



# ON THE STREET

## The Peoples Church of Chicago Newsletter for August, 2009

*"A Spiritual Home for People of Conscience"*

### CALENDAR

#### Film/Movie Night –

? No film in August.

#### Upcoming Services

? Sundays, 10am: Worship Service, a blend of Humanist & Christian and world religions, with stories and poetry and music.

? Guest speakers in August – Rev. Jean is on vacation.

*All services followed by fellowship, with coffee and light refreshments.*

#### Other Events

? **First Friday, August 7, 6pm:**  
**Taizé service** – in Molly's Café, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

? **Sat, Aug 29, 7pm:** Joseph Bures,  
**Classical Piano Recital.**

### 2 Li'l Fishes

Each Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, a free lunch is served in Anderson Hall. All are welcome.

If you would like to help, phone Will Pruitt, volunteer coordinator, 773-754-6102.

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#### Minister's Notes:

#### No Small Plans

*Rev. Jean Siegfried Darling*

I'm heading off to the mountains shortly for vacation, where friends and I will listen to the streams gurgle, watch hummingbirds fiercely guard the fake flower birdfeeders, perhaps see another adolescent bear walk by on the porch a foot or two from where we are seated.

Besides hanging out in my friend's quaint ghost town, we're going to get to hear a lecture by theologian Marcus Borg. He is author of *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*, and other books about Jesus to help 21<sup>st</sup> century folks make sense of his life and teachings. We're also hoping to take in a gathering of staunch Humanists a couple of days later, just for balance. (that's a joke! you can laugh now!)

While I'm gone, please call on Rev. Bob Ford (312-735-2123) for any pastoral issues you may want addressed.

"Make no little plans," said Daniel Burnham, who designed the city of Chicago, "they have no magic to stir men's blood." And though it seems he was quoting Machiavelli, he took the words to heart.

It isn't my own plans I'm speaking of, but the plans that are emerging from this congregation. I am filled with gratitude for the enthusiasm and caring of church members who are taking on the responsibilities of the services: Grace and Larry Itter, Ed Feldmanis, Dave Karcher, Iris Scurlock, and guest preachers Rev. Sam Manansala and Sara Ross. Isaac Barrantine is also giving his version of "The Story of 2 Li'l Fishes."

Dave Karcher will carry on the First Friday Taizé service, on August 7<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to all of you!

Church members are also intent on organizing the huge party that is the Labor Day Picnic. Some buy napkins and plates, or the meat we cook – not available from the Greater Chicago Food Depository; some spend all day Saturday and Sunday getting chicken and ribs ready to broil; some find watermelons to be donated; some show up on Labor Day to ladle food onto plates, greet the guests, or polish up the softballs for a game. It's a huge celebration! It's a ton of fun. It's amazing. **cont'd...**

### **Minister's Notes, cont'd**

Some of the other plans that are in the works include organizing a Sunday afternoon **interfaith series** with food, music or dance, and speakers who will tell us how their faith is working to bring about a world of peace, equality, and prosperity.

We're planning to bring back the **Jazz Coffee-house**, with time for amateurs to jam with the pros.

We continue to show films, as a way of connecting with neighborhood people and opening dialog between people who don't necessarily see eye to eye. I enjoy these discussions immensely.

The other night after watching "Defending Your Life" one film-goer and I spent time talking about God and life and how we get through the day. I told him about a guy I had met at a PADS site who told me, "Every day I wake up is a good day." This young man said, "When I was homeless, I felt that way, too." And then he added, "I realized that God was happy. And so I was happy."

No small plans must include this kind of time for us to talk, to tell stories, to share what we care deeply about. What a gift!

peace, *Jean*

### **Plain Talk**

*by Rev. Bob Ford*

This year 2009 presents special challenges. The world economy is in the tank, and many of us, no matter how affluent we were two years ago, are hanging on by our fingernails.

For those of us who believe in the Social Gospel, helping those lowest on the economic ladder—those whom Jesus referred to as "the least of these"—this presents a confounding problem. Because our businesses or employers are not doing well, and because the supposedly safe assets in which we stored away our accumulated wealth have lost value, we have a thinner cushion on which to rely in case of further economic turmoil.

Yet those who had even less before this all transpired are truly destitute now. Through our churches, charities, and social service agencies we did much to support them before. But now the need is even greater. Now there's an even greater need

to share our life giving assets, but we have less to give.

As most of you who will read this already know, Peoples Church is heavily invested in bringing spiritual and temporal nourishment to those whom almost everyone but God passes by on the other side. Situated in Uptown, we are in the heart of one of the most ethnically and financially diverse neighborhoods in the United States, and we are inclusive—ministering to all comers.

As you might expect, our receipts are down, and dangerously so. We share our building with three other not-for-profits—another church, a human services provider, and a musical organization—and they help us pay the bills, yet between us all we still struggle to "crack the nut" each month. We also rely on a couple of Angels, who perennially have given substantial sums over many years. But even they are struggling in these distressed times, and their present giving is threatened. Others of you have given impressively large donations from time to time, and still others have made smaller donations each year as and when they were able. All in all, we have been exceedingly blessed by the generous sharing of multitudes of people who have enabled us to give nourishing meals, shelter, and spiritual guidance to many thousands of people who were in extreme need.

Our biggest financial challenges in 2009 and continuing into 2010 are (1) the escalating cost of natural gas for heating and cooking, (2) the escalating cost of food, and (3) periodic City mandated inspections. This year we have an Exterior Wall examination which comes every eight years and a newly mandated elevator test.

As many hands make small work, many small givers can finance big work. Please write us a check for whatever you can, and know that whatever you send will be put to good use doing God's work and sowing hope among our neediest citizens. May God bless you for your selflessness and your generosity.

In solidarity with the poor,  
*Bob*



# Calendar – August 2009

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
		<i>Rev. Jean is on</i>	<i>vacation in August</i>		1	2 10am Service 11:30 PC Trustees
3	4	5	6 NO MUSIC PRACTICE	7 6 – Taizé svc	8	9 10am Service
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 10am Service
17	18	19	20	21	22	23 10am Service
24	25	26	27	28 NO FILM IN AUGUST	29 7pm Joseph Bures Classical piano	30 10am Service