

CALLER

**JULY
2007**



CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



United Church of Christ
2500 South Sheridan Boulevard
Denver, CO 80227
(303) 935-8350

WEBISTE: www.christcongregational.org

E-Mail: christcongregationalchurch@champpmail.com

From the Desk of Jerry Eslinger..... *Worship as the Breath of God*

Dr. Hal Youngblood, in his visits with us, both at church council and at an open meeting one evening, counseled us with the idea that worship is the most important thing we do, and we have to continually work at evaluating and assessing how our worship meets the many-faceted needs of people who attend.

For a new generation of faith, our worship must capture this “breath of God” as the church moves forward and as Christianity is born anew. This new generation of faith is not one lost to the limited descriptions of demographics or sociological analysis. This is not a group we can easily market our wares to. This is a hungry, thirsty, spiritually sensitive and yet deeply critical collection of people who cross all boundaries of age, race, and gender. They are no longer bound by convention in lifestyle, or tradition in their daily existence, and yet they remember these things. Theirs might not be a conscious longing, or clearly defined memory, but certainly the church today represents “something,” both of those within it and for those at its edges. There still lingers a place in society for a system of belief that stood and perhaps may still stand for something that, at root, is positive and meaningful. How our worship represents this faithful convention and living tradition is the core challenge to the church in its mainline incarnation in our age.

It is essential that each worshipping community find a way to lift its faithful membership into that Spirit of God which binds our hearts. Our worship needs to flow in and through our communities, for God’s Breath (ruah in Hebrew) is central to our being and vocation.

For the faithful who gather each week, and for those who may only faintly remember the story, our challenge is to provide the tradition of Word, song, and prayer, passionately and prophetically. We have a unique opportunity in the midst of changing cultural norms, to offer the convention we name as Christian community, to the world, as a place of creative innovation, personal safety, moral support, and spiritual sustenance.

To be quite frank, worship is where our communities of faith hit the street. Our course, our outreach, community support. And activism is important and vibrant work of the church. Yet, as vocal and prophetic as we may be, it is when two, three, or more gather at worship that our identity in community is named and can be experienced.

Our challenge is to provide a space for this new generation of faith to find a spiritual home, and to be willing to hear their voice when they arrive. It is through our corporate worship that this window is first cracked open so it can be flung wide for “ruah” to blow through them, and us. In my opinion, we have a limited window of opportunity in which to live into our tradition in a conventional and touching way.



Join other caring adults and teens in making a significant impact in the life of an at-risk child. Tutor an elementary or middle school child in the spirit of Christ. Tutoring takes place at 37 sites around the city. Training and orientations begin in August. Sites begin the last week of September and continue once a week through April. Call us for an application and get in on the FUN! 303-504-9449. www.whizkidstutoring.com

GO GREEN

Pull the plug.
Even if they are not in use, common household appliances and electronics such as microwaves, computers, DVD players and televisions use power when plugged in. This not only increases your electric bill but increases overall energy consumption – a television that is plugged in but not in use can use as much as 20 watts per hour. Help curb your energy consumption: unplug items you rarely use; once portable devices are charged up unplug the charger from the outlet; and use electronics only as needed. A simple step to a healthier planet!
From Dr. Andrew Weil

YOUTH GROUP CORNER

Information on youth activities will resume in the August Caller.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONGREGATION EXPLORES ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Many members of Christ Congregational Church have expressed interest in additional adult education opportunities. The Christian Education Board would love to hear what ideas you may have for enhancing the adult education program at our church. Would you be interested in a book study or a Bible study? Would you like to meet on a weeknight? Would you like to meet at church or at a member’s home? Would you like to meet weekly or every other week? We’d love to hear your answers to these questions and others. Please share your ideas and responses with Jeremy Shaver, Director of Education and Family Ministries. You may call him at the church office, visit him after worship, or email him at jeremyshaver@hotmail.com.

In addition, Jeremy would be interested in a book study group on Progressive Christianity. There are three new books out that look at the Progressive Christian movement in detail. Those books are: The Phoenix Affirmations: A New Vision for the Future of Christianity, A New Spiritual Home: Progressive Christianity at the Grass Roots, and Open Christianity: Home by Another Road. If you would be interested in this topic, please let Jeremy know. We could begin a book study in the fall or select a book we would like to discuss this summer. Learning is always more fun with fellow sojourners!

LAFORET SUNDAY - Mark August 12th on your calendars as that is the day we worship at the LaForet Conference and Retreat Center! The staff has

promised us a cookout at noon and we will again plan on a relaxing afternoon with games and recreation, etc. Ponderosa Lodge will again be headquarters for our activities. We hope to arrange for any who have transportation needs, and the Deacons Board will have further information on luncheon costs, etc.

THANK YOU...to Suzy Hiskey for her dedicated work in the Flanders Library. She has worked many hours on completing the computerized card catalog and updating the index card catalog. We also appreciate the collections of resource materials she gathered and made available to the congregation during the previous Advent and Lenten seasons. Thanks, Suzy!

INTERFAITH PANEL DISCUSSION ADDRESSES CLIMATE CHANGE

The Interfaith Alliance of Colorado and Calvary Baptist Church are hosting an interfaith panel discussion on Global Climate Change at 11 a.m. Sunday, July 1 at Calvary Church, 6500 E. Girard Ave. (northeast corner of South Monaco Parkway and Hampden Avenue). Panel participants are the Rev. Peter Sawtell, Executive Director of Eco-Justice Ministries, Daniel Ziskin, Executive Director of Jews of the Earth, and Dr. Sherry Ellms, an Environmental Studies Professor at Naropa University. Jeremy Shaver, Director of Education and Family Ministries, will be attending this dialogue immediately after worship at Christ Church and would be willing to carpool.

OUTREACH BOARD – JULY MISSION – Our church’s July mission offering will support the Colorado Christian Home, Tennyson Center for Children and Families. This center has given hope to thousands of children. Tennyson Center is a community of people dedicated to breaking the cycle abuse and neglect, serving children, and strengthening families. As professional and concerned citizens, they strive to provide competent and caring treatment, educational, and advocacy services that are community-based, family-focused, and child-centered. A few services they offer are an accredited program designed to meet the academic and behavioral needs of students, a program for intensive short-term assessments for children, and a 24- hour treatment for troubled children. The program we support with our mission offering is called “Dress A Child”. As school approaches in August, the goal is to be able to buy some new school clothes and shoes for each of the children who live on campus. We all know how good it feels when we have new things to wear. The Mission/Outreach Board asks for support of this valuable organization.

community ministry
JULY
FEED LIST

BABY FOOD

Donations may be placed in the collection barrels in the Narthex. Thank you!

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY

The United Church of Christ, our national denominational body, is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. A special birthday celebration was held during General Synod on June 23 in Hartford, Connecticut. Today’s United Church of Christ is the result of a 1957 merger between American Protestant denominations with rich histories of their own: the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church. For the next three months, we will highlight a few pieces of UCC history in each edition of the Caller. In the month of July, we can look back and celebrate these notable events that occurred in our denomination’s past:

- In 1943, Reinhold Niebuhr adapted and popularized the Serenity Prayer at Heath Union Church in Massachusetts.
- In 1985, the UCC became the first mainline denomination to call its churches to welcome all people into the life and ministry of the church regardless of sexual orientation, by action of General Synod.
- In 1986, the UCC Book of Worship was published.
- In 1987, the UCC Commission for Racial Justice issued the groundbreaking study, “Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States,” which led to use of the term “environmental racism.”
- In 1987, the Council for Youth and Young Adult Ministries was formed.
- In 1987, General Synod created the Hispanic Ministries Implementation Team after the Hispanic Ministries walkout during General Synod.

MID-YEAR OFFERING STATEMENTS – Your mid-year offering statements are in the narthex. Please pick yours up, or if you would like to have it mailed, just call the church office. Just a friendly reminder with summer vacations, activities and lower attendance, we sometimes forget that the church’s bills continue to

arrive on time and need to be paid. Please try to keep your pledge up to date so that we can continue to pay our necessary bills. Thank you.

SUMMER SPECIAL MUSIC - All special people for special music to enliven our summer worship are invited to participate in the summer music. The sign-up sheets are posted on the Music Bulletin Board. We welcome all talents, musical, dramatic, terpsichorean. Just sign up for a certain date, giving your name, and phone number. You can fill in the title later, however, no later than the Wednesday before your Sunday. Please call Diana Bern if you need her to accompany you. She will be glad to rehearse with you beforehand. Call Liana if you have any questions, or need help choosing a song/music.

Council Minutes, June 19, 2007

Council Members present were Steve Nelson, Sandy Maben, Shirley Hendry, Jim Lynch, Janet Burns, Marve Evers and Jerry Eslinger. Guests included Randy Arnold, Sue White, Liana Lansing, and Hart Axley.

Jerry offered a prayer for the 50th Anniversary UCC General Synod Meeting in Hartford, CT and the members in attendance: Carolyn and Joanne Eslinger, Karen Bickett, Sandy Selzer, David Claypool, Joanne Broten, Jerry Eslinger, Pam and Sherm Higgins, and youth delegates Amanda Higgins, Samantha Schonberger, and Connor Rock.

The minutes were read, corrected and approved. The correction was made to the "Cornerstone Project".

Treasurer's Report included the Profit and Loss, Balance sheet, and Budget vs. Actual. The Memorial Fund paid for most of the new computers. When the Bookkeeper's computer is installed, the office will be networked which will allow for more efficient office procedures.

The Minister's Report was presented.

Continuing Business

Web Page – Sue white presented "VisitChristchurch.org". The web page is in color, very attractive and will contain 50 pages of information. It has been designed to be accessible from office staff and others. A new yard sign will be ordered announcing our webpage. Sue and her committee were thanked for their outstanding work and dedication to this project.

Bylaws Committee

Randy Arnold and Sandy Maben led a review of the proposed bylaws, noting changes from the current Bylaws. The revised bylaws will be ready for the July Council meeting.

Church Renovation

Shirley Hendry reported that several meetings with architect Bob Saas, Eidos Architects have been held. He will do "start up" design with simple drawings for Sanctuary for about \$13660. The planning group believes the Narthex also needs remodeling/expanding. Replacing lost blue prints will cost \$3,000. The permits and other expenses will probably run into \$20,000 and the project will take 1 ½ years to complete. Congregational approval is necessary. With the council's approval, a meeting will be held after worship on Sunday, July 15th.

New Custodian is Cynthia Menzer, who will be working 2 days per week.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.

*****UPDATE THE SANCTUARY*****

The recent long range planning survey completed by the congregation indicated the top priority was to update the sanctuary. The Council appointed Shirley Hendry to form a Task Force to select an architectural firm to move forward with this project. The task force is comprised of Shirley, Fred Fox, Brad Bern, Sue Duncan, Mary Binder and Jerry. After interviewing three firms, Eidos Architectural Firm was hired to develop concepts for our sanctuary renovation. One of the primary reasons for selecting Eidos was its vast experience in church design, construction and remodeling. The firm just completed the addition to Atonement Lutheran Church on Yale and Vassar.

Bob Saas, architect with the firm, met with the task force and some board members to discuss their various desires and suggestions for remodeling, plus his ideas based on his experience. Some of the suggestions being considered are:

- A center aisle

- Removing all dark paneling and fence barrier

- Relocation of choir

- Enlarge the chancel area

- Using a combination of chairs and pews

- Smaller, moveable pulpit or lectern, communion table and baptismal font

- Improved ceiling lighting and audio system

He also suggested if possible that the Narthex be enlarged. This should be a welcoming place for members as well as visitors, leaving the sanctuary a place for meditation and quiet before the service.

In order to move forward, a building committee has been formed to work with the architect on preliminary drawings. This committee is: Fred Fox, Brad Bern, Mary Binder, Mark Pleuss, Randy Arnold and Jerry.

A general meeting considering the proposed contract for renovation of the Sanctuary and Narthex will be held Sunday, July 15th at 10:30 a.m. Here’s an opportunity to learn what is in the future for our Church.

Further information will be given as plans develop.

WE ARE IN DIRE NEED OF THE SANCTUARY BUILDING PLANS. ANYONE KNOWING THEIR WHEREABOUTS PLEASE CONTACT JERRY AND RETURN THEM TO THE OFFICE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- 02 Tom Reid
- 03 Bill Greene
- 06 Marilyn Petrick
- 08 Todd Bruskiwicz
- 09 June Plourde
- 09 Bob Noble
- 11 James Duncan
- 11 Pauline Muzzy
- 11 Steve Nelson
- 12 Len Ewald
- 13 Samantha Schonberger
- 14 Lee Engelking
- 18 Renee Schonberger
- 19 Ken Miller
- 19 Thea Rock
- 22 Howard Taborsky
- 24 Kathryn Crawford
- 28 Steven Schonberger

We are sorry if your name was omitted; please call the church office so that we may add your information to our Birthday List.