



Add, Subtract and Multiply for Lent

Lent is here. It began on Feb. 25 with Ash Wednesday and continues for 40 days (excluding Sundays) until Easter on Apr. 12. The word Lent itself is not religious; it refers to the fact that the days are “lengthening” and spring is almost here. This season in the church year was established as a time of spiritual preparation before Easter, which has always been the most significant holiday in Christian faith.

Someone recently asked me, “What are we supposed to DO for Lent?” My advice is this: add, subtract and multiply for Lent. Add something to your life in the next few weeks that will help you be ready for the resurrection. Maybe this is a good time to volunteer in the food pantry, to pray more often, to read a daily devotion, poem or scripture text, to be more open to God’s mystery, to spend more time each day with people you love, to walk or bicycle more, or to write a weekly letter to Congress about peace and justice. Subtract something from your life that is a distraction from your spiritual purpose. Watch less TV, choose not to fight with that person who drives you crazy, stop wasting money on unimportant stuff, give up complaining, or say no to that traditional standby, dessert.

Most important, I pray you would multiply this Lent. Multiply joy by smiling at strangers and reaching out to newcomers. Multiply blessings by praying more often for other people and our world. Multiply peace in the world by approaching life with greater serenity and compassion. Multiply your mission by daring to use one of your gifts in Christ’s service. Multiply love by opening your heart and soul to the worship of this rich and sober season.

Our Lenten Worship Theme is “Promise and Presence,” and we will be exploring God’s covenants with humankind in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Mar. 1 – *Genesis 9:8-17 and Mark 1:9-15*

Lent 1 – “God’s Promise to Creation”

Mar. 8 – *Mark 8:31-38*

Lent 2 – “A Fork in the Road”

Mar. 15 – *Exodus 20:1-17*

Lent 3 – “Promises, Promises”

Mar. 22 – *Psalms 107:1-3, 17-22, Ephesians 2:1-10, John 3:14-21*

Lent 4 – Choir Cantata “Noye’s Fludde”

Mar. 29 – *Jeremiah 31:31-34 and John 12:20-33*

Lent 5 – “God’s Promise of Presence”

Apr. 5 – Palm Sunday

Apr. 9 – Maundy Thursday Service – 6:30 pm

Apr. 10 – Good Friday Service – Noon

Apr. 12 – Easter Sunday Services - 7 and 11 am

Promises are fundamental to faith, and when we are faithful to our most sacred promises we discover God’s presence goes with us. Because God is good, all the time. All the time, God is good.

In Christian love,
Julie R. Harley, *Lead Pastor*

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You are smaller than
the smallest seed;
more beautiful than
the rarest gem;
Who hold the mountains
and oceans in Your hand;
Who breathes us with the
breath of life; enfold us in
Your great love that we
may open our hearts to all
humankind.

—Annabelle Woodward

Transitions

Compassion:

Carl Nauert Jr., father of Carl Nauert
Helen Reeburgh, grandmother of Richard Williams
Ellen Goldstein, mother of Judith Loevy
Peggi Mizen
Ann Siler
Suzanne Keller
Milica Logan
Paul Soderdahl

Condolence:

Rev. Edward W. Bergstraesser, husband of Carole,
father of Paul and Edward, grandfather of Amy, Jenna
and William
Father of Sue Saliny, grandfather of Heather, Shannon and
Lauren
Joan Porter, mother of Josephine Porter
John Armour, member for 79 years
Marsha Sebesta, wife of Jerry, mother of Jamey and Jeremy,
member for 26 years
James Hayner, father of Judy Vojta, grandfather of Stacy and Sara
Joanne Gsell, mother of Julie R. Harley, grandmother of Rachel
and Emma
Grandfather of Mario Butler-Del Rio

Deacons:

Janet Haisman	Carl Nauert
Franklyn (Bud) Hayes	Betsy Samore
Neal McNish	Sam Dammers
Harriet Udelson	Lee Anderson
Melinda Haag	Priscilla Sibley
Matt Kemper	Chris Davis
Sally Sutherland	

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.

New Members:

Welcome! Welcome! —Mamie Broadhurst

On Sunday, February 22 —First United welcomed 20 people into membership.

Welcome— Michele Barnes, Ted Barnes, Bob Berry, Lauren Breit, Beth Butler del Rio, Mario Butler del Rio, George Chkoutov, Sarah McCoy Chkoutov, Ann Dickerson, Pat Godfrey, Emma Harley, Rachel Harley, Kari Jorgensen, Robert Marseilles, Nick Roghair, Jen Westfallen, Matt Westfallen, Ben Wilcox, Dale Youngkrantz, and Carol Youngkrantz!

Their photos and contact information will appear in the April Messenger Bell, so please print or tear out this directory update so you can contact these folks to offer them a continuing welcome. (Oh, and keep introducing yourself – there's a lot of names to learn!)



PROMISE
PROMISE
PROMISE

PRESENCE
PRESENCE
PRESENCE
PRESENCE

Lent Soup and Study

—Kelly Brouwer

Lent is often described as a 40 day journey toward the cross filled with reflection and prayer. Lent is a journey. Come and share part of that journey with other folks at First United.

Each Wednesday during Lent (March 4, 11, 18, 25) from 6:30-7:30 pm, come to church for a time of soup and a brief Bible study. The Senior High School kids will provide the simple meal of a variety of soups, bread and dessert; the staff will provide the Bible study. There will be a freewill donation with proceeds going toward WorkCamp '09.

Sharing Resources-Changing Lives:

One Great Hour of Sharing 2009

—Marylen Marty-Gentile

The writer of Hebrews says, "Do not neglect to do good and share what you have," and reminds us that our actions speak as loudly as our words and worship. God calls us to participate in the lives of others. Jesus calls us too when he said, "Just as you did it to the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." (Matthew 25:40)

These least may be nearby, as close as our church basement where we welcome neighbors to the Food Pantry, Walk-In Ministry and PADS. The least may be in Sudan fleeing from violence. The least may be in sub-Saharan Africa suffering from AIDS, The least may be in Iowa or New Orleans still rebuilding after floods.

The One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering is a way to care for others and share what we have. As we give to OGHS we help families and individuals around the world to build lives and communities that are healthy, safe and sustainable.

This year we will kick off the OGHS offering with our Fourth Foolish Fish Fry on Saturday, March 7 from 5:30-7:30 pm. All proceeds will go to OGHS.

On Sunday March 8, we will distribute boxes and calendars as a way for folks who follow a day-by-day giving discipline to contribute to OGHS. Or you may choose to contribute by check at the end. However you choose to contribute, we will receive and dedicate the OGHS offering on Sunday, March 29. Doing good and sharing what we have gladdens the heart of God, who promises those who respond "shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail." (Isaiah 58:11)

5F (aka Fourth First Foolish Fish Fry) - 5:30 pm Saturday, March 7

Come. Come alone. Come with your partner or spouse or BFF. Bring the kids. But come. Have fun. Eat fish. Be silly. Share time with folks in Centennial Hall.

Here's what we do. We eat Alberta Coppage's fried catfish and sides of spaghetti and coleslaw. We take time to hang out with each other. We show a movie for the kids. We just enjoy each other for a few hours. The cost is \$8/adult, \$5/kids with a \$30/family max. (If your kids hate fish, we can negotiate \$). All the profits got to OGHS (see above).

Mostly 5F is about being together and supporting OGHS. How cool is that, really?

**FOURTH
FIRST
FOOLISH
FISH
FRY**

March 7
5:30 pm
Saturday

Calling an Associate Pastor

—Melinda Robinson

As you know, last fall Council voted to convert the Associate Pastor for Youth and Adult Education from a contract position to a called position, effective September 1, 2009. Both of our denominations require that when this is done, the church conduct an open search to fill the post. The Personnel Committee has announced the opening with both denominations, and we are accepting applications through the end of February. As of February 12, we have received 25 applications. Just as when we filled the contract position, each application will be carefully evaluated, and we expect to complete the process by late spring.

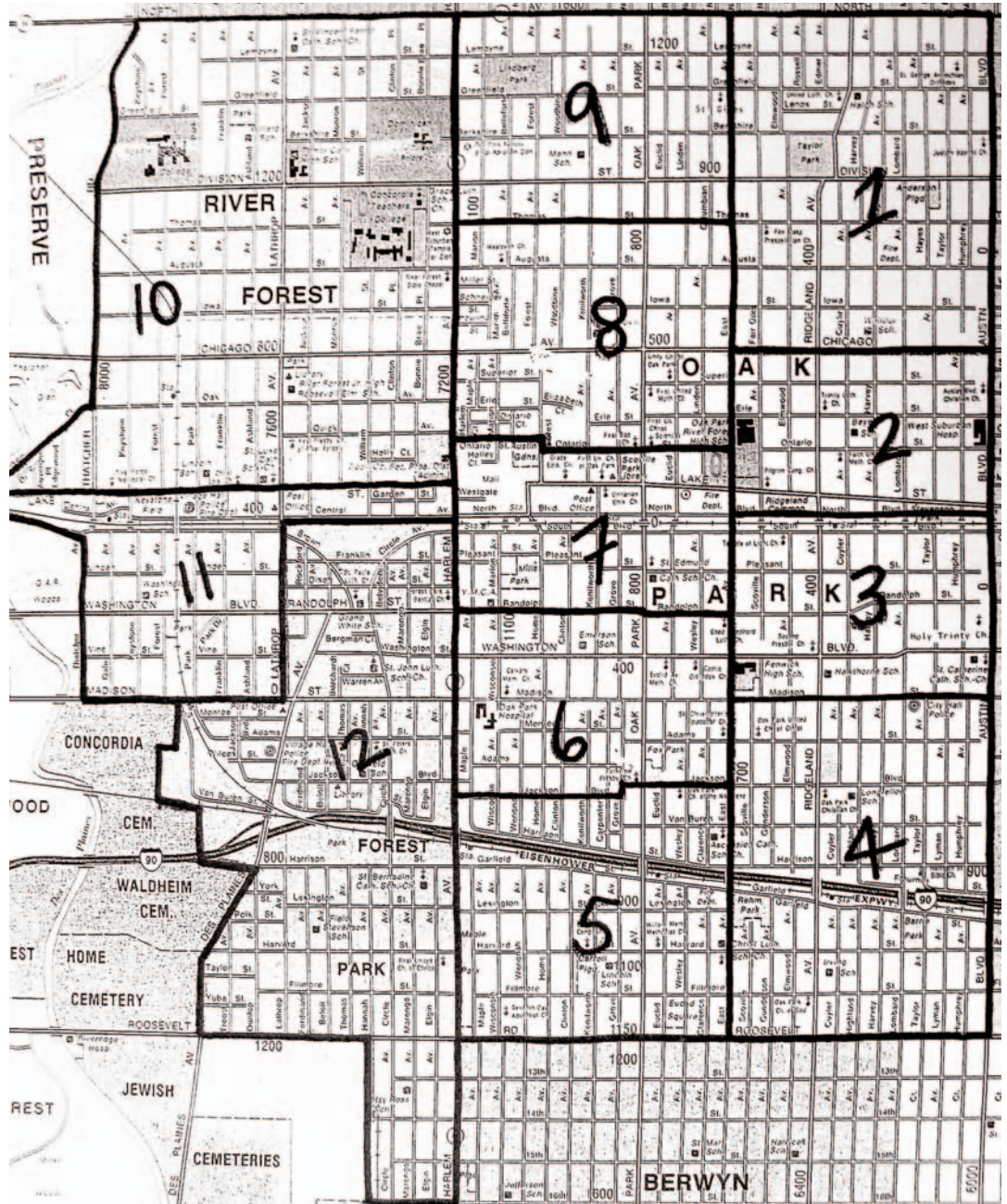
Julie Wants to Meet You — Betsy Samore

The Deacons are organizing small gatherings so everyone in our church has a chance to chat with our new minister, Julie Harley. Each gathering will take place in the church lounge. They are scheduled at two week intervals starting Feb.15 and ending May 17. They will alternate between lunches at 12:30 pm and cookies at 3:30 pm. You will receive an invitation to a particular gathering from a Deacon, but if you cannot attend the one to which you have been invited, don't worry! You can sign up in the lounge to attend one that suits your schedule. Julie hopes to see you there!

Here is an opening schedule for Meet Julie!

- Parish 7 & 11
Sunday, March 1 – 12:30-2:00 pm
- Parish 9
Sunday, March 15 – 3:30-5:00 pm
- Parish 3 & 6
Sunday, March 29 – 12:30-2:00 pm
- Parish 4
Sunday, April 5 – 12:30-2:00 pm

- ALL PARISH BRUNCHES**
- Sunday, April 19 – 8:30-10:15 am (Parish 1)
 - Parish 8
Sunday, April 26 – 12:30-2:00 pm
 - Parish 2 & Chicago and suburbs
Sunday, May 17 – 3:30-5:00 pm
 - Parish 5
Sunday, May 31 – 12:30-2:00 pm



Save April 19 for Parish Brunches! —Janet Haisman

Come and meet your neighbors on April 19 between 8:30 and 10:15 am (no Christian Education that day). Enjoy the food and fellowship, and then head over to church together. Call or e-mail me (708-383-2035 or jhais@sbcglobal.net) if you have any questions or if you do not receive your postcard and would like to attend. In addition, we are still in need of hosts and co-hosts, so if you are able to volunteer, do let us know!

— Ann Armstrong

The agenda for January's Council meeting was jam-packed! To live into the WIG and nurture our own spirituality, we opened the meeting by discussing Chapter 1 of the book we are reading together, *Beyond the Ordinary – Spirituality for Church Leaders*. Julie Harley defined spirituality as "experience of God," the important element being experience or relationship with God. Our discussion revolved around three questions, including "what does it mean to be a spiritual leader?" Some points made were: spirituality is the lifeblood of the church; church leaders do not need to have all the answers, but it helps to be confident in one's own spirituality; one job of a spiritual leader is to start the conversation about spirituality and provide opportunities for others to experience and learn about their own spirituality; and to be a spiritual leader, one has to have made some decisions about what s/he accepts/rejects. We will be reading Chapter 2 for February's meeting. Congregation members are encouraged to read along with us!

Council approved creation of the FFUN (Fellowship at First United) Committee, which will be responsible for all-church events, such as congregational breakfasts, the all-church picnic, August cookouts, Foolish Fish Fry, Dinner & A Movie, parish brunches, and celebratory receptions. We are deeply grateful to Carole Ferguson and Janet Kenealy who have agreed to co-chair the Committee. To kick-off their work, Carole and Janet organized the highly successful congregational breakfast that kicked off the February 1st Annual Meeting. They welcome volunteers to serve on the Committee.

The Big Picture Conversation revolved around themes in the responses to the five questions Julie posed to 20 church members with whom she met during her first several weeks with us and to Council members in December (see minutes for details). Responses indicated that people are waiting to see our next big issue. There was also a discernable energy in the answers that can and should be tapped as we go forward. Among the challenges identified were: finances, the need for focus/strategic planning, relationships within the church among people and groups of people (generations, interest groups, etc.), unexplored opportunities included getting people more involved and an emerging spirit of caring for one another as evidenced by the recent men's group. Regarding what would need to change to explore these opportunities, what stood out was the need for focus and a vision. (Note: as discussed at the Feb. 1 Annual Meeting, Vision 2010 is getting underway this year. For more information, please see the minutes for the Annual Meeting, which are available at the elder desk, on the Council bulletin board in the lounge, and on the church's website.)

The Finance Committee reported a surplus of \$28,821 for 2008, of which \$5,000 was expected and was included as carry-over in the 2009 budget. Council approved using \$8,500 to reinstate some of the expenses cut from the originally proposed 2009 budget (see minutes for details) and holding the remaining \$15,321 in reserve due to the uncertainty of the economy. Council is delighted with the newly launched redesigned website and voiced deep appreciation for the terrific work of the Communications Committee.

Holy Spirit,
giving life to all life,
moving all creatures,
root of all things,
washing them clean,
wiping out their mistakes,
healing their wounds,
you are our true life,
luminous, wonderful,
awakening the heart from
its ancient sleep.

—Hildegard of Bingen

Join us for Ecumenical Advocacy Days

—Mamie Broadhurst

A new administration is in charge in Washington, D.C. and a new Congress. Don't you want to tell them something? Plan to attend Ecumenical Advocacy Days, March 13-16, 2009. Several thousand church members will gather, attend workshops, worship together, and on Monday call on elected officials. Topics targeted include: Asia-Pacific, Africa, Latin America, Middle East, the U.S., Eco-Justice, Global Economic Justice, and Peace & Global Security.

Talk to previous participants if you want more information: the Rev. Mamie Broadhurst, Claudette Zobel or Pauline Coffman, or go to <http://advocacydays.org> for more information. The deadline to register is February 13. Financial assistance is available. There will be another opportunity for advocacy in Washington, D.C. in early June sponsored by Churches for Middle East Peace. Stay tuned!

Faith **IN ACTION**

Report from the Walk-In Ministry —Susan Zaruba

The Walk-In Ministry is now well into its fourth year. Because of the generous support of our partner congregations, individual donors, community organizations and a wonderful group of volunteers, we have been able to help many clients in a variety of ways. On a monthly average, we see over 150 clients, give out over 100 items of clothing, provide transportation to over 50 individuals, pay for around 20 state identification cards, hand out over 25 lunches, prevent around 5 evictions, and make numerous referrals for food, utility help, shelter, medical care, work, etc. None of this would have happened without the generosity of our partners.

Even more awe inspiring is the support we have received just recently from group of women who ran two separate clothing drives for us. They took the call for volunteering seriously and completely organized, advertised, and ran clothing drives that supplied our Walk-In Closet with a huge amount of long underwear, jeans and sweaters. These women, though not members of any of our partner churches, showed a generous spirit that warmed our hearts.

Thinking over the past year I am particularly pleased to see a growing relationship in partnering with both the Food Pantry and PADS. These are two organizations that have continued to grow and develop in order to better serve the needy. By helping to provide state IDs for the Food Pantry clients and financially assisting PADS clients in getting permanent housing, we have joined PADS and the Food Pantry in their good work. The WIM can only benefit from assisting with the work of these organizations.

The last thing I want to mention is the great response that we received from numerous individuals when a plea went out for furniture, household items and appliances for one of our clients who was truly in need. Not only did this gentleman receive immediate responses, but he was able to completely furnish his home. He called me three times to tell me how generous people of this community are – I said I know!

We continue to ask for your support as we grow and improve our services.

Travel to Colombia

Are you interested in going to Colombia with a group from First United and Chicago Presbytery this summer? We are confirming dates for a ten day trip somewhere between July 15th and August 3rd. Can you join us? Come learn first hand about the Presbyterian Church of Colombia, the situation of human rights and displacement and the strong sense of mission and call felt by Christians there. Talk to Mamie if you are interested. Scholarships are available.

Sharing Our Fruits

In an effort to continue outreach with our local, denominational, and global communities, Faith in Action in coordination with the Finance Committee and Church Council have decided to give away one offering each month to mission.

What do we mean by offering? It is any coins, currency, and/or checks collected in the offering plates other than that which is specifically designated to fulfilling a pledge or dedicated to a different purpose.

What are we going to do with the funds? Faith in Action has selected four areas of concentration: Justice, Peace, Hunger/Housing, and Renewal. First quarter 2009, we will concentrate on Justice.

Mission Plan 2009

Thanks to all who participated in the lunch after worship on February 22nd! We had a great turnout, and we will keep you posted on where we go from here. Our focus will be on one of four topics: Hunger, Homelessness/Housing, Health Care, or Education. Thanks for your input, and thanks to Faith in Action (and especially Yvette Bouchard) who made the luncheon happen!



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YOUTHNEWS

—Kelly Brouwer

Workcamp is coming very soon—July 24-31! Though the location of this year’s workcamp will be revealed at the Stockholder’s Luncheon on April 26th, we are currently looking for adult volunteers to be part of this important trip. If you are interested, please contact me. A great big thank you to Council for serving a wonderful meal of Mostaccioli to our senior high kids on February 15! “It was the best meal we’ve ever had at FUSH!” “Can Council cook for us each week?” These were just a few comments I heard! Thanks Council, for providing a great meal and sharing yourselves, your time and your important work with the future of our church! If there are other groups out there that would like share about your group and provide a meal for our kids on a Sunday evening, please contact me.

Dates To Remember:

March 14-15—OWL Retreat

Our Whole Lives helps youth make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. It equips participants with accurate, age-appropriate information in six subject areas: human development, relationships, personal skills, sexual behavior, sexual health, and society and culture. Grounded in a holistic view of sexuality, Our Whole Lives provides not only facts about anatomy and human development, but helps participants to clarify their values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the spiritual, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality. First United has trained individuals that lead this training (Joanne Despotes, Gary Cerniglia and Rich Wheelock) along with Kelly Brouwer, Associate Pastor for Youth Ministry and Adult Education, and our dedicated FUJI youth advisors.

If you have a junior high child and have not received information via USPS mail, please contact me to get your child signed up.

- March 21—FUJI Mostaccioli Luncheon set up (10am-noon)
- March 22—FUJI Mostaccioli Luncheon (9am-1:30pm)
- April 25—Youth Sunday practice (Time TBD)
- April 26—YOUTH SUNDAY!!!! This will be a huge Sunday for our Youth.

This Sunday is BOTH Youth Sunday and the Stockholder’s Luncheon. Please mark this date on your calendars and plan to attend.

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

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

Adult Education

—Kelly Brouwer

Art and Spirituality—March 1-29—Chapel

These four weeks will allow you that chance to explore art as it relates to Spirituality. Some of our very own artists will share both their art and how it feeds them spiritually.

Exploring Common Relationship Challenges:—*Spouses and Partners; Parents and Children*

March 1 & 8—Centennial Hall —Elena Vassallo

Continued Conversations on Race—March 15—Centennial Hall — Dr. Lee Butler, professor at Chicago Theological Seminary.

Renewal in the Wilderness—March 22—Centennial Hall —John Lionberger

John Lionberger’s book *Renewal in the Wilderness: A Spiritual Guide to Connecting to God in the Natural World* shows meaningful ways of connecting with God in nature. John, a UCC chaplain at Three Crowns Park in Evanston, will come and share his work with us.

Chicago Coalition for the Homeless—March 29—Centennial Hall

A group of people, formerly or currently homeless, will describe their experiences on the streets and how we can make an impact on this pressing social problem.

Lectionary Bible Study—All year long!—Conference Room

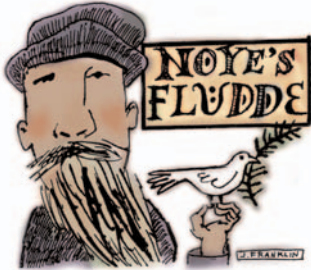
This class gathers each Sunday to look at the Lectionary texts for the day. Come and explore the Bible with this group! Bring questions, comments and discussion!



Any Ideas????? Please talk to us!!

The Adult Education Committee is always looking for topic ideas from the community. If you have something you'd like to see show up in First United's Adult Education program, please contact one of the Committee members: Kelly Brouwer, Dan Sack, William Tweedley, Jeff Olson, Melinda Haag, Kim Kemper, Stan Davis and Jim Smith.

***Please pick up a copy of the latest Adult Education brochure on the Elder's desk or check it out on the website! www.firstunitedoakpark.com.



Friday &
Saturday,
March 20 & 21,
7:30 pm

Monsoon! Walls of water! —Elaine Pierce

Pandemonium at First United Church! Can anyone survive???

Benjamin Britten's spectacular musical drama features an unusual orchestra, eye-popping sets and animal masks created by Oak Park artist Jonathan Franklin, and the musical talent of professional and community singers and instrumentalists from the Oak Park & River Forest Children's Chorus (who make great animals) and Oak Park Recorder Society. This is a gem for the whole family!

VERY IMPORTANT NOTICE: Bring an animal for the Ark Animal Art Contest. Not a live animal, silly! Draw a picture or create a sculpture of an animal, bring it to one of the performances, and enter it into the Ark Animal Art Contest! Be inspired by the extraordinary, fanciful multimedia animal masks created by Jonathan Franklin for this production -and be an artist, too. Entries will be displayed at intermission. All sizes and media accepted. Multiple prizes will be awarded. The contest is open to adults and children.

William Chin, Music Direction; Kristin Gehring, Stage Direction; Jonathan Franklin, Costume and Scenic Design.

Friday & Saturday, March 20 & 21, 7:30 pm

Adults \$20, seniors/students \$15, families \$50

Group rates are available. Call 708.386.5215, ext 39, for details.

Kenyon College Chamber Singers on March 4 —Bill Chin

The Kenyon College Chamber Singers, conducted by Dr. Benjamin Locke, will be performing in our sanctuary on Wednesday, March 4 at 7:30 pm. The Chamber Singers, consisting of 51 undergraduates chosen by competitive audition, is Kenyon's premier touring ensemble.

The group is noted for its versatility of vocal style and broad repertoire. A centerpiece to the program will be Brahms's motet *Schaffe in mir, Gott, ein rein Herz*, a setting of Psalm 51:12-14. Other pieces on the program include Ernest Bloch's *Yihyu leratzon imrei fi* (Psalm 19:14), Juhani Komulainen's *Four Ballads of Shakespeare*, Williametta Spencer's *At the round earth's imagined corners*, William Harris's *Faire is the heaven*, Claude Debussy's *Trois Chansons*, Adolphus Hailstork's *My Lord, what a moanin'*, and many other selections of sacred and secular choral repertoire.

The concert is free, with a freewill offering requested. Start your Lenten season with beautiful choral music sung by these young musicians from seventeen different states and two foreign countries.

Cathryn Wilkinson Performs in St. Charles March 1

The music department of Baker Memorial Church in St. Charles presents our organist, Cathryn Wilkinson, together with Phillip W. Serna on viola da gamba, Sunday, March 1 in a concert of music for the season of Lent. The concert will feature the rarely heard Sonata in D Major for viola da gamba and keyboard by J. S. Bach, one of only three works that Bach wrote in this genre.

Additional music includes contemporary organ settings of Lenten hymns by Samuel Barber, Gwyneth Walker, and Emma Lou Diemer. The duo will also play selections from Francois Couperin's Mass for Organ, arranged for organ and viol.

The one-hour concert takes place at 3:30 pm at Baker Memorial Church, 307 Cedar Avenue in St. Charles. A freewill offering will be taken to defray costs of the concert.



Thank you to Castanedas, Jr. and Sr. "The Mystery Offertory"

—Cathryn Wilkinson

Many, many thanks for the beautiful music performed by Ricardo and Ricardo Castaneda on February 2. So many of you contacted me about the exact titles, that I decided to publish the answers. The offertory was the "Adagio" from Bach's Concerto BWV (Bach's Work Catalog) 1060 which has been reconstructed as a Concerto for Oboe, Violin, Strings, and Basso continuo. The father-son team played the first movement of this concerto (Allegro) for the gathering music and the third movement (also Allegro) for the sending music.

Bach wrote the original concerto in 1735 for two harpsichords. All three movements from the version we heard at First United are available on either of the following recordings, Bach: Violin Concertos; Double Concerto; Concerto for Violin & Oboe with Isaac Stern on violin (Sony label) J.S. Bach: Cantatas & Concerto with Emma Kirkby singing several cantata excerpts, followed by this instrumental concerto in the oboe/violin version (Carus label).

Church Finance/Stewardship Questions Answered

—Joanne Despotes

This is the third in a series of monthly columns attempting to illuminate First United Finances. For prior columns please check the website or January & February 2009 Messenger Bells. Last month I started to explain our multiple Endowment Funds.

Mission Endowments:

God has indeed been good to First United. We have two sizable endowments that are dedicated to mission.

The one many people know about is the Special Mission Endowment Fund – lovingly referred to as 'SMEF'. SMEF is part of the endowments managed by Park National Bank with oversight by the Endowment Committee. It was established with the proceeds of the sale of the old First Presbyterian Church Building to Calvary Memorial Church for \$1.5 million after the 1975 merger of the predecessor churches. An agreement was made with the Chicago Presbytery that the funds be utilized for mission. There is no stipulation other than that on the use of the funds. The church chose to put the money into the restricted fund (SMEF) and created a calculation based on fund performance to determine the annual draw. The original draw calculation essentially utilized all the earnings each year such that the value of the fund did not keep up with inflation. In 2006, after discussions in Finance Committee, Faith in Action Committee and Church Council, the draw calculation on SMEF was changed over time so that it is now 6% of the 5-year average mid-year market value. SMEF is currently (12/08) valued at \$1,259,583.32. The budget allocation from SMEF for 2009 is \$113,342.00. A less well-known but no less important mission endowment is held in a First United Account at Chicago Community Trust (CCT). These funds were deposited with CCT as part of a matching gift program in the 1980s. When we allocated funds to an organization, CCT provided a match and also a deposit to the account. As of June 30, 2008 the balance was \$894,768.00. These funds are held at CCT and we are annually allocated a sum equal to 5.5% of the trailing 12-quarter average market value. In the 2009 budget the allocation is estimated as \$45,000. First United can utilize this allocation in grants to any organization that serves people in Chicago. (This has included local organizations such as PADS, Food Pantry and Walk-in Ministry.)

These two endowments combined are listed on the annual report as mission endowment draws. The total (\$158,342.00) is in the Faith in Action expenditure budget.

Per a prior congregational vote, \$90 per member from the total is donated annually to our denominations (half to each). In 2009 this is budgeted as \$67,000. The remainder (\$91,342) is available for the Faith in Action Committee to contribute to various local, national and international mission programs.

Next month – 'the rest' of the endowments! Please let me know (708-209-1377, jdespotes@ameritech.net) if there is anything else you are interested in reading about in this column.

May the God of justice
and mercy unite us
in compassionate
solidarity with all those
in need, that our lives
may be just and merciful,
and a source of
Her blessing to many.

—Marchiene Vroon Rienstra

Mighty God, Father of all,
Compassionate God, Mother
of all, bless every person I
have met, every face I have
seen, every voice I have
heard, especially those most
dear; bless every city, town
and street that I have known,
bless every sight I have seen,
every sound I have heard,
every object I have touched.
In some mysterious way
these have all fashioned my
life; all that I am,
I have received.
Great God, bless the world.
—John J. Morris, SJ



If You are a Guy, Start March Right. —Bud Meyers

All men who are members or friends of First United Church are invited to a fellows-only event at 6:00 pm on Sunday, March 1st. Come to 1033 South Boulevard (The Schem Company) with your \$4 for pizza and beverages. RSVP to me (hnsmeyers@sbcglobal.net).

First United Softball—Season #2 —Kelly Brouwer

Get your bats ready! The second season of First United Softball will play its first game on Friday, Apr 24! (Time and Place TBA) Like last year, we are playing with the Oak Park Parks District in the Friday night league. All games will be played at Ridgeland Commons. This is a Co-Ed league, so we are looking for both men and women who are looking to play some fun softball and build community outside the walls of First United. Having fun is guaranteed. Please contact me with questions.

Interfaith House —Lynda Ficca

The next Interfaith House birthday party will be held on Sunday, March 22. We will meet at 5:00 pm in the church parking lot and leave together for the celebration. Please contact Lynda (ficcac@comcast.net) if you plan to come and bring some fruit, juice, or chips to share. We will be back at church by 7:00 pm. This is a great opportunity for families to do mission together! Interfaith House is a model of recuperative residential care for people who are homeless. It fills the crucial gap in care between a hospital stay and complete recovery for the homeless population and is the only agency of its kind in Illinois.

Join the FFUN! —Carole Ferguson and Janet Kenealy

The Fellowship at First United (FFUN) Committee is seeking members to promote fellowship and hospitality at First United. The newly formed committee is responsible for overseeing the planning and implementation of all church events, including preparation and serving of food and drinks and cleaning up after all church meals and receptions. If you enjoy party planning, organizing and kicking up your heels, this is the committee for you!

Our first meeting will be held at Janet Kenealy's home, 317 N. East Avenue, O.P. on Monday, March 9, 2009 at 7:30 pm. Contact Carole (383-5566, prideandprejudicefudge@yahoo.com) or Janet (386-5180, Kenealyfam@sbcglobal.net) with any questions you may have.

Evening Division Programs — Marcia Ashton

"Influence of Jane Addams and Hull House Internationally" (March 5th – 6:30 pm Centennial Hall) Rima Schultz and Peg Strobel will give us insight on Jane Addams, founder of the Settlement House movement and one of the first women to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Dinner reservations by March 2 to Grace Behrendes (708-386-2721). You are welcome to invite a guest for this exceptional program.

"Children's Clinic of the Infant Welfare Society" (April 2– 6:30 pm Centennial Hall) Guest speaker is Elizabeth Lippitt, Executive Director of The Children's Clinic. This program will give insight into one of the local missions supported by First United Church.

New Midpoint Group — Amber Pareja

Are you in your 30s or 40s, too old to be a FUSHie, too young to be a PrimeTimer? If you said yes to the above questions, and want to connect with others at First United, please join us for a gathering of all First United members / members-to-be who are thirty or forty-something. We'll have appetizers and desserts. Keep an eye out for the date. Please bring a bottle of your favorite wine or another beverage of your choice; appetizers and desserts will be provided. Come by yourself, with your partner/spouse, or with a friend, but please leave any little ones you may have at home. If you have any questions, please contact me, (aspajaja@gmail.com; 708-383-0293) or Angie Maguire (angiegerry@sbcglobal.net; 708-445-9240).

Nursery School Annual Plant Sale

—Megan Lewis

We hope you will support the First United Church Nursery School while beautifying your garden, deck or porch! We're offering the most amazing geraniums, herbs, hanging baskets, ferns, vines, impatiens, pansies and lots of other beautiful plants.

Our annual sale is underway and we will be taking orders until March 19th. Please stop at our table in the lounge on March 1st, 8th and 15th to place your order or feel free to contact Megan Lewis (708.660.8439) or Holly Wiemken (708.524.9020) or the Nursery School office (708.848.4910).

Your purchases help the school maintain and improve its facilities for our children! Thank you so much for your continued support!

PrimeTime Travelers (60+) Main Event - March 29 —Marcia Ashton

Circle the date: March 29th, 5:30 – 8:30 pm for a fun gathering that will tap into our travel adventures, both near and far. Carole and Tom Ferguson are opening their home (531 N. Elmwood, O.P.) for a travel-themed Pot Luck dinner. You are invited to bring a dish that is reminiscent of your travels to a favorite spot in the USA or inspired by an international trip. If you choose, bring wine or other beverage to accentuate your dish. Do you have guide books or maps that are taking up space? Bring a couple items and exchange them for books, etc. to use for an upcoming trip. If you make "trip books," bring one or two to share. Contact co-host Marilyn Kauffman (708-366-4047) to let us know what you plan to bring. Call Anna Sadowski (708-386-7896) if you need a ride. RSVP by March 23 by phone to Marilyn Kauffman or by e-mail to me, marciaashton@msn.com.

Earth brings us into life
and nourishes us.
Earth take us back again.
Birth and death are present in
every moment.
—Thich Nhat Hanh



**Save
These
Dates**

Sunday, March 1	12:30p	Parish 7 & 11 Gathering with Julie Harley
Wednesday, March 4	6:30p	Soup Supper & Bible Study
	7:30p	Kenyon College Choir Concert
Thursday, March 5	6:30p	Evening Division Dinner
Saturday, March 7	5:30p	Fourth Foolish Fish Fry
Wednesday, March 11	6:30p	Soup Supper & Bible Study
Sunday, March 15	3:30p	Parish 9 Gathering with Julie Harley
Wednesday, March 18	6:30p	Soup Supper & Bible Study
Friday, March 20	7:30p	Music at First Concert— <i>Noye's Fludde</i>
Saturday, March 21	7:30p	Music at First Concert— <i>Noye's Fludde</i>
Sunday, March 22	12:00p	Mostaccioli Luncheon
	5:30p	Interfaith House Birthday Party
Wednesday, March 25	6:30p	Soup Supper & Bible Study
Sunday, March 29	12:30p	Parish 3 & 6 Gathering with Julie Harley
	5:30p	PrimeTime Travelers
Dinner & A Movie returns in April		Wednesday, April 22

Deadline for the April 2009 issue is March 15th.

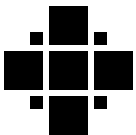
Please e-mail information or articles for the MB to:
office@firstunitedoakpark.com

2.09.emorymead

March 2009

848 Lake Street
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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>Mondays & Tuesdays</i>	7:30p	<i>PADS Homeless Shelter</i>	<i>Bill Lovell - 445-2665</i>
<i>Wednesdays 2nd & 4th and 1st</i>	3:30p	<i>Food Pantry Open</i>	<i>Kathy Russell/Michele Zurakowski - 386-1324</i>
	7:00p	<i>Food Pantry Open</i>	<i>Kathy Russell/Michele Zurakowski - 386-1324</i>
	7:00p	<i>Adult Choir</i>	<i>Bill Chin - 386-5215</i>
<i>Thursdays</i>	6:30p	<i>Cluster Tutoring Classes</i>	<i>Mamie Broadhurst - 386-5215</i>
<i>Fridays</i>	7:00a	<i>Men's Breakfast Group</i>	<i>Ted Desportes</i>
	7:00p	<i>Peace Prayer Vigil</i>	<i>Bud Hayes</i>
<i>Saturdays</i>	8:30a	<i>Inner Peace/World Peace</i>	<i>Jeff Olson - 383-3154</i>
	9:00a	<i>Food Pantry</i>	<i>Kathy Russell/Michele Zurakowski - 386-1324</i>
			<i>Susan Zaruba - 386-1946</i>

Walk-in-Ministry Monday - Saturday 10 to 11am

Week of March 1

Sunday 1	9:30a	Christian Education for All	
	9:30a	Quest	<i>Art Spooner/Gabrielle Worley</i>
	11:00a	Worship-First Sunday in Lent-Communion	
	12:30p	Parish 7 & 11 Gathering with Julie R. Harley	
	5:00p	FUJI (Jr High Youth Group)	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
	6:00p	FUSH (Sr High Youth Group)	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
	6:00p	Men's Group at Sachem Co.	<i>Bud Meyers</i>
Monday 2	7:00p	Fellowship of Reconciliation	<i>Amy Pappageorge</i>
Tuesday 3	7:00p	WIM Volunteer Meeting	<i>Susan Zaruba</i>
		Library Committee	<i>Cindy Palombi</i>
		Youth Board	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
		Faith in Worship Committee	<i>Scott Haldeman</i>
		Children's Ministry Committee	<i>Audrey Todd</i>
Wednesday 4	6:30p	Soup Supper & Bible Study	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
	7:30p	Kenyon College Choir Concert	<i>Bill Chin</i>
	7:30p	New Member Committee	<i>Karen Christopher</i>
Thursday 5	6:30p	Evening Division Dinner	<i>Carole Ferguson</i>
Saturday 7	9:30a	Breakfast Bunch	
	1:00p	Dances of Universal Peace	
	5:30p	Fourth Foolish Fish Fry	<i>Cindy Palombi</i>
			<i>Mamie Broadhurst</i>
			<i>Marylen Marty-Gentile</i>

Week of March 8

Sunday 8	9:30a	Christian Education for All	
	9:30a	Quest	<i>Art Spooner/Gabrielle Worley</i>
	11:00a	Worship-Second Sunday in Lent	
	5:00p	FUJI (Jr High Youth Group)	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
	6:00p	FUSH (Sr High Youth Group)	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
Monday 9	7:30p	FFUN Committee at Kenealy's	<i>Carole Ferguson/Janet Kenealy</i>
Tuesday 10	7:00p	Shawl Ministry	<i>Elan Long</i>
		Finance Committee	<i>Justin Lewis</i>
		Deacon Meeting	<i>Bud Hayes</i>
		Youth Committee	<i>Lou Valsoano</i>
	8:00p	Communications Committee	<i>Connie Henderson Damon</i>
Wednesday 11	6:30p	Soup Supper & Bible Study	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
Thursday 12	7:00p	Nominating Committee	<i>Linda Sandman</i>
Saturday 14	9:00a	OWL Retreat	

Week of March 15

Sunday 15	9:00a	OWL Retreat	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
	9:30a	Christian Education for All	
	9:30a	Quest	<i>Art Spooner/Gabrielle Worley</i>
	11:00a	Worship-Third Sunday in Lent	
	3:30p	Parish 9 Gathering with Julie R. Harley	
	5:00p	FUJI (Jr High Youth Group)	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
	6:00p	FUSH (Sr High Youth Group)	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
Tuesday 17	7:30p	Church Council	<i>Laurie Jolicoeur</i>
Wednesday 18	6:30p	Soup Supper & Bible Study	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
	7:00p	Food Pantry Volunteer Orientation	<i>Kathy Russell / Michele Zurakowski</i>
Thursday 19	7:00p	Spiritual Guidance Group	<i>Julie R. Harley</i>
Friday 20	7:30p	Music at First Concert/Noye's Fludde	<i>Bill Chin</i>
Saturday 21	9:00a	Directions	<i>Liz Howells</i>
	7:30p	Music at First Concert/Noye's Fludde	<i>Bill Chin</i>

Week of March 22

Sunday 22	9:30a	Christian Education for All	
	9:30a	Quest	<i>Art Spooner/Gabrielle Worley</i>
	11:00a	Worship-Fourth Sunday in Lent	
	12:00p	Mostaccioli Luncheon	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
	3:00p	PFLAG	<i>Sylvia Menninga</i>
	5:00p	FUJI (Jr High Youth Group)	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
	5:30p	Interfaith House Birthday Party	<i>Lynda Ficca</i>
	6:00p	FUSH (Sr High Youth Group)	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
Tuesday 24	7:00p	Building & Grounds Committee	<i>John Zaruba</i>
		Personnel Committee	<i>Melinda Robinson</i>
		Faith in Action Committee	<i>Bob Hahn</i>
		Adult Education Committee	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
Wednesday 25	6:30p	Soup Supper & Bible Study	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
Thursday 26	7:00p	Shawl Ministry	<i>Elan Long</i>
		Planned Giving Subcommittee	
Saturday 28	9:00a	Quest Trek to Villa Park Mosque	<i>Art Spooner/Gabrielle Worley</i>

Week of March 29

Sunday 29	9:30a	Christian Education for All	
	11:00a	Worship-Fifth Sunday in Lent	
	12:30p	Parish 3 & 6 Gathering with Julie R. Harley	
	5:00p	FUJI (Junior High Youth Group)	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>
	5:30p	PrimeTime Travelers at Ferguson's	
	6:00p	FUSH (Senior High Youth Group)	<i>Kelly Brouwer</i>

Church Calendar

March 2009

Julie R. Harley,
Lead Pastor

Mamie Broadhurst
Associate Pastor

Marylen Marty-Gentile
Director of Children
& Family Ministries

Kelly Brouwer
Associate Pastor for Youth
and Adult Education

Bill Chin
Director of Music Ministry

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