



**Little  
Summer  
Poem**

*Touching the Subject of Faith*  
by Mary Oliver

Every summer  
I listen and look  
under the sun's brass  
and even  
into the moonlight,  
but I can't hear

.....continued>

**Inside...**

- Transitions* >page 2
- Faith in Action* >page 5
- Youth News* > page 6
- Church Finance* > page 7
- July Calendar* > insert

## **Introducing Rev. Leah Fowler** Our Candidate for Associate Pastor for Youth and Adult Education

For the past four years, Leah has been the Minister for Christian Formation and Youth at Union Congregational Church in Montclair, N.J., 12 miles west of Manhattan. Like Oak Park, it is a town in the shadow of a major U.S. city but with a culture very much its own. At Union Congregational Church, Leah directed 4 youth programs and led youth on mission trips to Atlantic City, Peru and Tennessee. Leah has an additional three years of youth ministry experience, having served as Interim Chaplain at The Lovett School in Atlanta, and as Director of Youth Ministries at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Alexandria, Va.

Leah grew up in the PC(USA), went to a Methodist seminary, and emerged as a member of the UCC, so she is very familiar with both of our denominations. One thing Leah loves about working with youth is their spirit, especially when they find their voice. Leah hopes to help youth feel more connected to the church and to help the church use the gifts youth offer. She strongly believes that the religious spirit needs to be nurtured at every age and is looking forward to working with both youth and adults at First United.

A native of Atlanta, GA, Leah graduated from Agnes Scott College in Decatur, GA with a B.A. in Religious Studies. During college, she studied for a semester in Beijing, China and she attended the United Nations 4th World Conference on Women which sparked a passion for international politics and travel. After college, Leah worked as an Intern at the Presbyterian United Nations Office in New York City, participating in and leading seminars on human rights issues from Harlem in New York to Harare, Zimbabwe.

Since high school, Leah has been interested in the ways churches shape communities and can be positive forces for social change. That curiosity led her to seminary at Emory University's Candler School of Theology. While in seminary, Leah met Chris Gajilan, her life partner. In 2007 they celebrated a religious wedding; they hope for full marriage equality in the coming years.

Leah will be moving from NJ in July to join Chris, a talented TV producer who moved to Chicago last winter for a position with Harpo. In her spare time, Leah enjoys spending time with Chris and their mutt, Lucy. Leah loves to be quiet with a novel, throw dinner parties with friends, and see independent movies. She loves to travel, has been known to rollerblade, do yoga, and even swing on a trapeze.

Leah will be introduced to the congregation on July 12, when she will preach and we will have an opportunity to vote on her call. We anticipate she will join our staff on July 26. We would like to convey to everyone in the congregation our deep appreciation for your prayers, your thoughts, your letters and conversations through this process of discernment. We thank God for guiding us through these months and for bringing us to ministry with Leah Fowler.

### *A Message from Leah Fowler*

Grace and peace to you! I am very much excited to be with you in the flesh in just a few weeks. This call has been many months in the shaping, and I believe the Holy Spirit is at work, helping to make a good fit. From the time the position was posted, I have felt a strong draw to First United Church. You are a people eager to explore and express your faith in exciting ways. You live out Christian witness as a beacon for justice and hospitality in and beyond your community. You are spiritually and intellectually inquisitive. In worship, my partner Chris and I each were energized by the warmth and vibrancy we felt. We were called into moments of spirited wonder and awe. I see your church as a place where worship can be shared that evokes both the delight and the challenge in worshiping our God. I was moved by the leadership qualities I saw in the youth on the search committee. The thing that stood out the strongest in their depiction of the youth program is the love they feel for, and from, the community they share with one another. There are surely more mysteries about you I have yet to uncover. I eagerly await the opportunity to become part of your lives, as you become part of my life, and we journey in faith together.

See you soon!



## Transitions

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Marriage:</b>   | <i>Ben Wilcox and Kari Jorgensen</i>  |
| <b>Compassion:</b> | <i>Ida Hanson</i>   |
| <b>Condolence:</b> | <i>Jeff Ruthven, father of Sarah Ruthven<br/>Gerald Potts, Jr., son of Brenda and Gerald, Sr., brother of Jeremy<br/>Frank Bunkers, brother of Bill, uncle of Hannah, Chris and Elizabeth<br/>Martha Wasylik, grandmother of Mike, great-grandmother of Eve and Henry</i> |

And so, every summer,  
I fail as a witness, seeing  
nothing—  
I am deaf too  
to the tick of the leaves,

the tapping of downwardness  
from the banyan feet—  
all of it happening  
beyond any seeable proof, or  
hearable hum.

.....continued>



### Wow! Happy Birthday!!

On July 19th we will celebrate our members who are 90 years and older with a rousing chorus and yummy birthday cake. Join us immediately after the service in the lounge for the celebration.

We are grateful to the Deacons, and especially Sally Sutherland for her work in organizing the party and her attention to detail. We have included the dates of upcoming birthdays, but whether already passed or still to come...

Happy Birthday, one and all!

*Paul Soderdahl* – 103 (Happy Birthday July 10!)

*Eugene Beck* – 102 (Happy Birthday July 12!)

*Sadie Lussenhop* – 101 (Happy Birthday January 1!)

*Eleanor Soliday* – 101 (Happy Birthday November 2!)

*Edith Crabbe* – 99 (Happy Birthday Aug 2!)

*Ida Hanson* – 99 (Happy Birthday August 20!)

*Helen Severson* – 97 (Happy Birthday September 25!)

*Anne Robinson* – 97 (Happy Birthday November 28!)

*Lucille Beaulieu* – 94 (Happy Birthday January 5!)

*Ralph Balgemann* – 94 (Happy Birthday September 12!)

*Beta Balgemann* – 92 (Happy Birthday September 20!)

*Edith Dennis* – 92 (Happy Belated Birthday April 9!)

*Alice Granstrom* – 92 (Happy Birthday August 6!)

### 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     |                      |

## July Summer Sermons

*Preaching through the Book of Romans – “A Reason to Believe”*

—Julie R. Harley

**July 5** – Pentecost 5 and Communion Sunday  
*Mark 6:1-13 and Romans 5:1-21*  
 “Peace Be With You”

**July 12** – Pentecost 6 - Rev. Leah Fowler preaching  
*2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19 and Ephesians 1:3-14*  
 “A Strange Inheritance”

Leah has been nominated as our new Associate Pastor for Youth and Adult Education.

A congregational meeting to vote on her candidacy will follow the service, as well as a reception for Leah and her partner Chris.

**July 19** – Pentecost 7- Baptisms and Work Camp Commissioning  
*Mark 6:30-34, 53-56 and Romans 6:1-14 and 7:14-25*  
 “Lead Me Not Into Temptation: I Can Find It Myself”

**July 26** – Pentecost 8  
*John 6:1-21 and Romans 8:18-30*  
 “Hope for Those Who Suffer”

### Pastoral care needs

Please contact any 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.

### New Members

We welcome all the new members who joined the church on June 28th! Look for a church directory insert in the next *Messenger Bell* with their names, photos, and contact information and be sure to greet each of them. You might just be the connection that helps make this church feel all the more like their church. If you are interested in becoming a member, please contact Julie R. Harley. Our next new member class will begin in October!

### Fall Weekend Spiritual Retreat

There are only 20 spaces still available for our all-church spiritual retreat at Stronghold Conference Center in Oregon, IL. The retreat begins at 10 am Saturday, Sept. 26, and concludes at 2:00 pm. Sunday, Sept. 27. It will be led by our pastoral staff. 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](mailto:jrh@firstunitedoakpark.com) or 708.386.5215 x22.

Looking I mean not just standing around, but standing around as though with your arms open.

And thinking: maybe something will come, some shining coil of wind, or a few leaves from any old tree — they are all in this too.

.....continued>



## Staff Transitions

—Julie R. Harley, *lead pastor*

When I arrived here last October, I told the Personnel Committee we needed stability in our pastoral staff. We don't always get what we want! On June 7 we said farewell to one associate pastor – Mamie Broadhurst – and on Friday, June 26, we said farewell to our other associate pastor – Kelly Brouwer. This is a lot of change to absorb in a short time... for all of us. You may be asking yourself: If pastoral stability is something we value, then why is this happening? Stable leadership is certainly a precious value for me, which is why I have made a commitment to be your lead pastor for the next 10 years.

But there are other important values we honor at First United Church. We believe in the need for spiritual discernment, in listening to our still speaking God. Mamie listened to God's voice calling her to embrace a new calling as a missionary. While Mamie was a good minister in Oak Park, we know that her work in Colombia will provide a new challenge that will stretch and grow her gifts as a pastor.

In the same way, we honor and respect the discernment process of the search committee for our Associate Pastor for Youth and Adult Education. This group of 12 people was asked to consider all the candidates who applied for this position, and after hours of interviews and meetings, they selected Rev. Leah Fowler as the candidate who best fulfilled the eight qualities

## Clerk's Corner

—Beth Mrkvicka

The Clerk's "pen" has been passed on to me from the capable hands of Ann Armstrong. I feel honored to be able to report to you each month on the exciting things that are happening in Council. June is always a transitional meeting and our Ritual Practice of Gratitude involved reflecting on the unique gifts each of our outgoing members brought to Council. We said goodbye to outgoing members Ann Armstrong, Katy Dammers, Carlos Pareja and Sher Watts Spooner and expressed gratitude for their years of service. We welcomed new members Jane Barker, Bob Haisman, Becky Kuntz, Lara Miller, Connie Ronnow and Deb Stracco. Melinda Robinson, Chair of Personnel, was a guest speaker. She recapped the search process for calling an Associate Pastor for Youth and Adult Education, sharing the criteria that aided the committee in their discernment. She announced the decision to call the Rev. Leah Fowler to be our new pastor in this position. Leah will be here on July 12 for her candidating sermon.

The Big Picture Conversation centered on the transition for Mamie Broadhurst's position. Motions to appoint two search committees that will work simultaneously this summer were approved. An Interim Search Committee will be appointed by Council to hire an interim to fulfill our short term staffing needs. A Pastoral Nominating Committee will be named pending the congregation's approval to commence a search to call an Associate Pastor.

Our Sharing the Spirit of Group Practice this month focused on Chapter 5 "The Spirituality of Vision" in *Beyond the Ordinary – Spirituality for Church Leaders*, a book that Council is reading together. The chapter describes original, mystic, and prophetic visions and we were all encouraged to be open to the notion of visions. Coinciding with the vision theme, it was reported that the Vision 2020 Task Force is up and running and will have more to report in the months to come. Our meeting ended with expressions of gratefulness for twelve confirmands and for the appreciation for the ministries of Mamie and Kelly, as they attended their last Council meeting. In addition to the monthly meeting, Council was involved in the inaugural Committee Orientation held in early May. Over fifty people attended and learned about our committee structure. We envision this being an annual spring event.

## Faith **IN ACTION**

**West Suburban PADS - NEW Transitional Shelter Program:** —Ted Desportes

Sign up now!! To volunteer go to [WWW.WestSuburbanPads.org](http://WWW.WestSuburbanPads.org). The West Suburban PADS new summer Transitional Shelter program has started. First United Church of Oak Park has agreed to host this program for four nights each week (Monday night through Friday morning) during the last two weeks of July. Two volunteers are needed to staff each shift. Added overnight shift bonus; you can sleep during part of the shift! Volunteers are also needed to supply dinner, breakfast and bag lunch food. Help people transition from homelessness to having a home. Volunteer now!

**Gephard Fund**

—Mamie Broadhurst

A number of years ago one of our members, Angelina Gebhard, gave a gift to the church in memory of her husband Paul which is intended to aid in the expansion of this congregation's awareness and understanding of the mission of Christ's church. To this end, two major types of activities are eligible for support from this fund:

1. Support from First United to participate in study tours, voluntary mission projects, conferences, or other events related to the mission of the church either nationally or internationally. These activities should be related in some official way to First United or one of our two denominations (UCC and PCUSA).
2. Support for events sponsored by First United which bring representatives from the national or international church to our own community or in other ways provide an educational opportunity for our congregation related to the church's wider mission.

If you are interested in learning more about this fund, adding to its corpus, or discussing whether an idea you have might fall within the guidelines of this fund, please talk with Bob Hahn (Faith in Action Chair). Imagine what you could learn...

**Volunteers Needed...****for the Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry**

Client visits to our food pantry are up 80% from the same time last year, and so more volunteers are needed. If you have a few hours on a Saturday morning, please go to the website: [www.oprffoodpantry.org](http://www.oprffoodpantry.org) to fill out a volunteer application. You may also contact our volunteer manager, Kristi Braun, who can sign you up and provide training: [kristi@oprffoodpantry.org](mailto:kristi@oprffoodpantry.org) or 708-445-8580.

**First United Peace with Justice**

—Bob Haisman

We are announcing the formation of the First United Peace with Justice Group. This is an informal group designed to continue and build upon First United Church's tradition and commitment to: Peace with Social Justice.

An informal group to support enthusiastic Peace-Making at First United, mixed with continued and vigorous advocacy for social justice in our community and the world.

An informal group that would assist the ministers in bringing before the congregation of First United issues and actions of our national churches with regard to Social Justice and Peace Issues.

An informal group to facilitate, motivate and educate members of the congregation of First United on advocating for Peace with Justice.

A group to help support the Friday Night Peace Vigil.

By an informal group we mean that this group will exist under the umbrella of First United but not be part of the official committee structure, not part of the regular meeting schedule, not part of the First United budget. We mean the group to be held together by the Internet and meet only when an issue moves the group or the ministers. Rev. Julie R. Harley will be The Peace With Justice Group's staff contact.

How do you become a member? Know of some folks who are 'Peace-Makers'? Interested in Peace Issues?? Just send me --[gardenoprff@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gardenoprff@sbcglobal.net) —their name and E-MAIL! Questions/concerns? Contact me at — 708 997-1993.

**Sharing Our Fruits**

Our Sunday, June 28th the loose offering went to benefit the PADS Summer Transitional Housing Program. This is a new, targeted endeavor by PADS to move people from homelessness into housing. First United will help host the program from July 20-30.

If you would like to volunteer please contact Ted Despotes at [tdespotes@gmail.com](mailto:tdespotes@gmail.com).

And, therefore, let the  
immeasurable come.  
Let the unknowable touch the  
buckle of my spine.  
Let the wind turn in the trees,  
and the mystery hidden in  
the dirt  
  
swing through the air.  
How could I look at anything  
in this world  
and tremble, and grip my  
hands over my heart?  
What should I fear?

.....continued>



## YOUTH NEWS

### Summer Youth Work Camp July 24-31

About 36 youth and six adult leaders will head off to the St. Louis area on July 24 for our weeklong summer Work Camp at Emmaus Homes in Marthasville, Missouri. The mission of Emmaus is: "Arising from faith in Jesus Christ, we seek to enhance the quality of life for adults of all beliefs who have cognitive, intellectual and other developmental disabilities." This agency has been related to the United Church of Christ for decades. The Work Camp is designed to help our youth experience servanthood and learn to interact with people who have developmental disabilities.

Youth advisors Pennie Ebsen and Margaret Hartmann are organizing this trip, and the chaplain, seminarian and staff at Emmaus Homes will welcome the group when they arrive. We are grateful to all the adult "stockholders" who provided financial support for the trip. To register, contact Pennie Ebsen. Scholarships are available by contacting Pastor Julie R. Harley. The Work Campers will be commissioned in worship on July 19.

### Church School

#### Words Are Not Enough

—Marylen Marty-Gentile

Knowing how to thank people is hard. How can I thank 42 people for faithful ministry with all our children, youth and Questors? How do I thank people for reading Bible stories and reading through sometimes-not-great lessons and making them better? How do I thank adults and youth for walking with our children every week? There really aren't enough words or maybe not the right words...

These folks are normal adults and teens. Most are not theologically trained, but they love God and love this church and want to share that love through ministry with children and younger youth. They care enough to try hard and enough to show up a lot. How cool is that?

So on behalf of nearly 200 children, youth and their adults, I say thank you (they are really the best words I have) to Christa, Andrew, Patricia, Julie, Alissa, Elizabeth, Donnie, Emory, Jeanne, Ilse, John, Brian, Katharine, Noah, Steve, George, Amy, Grace, Jack, Dick, Harriet, Ellen, Eli, Deb, Pennie, Katy, Sam, Sharon, Claire, Ian, Peter, Kathy, Yvette, Rob, Tom, Walter, Rick, Matt, Nick, Gabrielle and Art.

Thank you.

### Adult Ed in July!

—Melinda Haag

That is not a typo! Sample something special this summer called "Sermon Talk-Backs." On July 5, 19, and 26 from 11:15 – Noon in the Chapel, Julie R. Harley will lead us in conversations about the Sunday's sermon and worship. How often have you found yourself pondering,

discussing, and wondering about a sermon topic, theme, or biblical text as you share fellowship after Church? Had a great idea for a sermon topic, but you weren't sure how to share it? On these warm, summer Sundays, we will share questions about the sermon we just shared and suggest ideas for future sermons. Come be a part of keeping our worship at First United engaging, relevant and vital.

### Summer Sunday Morning Organ Music...Out of the Ordinary!

—Cathryn Wilkinson

The organ is one of the most versatile musical instruments that we know. At June's Sunday morning recital, we heard it sound like an elephant. Usually the sounds of our organ are to support worship - singing, accompanying, creating moods to gather and depart. But the organ can do much more than this! Plan to arrive early on Sunday, August 2 for another presentation of music. Beginning at 9:15 am and continuing to 9:50 am, I will play a few more favorites and feature a few more surprising sounds from the many possibilities our organ has to offer. With more than 4,000 pipes, you probably have not heard them all yet! The atmosphere is informal and listeners of all ages (especially young children) are welcome. Come to enjoy the many dimensions of our beautiful space -- architecture, sunlight, music, and time to sit (or wander) before worship. And any special requests? Let me know.

## July 2009/Church Finance/Stewardship Questions Answered

—Joanne Despotes

Since January I have been writing a monthly column explaining First United finances. This month I will tackle the Church's Special Investment Funds. Many of these investments are not directly controlled by First United. One example is the Chicago Community Trust (CCT) account that I explained in March. We utilize the money allocated from the CCT account in making grants to organizations that serve people in the Chicago metro area. Another mission related fund is the Reinvest in South Africa (RISA) Fund. This is a South African program to support the development of self-sustaining businesses. In 2001 we allocated \$25,000 of SMEF (see March Messenger Bell) to this investment. The 3% per year earned on this investment is deposited back into SMEF as it is received and we expect complete repayment in 2010. We have also invested \$33,000 from the Pastoral Housing Fund (see April Messenger Bell) in a Housing Equity Agreement to assist Mamie Broadhurst and Richard Williams in buying their home in Oak Park. When the home is sold, we will receive a proportional repayment of equity that will be returned to the Pastoral Housing Fund. The Women of First United Church have two investment funds. One, valued at approximate \$25,000, is part of the invested funds at Park National (see April Messenger Bell). The other is a money market, currently valued at \$25,945, under the auspices of Chicago Presbytery. The dividends from the money market are deposited into a restricted fund (for the women of First United) that is in the church's operating accounts and is currently valued at about \$2300. (I plan to discuss the church operating funds next month.)

We also have several Special Investment Funds that are examples of how members have provided for the church with planned or memorial gifts.

- The family of Bess Haines provided two \$5000 Certificates of Deposit for the Bess Haines Memorial Scholarships. One is designated for Junior High Retreat scholarships and the other for Senior High Retreat or Work Camp scholarships. Each year when the CDs mature, the church has been directed to remove between \$250 and \$1000 to supply scholarship funds for our youth as needed. This is to continue until all income and principal are exhausted. Scholarships are awarded at the discretion of the pastor responsible for the youth programs.

- First United is a designee from a portion of the The Butler Family Charitable Foundation. The Foundation will provide funds for support of the operating budget in perpetuity. This year we have budgeted \$21,000 in income from this source and show it as part of the "Other Income" line item in the annual budget.

- Another source of "Other Income" for the annual budget is provided by the Kenneth C. King Memorial Fund which is held at Chicago Presbytery Foundation. Current value is around \$11,000. We receive 5% per year of the average market value.

- A current member of First United has designated a portion of a Charitable Annuity held at Presbyterian Foundation to be paid to First United at the time of the member's death. This is currently valued at around \$45,000.

In future months I will tackle the operating accounts and budget and launch into a discussion of stewardship and pledging decisions. Please let me know if there is something in specific I can answer for you. The goal is for everyone to feel they know what's going on. (708-209-1377/jdespotes@ameritech.net)

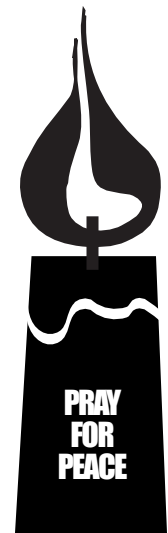
## Environmental Stewardship Team

—Ann Alexander

Are you interested in joining a team of people seeking to care for God's creation in our church, our lives, and our community? The First United Environmental Stewardship Team will have its kickoff meeting on Sunday, July 26 at 9 am in the Conference Room. We have lots of ideas how individuals can get involved, including projects to green our church building, development of adult education programs, and creative thinking about including creation themes in worship. Everyone interested is welcome. RSVP and questions to either Ann Alexander (Ann.Alexander@comcast.net) or Paul Aeschleman (aeschlemanp@sbcglobal.net).

**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.



One morning  
in the leafy green ocean  
the honeycomb of the corn's  
beautiful body  
is sure to be there.

—Mary Oliver

## Annual Meeting

of the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ —Lee Anderson

The 45th Annual Meeting of the Illinois Conference United Church of Christ was held June 5-7, 2009, in Springfield Illinois, with Priscilla Sibley and Lee & Mary Lou Anderson as delegates. The overall theme of the conference was "Living the Sacred Life" (Micah 6:8) with Friday "Doing Justice", Saturday "Loving Kindness and Mercy" and Sunday "Walk Humbly with God" as we deal with change. Each day began with appropriate bible study for the day. The opening keynote, celebrating the 200th birthday of Abraham Lincoln, was based on the foundational antislavery speeches of The Hon. Abraham Lincoln and The Hon. Rev. Owen Lovejoy, a Congregational Church minister, with a brief history of their backgrounds and excerpt samples of their speeches. Lincoln's was based on his fervent interpretation of the law and Lovejoy's based on biblical and religious understanding.

There were two workshop sessions offering a total of 15 workshops on Friday afternoon. *Moving Beyond Conflict* was a well attended workshop led by one of our own, Rev. William Tweedley. Gloria Vicente: Global Missionary and Illinois Conference Member gave a brief background of the repression to the Mayans and highlighted the Guatemalan Cultural Action healthy stove project. *Mental Illness: The Faith Community Responds* led by Rev. Bob Dell of "Pathways to Promise" ([pathways2promise.org](http://pathways2promise.org)), an interfaith resource center to promote a caring ministry among people with mental illness and their families. He introduced "Souls In the Hands of a Tender God: Stories of the Search for Home and Healing on the Streets" by Craig Rennebohm. It was described as the definitive resource for beginning conversation about mental illness in a congregation. A copy has been purchased for the Church library. *No Child Left Behind* – A brief introduction by Savannah Mason on the social justice consequences of the federal NCLB legislation and why congregations should be concerned for their children and schools.

Saturday was the plenary sessions with resolutions adopted that addressed issues both within the conference and to be addressed at the national conference later this month. Like everyone else, the conference is seeing a significant drop in income, projected at 15%. Our church is a generous supporter of the conference. One of the changes to be addressed this year is a restructuring of the conference and conference ministers responsibilities.

Worship services on Friday and Saturday evenings and Sunday morning were lively and spirited with excellent sermons with the youth leading the Sunday service.

## MemberLink...MemberLink

—Martha Reese

- Do you use the church directory to stay in touch with other members?
- Does the church photo directory help you learn new faces and names?
- Are you frustrated by the fact that the church directory is always out-of-date?
- Do you wish we had a better church member directory?

Well guess what, we have one, and it's called MemberLink!

MemberLink is our online directory of all members, and in order for it to be accurate and up to date, we need your help!

It's not hard to update your own profile. All you need to do is: 1) go to the church website [firstunitedoakpark.com](http://firstunitedoakpark.com), 2) choose the "Resources" tab, and 3) choose "Member Link." That's all there is to it!

NEED HELP? If you don't have access to a computer with internet access or would like assistance with the process, help is available!

On Sunday, July 19, tech-savvy volunteers will be in the library and conference room after church working individually with members to update their MemberLink profiles on the spot. We'll even have a photographer available so you can add your photo to your profile—just like the old church directory!

For more information, contact Don Minas ([purplebearcat@yahoo.com](mailto:purplebearcat@yahoo.com)) or Carl Nauert ([chnauer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chnauer@sbcglobal.net)).



**Summer Cookouts**

—Judy Bradeen

We are adding a new twist this summer to the August cookouts of the past. This year, this time of fellowship will take place on Sunday evening and we will head over to Scoville Park to hear the concerts offered by the Park District of Oak Park. Tentative dates are July 12th, July 26th, August 2nd and August 23rd. The idea is that we will meet at the church at 4:30 pm, bring something to grill and something to share. Dinner will last until about 5:30 and 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.

**Evening Division Benevolences 2008-2009**

—Marcia Ashton

In addition to sharing warm fellowship, the Evening Division has a tradition of providing financial support for local organizations and international projects. This year our generous members contributed \$2,500 through Thank Offerings and our Annual White Elephant Sale. Beneficiaries included: PADS, OPRF Youth Services, Near East School of Theology, FU Work Camp Scholarship, Food Pantry, Walk In Ministry, Children’s Clinic, College Scholarship and Community of Congregations. In addition, \$1,000 from the Elizabeth Snow Trust was contributed to the Niebuhr Center of Elmhurst College in memory of Rev. Ed Bergstraesser.

Special thanks to the wonderful FU artists, crafts people and technical specialists who donated their talents and services to enhance our White Elephant Sale. Please mark your calendar for our Fall Luncheon Kick-off on September 19th.

**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.

Thanks so much to everyone for making our sending a day to remember. What glorious music. What wonderful food. What a splendid set of folks to commission us and send us off. Thank you for your generosity in my coming and my leaving. We will keep in touch.  
Grace and peace,  
*Mamie and Richard*

*Thank You!*  
*Thank You!*  
*Thank You!*  
*Thank You!*  
*Thank You!*



## Save These Dates

### Beginning the Week of July 1 and through August 31

Church Summer Office Hours 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

|                   |        |   |
|-------------------|--------|---|
| Friday, July 3    |        | Church Offices Closed for Fourth of July                  |
| Sunday, July 5    | 11:15a | Sermon Talk Back  |
| Friday, July 10   | 6:45p  | Softball at Ridgeland Common                              |
| Saturday, July 11 | 2:00p  | Reception for Rev. Leah Fowler                            |
| Sunday, July 12   | 10:00a | Worship-Candidating Sunday                                |
|                   | 11:00a | Congregational Meeting and Reception for Rev. Leah Fowler |
|                   | 4:30p  | Summer Cookout  |
| Monday, July 13   | 9:30a  | SCARF Camp Begins   |
| Sunday, July 19   | 11:00a | Birthday Party for 90 years old +                         |
|                   | 11:00a | MemberLink Demonstration                                  |
|                   | 11:15a | Sermon Talk Back  |
| Friday, July 24   |        | FUSH Work Camp to Emmaus Homes                            |
| Sunday, July 26   | 11:15a | Sermon Talk Back  |
|                   | 4:30p  | Summer Cookout  |

**Deadline for the August 2009 issue is July 15th.**

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

office@firstunitedoakpark.com

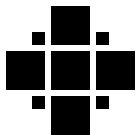
6.09.em

## July 2009

848 Lake Street  
Oak Park, Illinois 60301-1314  
708-386-5215

www.firstunitedoakpark.com

# WEB Edition



FIRST  
UNITED  
CHURCH  
*of Oak Park*

*an open community  
united in love  
& justice*

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

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

**Week of July 1 - Church Summer Office Hours 8:00am - 3:00pm**

|            |                |   |                      |
|------------|----------------|---|----------------------|
| Friday 3   |                | Church Offices Closed for Fourth of July                              |                      |
| Saturday 4 | 9:30a<br>1:00p | Breakfast Bunch at Maple Tree Restaurant<br>Dances of Universal Peace | <i>Cindy Palombi</i> |

**Week of July 5**

|             |                  |   |   |
|-------------|------------------|---|---|
| Sunday 5    | 10:00a<br>11:15a | Worship-Communion<br>Sermon Talk Back   |   |
| Monday 6    | 7:00p            | Fellowship of Reconciliation  | <i>Amy Pappageorge</i>  |
| Tuesday 7   | 7:00p<br>7:00p   | Devotional<br>Faith in Worship Committee<br>New Members Committee<br>Adult Education Committee<br>Library Committee<br>Children's Ministry Committee<br>Youth Committee<br>Communications Committee | <i>Scott Haldeman</i><br><i>Susan Saliny</i><br><i>Melinda Haag</i><br><i>Cindy Palombi</i><br><i>Andrea Alter, Barb Metric</i><br><i>Judy Bradeen, Kathryn Heavey</i><br><i>Martha Reese</i> |
| Friday 10   | 8:00p<br>6:45p   | Softball at Ridgeland Common  |   |
| Saturday 11 | 2:00p            | Reception for Rev. Leah Fowler  |   |

**Week of July 12**

|              |                           |   |                              |
|--------------|---------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Sunday 12    | 10:00a<br>11:00a<br>4:30p | Worship-Candidate Sunday for Rev. Leah Fowler<br>Congregational Meeting and Reception for Rev. Leah Fowler<br>Summer Cookout on the Patio |                              |
| Monday 13    | 9:30a                     | SCARF Camp  | <i>Marylen Marty-Gentile</i> |
| Tuesday 14   | 9:30a                     | SCARF Camp  |                              |
| Wednesday 15 | 9:30a<br>7:00p            | SCARF Camp<br>Food Pantry Volunteer Orientation   |                              |
| Thursday 16  | 8:00a<br>9:30a<br>7:00p   | Endowment Committee<br>SCARF Camp<br>Spiritual Guidance Groups  | <i>Gene Armstrong</i>        |
| Friday 17    | 9:30a                     | SCARF Camp  |                              |
| Saturday 18  | 5:30p                     | PrimeTime Picnic  | <i>Janet Haisman</i>         |

**Week of July 19**

|              |                                      |  |                     |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Sunday 19    | 10:00a<br>11:00a<br>11:00a<br>11:15a | Worship-Baptisms-Work Camp Commissioning<br>Birthday Party for those 90 and up<br>MemberLink Demonstration<br>Sermon Talk Back | <i>Carl Nauert</i>  |
| Monday 20    | 7:00p                                | PADS Shelter   | <i>Ted Despotes</i> |
| Tuesday 21   | 7:00p<br>7:00p                       | PADS Shelter<br>Vision Team  |                     |
| Wednesday 22 | 7:00p                                | PADS Shelter   |                     |
| Thursday 23  | 7:00p                                | PADS Shelter   |                     |
| Friday 24-31 |                                      | FUSH Work Camp   |                     |

**Week of July 26 Welcome Leah Fowler, Associate Minister for Youth and Adult Education**

|              |   |  |  |
|--------------|---|--|--|
| Sunday 26    | 9:00a<br>10:00a<br>11:15a<br>3:00p<br>4:30p | Environmental Stewardship Group<br>Worship<br>Sermon Talk Back<br>PFLAG<br>Summer Cookout on the Patio                   | <i>Ann Alexander</i><br><br><br><br><i>Judy Bradeen</i>                                    |
| Monday 27    | 7:00p                                       | PADS Shelter   |  |
| Tuesday 28   | 8:00a<br>7:00p<br>7:00p<br>7:00p<br>7:00p   | FUNS Oversight Board<br>PADS Shelter<br>Building & Grounds Committee<br>Personnel Committee<br>Faith in Action Committee | <i>Bonnie Beck</i><br><br><i>John Zaruba</i><br><i>Melinda Robinson</i><br><i>Bob Hahn</i> |
| Wednesday 29 | 7:00p                                       | PADS Shelter   |  |
| Thursday 30  | 7:00p                                       | PADS Shelter   |  |

July 2009

Julie R. Harley,  
Lead Pastor

Marylen Marty-Gentile  
Director of Children  
& Family Ministries

Bill Chin  
Director of Music Ministry

[www.firstunitedoakpark.com](http://www.firstunitedoakpark.com)

708.386.5215  
Fax: 708.386.7480  
office@firstunitedoakpark.com