

Congregational News
First Congregational Church of Geneva
United Church of Christ
321 Hamilton St.
Geneva, Illinois 60134

July 2011

Return Service Requested

Congregational News



Growing in the
Spirit,
Come Grow With
Us!



July 2011

Church Staff

Rev. Rebecca Clancy, Pastor
Rev. Catherine Erwin, Minister of Christian Education
Karen Howard, Music Director
Patricia Alcorn, Organist
Lynnly Buchanan, Church Secretary
Phil Potoczek, In-Care Seminarian
Kyle Tade, In-Care Seminarian
Jillian Lindeen, In-Care Seminarian

Church Officers

Dave Buchanan, Moderator
Dayle Malone, Vice-Moderator
David Fauntleroy, Treasurer
Dan Brand, Financial Secretary
Open, Historian
Gail Schlesinger, Clerk

Board Chairs

Barb Malone, Worship
Sharon Jones & Kim Valentine, Deacons Board
Daniele Gibney & Lynnly Buchanan, Christian Education Board
Becca Clancy & Carolyn Fabian, Missions Bd.
Lynnly Buchanan, Properties Board
Mike Rosier, Stewardship Bd.

*The First Congregational Church of Geneva
United Church of Christ
321 Hamilton St
Geneva, IL 60134
(630) 232-7143
geneva-ucc@sbcglobal.net*

**visit our web site at:
geneva-ucc.org**

Herb Garden

By Timothy Steele

The lizard, an exemplar of the small,
Spreads fine, adhesive digits to perform
Vertical push-ups on a sunny wall;
Bees grapple spikes of lavender, or swarm
The dill's gold umbels and low clumps of thyme.
Bored with its trellis, a resourceful rose
Has found a nearby cedar tree to climb
And to festoon with floral furbelows.

Though the great, heat-stunned sunflower looks half-dead
The way it, shepherd's crook-like, hangs its head,
The herbs maintain their modest self-command:
Their fragrances and colors warmly mix
While, quarrying between the pathway's bricks,
Ants build minute volcanoes out of sand.





Sunday Schedule

10:00 am Morning Worship
11:00 am Coffee/ Fellowship

Board Meetings & Events

Fri, Jul 1	7:30 pm	Justice Series Movie #4
Sun, Jul 3	10:00 am	Holy Communion
	11:30 am	Missions Board meeting
Sat, Jul 9	8:00 am	Church-wide Rummage Sale
Sun, Jul 10	11:30 am	Deacons Board Meeting
Sat, Jul 16	8:30 am	Men's Breakfast
	10:30 am	Deacon's Special Meeting
Sun, Jul 17	11:30 am	Worship Board Qtrly. Meeting
Sun, Jul 24	11:30 am	Council Meeting
Sat, Jul 30	6:00 pm	Lazarus House dinner service
Sun, Jul 31	7:00 am	Muddy Buddy Race !!
	10:00 am	Catherine Preaching
Sun, Aug	10:00 am	Holy Communion
	11:30 am	Missions Board Meeting
Sun, Aug 14	11:30 am	Deacons Board Meeting

Birthdays !

7/3	Pat A	7/17	Craig B
7/8	Nicolas G	7/21	Alec F
7/12	Hayley M	7/22	Jack B
7/12	Bart P	7/24	Dave V
7/15	David B	7/24	Lori B
7/15	Emaline S	7/26	Ron S
7/15	Spencer S		

Anniversaries !

No July Anniversaries. If we are missing yours, please call or e-mail the church office.

If your birthday or anniversary isn't listed above, please call the church office to update our records.

The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective

James 5:16

Please keep the following individuals in your prayers this week:

- Karen H's friends and family (illnesses);
- Pat A's friend, Ericka (illness);
- Pat A's friend, Buzz (illness);
- Pat A's father-in-law, Ken (illness);
- Louise B mom, Jeannette (surgery);
- Catherine E's friend, Lynn (illness);
- Mark F's mother, Jewel (illness);
- The F Family, (death of Kara's grandmother);
- Barb S's niece, Amy (surgery, illness);
- Barb S's brother, Steve (illness);
- The W Family (struggles);
- Lynnly B's uncle, Ken (illness);
- Nancy H's friend's son, Dave (struggles);

Additionally, please remember our ill and home-bound members: Emma Gene B, Betty D, Nell G, Elsie H, Leona J, Barb K, Lucille L, and Esther W. Finally, please pray for those serving in the military

For the Record...



Pulpit Associate volunteers for the coming months:

July Open

If you are interested in serving as Pulpit Associate or Usher talk with Barb Malone, Worship Board Chairperson.

Food For Thought...

"Friends are like fiddle strings, they must not be screwed too tightly."

English Proverb

From The Pastor

At the month's end, several church members and I will participate in the *Muddy Buddy*. How to describe the *Muddy Buddy*? A cross country quasi biathlon interspersed with trumped up military obstacles. The last of these obstacles is what really makes the race distinctive. It involves crawling at some length under netting through a wet mud bath.

Why would anybody in his or her right mind do such a thing? The answer is simple. *It's for a good cause*. That good cause is the Open Door Clinic – an HIV/AIDS clinic that our church supports and partners with. We hope through our efforts to raise \$5,000.

I like to run and to cycle competitively, but I admit I've never considered participating in an event like the *Muddy Buddy*. It's the "for a good cause" piece that made the decision a no-brainer. One of the things that occurred to me in this process is what a great motivator "for a good cause" is. It inspires one to take risks, to branch out, to make changes; and so to grow. It is as good, probably better, for the giver than the receiver.

All this is compatible with Scripture. There is an equation in Scripture between loving and new life. When one loves – especially the kind of love that is challenging: love of the stranger, love of the enemy, love of the transgressor, love of the loveless....one's life is transformed. When one joins the "good cause", one receives more than one gives.

The *Muddy Buddy* is not for everyone. It may not even be for me. I'll only know when it's over. But it is for everyone to do something that we normally would not have "for a good cause." Scripture promises that when we do, everyone wins. *"Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us."*

With you in Christ's service,

Becca

From The Moderator

We are sitting peacefully around the dinner table, enjoying a quiet meal outside on the deck, thanks largely to cooler than usual evening temps, and a healthy breeze that is keeping the mosquitoes at bay for the time being. We have just finished our annual family vacation, this year spent with all of Lynnly's immediate family on Hilton Head Island. It was a whirlwind vacation, which followed smack on the heels of a whirlwind second semester of school for everyone, which followed smack on the heels of a whirlwind holiday season, which followed smack on the heels of a whirlwind first semester of school, which followed...I think you get the idea. We have been leading a whirlwind life recently. I am wishing for an uneventful remainder of the summer, but even as I write those words I realize that looking ahead at the calendar it promises only to be whirlwind.

It can feel that way sometimes with church as well. We as a congregation have fallen into the habit of planning in a very haphazard and spur of the moment fashion. Sometimes it leaves us in a whirlwind of activity, and sometimes it leaves little time for people to make plans to attend something, or to get something rightly advertised for participation. The Deacons Board is in the process of overhauling our planning habits. Over the "quiet" months of summer, they will be looking ahead, not just to next month, but to the next two or three years, to help plan out our activities and opportunities. Watch your newsletters and bulletins for information on things that will be upcoming. Hopefully with more warning / notice, more people will be able to participate, and we won't feel so much as though we live in a whirlwind.

Until next month,

Dave



Lost

Stand still. The trees ahead and bushes beside you
Are not lost. Wherever you are is called Here,
And you must treat it as a powerful stranger,
Must ask permission to know it and be known.
The forest breathes. Listen. It answers,
I have made this place around you,
If you leave it you may come back again, saying Here.
No two trees are the same to Raven.
No two branches are the same to Wren.
If what a tree or a bush does is lost on you,
You are surely lost. Stand still. The forest knows
Where you are. You must let it find you.

~ David Wagoner ~

(Riverbed)

Our first reaction to the concept of being lost is usually a negative one. It often means that someone traveling and has not reached their destination and does not know how to “get there from here” often not knowing where “here” is. Lost indicates something misplaced, desired that can’t be found, “I’ve lost my keys”. Or perhaps we are in the middle of a project or procedure and we proclaim we are lost, indicating we are confused as to how, or perhaps if, we should proceed.

David Wagoner reminds us that being lost has another, often positive, sometimes wonderful, connotation. We get lost in a project, meaning we’ve been working on it and it has been all absorbing. We lose track of time when we are enjoying ourselves in an activity, or perhaps we have gotten “lost in a book”. We have the in-between reality of “lost”, when we acknowledge that to move forward we must “lose” some old

habits or perhaps more literally, possessions, to make way for new possibilities. Often times, in these modes we are taking the time to examine our world, looking at the detail of things. We are seeking to understand, giving something our complete, undivided attention.

Jesus was speaking to an ultimate expression of this understanding when he told the disciples, “For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it” (Matt. 16:25 niv). Mr. Wagoner suggests that if we feel lost it is a function of not taking the time to know the “here”. Being a follower of Jesus often sets us off on a new path, a new understanding, and it feels uncomfortable, unfamiliar – we feel lost – and may find ourselves longing for the old, the familiar. This is understandable, and yet how can we claim all that can be ours in living fully in the love of God in Christ if we cannot find it in ourselves to stand, quietly in this new “here” and become familiar with all that it can be. Like the person in Mr. Wagoner’s poem, we may step into and back away from the “Here” we find as we try to follow Jesus, but as Mr. Wagoner tells us, “I have made this place for you, If you leave it you may come back again, saying Here.” We can never go “to far away” to be able to come back to God, because, when we are ready, God is always ready to meet us where we are.

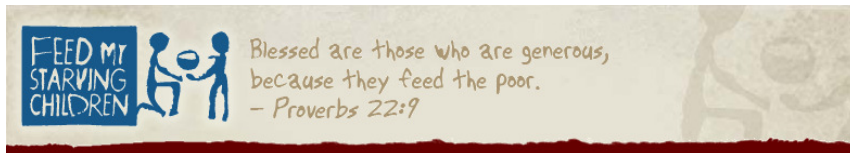
Amen.

Catherine



MEN'S BREAKFAST

The men’s group, Society of the Sons of God (SoSoGo), will have their next breakfast meeting on Saturday, July 16th, at 8:30am in Fellowship Hall. All men and boys are welcome. The group meets on the third Saturday of each month for breakfast and light chores.



Feed My Starving Children Opportunities

Our most recent mission project, working at Feed My Starving Children in Aurora on June 27th, was a lot of fun. We had 13 people come to work, and the time went by quickly. The Missions Board has made arrangements for members of our congregation to participate again in the food packaging efforts of Feed My Starving Children on the following dates:

Thursday, August 4th: 9:30am – 11:30am
Thursday, August 11th: 9:30am – 11:30am
Saturday, January 14th: 9:00am – 11:00am

We have signed up for 10 spots, but more can generally be accommodated. If you are interested in attending, please let Carolyn Fabian or the church office know.



Open Door Clinic Muddy Buddy Race Fund Raiser – We have put together five teams to participate in the 2011 Columbia Muddy Buddy - Chicago race on July 31st, in Gilberts, Illinois in an effort to raise funds for the Open Door Clinics in Elgin and Aurora. The race has a bike/run/obstacle course format for teams of two. You can donate directly to our teams online through our website, www.geneva-ucc.org, by clicking on the Muddy Buddy page on the left hand side of the home page. Donations are processed through Paypal, and you will be able to use your credit card. Donations can be made even if you don't have a Paypal

account. You can also contribute to any of the teams by stopping them in church on Sundays between now and the 31st. If you can't make it to church, and don't want to use your credit card, you can mail donations to the church office. Our teams for this year are as follows:

Red Team: Becca and Dave
White Team: Louise and Carrie
Blue Team: Kelsey and her friend Kyle
Green Team: Claire and Jack
Yellow Team: Pete and his friend Molly

No matter how you donate, all proceeds will go toward helping Open Door Clinic put in a new phone system, since their current one is on the verge of starting a nuclear meltdown in Elgin. Last week three people were found wandering through the jumbled mess of wires who had been lost as small children 10 years ago...just kidding. The system is a mess though, and it would be great to give them the gift of a functional phone system for the 20th century, if not the 21st. Every little bit helps, and there is no minimum donation. Thank you in advance for participating!



The Chicago Aids Run & Walk will be held on Saturday, October 1st this year. Since its inception in 2001, more than 20,000 participants, raising more than \$3 million net, have converged in Grant Park to *get moving* against HIV/AIDS. Join the fight with thousands of others this year and help the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC) raise more than \$500,000 net! If you would like to run (or walk), you can visit their website: <http://afc.aidschicago.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=1242> or if you would just like to sponsor a team, you can sponsor the Open Door Clinic's team by talking with Carolyn Fabian.

Open Door Clinic Fund Raiser



See **the Miracle Worker** at the Arcada Theater in St. Charles!

September 18th, 2:00pm

The afternoon starts with the showing of Patty's Academy Award winning film "The Miracle Worker" After the film there will be a 'Question & Answer' interview with Patty.

Tickets are \$25.00 each, or a VIP ticket can be purchased for \$55.00. The VIP ticket includes the film, Q&A and a 'Meet & Greet' opportunity with a photo of your choice for Patty to be personalized. Patty will also have many photos to choose from her collection. You may also bring your own camera to take photos with Patty. Light Hors D'oeuvres will be served at the 'Meet & Greet' with a cash beer & wine bar.

All proceeds benefit Open Door Clinic. Tickets can be purchased on the Open Door website,

http://www.opendoorclinic.org/patty_duke



Congregation Wide Rummage Sale - We will be holding a church wide rummage sale on Saturday, July 9th, from 8am until 5pm, in the driveway between the church and Peterson House. We are collecting rummage in the basement of the church, in a special rummage holding area just past the double doors. You are invited, nay encouraged, to bring the excess rummage laying around your house...you know you have some...to the church on Sundays. If you can't make it on Sundays, call Lynnly or Kim and

we will arrange to pick it up for you. We will need several people to sign up to help work at the rummage sale. This includes folks who only have time to come help get the rummage out in the morning or back in the church in the evening. The money we raise during our rummage sales helps the Missions Board do all the things we do. It also lessens the amounts we have to ask you for. Please, PLEASE, PLEASE help us out by donating to and working at our rummage sale. If you aren't sure you have any rummage, call Lynnly and she will come to your house and help you identify the rummage, probably bringing with her several teenage boys to haul it up from your basement...



Marion Hagen Burton, formally of Geneva, died June 13th 2011 in Claremont, CA at the age of 89. Marion was born in St Paul, MN May 6th, 1922. Marion was a graduate of the University of MN, and Northern Illinois University. Marion met and married George Burton while in graduate school at Chicago Theological Seminary in 1950. Rev. Burton was the pastor at FCCG from 1969 until 1986. They had four daughters and served Churches in Missouri and Colorado as well as Illinois. Marion Burton moved to Pilgrim Place, a community of retired Church Professionals, in 1995 leaving Geneva after over 25 years.



As you read this, the 29th General Synod of the United Church of Christ is in full swing. This year Catherine Erwin and Kyle Tade are representing our congregation at Synod down in Florida. The keynote speech was presented by journalist Leonard Pitts, Jr., who said, "It turns out that history is replete

with trials and accomplishments of crazy people. From George Washington and Mahatma Gandhi to (Motown founder) Berry Gordy igniting cultural revolution with a \$700 loan, there have always been those who are just crazy enough to confound expectation and overcome long odds. People confuse ‘crazy’ with ‘can’t be done’ or ‘don’t know how.’ And they think ‘can’t be done’ is an expression that means ‘never tried to do it and we should accept it the way it is.’”

Speaking on the podium between two large-screen images of photos taken from the NASA’s Hubble Space Telescope, Pitts said he marvels each time he views them.

“I have always found these pictures of immense value to me when imagining the possibilities,” said Pitts. “There is something humbling in these images; these clusters of stars, these swirling masses of gases, these spiraling galaxies. These images represent the smallest corner of God’s possibilities.”

You can read the full text of Pitts’ speech, as well as those of many other denominational leaders, at the UCC website, www.ucc.org.

Claire’s Corner...



Last year in school one of my teachers had us write a bucket list for what we wanted to get accomplished during the year. We put a big poster up to show what things were on our list, and made a [ridiculous] production every time someone accomplished one of their goals. So after I graduated from high school, before I go on to what will surely be my undoing in college, I thought I would put together a bucket list for the summer. These are some of the things I have on my list: Make a music video, climb a tree, fix something, register for my classes for next fall, learn how to golf better, learn how to cook

something repeatable, volunteer somewhere at least once a week, be a reliable employee, and write a good story. There were several more things, but those are on a need to know basis.

I started off the summer with a trip to Hilton Head Island with my family, including Grandparents, Aunts, Uncles and cousins. Since several of my bucket list items were related to vacationing I was checking off items left and right: See something cool (I watched a loggerhead sea turtle come up from the water to lay her eggs on the beach one night); Do something I wouldn’t normally do (I visited a hokey lunchbox museum in Columbus, Georgia); Do something silly (My Grandma told us that if we went to the beach at midnight during a full moon we would be able to see Morocco. I went down in spite of ridicule from my cousin the naysayer who thought he knew better since he’d just finished a physics class). These things all ended up on my bucket list mainly because I knew I was going somewhere that would allow me to accomplish them. It’s like putting “clean bedroom” on your to do list after you’ve done it just so you can check it off. Everyone likes a sense of accomplishment to help them along on a difficult journey.

On my way out the door to enjoy some fondue at Grahams with my friends this week, I dropped my phone and broke it into a millions pieces (OK, three pieces). I wasn’t sure how everything went back together, but I monkeyed with it until I fixed it, and surprisingly it worked. On my way to Grahams I realized that ‘fix something’ was on my list. It occurred to me that many of the things I had on my list were things I knew I would do and be able to check off, but that isn’t what makes for a well lived summer or a well lived life. The fixing of the phone though was just thrust upon me; I didn’t need to take a hammer to my phone so I could learn to fix it. It made me realize that planning is all well and good, but chance, and how you react to it, is what makes for a full life. I’ll continue to check things off my bucket list (I still have a trip to Zimbabwe to look forward to), but the most fulfilling things seem to be the little ones God puts in front of you hoping you’re not looking the other way.