Gentile

From June 26 to June 30, I joined over 3000 of my new best friends in Grand Rapids, Michigan for the national gathering of the UCC. As is the case with the national gathering of the Presbyterian Church (USA), this event happens every other year. These gatherings are occasions for clergy and lay folk, delegates and observers to come together under one roof. This year's theme was *Immerse Yourself*.

We did. We did business. We had fun. We worshiped. We shopped. And I noticed UCC folks eat a lot of cookies.

Worship was extraordinary, featuring art, music of the instrumental and vocal variety, dance, and fabulous preaching. The highlight for me was the worship leadership of Otis Moss III, the new senior pastor of Trinity UCC here in Chicago. He preached on Revelation 1:1-8 and used punctuation as his controlling image. We clapped and shouted when we heard about periods, semicolons; colons, question marks, exclamation marks and especially commas. He shared the good news through punctuation.

The business was important and energizing. The delegates passed two governance resolutions: one affecting ministry and ordination, one reducing and combining the committees that do the day-to-day business and ministry of the national church. Other resolution actions called for solidarity with the people of Iran, support for Iraqi refugees, a continuation of "Sacred Conversations on Race," advocacy regarding a single-payer health care solution and regarding the inclusion of anti-bullying curriculum in public schools. One of the strengths of the UCC is its willingness to be on the cutting edge of how the church can respond to policy issues and serve as a beacon to other denominations. Watching this denomination do business was exciting—the UCC takes very seriously God's call to inclusion, all people, all positions, all voices.

I went to the General Synod as part of my requirements for ordination. Not surprisingly, I did not know what to expect. What I discovered was that God works in amazing ways in many settings of the church. Churches outside First United do ministry that serves the world and dazzles in its breadth and depth. And I remembered why I love the Church—the Church is a gathering of many different, often wacky people who do their best to serve the One who is the source of life, to do new things in the name of God, to co-create new ways of living with God the creator of all.

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Transitions

Baptisms:

Aaron Steven Herrman,
son of Deana and Chris, brother of Anja

Jenna Kate Kozinski,
daughter of Holly and Ron, sister of Kara

Marriage:

Sarah Willey and John Severson

Compassion:

Marion Jones
Ed Guinan, father of Patrick Guinan

Condolence:

Joseph Cristanus, father of Susan Larson, grandfather of
Katherine, Scott and Ingrid

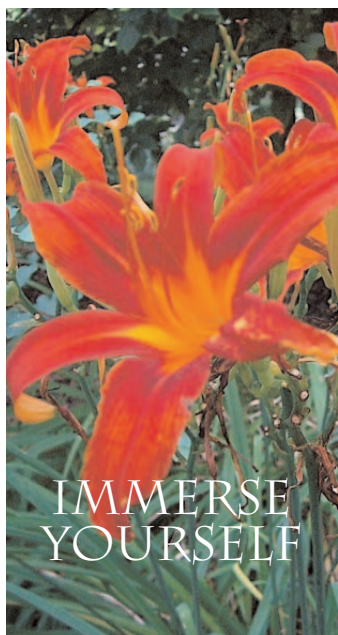
CERTAINTY

Certainty undermines one's power, and turns happiness into a long shot. Certainty confines.

Dears, there is nothing in your life that will not change—especially your ideas of God.

Look what the insanity of righteous knowledge can do: crusade and maim thousands in wanting to convert that which is already gold into gold.

continued>



August Summer Worship at 10 am

August 2 – Pentecost 9 and Communion Sunday

Exodus 2-4, 9-15 and John 6:24-35

“Drenched in Grace”

August 9 – Pentecost 10

1 Corinthians 12:12-26

“Pauline Yoga”

Work Campers share their experiences.

August 16 – Pentecost 11 and Baptism for Imara Westfallen

Ephesians 5:15-20 and Romans 8:31-39

“Nothing Separates Us from the Love of God”

August 23 – Pentecost 12

Ephesians 6:10-20 and Romans 12:1-21

“Overcoming Evil with Good”

August 30 – Pentecost 13

Song of Solomon 2:8-13 and Romans 13:1-10

“The Economy of Love”

Note: Worship will continue at 10 am until Gathering Sunday, Sept. 13, when worship time resumes at 11 am

Deacons:

Carl Nauert	Mario Butler-del Rio
Franklyn (Bud) Hayes	Betsy Samore
Neal McNish	Connie Ronnow
Lee Anderson	Priscilla Sibley
Melinda Haag	Irene Worley
Chris Davis	Karin Pietrini
Sally Sutherland	

Pastoral Care Needs

Please contact a member of the pastoral staff if you need a home visit, hospital visit, nursing home visit or personal counseling. If there is a pastoral emergency after office hours, Lead Pastor Julie R. Harley can be reached on her cell phone at (630) 561-4255.

Yes! We Record Services!

Each Sunday we record a CD of our Sunday service which is then placed in the library and is available for check-out. Right now this is all the work of George Ashman, so if others would be interested in helping occasionally, he would be glad for the assistance. If you are interested in a copy of any CD for yourself or to take to members who are unable to join us at church, you are welcome to copy it yourself or talk with George about how to obtain one. Sermons are available in print on the Elder's Desk in the Lounge and online through the Church website (www.firstunitedoakpark.com).

Fall Weekend Spiritual Retreat — Julie R. Harley

There are only 15 spaces still open for our all-church spiritual retreat at Stronghold Conference Center in Oregon, IL. The retreat begins at 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 26, and concludes at 2:00 pm. Sunday, Sept. 27. It will be led by Leah Fowler, Julie R. Harley and Marylen Marty-Gentile. This weekend is designed as a time to get away, to be with God and our fellow church members in a relaxed setting, and to nurture our spiritual lives. This retreat center is within a two-hour drive, and we will stay in a lodge, with all meals provided. The cost is \$50 per person. Please make reservations (first come, first served) by contacting Julie R. Harley at jrh@firstunitedoakpark.com or 708.386.5215 x22.

—Beth Mrkvicka

**Clerk's
Corner**

Summer may mean vacations and breaks from regular routines, but Church Council continues its work. June saw the farewell of two associate pastors and the establishment of two search committees – for an interim pastor and a Pastoral Search Committee (PSC) to fill the position held by Mamie Broadhurst.

The Big Picture Discussion at our June meeting was led by Dick Krissinger, the Consultant for the Vision Task Force at First United. Other members of the Task Force were also in attendance. Dick walked us through the inspiration, methodology, timeline and goals of the group. The Task Force plans to guide the congregation as its vision is discerned, not create the vision. It wants to determine what is and isn't working at First United, commit to addressing and shedding the things that aren't working and eventually establish the intentions of the church by looking for common themes. To accomplish this goal, the Task Force will be using variations of the following four questions:

- ❖ What is working and bringing value to First United? What is making a difference?
- ❖ What is working but bringing no value?
- ❖ What is not working, yet would bring value if it were?
- ❖ What is missing that would be of value?

Council spent time answering all of these questions. The Task Force will be asking these questions of our membership as well as community leaders and other churches. We look forward to hearing their findings and recommendations at the annual meeting in 2010. The other major topic at our June meeting was a discussion about search committees. The process for establishing both interim and Pastoral Search Committees was reviewed. The Interim Search Committee is named by Council. The PSC is nominated by Council and voted on by the congregation. Names of potential members come primarily from volunteers and staff recommendations. As the names are evaluated and the lists are generated, the values we share and respect are used to focus. These values include a variety of backgrounds and experiences within the church, inclusivity, willingness to serve, a range of ages and a history of not having clergy serve on search committees. Members of both search committees can be found elsewhere in the *Messenger Bell*. The Interim Committee is already at work and hopes to have a recommendation by the end of August.

Our meeting ended with expressions of gratitude for the hard work of the Vision Task Force and those who worked on establishing the two search committees. We also reflected on the notable life of Gerald Potts, Jr.

Vision Team

—Rick Ashton

The work of the First United Vision Team continues through the summer. In a June conversation with Council, we began gathering information and opinion around important questions for the future of our congregation.

We asked the following:

- What is working and bringing real value to the church?
- What is working and not making any difference?
- What is not working and will bring real value when it is?
- What is currently missing and will make a difference when it is present?

In addition, we are launching two-person research teams to learn from community leaders and other congregations. We will look for the issues and the energy in our local community and for examples of best practices of thriving congregations.

Our charge is to help First United Church find its own clear and compelling vision and direction for the coming years. With God's help, we are confident that we will. Our members are: Mark Loafman, Mark Jolicoeur, Sara Stevenson, Jane Barker, Richard Krissinger, Julie Harley, Rick Ashton

Certainty can become an illness that creates hate and greed.

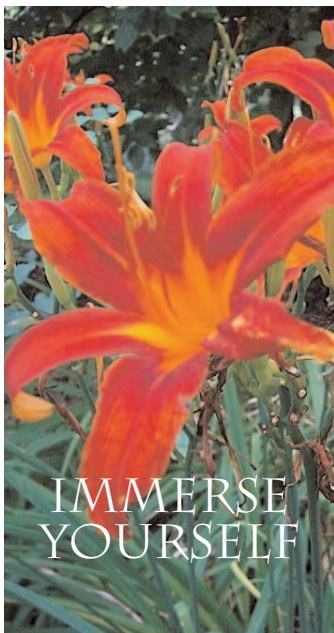
God once said to Tuka,

“Even I am ever changing —
I am ever beyond
Myself,

what I may have once put my seal upon,
may no longer be the greatest
Truth.”

—Tukaram

*Love Poems From God:
Twelve Sacred Voices
from the East and West,
versions by Daniel Ladinsky*



COVENANT of the Pastoral Search Committee Members

—Laurie Jolicoeur

We, who are serving on the Pastoral Search Committee for First United Church of Oak Park, promise to perform faithfully the vital task of searching for a new pastor. We pledge, with God’s guidance and your prayers, to be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit in all we do, say, and decide.

We will endeavor:

- to establish a harmonious working relationship within our committee;
- to maintain consistent attendance at our search committee meetings;
- to be open and patient listeners to each other and to the congregation;
- to listen carefully to your hopes and dreams as we consult with you, the members, in the development of a description of our church community and the style of pastoral leadership we seek;
- to maintain strict confidentiality in all we read, say, and hear—protecting both the privacy of each other and of potential candidates;
- to review all profiles with open minds and hearts, treating all candidates fairly and justly;
- to seek decisions not made by majority rule, but by the coming together of minds, hearts, and souls in a consensus that will build a firm foundation for the effective future mission and ministry of this church.

We pledge, as a gathered community of faith, to be patient with you and to respect your need to be confidential in your task. We recognize that the work of our search committee is a difficult assignment and will take much effort. We pray for you and offer our support and words of encouragement throughout this time.

These things we promise in the hope and belief that you will be obedient to the guidance of the spirit as you seek a new associate pastor for mission and membership to minister with us.

The Pastoral Search Committee met for the first time on Tuesday, July 23rd. The members of the PSC are: Lou Valsoano, Marilyn Kauffmann, Robert Hickok, Shanti Kulkarni, Steve Mrkvicka, Janet Guevara, Sarah Faust, Melinda Haag, Ted Despotes, and Donnie Kuntz.

Please keep them in your prayers.

Search Committee

for an Interim Associate Pastor for Mission and Membership — Dan Pietrini

The search process has begun in earnest. The Committee met three times and reviewed twenty eight resumes. After all resumes are reviewed, the Committee intends to conduct telephone interviews with selected candidates. In person interviews will be held in late July or early August. The Committee expects to have a candidate to present to the Church Council at its August meeting. The members of the search committee are: Marcia Ashton, Chris Davis, Renee Davis, Dan Pietrini and Tom Wolford.

Faith **IN ACTION**

PADS Emergency Overnight Shelter Starts in September

—Ted Despotes

The West Suburban PADS Emergency Overnight Shelter starts September 17th. As in the past, First United Church is responsible for staffing third and fifth Mondays every month. Our first night is September 21st. Opportunities are available on all shifts. Please contact me (tdespotes@gmail.com, 708-209-1377) or Bill Lovell (billlove53@yahoo.com, 708-445-2665) to volunteer or for more information. For more information about West Suburban PADS and the multiple programs they offer, go to www.westsuburbanpads.org.

Fourth Sunday Offering Collected —Julie R. Harley

Our June 28 First Fruits Offering collected \$868.67 for the summer PADS program. This program is designed for 10 carefully selected PADS clients, and it meets at several churches (including First United) during the summer. In addition to providing overnight shelter, the PADS staff and volunteers provide coaching for life skills and job skills so that people can move from homelessness to employment and permanent housing. Thank you for your generous support!

Scarfed — Marylen Marty-Gentile

Twenty-eight children and fifteen adults spent a week in holy play and storytelling called SCARF (spirituality, creativity, art, reflection and fun). We baked bread and brownies, created arks and scarves, danced gratitude, rang chimes, drummed drums and sang our hearts. We also stretched, listened to a story and laughed. These pictures show what a few pieces of this SCARF week looked like.

Deep, deep gratitude to the main planners and leaders: Andrea Alter, Carol Borysowicz, Bill Chin, Paul Jacobson (a District 97 music teacher), Emory Mead, Julie O'Shea, Katharine Thurman, Heather White (a dancer from NYC). They gifted our children with a rich, full and deep week.



dancing
painting
singing
playing
having
fun
with
God

Dinner and a Movie

—Ted Despotos

Dinner and a Movie returns at 6:00 pm on August 26th! Watch for the sign up sheet on the lounge desk early in August. The movie will be, as Mamie promised, "Secret Life of Bees." As in the past, a light dinner will be provided along with some drinks. You are welcome to bring additional drinks and food. I hope to see you there!

The Journey Begins Confirmation 2009-2010 —Marylen Marty-Gentile

Quest is First United's confirmation program for youth in ninth grade. Quest meets on Sunday morning during the education hour (9:30-10:45 a.m.) and is led by Art Spooner, Marylen Marty-Gentile and other members of the pastoral staff.

If you have a ninth grade youth who will be participating in Quest, please e-mail Marylen (marylen@firstunitedoakpark.com) so that we can begin to know who will be part of the journey this year. Quest will begin on September 20. You'll receive additional information closer to our beginning date.

Second Annual First United Music Festival on September 12

—Bill Chin

There are lots of people with musical talent at First United. If you're reading this, you're probably one of them! You should be sharing that talent in worship, and the Music Festival is your chance to connect with other music makers.

The Music Festival on Saturday, September 12, will be our second annual open house for singers and instrumentalists both young and old. If you're a brass player, or play a woodwind instrument, you can meet and play with people in our wind and brass ensembles.

Are you a string player? Our string ensemble is looking for more. We'll have a handbell session, and singers of every age can sit in either with our Sanctuary Choir or our children's choir.

The Festival is from 9:00 am to 12 noon. There will be breakout sessions for winds, brass, strings, and handbells, and singing time for adults and children. There will be refreshments, too, so we can take time to get to know each other. We'll end the morning together in the sanctuary and make music together by rehearsing a hymn arrangement for Gathering Day, which is the next morning, September 13.

Let us know if you plan to come, and if you're an instrumentalist, tell us what you play so we can be sure to have an appropriate part for you. A detailed schedule will be in the next Messenger Bell; for more info, contact Bill Chin.

My Summer as an Organist

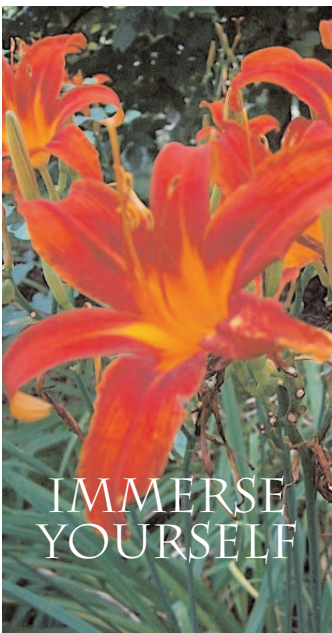
— Cathryn Wilkinson

Summer never seems to last long enough, but in these short weeks of long days and warm weather, I managed to experience two wonderful events. In June I served on the faculty for the national Pipe Organ Encounter sponsored by the Fox Valley Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. This is a first-class "Pipe Organ Camp," complete with swimming and ice cream parties and pillow fights and field trips. I was among 17 teachers who together taught 140 lessons to 35 students aged 14-18. These aspiring young organists were able to play the newly restored Skinner organ and carillon at Rockefeller Chapel and some of Chicago's other great organs at St. Chrysostom's, Fourth Pres, and Holy Name Cathedral. We had "organ all-day," practicing, teaching, watching others teach, and hearing first-rate recitals, including a splendid performance by Paul Jacobs, chair of the music department at the Juilliard School in New York. I wish I could have been inside the happy teenagers who had a private tour of Orchestra Hall and played on that magnificent Casavant – surely a life-time experience!

But my summer was not all work. The members and friends of First United Church generously provided an educational stipend to me which I spent attending the annual convention of the Organ Historical Society in Cleveland. For some people, traipsing around old churches and listening to historic organs may not sound like much fun, but for me it was fabulous to hear some of the greatest music for the organ played by the best performers of this generation without having to do the work myself! I especially enjoyed a recital by our former organist, Rhonda Sider Edgington, who played at the Shrine Church of Saint Stanislaus in Cleveland, home to a rich and warm-toned 1909 Max Schuelke organ. (See <http://www.organsociety.org/2009/instruments/instruments-19.html> for a lovely picture of the instrument.) Rhonda and Mark are doing well; she continues to study organ and works at a church in Bremen, Germany.

Many other conference events were highlights, from hearing Chicago's Nathan Laube, a recent graduate of Curtis Institute, play on a 1942 Casavant at First Methodist in Cleveland, to singing many hymns with 450 other musicians, all who share my love of church music.

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Organist continued>

The OHS will be coming to Chicago in 2012 for a week of concerts and demonstrations of our area's historic instruments, some of which will be open to the public. I am serving on the planning committee and thanks to your generosity, my experience in Cleveland has been very helpful. I came away reinvigorated with the wonder of great organ music and inspired by those artists who have made the building and playing of these instruments their life's work. Thank you for reminding me that the organ holds yet more gifts for us!

Note: Membership in the OHS is open to anyone who loves organs and organ music. If you would like to look into becoming either a local or a national member, go to www.organsociety.org.

The Story Behind our Steinway

—Cathryn Wilkinson

First United Church is fortunate to have among its musical instruments a concert grand piano built by the Steinway Company at the turn of the last century. The instrument measures 8'-11" and weighs approximately 990 pounds. We see this big, black giant every Sunday, but perhaps we never think about how it got here. First United member (and music lover!) Herb Zobel has done some research over the years and kindly provided to me the following information about our piano.

"When Bill Schneider began the process of regulating this piano last year, Claudette & I had arranged for his over-night stay. After making these arrangements, I acquired a source of information on the instrument. Bill indicated that Steinway kept excellent records of their pianos. Using the Serial Number that I found on the piano, I wrote to Steinway asking them for information on the origin of the piano.

Margaret Wolejsza from Steinway's Customer Satisfaction Dept. answered my letter with considerable information. The piano was completed in the New York Steinway factory on October 5, 1898, meaning that it will be 111 years old in October 2009. Steinway sold it to Lyon & Healy (currently a harp manufacturer) later that year. The piano was selected by a Mr. W. Damrosch for Mrs. Emmons Blaine, who lived in Chicago.

Walter Johannes Damrosch, born January 30, 1862, was the son of Metropolitan Opera Conductor, Leopold Damrosch and the brother of the eminent conductor Frank Damrosch. Walter became an important figure in turn-of-the-century New York's musical life, holding positions such as asst. conductor at the Met, music director of New York Oratorio Society and music director of the New York Symphony Society. He is credited with making significant contributions to American music, including five operas. He died in 1950.

Mrs. E. Blaine, or Mrs. Emmons Blaine, was listed with the richest women in Chicago in the New York Times, June 29, 1911. Mrs. Blaine was listed in second place (\$1,950,000) behind Mrs. Nettie McCormick (\$2,595,000) but ahead of Virginia McCormick (\$1,350,000).

I have not determined where Mrs. Blaine lived during her lifetime, except that she died at 101 East Erie Street, Chicago. I don't know if she had any connection with First Presbyterian Church of Oak Park. It may be that the piano passed through other hands before it was given to First Pres. The piano was probably too large for the First Pres. sanctuary and so it was placed in the parlor of the church house. The piano was moved to the First United sanctuary after the merger of First Presbyterian and First Congregational Churches. The instrument, a model D grand in ebony finish, still contributes to the elegance of the sanctuary, to the worship services of First United Church of Oak Park, and to concerts and musical events held in our sanctuary."

—Herb Zobel, 6.24.09

Additional note from Cathryn: The piano's sound board, pin block, hammers, and dampers were replaced at the Steinway factory in 1997. Since a piano's typical life span is usually close to a human's, with ongoing regulation and maintenance, we have managed to get more than average use out of this wonderful instrument!

Open Choir on August 30

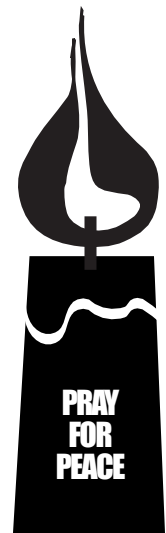
For those of you who sing and can't wait for the Music Festival, there's an Open Choir Sunday on August 30. We'll meet at 9:00 am and rehearse in preparation for the 10:00 am service. Open Choir Sundays are the last Sunday of every month, all year round.

Prayers for Peace

On the front steps of the church every Friday evening at 7pm

INNERPEACE WORLDPEACE

Saturday at 8:30 am,
in the Conference Room
All are invited.

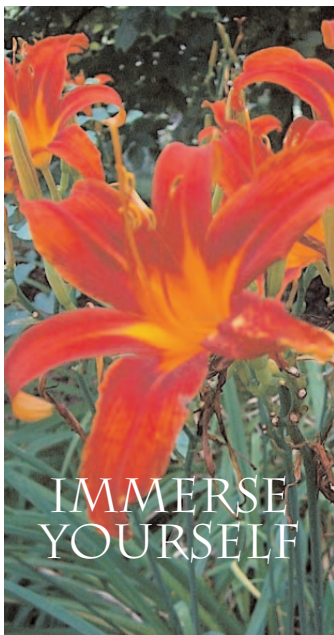


The “isness” of others

O Creator Lord, let me feel the “isness” of things and people, without resistance, without trying to impose my own pattern upon them or exploit them for selfish ends.

Let me welcome them, enjoy them, value them, love them, for what they are and for what they are becoming through your creative love.

George Appleton (1902-1993) England
—The Bridge of Stars



An Update —Judith Loevy

During the month of June we sustained damage to both the Memorial Garden slabs and the plaque in the Labyrinth. I wanted to give you an update. The damage was done as acts of vandalism. Vandalism is a mean-spirited random act. I made police reports and I contacted our neighborhood beat officer, Raphael Murphy. He was very helpful. He said that he would speak to any teenagers who were hanging out on our property after dark. He also said that he would alert other officers to the problem. I will be scheduling him to come in and speak at a staff meeting.

I have contacted John Gast from Gast Monuments for a proposal to repair the slabs if possible. The other reality is that we might have to replace those slabs at some point. I'll keep you posted as we pursue our options. Michael Mizen is looking into having the plaque refinished. It turns out that the plaque itself didn't get scratched, just the lacquer used to seal it.

Planned Giving Really Does Provide for a Rainy Day — Gene Armstrong

Our planned giving subcommittee is encouraging all of us to remember the church in estate planning. Why? Because thanks to the generosity of former member Helen Harrison, we received \$10,000 this summer to pay for repairs to the leaky flat roof over the church school rooms upstairs. Mrs. Harrison set aside some of her estate in a foundation, and each year we receive thousands of dollars to pay for building improvements and other unanticipated needs. First United got another \$10,000 this year from the Helen Harrison Foundation to help pay for repairs to the sanctuary windows. Your gift, made today, could provide for ministry and mission for generations ahead. For more information, contact Gene Armstrong.

Giving as Worship —Stewardship Committee

Worship: reverence offered a divine being; an act of expressing such reverence (Merriam-Webster).

Every major world religion calls believers to give as an expression of worship.

“Charity is equal in importance to all other commandments combined.” — Jewish Talmud

“The righteous man is he who, though he loves it dearly, gives away his wealth to kinsfolk, to orphans, to the destitute, to the traveler in need and to beggars, and for the redemption of captives.”

—Islamic Qur'an

“On the high ridge of heaven he stands exalted, yea, to the Gods he goes, the liberal giver. The streams, the waters flow for him with fatness: to him this garden ever yields abundance.” —Hindu Rig Veda

“If I give this to others, what shall I have to enjoy? Cherishing of others is the mind of the enlightened ones.” — Buddhist writings

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” —Acts 20:35, Christian scriptures

Why is giving an act of worship? By giving, we release our desire to hold desperately to what is in our hands and find that we are left with open palms and a mind no longer distracted by clinging to stuff. By giving, we reflect an intentional attitude of joyful gratitude for the God-given gifts of life that surround us constantly. By giving, we give away the power that money represents in our lives. We give away the power that money has to comfort us, to motivate us, and even to define us. We give away the fear that we won't have enough money, the fear that our generosity will somehow be taken advantage of. Giving money in the offering is the central drama in the act of worship. It is our conscious decision to be generous, which shows that accumulation of wealth is NOT the only path to fulfillment. When you give money away, you discover that the source of joyful gratitude isn't the money itself, but the transformation of heart and perspective that the act of giving achieves.

From— *Giving – the Sacred Art: Creating a Lifestyle of Generosity* by Lauren Tyler Wright

Joyful Announcement!

—Laurie Jolicoeur

The congregation voted to call Rev. Leah Fowler to serve as Associate Pastor for Youth and Adult Education on Sunday, July 12, at a Congregational Meeting following worship. We had the opportunity to meet and greet Leah on Saturday, July 11 from 2-4 pm, to hear her candidating sermon during worship and to affirm the terms of call to our congregation. We look forward to the many different ways we will welcome Leah and her partner Chris into the life of First United. Thanks be to God. Leah's first day on our staff was July 26th. Welcome Leah!

Join Us for the Upcoming Cookouts!

—Judy Bradeen

Our first one was on July 26th, when we gathered for dinner and then went over to Scoville Park to hear the concerts offered by the Park District of Oak Park. Join us on August 2nd and August 23rd for this time of fellowship. We meet at the church at 4:00 pm and ask that you bring something to grill for yourself and family and a dish to share. After dinner we will walk over to Scoville Park to enjoy dessert and the concert. Interested in participating? For more information and /or to volunteer to fire up the grill one night, contact me at jab1022@aol.com or 383-6870.

Check This Out!

—Lisa Bierman

Here is an invitation to sample some of the books we have in the library's collection. Have you wondered about grace, looked for it, or even felt funny that you don't wonder about it? You may want to take a look at Cathleen Falsoni's book, *Sin Boldly*. It's highly accessible and conversational—a very personal collection of stories about the author's experiences of grace.

If there is a young boy in your life, and you would like to better understand the challenges that boys experience from age 11 to 14, then you may benefit from reading *Losers, Loners and Rebels*, by Dykstra, Cole, and Capps.

And have you been meaning to read *The Faith Club*—by the three moms—Muslim, Christian and Jewish, who intended to write a kids' book and ended up writing a best-seller for adults? Well, I'll try to hurry up and finish it—and then you can check it out. Come and enjoy the library!

Harley Housing Update

—Julie R. Harley

Our home in Hinsdale has been on the market for nine months, but despite dozens of showings and four open houses, we have had no offers. We had hoped to move to Oak Park before the school year starts, but that will not happen. So my daughter Emma will start her sophomore year at Hinsdale Central High School and we will continue to live in that school district. I will be getting more involved in the Oak Park community in others ways, though. We'll start doing our daily errands in Oak Park – grocery shopping, banking, buying gas, going to Walgreens, the farmer's market, health club and library here. I'm open to recommendations on local dry cleaners and hair salons too. I'm already becoming WELL acquainted with our restaurants! My daughter Rachel starts her studies at Elmhurst College and will be moving to campus on Aug. 26. Thank you for your hospitality. We do love this place. —Julie, Rachel and Emma Harley

PrimeTime Outing on August 14

—Janet Haisman

Because summer is upon us and many of us have vacations planned, our PrimeTime outing on August 14 will be really casual! We are hoping it will be to the Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Skokie, but if that is not a possibility, we will make it a trip to the North Shore, at least for lunch! Please watch for our new PrimeTime bulletin board in the church lounge! Contact Janet Haisman if you'd like to be on the list for whatever happens! jhais@sbcglobal.net or (708)383-2035.

Part-time Church Office Assistant Needed

—Julie R. Harley

First United is seeking a part-time office assistant to work as needed on general office tasks. The position will include occasional assistance with answering the phone, greeting and directing visitors, assisting with bulletins, newsletters and mailing projects, and copying. The salary is \$12.00 per hour and the employee reports to Judy Schoenbaum-Wood, office manager.

The position will be available September 1. To apply, please send an e-mail to Pastor Julie R. Harley at jrh@firstunitedoakpark.com or leave a cover letter and resume in the Personnel mailbox at church.

Save the date for First United Family Camp!

—Priscilla Sibley

Whether you are a single in a pup tent or a family of 6 in an RV, come to Tower Hill, Sawyer, Michigan, August 13 through 17. Come Thursday to Monday or just for an overnight. We'll enjoy beach time, blueberry picking, bike riding, antique-ing, campfires, fellowship, food, or just vegging out with a good book. Bring your own food & shelter. The only planned event is a potluck on Saturday night. For questions call Don & me at (708) 848-2840.

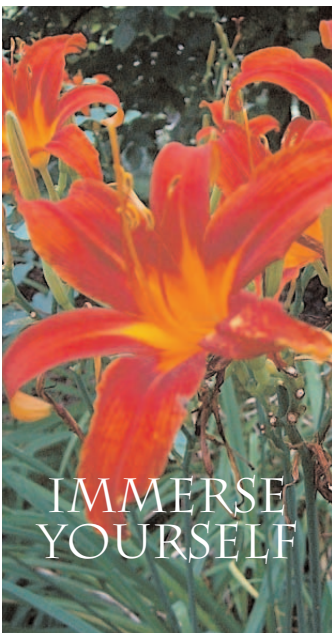
Thank You!
Thank You!
Thank You!
Thank You!
Thank You!
Thank You!

It's a Miracle! It's no overstatement. Megan Lewis has redeemed our storeroom. We pledge to keep it as clean and ready as she has organized. Thank you, Megan for your hallmark efforts!

Thank you for many ways we choose to joyfully work together

- ❖ to members of the FFUN Committee who created a festive Annual Picnic on the lawn in June. We had fun visiting, listening to music and eating tasty food. We appreciate the way you adapted to the questionable weather!
- ❖ to the members of the Faith in Action Committee, New Members Committee and Deacons for coordinating gifts and words of gratitude for the faithful ministry of Mamie Broadhurst as we commissioned her and Richard to ministry in Colombia.
- ❖ to the Adult Education Committee, Youth Committee, First United Softball Team, FUJI and FUSH for leading our celebration of Kelly Brouwer's ministry among us. You created an atmosphere of fun and appreciation. Thanks to Matthew Udelson for taking wonderful photos!
- ❖ for the coordinated effort between Council, Deacons, Personnel, Youth Committee, FFUN Committee, FUJI and FUSH for creating hospitality during the Meet & Greet event for Leah Fowler's candidating weekend.

We are grateful for our dedicated and professional staff working as a team through this transition time in the life of our church. As they face the challenges of a leaner staff and vacation time, they are encouraging each other and collaborating in wonderful ways. Thank you Judith, Julie H, Judy, Marylen, Julie O., Bill, Patrick, Dudley — all of you. Please know that we are mindful of you and we want to do our part by contributing positively when we are able.



IMMERSE
YOURSELF



Regularly Scheduled Weekly Meetings: *Please check with convener if you have questions.*

<i>Wednesdays</i>	3:30p	Food Pantry Open	Kathy Russell/Michele Zurakowski - 386-1324
<i>2nd 3rd & 4th and 1st</i>	7:00p	Food Pantry Open	
	7:00a	Men's Breakfast Group	Ted Despotes
<i>Fridays</i>	7:00p	Peace Prayer Vigil	Bud Hayes
<i>Saturdays</i>	8:30a	Inner Peace/World Peace	Jeff Olson - 383-3154
	9:00a	Food Pantry Open	Kathy Russell/Michele Zurakowski - 386-1324
Walk-in-Ministry	Monday—Saturday 10 to 11am		Susan Zaruba—386-1946

Week of August 1			
Saturday 1	9:30a	Breakfast Bunch at Maple Tree Restaurant	
Sunday 2	9:15a	Organ Music for a Sunday Morning	Cathryn Wilkinson
	10:00a	Worship-Communion	
	4:00p	Summer Cookout	Judy Bradeen
Monday 3	7:00p	Fellowship of Reconciliation	Amy Pappageorge
Tuesday 4	7:00p	Devotional	
		Youth Board	
		Adult Education Committee	Melinda Haag
		Library Committee	Cindy Palombi
		Faith in Worship Committee	Scott Haldeman
		Interim Search Committee	Dan Pietrini
Week of August 9			
Sunday 9	10:00a	Worship	
Tuesday 11	7:00p	Finance Committee	Claudette Zobel
	7:00p	Deacons	Carl Nauert
	8:00p	Communications Committee	Martha Reese
Thursday 13-16		Family Camp at Tower Hill	Priscilla Sibley
Saturday 15	9:00a	Directions	
Week of August 16			
Sunday 16	10:00a	Worship-Baptism	
Monday 17	7:00p	Stewardship Committee	Beth Drews
Tuesday 18	6:30p	Vision Team	Rick Ashton
	7:00p	Youth Committee at Bradeen's	Judy Bradeen
	7:30p	Church Council	Laurie Jolicoeur
Wednesday 19	7:00p	Children's Ministry Committee	Andrea Alter/Barbara Metric
Thursday 20	7:00p	Spiritual Guidance Groups	
Week of August 23			
Sunday 23	10:00a	Worship-Special Offering	
	3:00p	PFLAG	Sylvia Memminga
	4:00p	Summer Cookout	Judy Bradeen
Monday 24	1:00p	Worship Planning	Julie R. Harley
Tuesday 25	7:00p	Building & Grounds Committee	John Zaruba
	7:00p	Personnel Committee	Al Parchem
	7:00p	Faith in Action Committee	Bob Hahn
Wednesday 26	6:00p	Dinner and a Movie	Ted Despotes
Thursday 27	6:30p	Church School Leaders Gathering	Marylen Marty-Gentile
Week of August 30			
Sunday 30	8:30a	Congregational Breakfast	
	10:00a	Worship	

August 2009

Congregational Breakfast
at 8:30 am. Sunday, Aug. 30
—Julie R. Harley

Join us for bagels, coffee and juice in Centennial Hall and a chance to meet the new pastoral "team." We will introduce Leah Fowler, our new Associate Pastor for Youth and Adult Education, as well as Jeffrey Foels, our McCormick Seminary intern who will be here two days a week during the academic year. We also hope our new interim associate pastor for membership and mission will be on board. You'll get an update from the called Pastoral Search Committee and we'll offer a preview of the upcoming program year.

Julie R. Harley,
Lead Pastor

Leah Fowler,
Associate Minister of Youth and Adult Education

Marylen Marty-Gentile,
Director of Children & Family Ministries

Bill Chin,
Director of Music Ministry

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office@firstunitedoakpark.com

Save These Dates

Sunday, August 2	9:15a	Organ Music for a Sunday Morning
	4:00p	Summer Cookout
Thursday, August 13-16		Family Camp at Tower Hill
Sunday, August 23	4:00p	Summer Cookout
Wednesday, August 26	6:00p	Dinner and a Movie
Sunday, August 30	8:30a	Congregational Breakfast

Deadline for the September 2009 issue is August 15th.

Please e-mail information or articles for the MB to:

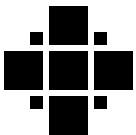
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August 2009

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WEB Edition



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of Oak Park

*an open community
united in love
& justice*