



July 2009

# SPIRIT IN THE PARK

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MORGAN PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**2009**

## **ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT**

*Submitted by Carolyn McPherson*

It was my pleasure and privilege to represent Morgan Park United Methodist Church at the annual Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church, held June 7-9 at the Pheasant Run Conference Center. Lay representatives like me from all the churches of the NIC, along with their pastors, met with staff and support organizations to celebrate accomplishments, learn new ways of serving, affirm those entering into positions of authority, amend the Constitution of the United Methodist Church, worship together, and enjoy the fellowship of like-minded Christians. The group was large and diverse, but the common theme of serving God and Jesus Christ bound all together and unified our purposes. From the multitude of experiences, I wish to share several that I found particularly notable or inspiring.

The evening of the first day was dedicated to ceremonies that commissioned candidates to become elders, deacons, or ministers. An inspiring sermon by Bishop Sally Dick set the tone for the ceremonies, during which candidates were received into their new roles in the Church. Bishop Hee-Soo Jung presided over the commissioning. One by one the candidates, with their sponsors and relatives, were presented for confirmation in a ceremony of solemn beauty. Each robed candidate was affirmed in his/her new role by the Bishop, and then was hooded with an elegant stole to mark the elevation to a new role. It was reassuring to see that the Church will continue with such able new leadership.

The dominant activity of the second day was working to understand and vote on the many amendments to the Church Constitution. There were numerous amendments presented for consideration. While I would not say this work involving close reading and understanding was particularly enjoyable, it nonetheless was significant for several reasons. First, it highlighted the fact that ways of proceeding are not carved in stone, but can be changed as circumstances and understandings change with time. Second, the purpose of many of the amendments was to make the document more inclusive—an important reflection

of societal change in this new century. Additionally, the process of approving or disapproving the amendments was open—everyone had an opportunity to comment and explain reasoning. Democracy was at work in the process.

Finally I was very impressed with the friendliness and seriousness of purpose displayed by all who attended. At every level of authority in the Conference there was genuine collegiality, along with seriousness of purpose, in the quest to make the United Methodist Church the best servant it can possibly be.

### **JULY WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

**JULY 5, 2009**

Holy Communion

Pat Hawkins will preach.

“When Will You Have Enough?”

2 Kings 4:42-44; Ephesians 3:14-21 and John 6:1-21

**JULY 12, 2009**

Healing Service

“Reconciling Body and Soul”

Genesis 1:26-31 and Matthew 9:18-26

**JULY 19, 2009**

VBS Program

“Reconciling Jews and Gentiles”

Romans 11:11-36

**JULY 26, 2009**

Chris Walters will preach.

“Reconciling Creation and Evolution”

### **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2009**

**July 13-17**

**E. D. G. E.**

**Experience & Discover God Everywhere**

*(Please see enclosed flyer & registration form.)*

## **Becoming a Reconciling Congregation**

*Submitted by the Reconciling Committee*

Recently there has been a lot of conversation about reconciling in our church. A Reconciling Congregation offers gospel hospitality and affirms our baptismal promises, and includes people of all sexual orientations and gender identities into the full life of the church.

The Church and Society Committee of our church will initiate the study and discussion process necessary to our becoming a reconciling congregation and invites all members and friends who have an inclusive heart to join the process.

Over 250 United Methodist congregations have gone through the process toward declaring a reconciling welcome in their churches, thus becoming Reconciling Congregations. These congregations have approved a statement that specifically names a welcome to people of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

There are a number of steps in the process to becoming a Reconciling Congregation and the process might take about a year. The final step is the formation of a reconciling/welcoming statement, which the church's Charge Conference must approve. We anticipate presenting our statement to the MPUMC Charge Conference in October 2010.

The first step of the process is to form a Reconciling Committee. The members of the Church and Society Committee all decided to become members of our Reconciling Committee, but anyone is welcomed to join the Committee.

At the first meeting of the Reconciling Committee there will be a discussion of the movie, "The Bible Tells Me So". This will take place on Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. before our worship service. "The Bible Tells Me So" is a documentary film on the perspectives and experiences of homosexual youth and their parents. Please view the film and join in the discussion.

All questions and suggestions can be discussed with the current members of the Reconciling Committee: Yvonne Brown, Eileen Fay, Laura Parker, Carisa Parker, Don Jaburek, pastor Eun-Hye Choi and pastor Kermit Krueger.

The progress of becoming a reconciling congregation will be shared at all times with the entire congregation through newsletters, Sunday bulletins and verbal announcements.

## **SCHOOL OF CHRISTIAN MISSION**

Just a reminder that the School of Christian Mission is July 23 – 26 at Judson University in Elgin, IL and Drive-in Day is Saturday, July 25. If you are interested in finding out more about it talk to Anne Genter.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Summer Berry Festival**



**Saturday, July 11, 2009  
11:00 AM – 4:00 PM**

*Submitted by Shirley Butler*

In case you don't remember, the "Berry Festival" is a UMW summer fundraiser. It is a fun filled event with lots of tasty desserts made with strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, and any other berry you can name. These tasty desserts are baked by the women of our congregation — men are welcome to contribute. So, we all need to put on our chef's hats and start baking.

There will also be hot dogs, smoothies and other goodies, as well as children's activities, games, music, a gift court, and a Talent Show.

We need performers of all sorts for the Talent Show. If you want to sing, dance, tell a joke, play an instrument, do a magic trick, etc. this is your chance. Your audience awaits!

Lastly, we want everyone to come and join in the fun, and bring friends and family.

For more information on the "Fest", or the Talent Show, please contact Shirley Butler.

## **WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!**

On Sunday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, we welcomed into full membership of our church family Eugene Echols and Jazelle Brown-Echols.

Eugene and Jazelle were both members of King of Glory UMC. Eugene is the owner/operator of NAS Electronics and his hobbies include sports. Jazelle is the store director of Toy R Us and her hobbies include shopping and reading. Eugene and Jazelle reside at 1748 W. Beverly Glen Pkwy, Chicago, 60643 and can be reached at 773-233-6134.

We give God thanks for these three new members.

## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

*Submitted by Anne Genter, President UMW*

Since our first project night on May 14<sup>th</sup> several members have completed 29 heart-shaped pillows, which are being distributed to breast cancer survivors to use as they undergo various treatments. The pillows are easy to make and require no sewing – just cutting and then tying knots. Some members have given the pillows to people they know who have need of them and Conchita Little, who works with the American Cancer Society, has delivered some there.

There is an on-going need for these pillows and the group has decided to continue to make the pillows at least through the summer. We will be meeting at 6:30 p.m. on July 2, 16, 30 and August 6 & 20 (all Thursdays). We'd love to have you join us.

There is also another way you can help – by providing materials to be made into pillows. We can usually make four pillows from two yards of fleece material – one dark and one light or one patterned and one plain. You can often buy the fleece material on sale or if you would rather give a monetary donation we will purchase the material for you. For further information talk to Trudy Hill, Gertrude Preyar, Elaine Reynolds, Conchita Little or others involved in this ministry.

### SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR ESMOND SCHOOL

The Outreach Team is again sponsoring the collection of school supplies for the children of Esmond School. However, since Esmond will be starting the school year early in August we are beginning the collection in July. Watch for sales of school supplies and purchase some for the children at Esmond who can use some extra help. The children at Esmond range from kindergarten to eighth grade so any type of school supplies are welcome. Some suggestions are:

- Crayons
- Pencils
- Ball point pens
- Notebook paper (wide lined)
- Scissors
- Rulers
- Glue and glue sticks
- Erasers
- Spiral notebooks (70 page, wide lined)
- Markers
- Book bags
- Folders

Bring the items to church at any time and place them on the mission table in the parlor.

**The deadline for submitting articles for the August newsletter is Wednesday, July 15<sup>th</sup>.**

## WELCOME NEW STAFF MEMBERS

We welcome to the staff at MPUMC Terry Blevins, Pierre McCann and Charles Campbell. Terry is our new full-time day custodian working Monday through Friday. Charles will work the evening and Saturday custodial shift. Pierre has joined us as a security person on Saturdays and as custodian on Sundays.

Please take the time to meet and greet our new staff members.

## AFRICA UNIVERSITY

Did you know that in 1992 the United Methodist Church opened the first private, international university in Zimbabwe? Africa University began as a dream of several United Methodist bishops in Africa. They said that increased access to higher education was key to peace, stability and development in Africa. After approval by General Conference in 1988 plans were made and work began.

In March 1992 classes started with 40 students from a dozen African countries studying in two faculties (areas of study) – Agriculture & Natural Resources and Theology. Today students come from 22 different countries, the campus includes 12 residence halls as well as a farm and teaching buildings, and there are six faculties (areas of study) – the two named above as well as Humanities & Social Services, Education, Management & Administration, Health Sciences, and the Institute of Peace, Leadership and Governance. Most of the students return to their home country following graduation.

Much of the funding comes from church members all over the world, especially the United States. You can learn more about Africa University by going to their website [www.africau.edu](http://www.africau.edu).

## JULY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

### GREETERS

July 5...Tom & Carolyn Trinley

July 12...Crystal Hill and April Preyar

July 19...Barbara Edmonson and Sylvia Robertson

July 26...Arleen McGee and Dorothy Wiggins

### ACOLYTES

July 5... Sydney Cerrentano and Denise Parker

July 12...Kaline Langley and Carinne Parker

July 19...Sydney Cerrentano and Christopher Parker

July 26...Pierre Parker and Will Zopp