



NewsNotes

Christ Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
A Just Peace and Open and Affirming Church
Becoming an Anti-Racist Church

Volume 64 – Number 8

August 12, 2008

Tents of Hope

In just a few days, Ken and I will join several CCC families for a weekend at Bethany Beach. The eastern coastline has been a place of renewal of us you might imagine how excited it will be to spend a few *dog days of summer's* watching water smooth the rough edges of rocks and tired souls. We look forward to long walks, unplanned conversation and board games. Mostly, we are excited to be with people we know and will come to know. Just being with church family will be a treasured gift!

A weekend away will be a time of joy and renewal. It will also be a time of prayer and contemplation. When imaging the beach, I see rows and rows of umbrellas specifically placed to block the sun and to shelter the masses from the intrusions of the everyday tasks that await their return. These tents of respite are a gift to any soul. This summer, these umbrellas will remind me that there is an ongoing crisis in Darfur.

In Darfur, Sudan, violence and genocide have displaced millions of people from their villages. Most of these refugees are forced to live in tents far from their homes and often away from their families. The United Church of Christ, in partnership with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and Dear Sudan, has encouraged faith communities to be engaged in *Tents of*

Hope, a one year project which calls us to respond to the ongoing crises in Darfur.

Tents of Hope invites faith communities to create a tent or canvas panel as works of art to help educate people about the situation faced by the people in Sudan while giving us opportunity to discern what kind of advocacy or response can be made. The tents are meant to be a symbolic and tangible focal point of compassion and peacemaking. In the coming months, CCC's Boards for Social Witness and Christian Education will consider the best way to focus our attention on how best we might respond to what is happening to our brothers and sisters in Africa. We *will* find a way to offer a prayerful response.

Tents (and panels) of Hope from around the United States will have the opportunity to be displayed on the National Mall November 7-9, 2008. I imagine the display will not look exactly like umbrellas on the beach, but they will tell the story of how people survive the weight of injustice. I pray it will challenge us to be a people of conscious hope who extend a hand to all our brothers and sisters. May your summer activities, whatever they may be, joyfully energize you as together we continue to be engage in God's mission throughout the world. *Susan A. Henderson*

An Opportunity to Give ~~

The Deacon's Fund offering operates outside the unified budget of the church and monies are used to meet special needs of CCC members and needs in the community identified by the ministers. Additionally CCC in concert with other churches in the area contributes \$200 per month to MUSST INC (Ministries United Silver Spring, Takoma Park) to help low income families in crisis to meet health, utility and nutritional costs.

The Board of Deacons asks you to consider supporting these worthwhile efforts by making donations, using the yellow envelopes included with pledge envelopes or the envelopes provided in the pews. We are grateful to the members who regularly provide this support. *Audrey Platt on behalf of the Deacon's Board*

A New Ministry of Hospitality and Building Stewardship

Earlier this summer, at the request of the Church Administrator and in light of difficulties with retaining part-time custodians on weekends, a Custodial Task Force was formed to look into the custodial and maintenance needs of CCC. After considerable study, including visits to similarly situated churches in the Washington area, the Task Force recommended, *inter alia*, that CCC develop and sustain a volunteer sexton ministry of hospitality and stewardship of the building under the leadership and management of the Building and Grounds Committee.

Now, members and friends of CCC are invited to volunteer as sextons. Each sexton will open the building at 8:30 AM on Sundays and then close it in the early afternoon once every three months, i.e., four times a year. He or she will also provide a presence on occasional Sundays beginning at 4:30 PM and sometimes on Sundays between approximately 1:00 and 5:00 PM on an as-needed basis. After completing a training session in late August, the volunteer sextons will begin their activities on Sunday, September 7. This ministry will need 13-14 individuals.

If you would like to be part of this very important undertaking, or if you would like more details, call Bud Dennie at (301) 460-4379 or by e-mail at cdennie213@aol.com. Your service will be greatly appreciated as it will enable our building to be even more available to its own members and to the community.

Building and Grounds Committee

About CCC Members ~

Through the power of Google, I found you and send joyous greetings from a charter member of the church! I was 11 years old when I joined, and my name will not be known to your current congregation, nor yours to me – but the shades of John F. McClelland and Louise, if they are hanging around, will greet me, I am sure! As will the Reed family, and the Coblentz's and the McBrides, and others. From Whidbey Island, off the coast of Seattle, I salute you and trust that your work is blessed as it blesses others.

Affectionately, Martha Dodson Forward

Thank You ~



I want to thank the staff and congregation at CCC for their support and prayers during my recent illness and current period of recovery from meningitis. I know your intercession has helped to speed things along, and the flowers I received Sunday from David Bell of the Deacons helped brighten my time here at home.

Nancy Cox



New Book Order

Fall Contemporary Theology Class

Come join the stimulating discussion based on the book selected for the Fall class. The book is *What Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* By N.T. Wright. \$11.56 each. Please contact Lynn White at lrw504@gmail.com or (240) 328-6848 by 8/24/08 if you would like a book ordered for you. New members always welcome to join in. The class will begin on Sunday September 7 at 9:00 AM in the Conference Room.

CCC Book Group ~ ~

The next CCC Book Group discussion will be on Sunday evening, September 7 at 7 PM, at the home of Mary Stone. The book for discussion is *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Shaleh Hosseini, the author of *Kite Runner*. All are welcome – new members and old. Call Mary at (301) 681-6925 for directions or to get on the group e-mail list.

Church-wide Picnic ~ ~

Mark your calendars! **CCC's Church-wide Picnic** will be on **Sunday, September 14** after the services in the Social Hall. The Board for Church Life will provide subs, chips, beverages and dessert. You are asked to bring a side dish to share. We need help with set-up, serving and cleaning up. Look for sign-up sheets on the church bulletin board or contact Carolyn West-Gipson at 301-384-9805 or cwestgipson@verizon.net.



CCC Covenant Review

A new committee was appointed in June to examine CCC's current covenant to assess whether it is suitable as is or is in need of revision. It was last modified in 1983. Our committee reports to the Deacons and the Executive Council. Our initial meeting was held in July and we determined to seek a broad array of church member and board views. We will be meeting with boards and having open conversation meetings this fall with congregation members. A longer article about our work will be forthcoming in the September News Notes, but we wanted to take this early opportunity to inform members about our committee. Our members are: Chuck Mason, chair; Dave Ackerman, Mary Stone, Jane von Maltzahn, and Anne Weissenborn. If you have views now, you can share them with any one of us. The current covenant is on the CCC website, www.christ-ucc.org, then click on "about us" and then on "Covenant Community."

July Thunderstorms Strike Blow to CCC

Severe thunderstorms rolling through Silver Spring on Sunday, July 27, irreparably damaged the main fire control panel in the Mechanical Room and temporarily disabled the compressor on the chiller.

Church Administrator Dianne Abraham was called to the church twice that Sunday by trouble and supervisory alarms. Typically, thunderstorms set off trouble alarms because even the briefest interruption or surge in power disrupts the fire alarm system. Usually, one of the staff can reset the system when turning off the alarm. Not being able to reset indicated a larger problem requiring the attention of Simplex Grinnell, which has the service contract for inspecting, maintaining and repairing the several components of CCC's alarm system.

While CCC sits in an area that is particularly susceptible to violent wind gusts and resulting power outages, the technician reported that most probably a lightning strike in the immediate vicinity knocked out the main panel. The elevator became inoperable as well because its electrical controls are connected to the fire alarm system. The elevator is designed to shut down when the fire alarm goes off. Cory Gray was able to work around that component on Monday evening and restore elevator service.

Until the panel can be replaced, CCC is not totally without protection since the sprinkler system is still working and would activate if a fire occurred in the building. The current estimate for replacing the control panel is estimated in a range of \$1750 - \$2300. (*Continued on page 4.*)

From the Financial Secretary ~ ~

Several CCC members have checks automatically sent to the church for their pledge contributions. Some of these checks have the envelope number included on the check. With the new fiscal year, those numbers have changed. The affected members should either have their institution change the envelope numbers to reflect the new numbers or have the envelope numbers removed and we can look up the number. Thank you for your attention on this matter.

Gregg Muncill, Financial Secretary

(July Thunderstorms, continued from page 3) The Administrator is exploring the possibility of an insurance claim to pay for the necessary repair to the panel. It is unusual but not unknown for the chiller compressor to shut down during a bad storm. When that happens, the Administrator calls Cranston, the plumbing and heating company that maintains all of the heating and air-conditioning equipment, to check out the compressor to ensure there is no serious damage and that it is safe to restart. Because of the frequency that CCC experiences violent electrical and wind storms, the Board of Trustees is considering options to purchase a commercial surge protector system to protect the Church's investment in the life safety and heating and air-conditioning systems and in the organ.

Jackie Walters, Communications Officer

Library Notes for August ~~



Books on health in the adult library have been slimmed down. Retired librarian Ruth Erk helped to weed out those that were perhaps too specific or outdated. These books are now giveaways in a box on the second floor outside the Conference Room. Topics include calcium concerns, carpal tunnel syndrome, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, depression, diet and AIDS.

The titles that remain:

Alternative Medicine, the Authoritative Guide, by the Burton Goldberg Group, 1995, 1066 pp., covers topics of acupuncture, biofeedback, fasting, hydrotherapy, sports injuries, yoga and many more.

Beyond Codependency, and Getting Better All the Time, by Melody Beattie, 1989, 252 pp., about people recovering from various dependencies.

Medicine Women: A Pictorial History of Women Healers, by Elizabeth Brooke, 1997, 127 pp.

Medical Technology And Christian Decision Making, Using New Technology Without Losing Faith, edited by Ronald Cole-Turner, fall 2002, New Conversations, published by the UCC's Proclamation, Identity and Communications Ministry, 91 pp.

Under One Roof, Caring for an Aging Parent, by Sheelagh McGurin, 1992, 174 pp.

Caring for the Disabled Elderly: Who Will Pay? by Alice Rivlin and Joshua Wiener, 1988, 318 pp.

Love, Medicine and Miracles, Lessons Learned about Self-Healing, by Bernie Siegel, 1986, 243 pp., from a surgeon's experience with exceptional patients, including children.

Cancer Survivor's Nutrition and Health Guide, Eating Well and Getting Better During and After Cancer Treatment, by Gene Spiller and Bonnie Burch, 1993, 246 pp.

Blessed to Be a Blessing, by Jack K. Wagner, 1980, 144 pp. How to have an intentional healing ministry in your church.

Peggy Mentzer

Deadline for the next NewsNotes is 5:00 PM Wednesday, September 3
Send articles to Susan Gray cccoffice@christ-ucc.org or leave them in the NewsNotes Box

Sing (and play) to the Lord a Jubilant Song! Music Ministry rehearsals resume in September



Rehearsals for all Children's Choirs, Youth Ensemble, Chancel Choir, String Ensemble and Intergenerational Orchestra will resume beginning Sunday, September 14th. Please look for the **Music Ministry Opportunities Brochure** in upcoming August bulletins to find out more about how all ages are invited to share musical gifts and talents within the life our congregation. The brochure will have specific details about each of our choirs with information about rehearsal times, locations, and directors for each group. *(Also available will be a rehearsal and singing/playing schedule for the entire calendar year for the children's choirs, Youth Ensemble and Instrumental groups)* These documents will be available on the music page of the church web-site for reference!

Here's a brief outline from the brochure so that you can begin your calendar planning and insure that choir and instrumental rehearsals are a part of your fall schedule! I look forward to beginning another year full of worship opportunities, concerts and the many other ways to share our joyful sound within CCC, the community and the world! Please feel free to contact our Director of Music, Nae Pearson, at the church, 301-585-8010, ext 224 or through e-mail at Holymusic@aol.com for further information.

Groups beginning rehearsals on Sunday, September 14th

The Carol Choir-(Pre-school, grades 1-2). Music for this age-group will be offered as a part of the regular Sunday morning Sunday school.

The Chapel Choir- (Grades 3-6), begins rehearsals September 14, promptly at 11:45 a.m. until 12:15 p.m. in the choir room. Nae Pearson will direct this choir.

The Youth Ensemble-(Grades 7-12), begins rehearsals on Sunday, September 14th, 5:00 until 6:00 p.m. in the choir room. Nae Pearson will direct this ensemble.

(Beginning on September 4) The Chancel Choir- (Youth and Adults), begins rehearsal on Thursday September 4th, 7:30 until 9:30 p.m. in the choir room. Nae Pearson will direct this choir.

The **String Ensemble** and **Intergenerational Orchestra** will hold rehearsals as announced throughout the year. There are no scheduled rehearsals for the Strings or Orchestra in September. A complete rehearsal schedule and worship playing dates will be available in August.



CCC will be offering the "Our Whole Lives" (OWL) program for youth in the 6th through the 12th grades this fall. This program, created jointly by the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Church, encompasses human sexuality, family relationships, interpersonal communications, decision-making, conflict-resolution, and handling peer pressure, all in the context of our Christian faith and values. It attempts to create a trusting and accepting support community for the youth, and help them understand and deal positively with the changes that they experience as they mature through adolescence into adulthood and the social pressures, they will likely encounter. It helps them to refine their sense of self-worth and to trust themselves, while recognizing each child's family as the primary source of moral values. Letters are going out to parents of our youth with further details about the program and the schedule for the upcoming year. On Sunday evening, September 14 there will be a parent-youth meeting at 6:00 PM to learn more about OWL. While the youth eat together and participate in youth activities, parents will meet separately for a discussion of the program. Save the date!

Christ Congregational Church
9525 Colesville Road
Silver Spring, MD 20901

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Mailed August 12, 2008

HAPPENINGS IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER

Aug. 15 - 17 -- Beach Weekend

Sat., August 30 -- Safe Church Training

Mon., September 1 -- Labor Day

Thurs., September 4 -- Chancel Choir Rehearsals Begin

Sat., September 6 -- Social Witness Board Retreat

Sun., September 7 -- Two Worship Services at 9 and 10:30

Wed. September 10 -- CCC Volunteers at Shepherd's Table

Sun., September 14 -- Church School and Youth Groups Begin
All Church Picnic

Fri., September 19 -- Parent's Night Out

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**CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH UCC**

Phone:
301-585-8010

Event Line:
301-585-4640, ext. 333

Email:
cccoffice@christ-ucc.org

Rev. Susan A. Henderson,
Interim Senior Minister;
Rev. Sandra K. Dodson,
Associate Minister;
Nae Pearson, Director of
Music; Sarah Anders, Director
of Senior Adult Programming;
Dianne Abraham, Church
Administrator
Susan Gray, Support
Administrator

At CCC, we honor and celebrate
people of all races, cultures, ages,
abilities, sexual orientation, and
gender identity.

www.christ-ucc.org