

July 7, 2008

Hope Perspective

“With Liberty and Justice for All. . .”

The Fourth of July is over, and with it the obligatory picnic, concert in the park, baseball game, Taste of Chicago, Rib Fest, and fireworks displays. All that's left are the instant replays and scraps of hot dog wrappers—and the freedom to go about our business as usual. We have so much that we usually take it all for granted, forgetting (except for a few minutes at Memorial Day and the Fourth of July) that it didn't come easy and is not the norm for most of the rest of the world.

We missed it. We were on the beach in Mexico, soaking up sea and sun, with only a vague notion that it might be a holiday. I think one of the resorts had a party with some fireworks, but we were on the other side of the mountain and didn't see anything. Our only reminder of the holiday came when one of our friends showed up at our cabana wearing a T shirt emblazoned with with American flags and Harley-Davidson logos.

While it is easy—and I think dangerous—to confuse American values and Christian values, the Church has long stood for such values as basic human dignity, “liberty and justice for all,” and concern for the plight of the poor and the minority. Luke 4:16-20 contains Jesus' declaration of revolution, proclaiming release to captives and liberty for the oppressed. And he is not talking of spiritual release and spiritual liberty, but of liberty and justice in a political sense. It is the business of the church as the Body of Christ in the world today to carry on that ministry, just as it ought to be the business of government to ensure the legacy of the Declaration of Independence and Constitution.

We are Christian “patriots” when we are willing to take seriously the command to love God and love neighbor with all its implications for peace and justice, and to participate in Jesus' ministry of preaching good news to the poor, proclaiming release to captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, setting at liberty those who are oppressed, and proclaiming that this is the year of the Lord's favor. May it be so.

Peace, Terry

This Sunday:

“No More Fears”

Romans 8:1-11

HOPE Vision Statement

"HOPE is a progressive Christian voice that welcomes diverse people for reflection and action. Rooted in the United Church of Christ, HOPE takes the Bible seriously, but not literally. As people who are joyfully and unapologetically Christian, we pledge ourselves completely to the way of love. We work to express our love as Jesus taught: by loving God, neighbor, and self. We unite personal faith with social justice, prayer with peacemaking and spirituality with action. We passionately believe in the power of hope."

Sharing Joys & Concerns

Please keep these persons and events in your prayers:

- † Jim Appleman, Maggie's cousin, who continues to struggle with stomach cancer. (Diana)
- † Chandler, Pat Armstrong's great-nephew battling infection.
- † Kathy Walter's family, as they deal with family illness.
- † "Clip" Higgins fully recovering from additional stent surgery. Doing great! (The Higgins Family)
- † Alex Keener, infant who will be undergoing a 2nd surgery to remove a brain tumor.
- † Ruth in California, back on active cancer treatments. (Barbara Anderson)
- † The Forsell family, still in difficult times. (Barbara Anderson)
- † Prayers for families in turmoil. May they find peace & love.
- † God, please help me make the right decision with my career. Give me guidance to follow the path you choose for me.
- † A fun & safe week for all kids going to camp. (Austin)

Celebrating Birthdays

7.08	Sam Dempsey
7.09	John Kroening
7.13	Carol Nathe

Upcoming Events

7-08	Women's Softball (6:30PM)
7-09	Bible Study (7-8:00AM)
7-17	Women Out to Lunch (Noon)

HOPE Happenings Online

Would you like to receive the HOPE Happenings via email each week? The online version contains all the information you see here, and more. If you would prefer to get your news online, please e-mail the church office at hope@sharehope.org and ask Gail Bassett to add your name to the Happenings e-mail group.

QUEST MINISTRIES: *Sundays at Scullen, 9:00 a.m.*

Quest Quote of the Month

"Most individuals have found God most clearly in and through others. The love of others is the love of God experienced in this life."

An Excerpt from Sacred Dwelling: A Spirituality of Family Life by **Wendy M. Wright**.

Kids Quest – Ages 4 – Grade 5

Kids Quest is now on break for the summer. See you in September.

Steps of Faith – Grades 6, 7 and 8

The three-year learning goals for our youth are: learning about team building, God, Jesus, Protestantism, peace and justice, Bible history, Advent & Christmas, the Holy Spirit, different religions (includes field trips), spiritual disciplines, baptism, Eucharist, Lent & Easter, history & polity of the UCC, formation and polity of HOPE and faith sharing. They are also using the curriculum called Jesus and his Kingdom of Equals. This curriculum introduces students in grades 6 to 8 to an interpretation of the historical Jesus based on contemporary biblical research, principally from the Jesus Seminar. Students experience an unfolding narrative of a Jewish reformer who saw through the hypocrisy and elitism of first-century Roman Palestine. This itinerant sage brought a message of affirmation and egalitarianism to oppressed and powerless Galileans and described a kingdom of love, not in the future but already present in the hearts of people. Their leaders are **Shannon Lane, Les Pierce, Jane Trotta and John Kroening**.

Sr. High Quest

Our youth are sharing their life experiences and connecting it with God and their faith through the use of the lectionary based curriculum called **Seasons of the Spirit**. Their leaders are **Michael Foster-Hulbert** and **Martha Selby**.

Adult Quest

"Although labels usually highlight differences, people with and without disabilities share almost everything in common. Like everyone else, people with disabilities need support to live a good life. Like everyone else, people with disabilities have wonderful strengths and gifts that exist alongside their limitations. Like everyone else, people with disabilities will struggle in some contexts and shine in others. And like everyone else, people with disabilities want to express their spirituality and belong to a community." (From Including People with Disabilities in Faith Communities by Erik W. Carter).

Unfortunately, persons with disabilities are often prevented from participating in congregational life due to barriers in architecture, attitude, communication, and transportation. Join us for the rest of July as we explore various perspectives from persons with disabilities and issues surrounding their/our inclusion into all aspects of church life. Adult Quest meets at 9:10 in the Faculty Lounge at Scullen.

Library News:

Subject List on Website

All of Hope's library holdings are listed on our website. You may reserve items (books, videos or tapes) by calling Gail (922-0470) at the Ministry Center during office hours (9:00-3:00); by checking them out at the Ministry Center anytime it is open; or by calling Martha Selby, Librarian, at 355-3709. Martha will also be bringing items, periodically, to Scullen School for Sunday morning worship.

HOPE Gathering Opportunities:

Bible Study Breakfast

Wednesdays, 7:00-8:00 a.m.

Please join us for breakfast and exciting discussion. Everyone is welcome. Bible Study Breakfast meets at **Butterfield's** at 1504 N. Naper Blvd., at the northeast corner of Ogden Avenue in Naperville.

Naperville Christian Women's Softball League

You are all invited to cheer the team on to victory—and there is usually some celebration or commiseration afterward at a local establishment. HOPE to see you there! Games are on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. behind Calvary Church on Rt. 59. The season runs through July 29.

Women Out to Lunch – July 17 (noon)

Join the women of HOPE for lunch at noon on Thursday, July 17. Lively conversation, great food and warm fellowship are waiting for you at **Giordano's** Restaurant at 119 South Main Street, in downtown Naperville. Parking is available in the lot across from the restaurant or in the Van Buren Parking Building.

News and Notes:

Laura Hall Concert @ St. Michael's UCC,
400 W. Washington, West Chicago
Sunday, July 20, at 7 pm

Laura Hall, improvisational pianist from the hit Comedy Central show *Whose Line Is It, Anyway?*, will present a concert and an original one-act play, written and performed by her husband, Rick Hall. The play focuses on the most segregated hour of the week and the way two congregations cross the great racial divide.

This concert is a benefit for the Northwest DuPage Walk-in Ministry, a covenantal ministry comprised of 16 congregations throughout NW DuPage County serving poor and working-poor families in DuPage County.

Tickets are \$10 and will be available at the door.

Name Tag Rack

HOPE's name tag rack has seen better days. It has been well-used, in and out of the trailer, put up and taken down for years, and now it needs refreshing. Is there someone out there who would like to engineer a new rack? Let your imagination flow! if you are interested, please let Jamie Pagano know.

Thank you, Barbara Anderson, name tag rack engineer, retired!

Better World—Tax Breaks For Efficiency

Although upgrading your home to be more energy efficient comes with an upfront price tag, most improvements will pay for themselves in energy savings within a few years. But if you need further encouragement, Illinois offers incentives to residents. These incentives can be found by searching the website www.dsireusa.org.

These Days Magazine Available

The latest issue of "These Days" (Daily Devotions for Living By Faith) is waiting for you on the Welcome Table at Worship. This issue includes devotions for July, August & September 2008. Be sure to stop by the Welcome Table and pick up a copy. If you would like a copy mailed to you, please contact the church office.

100% Recycled Paper Available

We are again offering 100 percent recycled paper for sale after church. A ream is \$4.75. This will give you an opportunity to try this paper for your home use. It is sold by Staples. See either Bob or Martha Selby.

Transporting Church Supplies to Scullen on Sunday Mornings

Now that the school has allowed HOPE to store our worship and Sunday School containers in the storage closet at Scullen, the trailer no longer needs to be pulled each Sunday. Hooray! But there are still containers that need to be moved from the Ministry Center to Scullen each Sunday. We need your help! There are only three bins and some miscellaneous materials that need to be taken to Scullen, so even if you have a small car, it will be no problem. There will be a sign up sheet for taking the supplies from the Ministry Center to Scullen and returning them for each Sunday.

Bring Your Empty Inkjet Cartridges to Worship!

HOPE is pleased to continue a fundraiser that is both simple and profitable! For every empty inkjet cartridge we collect, we will be paid \$2 by a recycling company. Please bring your empties to worship or the church office. The print head must be undamaged; you can protect it by putting the used cartridge in the wrapping and box from the new one you are installing. This will be an ongoing campaign -- round up as many empty inkjet cartridges as possible, and help "ink" benefits for both HOPE and the environment.

Wondering What to Do With Your Old Cell Phone?

If you have a cell phone that you need to dispose of, donate it to HOPE. We will be working with PhoneFund, a company that gives new life to old technology. We will benefit in two ways: we'll be paid for your unwanted cell phones, and you will help keep toxic e-waste materials out of the landfill. In addition to cell phones, you can also donate unwanted laptops, digital cameras and PDAs. Please deposit your donations in the Welcome Table box at worship, or drop them off at HOPE Center.

Urgent Request for Donated Furniture

Sharing Connections Furniture Bank needs your help to provide newborn babies with a safe and healthy sleeping environment. Donate your gently used cribs and baby equipment for families in crisis. Make an immediate difference in a baby's life today. No recalled cribs or equipment please. Drop off Monday through Friday from 9am to 3pm and Saturdays from 9am until noon. You can schedule a pick up by calling, 630-971-0565 x300 or visiting our website, www.sharingconnections.org. We are located at 5111 Chase Ave, Downers Grove, IL 60515. All donations are tax-deductible.

Mission Opportunities and News:

Meals Ministry

HOPE has established a meals ministry as a way to reach out to members and friends of HOPE's partners in times of need, pain, new birth, or unusual circumstances. We have been amazed at the way that a homemade, delivered meal can initiate a great friendship between the individuals involved.

In order to keep this ministry vibrant, we need to know when a meal would be appreciated by your family or by someone you know. Please contact Ginny in the church office or Valerie Moreno-Tucker at tuckerm@comcast.net to learn more or to make a meal request. Thank You!

Peace and Justice:

PerotCharts.com—An Important Tool for Understanding Our Country's Economic Condition

Ross Perot, business leader and former presidential candidate has launched a public information website, "PerotCharts.com," that contains objective, factual information about the current economic crisis in America. According to the press release, the site was launched as an alert and appeal for American citizens to inform themselves about federal government spending. Perot said, "The U.S. national debt reached \$9.4 TRILLION on April 30, and it is increasing by more than \$1 billion every day. We are leaving our

children and grandchildren with debt they cannot possibly pay.”

PerotCharts.com consists of three major components: a video featuring Ross Perot discussing the purpose of the website, a blog where new charts and other information are posted daily for study and comment, and a narrated chart presentation explaining the economic problems our country faces. The website is not affiliated with any political party or candidate. Most of the data and research for the charts is gathered from official government sources.

“The economic crisis facing America today is far greater than anything since the Great Depression,” said Perot. “Our federal government continues to spend us deeper into debt. The American people must get directly involved and demand an end to deficit spending. This website will provide information for citizens to do just that.”

Like the economic charts Perot employed in his 1992 and 1996 presidential campaigns, which served as snapshots of complex economic issues presented in simple terms, PerotCharts.com features the latest official government figures about the real conditions of our economy for everyone to see and consider. The site is designed to be a reservoir of information about the economy, and provides an accurate look at where the money comes from and where it goes.

“We simply cannot wait any longer to do something about runaway deficit spending,” Perot said. “This website addresses a number of issues, and we will add more in the coming weeks and months. But there is a common thread running through all of them. We cannot solve these problems unless we have the ability to pay for the solutions. Getting spending under control is the first step in that process.”

I highly recommend a visit to this website.

Submitted by Bob Selby