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## FROM THE PASTOR

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### JUST VISITING

<sup>1</sup> During those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. <sup>2</sup> And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait on tables. <sup>3</sup> Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, <sup>4</sup> while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word." <sup>5</sup> What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, [and six others]. (From Acts, chapter 7)

It was in a meeting of the Membership Team recently that the question came up about how to create a task force, of sorts, of individuals who would visit the homebound and others with limitations that prevent them from being present in our community.

One team member that night offered to serve as such a visitor, but we wondered how we might be able to assemble a more ideal complement, maybe three or four... or more, who would want to be the type of folk the seven mentioned in the passage above were to have been for that Christian community in first century Jerusalem.

It turns out, this wasn't the first time the visiting question has come up, here. The other day, when I was on a search for another archived file, I chanced upon the October 26, 1991, report of then-Moderator Janet Korsvik, tucked into a Church Council packet. It included the following note:

*We have had no responses to my plea in the Sept newsletter for volunteers to visit our homebound elderly, nor requests to be registered for the Nov workshop on how to visit them. (DD – "They are more lonely than you are afraid.")*

The afternoon I found that report, I actually paid a visit on Jan who is recovering from a fall. I mentioned the report, and we shared a moment of nostalgia.

Yes, the "DD" she cited was myself. I am not bragging when I tell you that, because that quip had been one someone else once had said to me. I had been working as a student chaplain at a local hospital and was assigned half the patients on a medical unit. My nurse supervisor had noticed that I was not in fact visiting the patients and complained. When I admitted to her that I found the prospect of calling on people I did not know intimidating, she replied unhesitatingly, "Trust me: they are more lonely than you are afraid!" I was about as chastened as I can ever remember being. Thereafter, I visited every patient on my unit once a day... sometimes twice!

I hope this little devotional moment comes to you either as an invitation or an encouragement... to join the Membership Team's visitors, or just to be aware of those around you who might appreciate a call. The responsibility and joy of every Christian is to extend the welcome of our spiritual home to those who cannot come. Some of those will be homebound.

If you want to be visitor but lack training, please speak with me, and I will make sure you know what to do, how to do it, and whom you might call upon.

Peace.

Pastor Dave Denoon

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

### HEIFER

“Thank you all who baked and/or bought food for the 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grade Sunday School class on Palm Sunday! The sale raised almost \$200 and the proceeds will be donated by the class to Heifer International. Your support really means a lot to our young people and we thank you for your generosity. Happy Easter!”

### LOCK IN APRIL 11TH

*Calling all confirmation and senior high students!* Join us for a lock in at the Church House on Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup>. We will gather at 7:30ish. Plan for little to no sleep, but lots of fun, food and games. Pastor Dave will be joining us... a good time to see what he's about, to make suggestions and ask questions. Oh yeah, and Jens is bringing his guitar.

For those who need to get a good night's sleep—or are taking the ACT on Saturday, join us for a late night.

For the parents: the chaperones are Chris Julcher, Youth Director Jens Notstad, and Deb Shamlin (who does not promise to stay awake all night). We will need volunteers for food, and probably some other stuff... please contact Chris at [cjulcher@yahoo.com](mailto:cjulcher@yahoo.com).

### AMISTAD LEARNINGS

During the March 9 Sunday Forum we reviewed the *Amistad* Story, one of faithful Congregational men and women who brought the first case of human rights to the Supreme Court. The story of the *Amistad* tells of the freeing and return of Africans to their native land, and of the birth of the American Missionary Association, which in its time was the social justice arm of the Congregational Church.

Reflecting on the richness of the conviction of these faithful folks and the irreducible humanity of the captives themselves, we began to list the opportunities today to speak on behalf of those who are oppressed, whose human rights are not upheld.

In Micah 6:8 we read, “What does God require of you, O mortal, only that you act justly, love kindness and walk humbly with your God.” Out of the March 9 discussion grew a list of *Amistads* of today, where there are opportunities for us individually, as a congregation, and as a community to act justly. The list includes Guantanamo Bay, Affordable Housing, GLBT and the Church, Interfaith Acceptance, and women enslaved in the Congo.

Watch the bulletin, website, and elsewhere in this newsletter for announcements of future Sunday Forum discussions of the topic of modern-day *Amistads*, so you can become informed, and determine, perhaps, for whom or what will you agitate!

### SEDER

Led by Bram Chill FCCE celebrated our third annual Seder. Attended by over 40 adults and children, this was an opportunity for fellowship and to answer the traditional question, “Why is this night different from every other night?” In story and song, Hebrew and English, haroset, bitter herbs, and the traditional seder plate, the story of the Israelites was retold.

A special thanks to the Brian Connors for the scrumptious brisket and for securing the haggadah, Dawn Steele for her apple crisp, Patty Sprague for authentic, traditional carrot tzimmes, Marty Beckwith and Merna Johnson for salads, the Julchers for libations, and the Cliftons for non-alcoholic libations, Kathy Koestring, Chris and Laima for setting up. Last of all, many thanks to all those who helped organize, cook, set up and clean up. And to Marcy Jenkins who with great cheer led the kitchen clean-up.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday School Open House was an experiential opportunity in Prayer. The preschool class, led by Sharyn Julcher, taught us about the desert. We learned from them that in the desert there are no trees, that Jesus had no food and he had no water during his 40 days and nights there. We also learned that when we pray we are talking to God.

Travis Clifton's class provided hands-on learning. Adults were able to make prayer bracelets were made by adding a bead for every person or situation you want to remember to pray for. Our children have learned that they can pray anytime and anywhere. Sometimes it is helpful to have something to focus on while we pray. Finger prayer labyrinths were available to take home, to trace while you pray. If you have forgotten the five finger prayer, copies are available in the Church House... or ask the children in the class.

The ideas for the theme came from the Prayer Garden in Travis' room. The children have turned leaves and flowers into prayer reminders. The garden is always open for prayer requests. Please stop by and add yours to the garden, in the first classroom on the north hall.

Lacey Ogbolumani and Kwesi Steele worked with their class on the topic of the Garden of Gethsemane, and their research can be viewed on the bulletin board of the landing in the Church House.

Thank you to all who came to experience what our children are learning.

### AND THIS MONTH IN SUNDAY SCHOOL

Our theme is *God is always with us*. Our Bible verse is Psalm 46:7 *The Almighty is with us, the God of Jacob is our fortress*. During April we will look at the stories of how God was present for Abraham and Sarah, Jacob, Joseph on his way to Egypt, and the Twenty-third Psalm, the most memorized part of the Bible.

### ADULT FORUM

The reality and pervasiveness of homophobia, and the social exclusion of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people historically, have troubled many of us who are committed to making this congregation a welcoming and inclusive place for all people. There is no blueprint for building a welcoming congregation or how a congregation might get there.

If we truly are people interested in becoming more welcoming, there needs to be some

education, conversation, listening, and dialogue about what that would look like for FCCE.

In the spirit of the *Amistad* Learnings (see previous article), April Sunday Forums will be held after worship in the sanctuary. The schedule is as follows:

**April 13** — What we know and how we learned it

**April 20** — Religion and Homosexuality

**April 27** — What Now?

### CONFIRMATION CLASS

Starting April 6<sup>th</sup> the confirmands will be attending worship.

### OUTREACH

#### WARMING CENTER WRAP-UP

Once again our Warming Center for the homeless finished its work for 2007-08 at the end of March. Martha Beckwith, Eric Erickson, D.J. Johnson, and Bill and Mary Lou Schwanbeck have been a sustaining force with Tom Lindsey adding his help when needed. Thanks are due to each of them for their constancy of service.

Our guest numbers fluctuated from 13 to 33 and all have been grateful for our help.

Thanks also to all of you who contributed magazines – they were appreciated.

After many years of serving the homeless, Eric, D.J. and I are retiring. We hope that others will volunteer to continue providing Thursday afternoon shelter for our less fortunate guests. It has been a wonderful and rewarding experience.  
~ Barbara Meyer

### READY, SET. GO...SELL PIZZA!



Once again we have an opportunity to make money for the church and have fun doing so! We will have an all church "fun raiser" selling CHICAGO'S LEGENDARY

GINO'S EAST DEEP DISH PIZZA! We will be selling four different pizzas from APRIL 6-20, 2008. The frozen pizzas will then be

delivered to the church on SUNDAY, MAY 4th for you to pick up and then deliver to your customers. Prizes will be awarded to the family or individuals that sell the most pizza. Last year we sold 196 pizzas. Winners last year were: Emily & Nicole Connors selling 28 pizzas, Emma Lehman selling 24 pizzas, and Margaret Tinzman 19 pizzas. Friendly competition is healthy and fun! Everyone should have a supply of these delicious pizzas in their home freezer. Let's make this 2008 FUN RAISER the BEST ever!! Questions? Please call Barb Lee (847) 251-0007 or [Babslee1400@aol.com](mailto:Babslee1400@aol.com)

### MEMBERSHIP

#### THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!

The Membership Committee has been hard at work coordinating coffee hours, brainstorming events, arranging for greeters, seeking a flower coordinator and working on pastoral care issues. To these ends, however, *much* help is needed! The committee is seeking volunteers to assist with visiting members who are homebound or are in nursing homes. If you can help out with this vital part of church fellowship, please contact Sharyn Julcher at 847.328.1783 or email her at [sjulcher@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sjulcher@sbcglobal.net). A visit to a homebound member is a blessing for all involved.

Second, coffee hour volunteers are needed. A sign up sheet will be placed in the narthex or Patty Sprague may seek your help directly. We are hoping choir members who have not yet had a chance to do a coffee hour this year will sign up for a summer Sunday and that other church members will sign up for Sundays this spring. Please contact Merna Johnson (847.328.5414) or Patty Sprague (847.475.4104) if you can volunteer.

Barbara Lee has graciously agreed to be flower coordinator this year. She too, would appreciate people to help deliver flowers to nursing homes and homebound members after church or the next day. If you are able to help with this most important part of church life, please email her at: [babslee1400@aol.com](mailto:babslee1400@aol.com).

Please watch for an announcement concerning usher/greeter training with Rev. Dave Denoon. We want to put our very best foot forward on Sunday mornings and Rev. Denoon will give us some important pointers.

Finally, a big "Thank You" is extended to all who have hosted a coffee hour, signed up to be a greeter at the narthex door, delivered flowers to homebound members and donated flowers for the altar this year. Without all these acts of kindness, generosity, and care, our church would not be the wonderful place it is. Your help is *most* appreciated with all these acts of love.

#### BY WELCOMING STRANGERS SOME HAVE ENTERTAINED ANGELS

*Usher and Greeter Workshop, Sundays, April 13 and 20*

The words from Hebrews 13:2, which are represented in the title line of this article, turn out to be profoundly true for church members who take on the responsibility of community hospitality.

Consider it this way: Service as an Usher or a Greeter can be one of the most important tasks you will pursue as a church member. The Greeter is likely the first person a newcomer or guest will meet on a Sunday and an Usher the second. Consider how essential it can be in any community for that initial contact to be successful!

Pastor Dave Denoon will be offering a workshop after morning refreshments on Sunday, April 13, to be repeated on April 20, for anyone who wants to hone their skills of hospitality. Attend either 45-minute session will begin in the Narthex.

Please let the office know by Thursday, April 10 or 17, that you plan to attend, so that sufficient materials may be prepared.



## EASTER THANK YOU

*Dear Friends,*

*I have several people to thank and being the Scotsman I am, I shall do it in one note.*

*First, my thanks to David. His visit was most enjoyable and brought back many happy times. Sharing communion will be an everlasting good memory.*

*Second, thank you to the Sunday school class for the thoughtful Easter card – and to the Membership committee for their lovely Easter card.*

*Third, thank you for the beautiful tulip plant. I shall enjoy it for many days to come. It will remind me that Spring is really here.*

*Thank you all again.*

*Fondly,  
Jean Davies*



## SUNDAY AFTERNOON BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The Sunday Afternoon Book Discussion Group will meet at 4:00 pm in the Brown Parlor on Sunday, April 13, 2008. Ann Vikner will lead the discussion for this month's book selection *The Year of Living Biblically* by A. J. Jacobs.

This is the story of one man's humble quest to follow the Bible as literally as possible. We welcome all to join our discussions.

## A NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY



We will be publishing a new church directory in the near future. Please contact the office at [info@firstchurchevanston.org](mailto:info@firstchurchevanston.org) or 847 864-8332 with any updates to your household information (email, address, phones, etc.).

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

April 1	Tommy Rorke
3	Corene McCollum
6	Eric Erickson
8	Beth Chill
8	Otto Tinzmann
12	Ian Perkins
12	Sam Sprague
13	Merritt Crocker
13	Fawn Ring
22	Adelaide Crocker
23	Sarah Todd

## THE NEW SENIOR CLUB

On March 3<sup>rd</sup>, six seniors had a fine time at the New Senior Club meeting. Sandwiches were enjoyed as were the hot cross buns which Eric brought for our Easter month meeting. The best part of our gatherings is always the conversation and sharing of thoughts and opinions. This meeting focused on what people had enjoyed most in their work for the church in the past. Being a Deacon was high on the list as was helping with physical improvements made to the buildings and rummage sale fellowship. There was total approval of, and pleasure with the new changes in the church services. We hope that spring will be upon us by the time we meet on April 7<sup>th</sup>. Come join us!!

**Correction:** In the interview with Mary Ellen Buell (December 2007) – Mary Ellen was born in Peru, Illinois not Indiana.

## STEWARDSHIP

### YOUR IRS REBATE – WHAT TO DO?

Sometime soon, many of us will be receiving income tax rebates from the Internal Revenue Service as our government attempts to address the recent economic downturn. Whatever you may think of the political or financial wisdom of this plan, it presents us with a question: What to do with this unexpected windfall?

We could, as government economists would have us do, stoke the fires of the consumer

economy by going on a shopping spree for more consumer goods. We could satisfy our *wants*. On the other hand, we might do something different. We could advance our ministry by sharing this unexpected gift with our church to address the *needs* of our faith community. You'll soon be hearing about some new and ambitious initiatives aimed at building a stronger foundation for our ministry. Our unexpected IRS windfall provides many of us with an excellent -- and reasonably painless -- opportunity to jumpstart that work.

Will you consider sharing your IRS rebate with your church? Your generosity will be deeply appreciated, and put to very good use. Thank you.

### COFFEE HOUR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

That warm cup of coffee and little sweet after worship service is such a nice thing--gets people talking, gives us a chance to catch up. But as of April, we do not have anyone signed up to help with our Sunday Coffee Hours!



It's so easy and so appreciated.

Please contact Patty Sprague at 847-475-4104 or [patty\\_sprague@yahoo.com](mailto:patty_sprague@yahoo.com) with a Sunday date you can help out.

Don't worry--we'll remind you the week before your sign-up date. We have the coffee and serving supplies, you just bring the half'n'half and the goodies, get the fixin's perking and set up, and rinse out the pot when the party's over. We so appreciate your help! Please do help. Thanks so much.

### LET THERE BE LIGHT CHALLENGE

In the last few months, FCCE has been focusing on energy conservation as an element of our



"Creation" theme for this FCCE program year. Specifically, FCCE members have participated in the "**Let There Be Light Challenge**" to reduce energy use in their homes which helps reduce the emission of

greenhouse gases that causes global warming. Our goal is for **households to change to low energy light bulbs (compact fluorescents, or CFLs)** before the end of March.

At last tally, we had 20 households that have replaced more than half of their light bulbs with CFLs. They are: Bauer-Cahill (>50%), Ogbolumanis (>50%), Spragues (72%), Sheryn Julcher (>50%), Nick Tucker (69%), Kingsley Day (>50%), Koestrings (>50%), Whiteley (64%), Wilsons (80%), Krause-Anderson (>50%), Roseberry-Valentinas (>50%), Andy Nelson (>50%), Tinzmanns (>50%), Lindseys (>50%), Day-Panek (>50%), Dotys (>54%), Cunninghams (>50%), Lehman-Pinney (>50%), Vosse Lewis (>50%), Steeles (>50%). We are fairly certain there are more of you that have changed more than 50% of your light bulbs but have not reported in. Please let us know so that we can report this information to the Let There Be Light Coordinators and the City of Evanston, which needs to know about all the actions taken for its Climate Action Plan monitoring effort.

According to the EPA, if every American home replaced just one light bulb with a compact fluorescent (CFL) bulb, we would save **enough energy to light more than 3 million homes for a year**, more than **\$600 million in annual energy costs**, and **prevent greenhouse gases** equivalent to the emissions of more than **800,000 cars. So....imagine** how much we would save if **hundreds** of Evanston households exchange **50%** of their incandescent light bulbs for CFLs!

We would love to have 30 households or more meeting the challenge, so please change some bulbs, calculate your percentage and report in as soon as possible. Saving money and helping the environment has never been easier! Thank you for your support.

Hal Sprague, Betty Phillips and Laura Wilson





**Sanctuary Address**  
1445 Hinman Avenue (at Grove Street)

**Mailing Address**  
1417 Hinman Avenue  
Evanston, IL 60201  
Tel: 847-864-8332  
Fax: 847-864-2143

**Email**  
[info@firstchurchevanston.org](mailto:info@firstchurchevanston.org)

**Website**  
[www.firstchurchevanston.org](http://www.firstchurchevanston.org)

**OFFICE HOURS AND EMAIL  
ADDRESSES FOR THE STAFF**

**Pastor David Denoon**

Monday – Thursday 9 am to 4 pm  
[ddenoon@firstchurchevanston.org](mailto:ddenoon@firstchurchevanston.org)

**David Lornson**

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 10 am to 4 pm  
[dlornson@firstchurchevanston.org](mailto:dlornson@firstchurchevanston.org)

**Deb Shamlin**

Tuesday, Friday 9 am to 4 pm  
[dshamlin@firstchurchevanston.org](mailto:dshamlin@firstchurchevanston.org)

**Melia Pappas**

Monday – Friday 8:30 am to 4 pm  
[mpappas@firstchurchevanston.org](mailto:mpappas@firstchurchevanston.org)

**First Congregational Church of  
Evanston  
1417 Hinman Avenue  
Evanston, Illinois 60201**