



South Church Newsletter

JUNE 2008

The South Presbyterian Church at 343 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522 914-693-0473 * www.southpres.org

Notes to Myself

Joe Gilmore

ONE OR TWO THINGS

- The Photo Directory Project: We hope you will email a photo of yourself, or of yourself and your family. To don@donpollardphoto.com, please. Otherwise, we will have a family portrait with mysterious places: a “*Who was that?*” sort of thing.
- Pledges: In the summer months, it is such a help if we keep our pledges current. It makes our whole financial team happy, whose happiness is now in your hands.
- The Church Picnic: Sunday, June 15th, 11am, Lower Field, The Masters School. (Very) brief worship at 11; a traditional picnic lunch (we provide hotdogs, burgers, and cold drinks; you provide sides, dessert, and music); children’s games and softball. REMEMBER: AN 11 O’CLOCK START.
- Summer Worship: Beginning on Sunday, June 22, our worship style changes. We turn to simplicity, quiet, and brevity. These summer mornings are meant to add to the ways in which we worship, to feed the heart, and to return the world-ward reach of God.
- The Attic Sale: It will take all of us pitching in to make this event sing the way it surely can. What I remember about last year is the laughter, the camaraderie, and the weariness on the nights when there was too much of IT and too few of us.
- The Church School: At South, we speak of our pride in our Church School—the integrity of the curriculum, the concomitant integrity of the meeting of teachers and students, and the importance of not only handing over the tradition, but making clear how our own time is as full of the sacred as any other. We say these things. What puzzles and worries me a little is why, then, it is so very hard to recruit teachers to be partners in this enterprise. What I don’t quite get is why our attendance is so fitful. If you have a clue about what is up with this apparent disjunction, let me know.

The narrative line that connects all of these odds and ends is, of course, the story of us together. It is a story I love for its wonder, its idiosyncrasy, its depth, its courage, its willingness to reach into the dark, its great caring heart, its praying which is as near as the heart and as far as the red, retreating edge of the universe.

If you travel, please travel and return in safety.
Watch for wonder in your own yard.
Sit near the quiet pond in yourself.

GET INVOLVED IN JUNE and beyond!

THE PROMISED LAND AND BEYOND?

In two weeks, the church school classes will have made it to the Promised Land after spending the last several months in bondage and the wilderness. We will have gotten there because of the wonderful interchanges and relationships between this year's church school teachers and children. Together they've explored the way in which the stories of the Bible found in Genesis and Exodus have been retold and recreated again and again over the centuries— in art, music, social justice work, movies, prayer, literature, reflection, and more. They've learned together, had fun together and found concrete ways to make the stories live with their hearts, imaginations, hands and feet.

Beginning mid-September, the 2008-2009 church school lessons will focus on life once the people settled in the Promised Land. We'll meet kings and messiahs, learn about the role of prophecy by looking closely at the life of Elijah, explore weeping with Jeremiah and soaring like the eagles with Isaiah. We'll not only talk about ways in which God is found in our everyday lives but also find concrete ways to acknowledge and embody the divine presence in the world around us.

To do this, however, we need your help. Would you consider teaching in a church school classroom for approximately ten weeks? We're not looking for folks who have extensive knowledge of the Bible; the lesson plans I write provide any biblical knowledge you need to have. Instead what we need are folks who can come into a classroom with an open mind and heart, ready to meet kids where they are in their lives and encounter together the wondrous ways in which God is met in stories, around tables, on our streets, and in our world. If you're interested in teaching, please email me (susandegeorge@southpres.org) letting her know which unit (fall, winter, or spring) you'd be available to teach and any age preferences you may have.

- Susan De George

MIDNIGHT RUN UPDATE

Fourteen of us headed for the streets of NYC on Friday evening, May 23rd. We were an enthusiastic band, some old timers, a few first time volunteers, including some teens accompanied by a parent. Joe was a merry addition midway through the night! Our first stop was at a Transition House on Lex and 115th Street. We met about 25 people there, all folks in the process of getting the support needed for making the shift from homelessness to permanent housing. From there we had three other assigned stops on the streets where the homeless gather to hunkerdown as best they can for a safe nights sleep. All were very grateful for our visit - for the company, clothing, food, bottled water. One Mom made homemade brownies, that were still warm! They were a big hit!

Our NEXT RUN is FRIDAY, AUGUST 8th! It's not to early to sign up, so feel free to be in touch to let us know if you plan to join us! As always, we'll need volunteers to bring food, help pack the van, clean up the kitchen that night and the next morning. There are many tasks that go into a successful Run and everyone's contribution is important and much appreciated. Many thanks to all those who contributed to the success of this Run, you know who you are ~ we couldn't do it without you!

Feel free to be in touch with us: Maureen Buckley-Fox: mbuckleyfox@optonline.net or Laurie Pyburn: Lpyburn@optonline.net

NEW CONNECTIONS



So are you sitting in front of your computer now reading this? Starting June many of us will receive our monthly South Church newsletter by email and all of us will be able to access the newsletter on the church website (www.southpres.org). It's a way to be both environmentally and fiscally responsible AND to allow us to access the information from a computer wherever we may be and whenever we need it. It's one of the last two additions that the church's Web Committee is taking during the 2007-2008 church year.

If you go to the church website, you'll also notice that we've begun to offer the opportunity to listen to some of our wondrous worship music. We've started out with a few of the "public domain" pieces performed by our younger musicians during Sunday service on Mother's Day. Later in the year, after we've added needed recording microphones, we'll hoping to offer more music. In the meanwhile, check out the Chopin and Debussy and let us know what you think.

All the web additions this year—audios of provocations/sermons, South Church Forum discussion boards, musical selections, and online newsletters—came out of the work of the Web Committee: Jonathan Donald (chairperson and webmaster), Carol Hagglund, Vivienne Heston-Demirel, Ernie Howell, Cal Wiersma, and MacKay Wilford. I want to thank each of them for their dedication and unique contributions to this project.

Now we're interested in getting your feedback. What do you think of the web additions—audios of provocations, South Church forums, music, and newsletters- that we've added this year? Do you have ideas for the next phase of our web development? We'd love your thoughts and we'd also like to expand the Web Committee so if you're interested in joining us in puzzling through what's next, please let me or Jonathan Donald know.

- Susan De George

Jubal's Wish List



Look for the June **Jubal's Wish List** on the Music Forum of the SPC website !
It will be posted before 10 June 2008



**BREAKING NEWS!
PLANS BEGIN FOR
THE ATTIC SALE !**

Those Fellowship Hall doors won't swing open for 3 months but we are already planning our next **Attic Sale on September 13 and 14**. Last year with the help of over 60 people, the Attic Sale was a catalyst for friendships, camaraderie, and raised an incredible amount of money. And we can do it again! This is a community event with people already asking, "When can we bring our stuff?" and others waiting for that bargain in need of a less pricey commercial shopping center.

On Sunday, April 13, a large group of avid Attic Sale fans met to discuss how we could improve the coming year's sale. We all agreed that it takes everyone in the church community to participate to make this event a success once more. And the more the merrier!

Here is the typical schedule of Attic Sale season. **Beginning Monday, June 30** we will open the doors to Fellowship Hall for donations. Start cleaning out your attic and basement now and setting aside those items which once brought you pleasure and now fill your house with nightmares and regret.

Peter Brenner will host our first Wednesday evening on July 8 when we will begin to unpack and sort donations. This really is a fun evening on a warm (hot) summer night – a chance to meet and greet people from across the pews and get to know them over linens and books and someone else's junk. And did I mention pizza and liquid refreshment? Each Wednesday night will be hosted by a SPC friend - hopefully one of you - who will open the doors, order the pizza and brew, and lay out the evening's tasks.

During the summer weeks, using the Midnight Run van, Stan Fox and Peter Brenner will coordinate pickup runs and pick up lighter items – no couches or breakfronts. Bob Wilson has offered his landscaping crew to pick up heavy items during the summer months and others have offered their friends' vehicles and backs. If you want to join them they would welcome the help.

This year's Attic Sale Coordinators are Laura Giannone, Cheryl Hajjar and Linda Jo Platt

There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall just waiting for your name. Bring your neighbor who loves garage sales to help you sort one night; bring your kids to sort the toys, your friend who loves to tinker with electronics. This is a wonderful way to show the true spirit of this church – it's like Habitat for Humanity's Junk .

The biggest push is the week before the sale when we put the finishing touches on everything. So if your summer plans prevent you from the weekly treasure hunts, we would love to have you when many of us do not want to see another large black (filled -with -the- unknown) bag.

Can't wait for the fun to begin! Linda Jo (693-9072 – work)

FROM THE SESSION

In the May Session meeting, our most important discussion topic was the application for the Lilly grant for clergy and congregational renewal. We discussed ways we can make the fall of 2009 a time of growth for our congregation, whether or not we receive the grant from the Lilly Foundation. Using the feedback we have already gathered from members of the congregation, we will begin to develop plans for that time. The June 14 Planning Conference—attended by Elders and Deacons—will be the next occasion when such plans are discussed. Expect to hear more about this exciting opportunity for our congregation.

Other topics the Session has recently discussed are the new communication opportunities brought by improvements to the web site and the addition of the Forums. This, too, is an ongoing project that we anticipate will become more familiar and more useful in the future.

Discussions of social justice issues were part of the conversations about the Lilly grant period; prison ministries were another topic discussed at the meeting.

Budgetary issues and concerns for the maintenance of our property are issues which the Session discusses at each meeting. In May, the issues discussed involved insurance, property improvements needed in the Wilde House for Days of Wonder, and improvements the Community Nursery School plans to make to its entrance area.

Carol Hagglund
Clerk of Session