



April 2010

SPIRIT IN THE PARK

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MORGAN PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Dear Friends

Wow, it's spring now. Did you check the prayer garden under the sanctuary stain glass window? Small yellow flowers are poking out their beautiful faces. The sunlight gets longer and we see new life everywhere in God's creation.

We celebrate Easter on April 4th, Sunday morning, with music, dance, poetry and prayers. On Easter we celebrate the resurrection of Christ Jesus and also our own resurrection. Upon our resurrection we will have new bodies as all these new flowers get new bodies after winter. We also live with the hope of resurrection and new life in our daily lives.

Among all of the blessings we have as a church, I am really excited with my upcoming sabbatical. I thank you for giving me possibly the first and the last opportunity for an extended sabbatical in my ministry years. I believe that it will be a wonderful experience for both the church and myself. May 2nd will be my last Sunday before the sabbatical and I will return to church on August 8th. The interim pastors are appointed by the cabinet of Northern Illinois Conference to minister our church. Their names are Darius and Penny Thomas. They are a retired clergy couple from our conference. The Staff Parish Relation Committee will work with them. I believe that you will extend our famous "radical hospitality" to them and learn from them so much.

During my sabbatical I plan to visit many diverse congregations in urban settings in the U.S.A. I believe that the diversity of any congregation is not just measuring numbers of different races but an important Christian value that we believe and live by. I hope that I learn how other diverse congregations practice the value of diversity in their ministries. When I come back to church I will share all my experiences and what I have learned with you.

God bless you and I love you!
Pastor Choi

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS BANQUET MAY 2, 2010

5:00 p.m.

Submitted by Sue Delves

During a retreat/planning session back about 1998, our church council accepted the challenge to create a different type of fundraising event – one which could extend an invitation to our Beverly/Morgan Park community.

From this discussion came the Annual Community Service Awards Banquet, honoring two local persons for their unusual efforts to good causes – a catered dress up event, with pretty decorations and invitations, nice food, an ad book and silent auction.

On Sunday evening May 2nd we will present this special event for the eleventh time! The 2010 honorees are Peggy Goddard of Catholic Youth Ministry and Bob Jackson of the CeaseFire Chicago office in Roseland.

Since 1979 when the community began CYM as an off-campus service for Morgan Park High School students, Peggy Goddard has served as its director. The CYM mission – and hers – has been to offer guidance to students in a comfortable house near the school, providing a safe haven where students gather for conversation, study, community service projects and social events. Ms. Goddard has helped students through all these years as they deal with teen issues, religious and academic challenges and student safety.

Bob Jackson is the Violence Prevention Coordinator for CeaseFire Chicago's office in Roseland. He has been instrumental in working with schools, families, gang members, police officers and churches to decrease incidences of violence throughout the south Chicagoland. Through the work of CeaseFire, the number of shootings has decreased in the areas where this organization is active. Bob Jackson's efforts throughout the south side of Chicago have been especially effective.

The enclosed flier describes the ways each of you at MPUMC can support this pleasant event and our guests of honor.

APRIL WORSHIP SCHEDULE

APRIL 4, 2010

Easter Day
Holy Communion
"Go to My Brothers"
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 and John 20:1-18

APRIL 11, 2010

"A Life of a Servant-Manager"
Proverbs 22:1-9 and Matthew 20:1-16

APRIL 18, 2010

"Meaning of Offering"
Exodus 25:1-9 and Matthew 5:21-26

APRIL 25, 2010

Youth Sunday
Youth Pastor Micah Briggs will preach.

GOOD FRIDAY

Friday, April 2, 2010



Christ UMC
3730 W. 119th Street
Alsip, IL

This year we will participate in a combined Good Friday Service with Maple Park UMC, Christ UMC, Grace UMC and Southlawn UMC. The service will be held at Christ UMC. Refreshments will be served at 6:00 p.m. The service, "Seven Last Words of Jesus", will begin at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Choi will be one of the seven speakers.

CHURCH DIRECTORY 2010

Submitted by Pat Bayer

A draft of the new church directory is located on the table in the back of the sanctuary. Please check your information for accuracy and make any necessary changes by April 18th. The new directory will be available on April 25th. Thank you.



Maundy Thursday

Thursday, April 1, 2010

6:30 p.m.

Parlor
Soup & Bread Dinner

7:15 p.m.

Samaritan Chapel
Taizé Prayer Service & Holy Communion

Celebrate the Risen Lord!

EASTER WORSHIP
SUNDAY, APRIL 4, 2010
10:45 a.m.



Music...Dance... Poetry...Prayers
Easter Brunch Following Worship



May 2, 2010

Submitted by the Stewardship Committee

Congregations that approach financial stewardship from a biblical perspective do not view the money Christians give to their church merely as a way to pay its bills. Rather, such congregations see financial contributions as a way to help people grow spiritually in their relationship with God by supporting their church's mission and ministry with a percentage of their incomes.

The biblical perspective of giving to the church is that the giver gives for the need of his or her own spiritual development, rather than on the need for the church to receive. Instead of treating people like members of a social club who should pay dues, we will treat people like followers of Jesus Christ who want to give unselfishly as an act of discipleship. Based on this biblical teaching we encourage our members toward proportionate and systematic giving in response to the question, "What percentage of my income is God calling me to give?"

On Consecration Sunday every member will be given the opportunity to complete an Estimate of Giving Card. This is the time when you voluntarily decide what God is calling you to give, and share that commitment with the Finance Committee. Your commitment is what you will strive to do and it is your prayerful decision to make.

We will do no home solicitation to ask people to complete cards but we will make every effort to inform, inspire, and commit everyone to attend Consecration Sunday and to learn about Christian stewardship.

Genesis Journey

The group formerly known as Exodus is now Genesis Journey! The group had a wonderful time at the contemporary adult planning and spiritual retreat on March 5-6, 2010 at Wesley Woods Conference Center in

Williams Bay, Wisconsin. We were truly Renewed, Revitalized and Refreshed!

After a long and fruitful process we created a new name for the group based on the foundation and principles of the Exodus Group. Henceforth the group is now Genesis Journey. Many thanks to all who assisted in making the retreat possible. Special thanks to Micah Briggs, former member Karen Young, JeRome Brown, Don Jaburek, Wanda Williamson-Johnson, Lisa Butler and Anne Genter for their added efforts in making the retreat a success.

Genesis Journey is in the process of planning many wonderful things. If you want to know more about Genesis Journey, please contact JeRome Brown or Lisa Butler.

Or email the group at
genesisjourney@morganparkumc.com

MONEY MATTERS

Submitted by the Stewardship Committee

Do you know that the cost of operating our Church averages \$800 a day, 365 days a year?

Do you know where the money goes?

Do you know where it comes from?

Unless you are one of the members of the current Finance Committee, there is more than a slight chance that you don't. So, in an effort to give all of our members a better understanding of the financial affairs of our Church, the Stewardship Committee has scheduled four "Money Matters" meetings in April:

- * **Sunday April 11th after worship**
- * **Monday April 19th at 7:00 p.m.**
- * **Thursday April 22nd at 7:00 p.m.**
- * **Sunday April 25th after worship**

(They will all be the same.)

The meetings will be an hour or less. We really want all of our members and friends to turn out for these meetings. So, please call the Church office to reserve your place.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Submitted by the Outreach Team

The Outreach Team would like to thank everyone who supported our Spring Luncheon on Sunday, March 21st. It was a beautiful day with good food. Those on the committee worked hard to provide the food and those that attended helped make our giving to the Rainbow Covenant possible. Thank you all.

"SHARE YOUR SOLES"

Submitted by Laura Parker, Nurture Team Chair



The Nurture Team is sponsoring a shoe collection during the month of April. As you do your spring-cleaning, set aside your used shoes to be used for people around the world.

Share Your Soles is a non-profit organization 501(c)(3) with a simple mission: To provide gently worn shoes to those in greatest need around the world. The organization has been able to put shoes on the soles of children and adults in the most impoverished areas of the world.

Please be sure that the shoes you share are gently worn or new, clean and can withstand heavy wear. When selecting shoes to donate, please follow these requirements: **Children's shoes:** boy's, girl's and infant's – must be new or gently worn. **Adult Shoes:** Men/Women, dress shoes, and casual shoes are needed – must be new or gently worn. **Shoe Types:** winter boots, cowboy, sandals, slippers, canvas shoes, school shoes, work/utility shoes, athletic shoes, running shoes, basketball shoes, football shoes, hiking shoes, soccer cleats.

REMEMBER – GO FOR QUALITY

We will have a collection box near the mission table in the parlor. We will drop off the shoes at Share Your Soles, 11701 S. Central, Alsip, at the end of the month. Please have the shoes cleaned up as much as possible to decrease the time needed for processing. Also consider donating a few dollars so that the agency will have money for shipping costs. This is a project all the family can work on, so let's all join in this opportunity to "Share Your Soles".

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Submitted by Anne Genter, UMW President



The April meeting of the United Methodist Women will be held on Saturday, April 10th beginning at 11:00 a.m. in the church parlor. All women are invited to share this time together.

We will have a business meeting and a program appropriate for Eastertide entitled "Easter: Women at the Tomb". We will then enjoy a potluck luncheon together. The UMW will provide the meat and each women is asked to bring a dish to share. Sign up with Trudy Hill.

SPRING RUMMAGE SALE

Friday & Saturday

May 21st & 22nd

Wesley Hall

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

The Spring Rummage Sale is coming next month. The dates are Friday May 21st and Saturday, May 22nd. Now is the time to start working on it. One of the ways you can help is by bringing items for the church to sell. We will be selling spring and summer clothing, household items, children's clothing, toys, jewelry and books. Please bring your donations to the canteen room at the church as soon as possible. Make sure they are marked so that they can be placed in the proper storage area. Clothing may be on hangers. It is helpful if the clothing and other items are clean.

The week of the sale many people are needed to set up and price items for our sale. It takes a great deal of time if only a few are working on it, but with many hands it is not such a huge undertaking. Any time you can give during the week will be much appreciated. Remember, many hands make light work.

Please be sure to mark the dates on your calendar now and think of the rummage sale as you do your spring-cleaning.

ALL!

Submitted by the Reconciling Committee

There are buttons some have that say, "**ALL MEANS ALL**". Unfortunately, we know this is not always true. The Declaration of Independence says:

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident that **ALL** men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."*

But when that was written "**ALL**" only pertained to Euro-American, landowning men, whereas women and people of any other race were excluded. Again, whereas the fourteenth amendment made **ALL** U.S. born or naturalized people citizens of this great country, yet African-Americans were not allowed to vote until several acts of Congress guaranteed the rights laid out in the fifteenth amendment. Women weren't allowed to vote until the nineteenth amendment. Sorry, folks, in the USA **ALL** doesn't necessarily mean **ALL!**

Even today, depending on the generation and location, some individuals are hated, excluded, abused, etc.; and some Christians (using the precious freedoms of speech and faith) feel free to lift hate-filled signs saying "God hates____" certain other individuals. Therefore, we the people of the Morgan Park United Methodist Church need to let EVERYONE know this congregation identifies "**everyone**" by name as among God's Chosen (God's Elect, God's Beloved, or God's Children – take your pick of the phrase you like best) and that we welcome everyone into this (God's) house. For us **ALL** must mean **ALL**, and our mission must define **ALL**:

The current **DRAFT** mission statement for our church follows for your continued review and reflection:

OUR MISSION:

To witness to the World lovingly and justly as servants of Jesus by healing, caring, embracing, reconciling and protecting all people.

Therefore, we open our hearts, our minds, and our doors to all persons of any age, race, ethnic origin, economic reality, family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, education, mental or physical ability, or social standing as full participants in the life and work of this reconciling congregation.

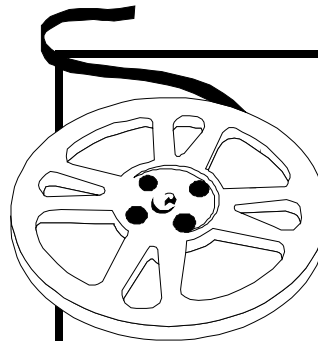
WELCOMING STATEMENT:

Home for all who enter and a refuge for all who are broken.

As an example of what other churches have adopted, **The Church of the Village (UMC) of New York City's** mission statement is:

We have declared ourselves to be a part of the "Reconciling Congregations Network," a movement within the United Methodist Church where we commit ourselves as churches, and as individual members, to a witness of reconciliation and a dedication to justice for all persons, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, nationality or economic status.

We need your ideas to make the proposed mission statement even now circulating among our committees reflect our congregation. For example, we might say something like, "We welcome people of all races, genders, sexual orientation and identification, nationality and economic status, and of all, varying mental and physical abilities. For us, all shall mean all! For us **ALL** are God's children, and we offer God's house here as their home. Speak to your committees' leaderships.



APRIL FILM DISCUSSION GROUP

*Submitted by
Shirley Butler*

The Film Discussion Group will meet on Saturday, April 10th, at 5:30 p.m. to view and discuss the film "Constatine's Sword". The meeting will take place at the home of Shirley Butler, 10119 S. Oakley Avenue.

The film is a 2007 documentary, which examines the history of anti-Semitism in the Catholic Church, and the link between the U.S. military and the Christian right; based on a controversial book by James Carroll.

*All are welcome
to join in the stimulating conversation.*

FLEA MARKET UPDATE

Submitted by Anne Genter

Every successful event takes much planning and our ALL CHURCH Flea Market is no exception. The date has been set – Saturday, September 11, 2010. Now we need your help.

Our flea market is a combination of church tables and outside vendors who rent space to sell their things. If you know someone who would like to rent a space the cost is \$25.00 per space. Tell them the date now so they can put it on their calendar. The more vendors we have the better it is. You can also rent a space individually if you would like.

Your help is also needed for the church tables. Last year we had tables of books, jewelry, odds and ends and bakery items for sale. This year we plan to have all of those areas again and are planning to add a table of Christmas items and a table of handcrafted items. We will continue to have food for sale and this year the children's ministry area is working on a fun fair for children. There will be two or more persons in charge of each area so if you would like to be one of those persons for a specific area let us know now. These persons will then be recruiting others to help them in their area on sale day. You can help in more than one area. Any time that you can give will be welcome so mark your calendars now to save the day for the flea market.

Are you crafty? Do you make things? One of our new areas is handcrafted items. We are looking for handmade items of all types. Some examples are wooden yard decorations, pillows, blankets, accessories such as scarves, and purses, knit or crochet items, wooden games, and decorative frames. You probably have many more ideas. We would welcome any items that you would share to make this table a success. Elaine Reynolds is heading up this table so talk to her with ideas or questions.

All of us working together can make our Flea Market a huge success. Any and all ideas are welcome.

**Remember, this is an all-church event
and its success depends on YOU!**

GOODMAN THEATRE OUTING

Submitted by Shirley Butler

The Goodman Theatre presents The Good Negro, which depicts the human side of people involved on both sides of the Civil Rights Movement in Birmingham, Alabama in 1962.

The play runs from May 1st through mid-June. The probable dates for the group theater outing are Saturday, May 15th; or Sunday, May 16th matinees. If you are interested in attending the play, please contact me.

APRIL WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

LITURGISTS

April 4...Rev. Kermit Krueger

April 11 – 25...Stanford Noble

GREETERS

April 4...Owen Skelly & Sydney Cerrentano

April 11...Barbara Edmonson & Sylvia Robertson

April 18...Deron & Deborah Truman

April 25...JeRome Brown & Frank Hawkins

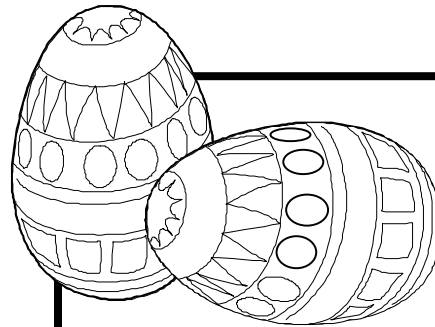
ACOLYTES

April 4...Kaline Langley & Denise Parker

April 11...Sydney Cerrentano & Carinne Parker

April 18...Christopher Parker & Pierre Parker

April 25...Sydney Cerrentano & Kaline Langley



CHILDREN'S EASTER PARTY & EASTER EGG HUNT

SATURDAY, APRIL 3rd

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Wesley Hall

GAMES...CRAFTS...FUN...FELLOWSHIP

Lunch Will Be Served.

All are welcome. We request that children age 3 and under be accompanied by an adult. Please contact Samantha Morek for more information.

...DON'T FORGET...

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS BANQUET

MAY 2, 2010

5:00 p.m.

We need help from as many members as possible for this event.