

February 2009

# SPIRIT IN THE PARK

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE MORGAN PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## International FAMILY NIGHT

*Submitted by Samantha Morek & Laura Parker  
Nurture Team Co-Chairs*

**Saturday, February 21, 2009**  
5:00– 8:00 p.m.

### Celebrate our Diversity!

Food...Games...Language  
Music...Clothes...Books  
Maps...Dance...Poetry

"We affirm all persons as equally valuable in the sight of God. We therefore work toward societies in which each person's value is recognized, maintained, and strengthened" (¶162, *The Book of Discipline 2004*).

Come join in the International Family Night! Our potluck dinner will feature a variety of foods from throughout the world. After the dinner, we will feature presentations of music, dance, or spoken word. If you would like to perform something special during this time, please contact Laura Parker or Samantha Morek and let them know in what way you would like to participate.

Bring music CD's, picture books, mementos from your travels, flags, maps, anything that will help us celebrate our backgrounds and the beautiful diversity that makes up Morgan Park United Methodist Church. This is a Family Night, so bring your favorite games to play; board games, floor games, card games, whatever will help us have fun together. Be prepared to learn new games.

Morgan Park United Methodist Church is blessed to have people from around the world, people from different cultural and religious backgrounds, as members. Many of us have said that this diversity is one reason we are members. Several studies have demonstrated some of the benefits

of diversity. These include cross-racial understanding, breaking down of racial stereotypes, and promoting learning outcomes. Experts assert that diversity is essential to national security. It is also essential if the dream of one Nation, indivisible, is to be realized.

Please join in celebrating each of the diverse backgrounds we bring to the church as we continue to work toward that one nation in spirit and in truth.

### NEW DRAMA PROGRAM

*Submitted by Shirley Butler*

We are forming a Drama Program at Morgan Park UMC, which will include a children and youth group, and an adult group.

Our aim is to highlight the Scriptures, and probe other issues using skits and dramatic readings. We want to see the Scriptures come alive for us, and bring new and fresh perspectives to our view of the Bible and moral issues.

We encourage anyone who has ever thought of acting, or who would like to improve their reading or public speaking skills, or who just wants to be a part of a fun group to contact Shirley Butler or Franja Brown for more information.

### UNITED METHODIST MEN ELECT NEW OFFICERS

At the January meeting of the United Methodist Men new officers Tom Hall (President) and Robert Fitzgerald (Sgt. at Arms) were elected. Charles Preyar retains the office of Vice-president, Phil Baker retains the office of Secretary and Stanford Noble retains the office of Treasurer.

The next meeting of the UMM will be on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>. Breakfast begins at 8:00 a.m., followed by a business meeting. All men are invited and encouraged to attend.

# RAINBOW COVENANT

## Mission Projects 2009

One of the great traditions in the Northern Illinois Conference is the **Rainbow Covenant Program**. As a Rainbow Covenant church, MPUMC not only pays its apportionments in full, but also gives mission money to each of the eight designated bands, affording our members and friends the opportunity to embrace the concept of comprehensive support of our mission life as connectional United Methodists.

The Outreach (Mission) Team met in January and the **Mission Projects for the 2009 Rainbow Covenant** have been selected. The projects selected are listed below with the hope of providing information and also with the hope of encouraging your continued support of the outreach program.

### BURGUNDY BAND

*Global General Advance Specials*

#### **Community Development Project, Cambodia**

Works to provide education, health care and nutrition for orphans and to construct a school to serve more than 300 children. Clara Biswas works with this project.

#### **Poverty Alleviation & Micro-Credit in Mo-Dega and**

#### **Repease, Ghana**

Uses micro-credit to provide supplies to improve crop yields and animal husbandry methods to help eliminate poverty in rural areas.

### RED BAND

*USA General Advance Specials*

#### **Tree of Life Ministry, Pierre, South Dakota**

This ministry with Native Americans addresses needs on the Rosebud and Pine Ridge reservations.

### ORANGE BAND

*UM Committee on Relief (UMCOR)*

#### **Disaster Relief, International USA**

Provides quick response to meet emergency needs and to address natural disasters.

### YELLOW BAND

*The Children's Fund for Christian Mission*

Divided into child-serving projects, this fund is all about "children helping children". It educates children, giving them the opportunity to learn about and donate to these projects; thus, helping them to understand the meaning of "being in mission".

### GREEN BAND

*Northern Illinois Conference Advance Specials*

#### **Grace Halfway House for Women Ex-Offenders**

Provides a caring environment to prepare women to re-enter society and the working world, and to reconnect with family.

#### **Marcy-Newberry Association**

Provides a variety of social services at multiple locations on the west side of Chicago for all ages.

#### **Methodist Youth Services**

Provides programs and services to troubled youth in the Chicago area.

#### **Camping Scholarships**

Camping fees rise each year. Scholarships make it possible for persons from all parts of the Northern Illinois Conference to attend camp.

### BLUE BAND

*District Advance Specials*

#### **AIDSCARE, Inc.**

Assists those with advanced HIV/AIDS in the Chicago area to achieve a higher quality of life through housing, care and support services.

#### **Humboldt Park UMC: Homeless Program**

Serving between 100 and 150 homeless persons each day, this program provides hot meals, shelter, counseling and referrals.

#### **Care & Counseling Center/Evergreen Park Ministry**

A ministry of pastoral care located in a shopping plaza that is approachable and accessible.

### INDIGO BAND

*Missionary Personnel*

#### **Clara Mridula Biswas**

Clara is a missionary assigned as a community worker in Cambodia. She works to improve the lives of impoverished children in Phnom Penh, many of whom are homeless and live in the streets. She was born in Bangladesh.

### PURPLE BAND

*Local Benevolences/Special Sunday Offerings*

This band includes General Church Special Offerings, as well as, our offerings to our prison ministry, the Community Food Pantry, Esmond School and New Neighbors.

### WHITE BAND

*Sister Church Relationships*

#### **Community Partners for the Common Good Fund**

Works in partnership with local churches, interfaith and other community organizations to identify and secure necessary resources to fulfill community goals and aspirations.

## HAVE A HEART for

## MISSION MONTH

*Submitted by Anne Genther*

February is often referred to as "Heart Month". The Outreach Team will be collecting donations for the Rainbow Covenant by selling hearts to be displayed in the parlor during February.

For \$1.00 (or more) you may place someone's name on a heart showing that you and they have a "heart for missions". Let's see how many hearts we can display. Come to the parlor on Sunday and buy a heart!



**Outreach Team  
BAKE SALE**

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>  
Following Worship**

**LUCIOUS' "LIFE LESSONS"**

*Submitted by Lucious Moore*

**"The Eyes of the Beholder"**

There was a blind girl who hated herself because she was blind. He hated everyone except her loving boyfriend. He was always there for her. She told her boyfriend, "If I could only see the world I would marry you."

One day someone donated a pair of eyes to her. When the bandages came off, she was able to see everything, including her boyfriend.

He asked her, "Now that you can see the world, will you marry me?" The girl looked at her boyfriend and saw that he was blind. The sight of his closed eyelids shocked her. She hadn't expected that. The thought of looking at them for the rest of her life led her to refuse to marry him.

Her boyfriend left in tears and days later wrote a note to her saying: "Take good care of your eyes, my dear, for before they were yours, they were mine."

This is how the human brain often works when our status changes. Only a very few remember what life was like before, and who was always by their side in the most painful situations.

**...PLEASE NOTE...**

*Submitted by your secretary, Pat*

Due to a series of circumstances, mostly (but quite honestly, not completely) beyond my control, there is no monthly church calendar included with this newsletter. I apologize for any inconvenience this may cause. However, on the bright side, Samantha Morek has created a very comprehensive (and also quite lovely) church calendar, which is prominently displayed in the church parlor. Please check out this calendar for upcoming meetings and events, and **THANK YOU** Sam for taking on yet another church responsibility and doing it so well.

**NOW, LET'S TALK NEWSLETTER.** Other than Gertrude Preyar, nobody came even remotely close to observing the stated deadline for this newsletter...so, if I had "stuck to my guns"...the only thing in this newsletter would have been the February acolytes. (This is also the reason that

you are receiving your newsletter on the first Sunday in February rather than the last Sunday in January.)

I hate to have to continually harp on this topic, but the deadline is put into place for a very good reason. It allows ample time to format the articles you submit, and make the newsletter presentable, visually interesting and readable. It also gives me time to solicit additional articles if there are blank pages or spaces (see below) and, most importantly, it allows me a little breathing room during this monthly newsletter process.

**BOTTOM LINE...**The deadline for the March Newsletter is February 15<sup>th</sup>. (In fact, the deadline for every newsletter is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the prior month!) You have two weeks to submit articles of importance to you or your committee. So..do not bother calling me with excuses on the 16<sup>th</sup> or asking special favors to include a late article, because you will be wasting your time. **LATE ARTICLES WILL NO LONGER BE PUBLISHED.** Thanks for your cooperation.



*In the Mailbag*

The 2008 year-end (1/01/08—12/31/08) contribution letters (to aid you in your tax preparations) have been mailed. If you have not received one, have questions or corrections, please contact Pat at the church office as soon as possible. Please remember that these are not pledge statements, as the church's fiscal year doesn't end until May 31, 2009. Also, please remember that Pat's office hours are Monday through Friday; 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

(EMPTY SPACE REFERRED TO ABOVE)

## FEBRUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**FEBRUARY 1, 2009**

Holy Communion  
"Authentic Life"

Deuteronomy 18:15-20 and Mark 1:21-28

**FEBRUARY 8, 2009**

"Strength for the Journey"  
Isaiah 40:21-31 and Mark 1:29-39

**FEBRUARY 15, 2009**

Celebration of Black History Month  
Guest Preacher

**FEBRUARY 22, 2009**

Youth Sunday  
Youth Witness

Families are invited. We will be setting up a schedule for childcare during the Bible study portion of the evening. Please consider providing childcare for one Thursday evening between March 5<sup>th</sup> and April 9<sup>th</sup>. See Laura Parker or Samantha Morek to volunteer.

The study will end on Maundy Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup> with Holy Communion.

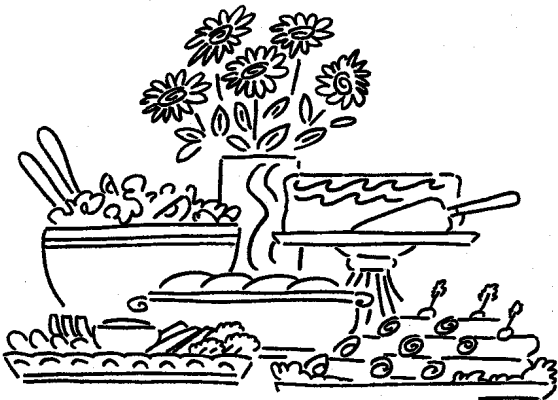
## ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

**February 25, 2009**

**7:30 p.m.**  
**Parlor**

Psalm 51:1-17 & Matthew 6:1-6; 16-21  
"Faith and Piety"

**Imposition of Ashes**  
**Special Music**



## Lenten Study & Potluck Suppers

Potluck Suppers Followed by Discussion

**Thursday Evenings:**  
**March 5<sup>th</sup> through April 9<sup>th</sup>**  
Parlor – 6:30 p.m.

*Please bring a dish or two of food to share and your own table setting (plate & silverware).*

**Study Book: \$5**  
**"Living with the Mind of Christ"**  
By James A Harnish

James A. Harnish is the senior pastor of Hyde Park UMC in Tampa, Florida. He is the author of many Christian books and meditation guides. Please contact the church office or pastor Choi to purchase your copy. (Make checks payable to Morgan Park UMC.)

We are seeking six people or teams to lead the presentations and discussions on each Thursday. If you are willing to lead a session, please contact pastor Choi.

## FEBRUARY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

### LITURGISTS

February 1... Shirley Butler  
February 8... Shirley Butler  
February 15... Shirley Butler  
February 22... Michel-Ange Desruisseaux

### GREETERS

February 1... Arleen McGee & Geraldine Washington  
February 8... Charles Davis & Bill Zopp  
February 15... Keil & Samantha Morek  
February 22... DeJuan Johnson & Marissa Johnson

### ACOLYTES

February 1... Kanisha Davis & Kyisha Davis  
February 8... Christopher Parker & Denise Parker  
February 15... Kaline Langley & Carinne Parker  
February 22... Antonio Sullivan & Will Zopp

**MARCH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:**  
**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15<sup>TH</sup>**