



UPDATE

November 2011

Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church

600 W. Fullerton Parkway, Chicago, IL 60614-2614 • 773-248-8288

Jeffrey Doane, Pastor

www.lppchurch.org

Steve Hunter, Editor

Inside this Month's Update

Stewardship letter.....p.1

Q & A with Kent Organ.....p.2

Shelter lunches.....p.3

Mission Activity Census.....p.3

LPPC Birthdays.....p.3

Remembering Jo Ann Reynolds.....pp.4-5

Getting to Know Donald Knight-Organist and Choir Director.....p.5-6

'Tis the Season for SERRV.....p.6

Getting to Know Maureen Wilson.....p.7

Alternative Christmas Shopping.....p.7

Clerk's Report.....p.8

Women's Retreat.....p. 9

Hunger Walk 2011....p.9

Dear Lincoln Park

Presbyterian friends,

'Tis stewardship season, that time when in the church we are each asked to do our part – really to continue to do our part – so that our ministries and mission will go forward with gusto in the new year. Though I just got here, already I am impressed with you and am eager to do my part. I am committing 14% of my salary to the life and work of the Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church in 2012. Stewardship Commitment Sunday is November 13.

'Tis stewardship season, and I am remembering a story about a woman who spent some time hiking in the Swiss Alps. She came back and told others about little cabins scattered along the trails that serve as shelter for hikers. Each cabin has a fireplace, and upon arriving at a cabin, the hiker finds a fire already laid and a stack of wood already cut. All the hiker has to do is strike a match. A sign in the cabin says that the hiker is realized that much of her life she had been burning that someone else had chopped, and that

that someone else had chopped, and that she had never thought to say, Thank you. She made a promise, ever after, to “leave a fire laid” for those who followed.

The Apostle Paul invites us to think of ourselves in this way: “*as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God*” (I Corinthians 4:1). We are stewards of a vision and a faith that has been given to us. It was already here when we arrived. Others before us, who received it from others before them, have given, preserved, and passed on to us a vision of life aligned with God's purposes. This vision of life is built on the principle of gratitude. The essence of the Christian life is not living out of duty, blind obedience, earning salvation, fear of punishment, or other self-focused motivations. The Christian life is lived in joyous gratitude in response to the awe-inspiring love of God.

The way we show gratitude is by living toward the vision we have received, and then passing that vision along to those who follow. In the season of stewardship, when we are asked to make a (continued on following page)

(continued from front page)

a personal commitment to God through the church, may your gratitude for the gifts passed on to you move you to offer a fire for others.

Yours in Christian service,

-Kent

A Note from the Interim Pastor...

Dear friends,

Using a Q&A format, I'd like to tell you some things about a pastoral interim. First, let me say again that it is a privilege for me to accompany you in this transitional time.

Q: What exactly is an "interim" pastor?

A: This is a minister invited by the Session of a church without an installed pastor to assume pastoral responsibilities during an in-between time. Interim pastors have special training to help churches assess themselves before searching for a new pastor.

Q: How long can an interim pastor stay at the same church?

A: The interim period generally lasts between 18-24 months. Sessions and interim pastors, in consultation with the committee on ministry of the presbytery, agree to a yearlong contract, which can be renewed after 12 months.

Q: If we like our interim pastor, can he or she stay on as the next installed pastor?

A: The Book of Order used to be clear about this. It said interim pastors are not eligible. With the new Form of Government, there can be exceptions. But I am not an exception. I will not be a candidate to be your next installed pastor.

Q: How are an interim pastor's duties different from those of an installed pastor?

A: An interim pastor does most of the same things an installed pastor does, plus specific

tasks that are needed in a time of transition. For instance, interim pastors are generally more free to help a church make hard decisions. They can name issues, face problems, and help church leaders address areas of need.

Q: Are there tasks for the congregation itself to undertake in an interim?

A: Yes. You can support LPPC and your church leadership in every way possible: prayerfully dealing with any past hurts, seeking reconciliation, opening your heart to see things anew; and pray, pray, pray for this congregation. Also, there are these developmental tasks:

- coming to terms with history (taking an unhurried look at LPPC's past);
- discovering a new identity (seeing if our view of ourselves needs reshaping);
- leadership changes during the interim (allowing room for new folks to step up);
- renewing denominational linkages (connecting with our larger Presbyterian family);
- commitment to new directions for ministry (readying for a new era, a new pastor).

Q: What will we be doing before the actual pastoral search begins?

A: The Session and I will be working with your Transition Team, who will lead us in a mission study, through which we will ask anew: Who are we? Who are our neighbors? What is God now calling us to do and be? The interim period is meant to be a time for real evaluation of how things are going: What's working at LPPC? What's not working? Where might God be seeking to lead us? When the mission study is completed, the congregation will elect a pastor nominating committee, and the search for a new installed pastor will commence. If you have any question, please get in touch with me. Blessings to all.

-Kent

Practice makes (almost) perfect

For at least two years (Zoe says three), Zoe and Mia and I have been making sack lunches for the Shelter on the first Saturday of each month. Occasionally Anne pitches in as well, but usually we do it ourselves. Once in a while the girls will invite a friend to help out, but that always takes longer because we have to train the new recruit. In October, because of family celebrations, we were obliged to alter the schedule, so we took the second Saturday. The change in date did not diminish the efficiency of the team. In fact we set a performance record: 17 minutes from start to finish.

Roles and responsibilities have evolved over time. Bruce does the buying (not included in performance time mentioned above) and lays out the bread on the island in our kitchen. Zoe gets out the Shelter supply box and lines up 30 brown bags on the dining table. She drops the juice boxes in the bags to provide a heavy base, then adds the fruit (apples in season) only after washing it. Meanwhile Mia is wrapping the gourmet cookies (from Aldi – supplies from Aldi were 1/3 cheaper than Costco) and then turns to help Grandpa form the sandwiches and stuff them in zip lock bags.

There is some flexibility as to when the snacks are added to the bags; they are light and so should go near the top, but we typically don't have the sandwiches done quickly enough so that Zoe does not have to wait for us. So the sandwiches and the cookies may go in on top of the snacks – not a perfect arrangement, but efficient. Mia is in charge of background music; she may consult with her tone-deaf grandfather, but her older sister usually has some suggestions.

Clean-up takes less than two minutes unless bad judgments in buying result in left-overs.

We count on at least one snack bag to sustain each worker during the assembly. Now this homely story has a number of implications for the life of faith.

- Certain practices like prayer and praise can become habitual.
- It's more fun and more efficient when you do it together
- Once the system is in place, you spend less time negotiating.
- Doing creative service projects can be enormously satisfying.

Perhaps you can think of others.

-Bruce Hunt

Mission Activity Census

Like Caesar Augustus in the Book of Luke, the Church and Society Ministry team is conducting a census. Not to tax you, thank goodness. No, we want to know what mission activities our congregation is involved in. This information will help us make decisions with the church's money and time that reflect the priorities of you and the rest of the congregation.

So wherever you volunteer, let us know! Email the church office or Steve Hunter at srhunterlaw@yahoo.com.

November Birthdays at LPPC

4	Nelson Portillo
7	Lou Carlozo
9	Bruce Hunt
11	Ryan Jones
14	Walt Meyers
16	Trina Portillo
16	Zoe Prekop
22	Margaret Bailey
28	Christopher Carlozo
28	Janet Kindred

Jo Ann Reynolds – In Memoriam

I have known Jo Ann Reynolds since 1968. We both joined the church that year, within months of each other. We started singing in the choir almost at the same time. And by the fall, we were teaching church school together.

In 1968, McCormick Theological Seminary was still located within blocks of LPPC, and many of the professors' children were in that middle-grade church school class of ours. We met weekly to "prepare the lesson" for that Sunday, which involved wonderful suppers prepared by Jo Ann, much fun and laughter (and glasses of wine), and finally finishing the lesson plan in the early hours of the morning. Meanwhile, infant Liz Russell slept on Jo Ann's bed. Despite all, our lessons made sense, hopefully engaged those kids, and we enjoyed working together immensely.

And we enjoyed many other parts of life together. At that time, Jo Ann was a young widow with a successful career with IBM. Her family was not in Chicago, so because of our friendship, she became an extra member of our family, joining Wayne, Liz and Jonathan and our extended family in the Chicago area for occasional holidays. She was another aunt to Liz and Jonathan when they were little children. And sometimes she came to Wisconsin with our family for weekends. Jo Ann also introduced me to the world of art fairs, and got me "hooked" on good, newer art (though she was much more likely to purchase pieces at art fairs than I was!).

Meanwhile, Jo Ann was also strongly committed to justice in the world and in the church. She served as a chaperone when this church provided space for 1968 Democratic convention demonstrators to sleep and recover from police brutality. She worked with a street gang in the

neighborhood, and with the neighborhood pantry, which was briefly housed in our church building. If there was a need, she was there. She was elected to the (now "extinct") Board of Trustees at LPPC, and later to the Session. LPPC greatly valued her leadership and witness.

Our family was excited to celebrate David and Jo Ann's wedding in their new home with David's children and a few other friends. Then later, they became our neighbors on Chalmers Place. Our children became good friends and playmates. They went to school and church school together. We were sad when the Reynolds moved to Houston, and then to Connecticut. But we kept in touch. And Jo Ann and David would come back to Chicago occasionally and sometimes stay with us. We were very excited to learn that they decided to retire to Chicago. And, of course, LPPC friends were excited to welcome Jo Ann back to leadership in Session and other aspects of church leadership, and to welcome her strong alto voice back to the choir.

On a very personal note, Jo Ann's and David's return to Chicago almost coincided with my decision to leave my marriage, and start a new life with my partner, Gerri Mead. While this was pretty disturbing news to both Jo Ann and David at first, they continued to be friends with both Wayne and me, and welcomed Gerri, too.

Jo Ann's role as an advocate for justice continued throughout her life. When she returned to LPPC, she found our church was still involved in justice issues, but at that point, our focus was on inclusiveness. Jo Ann added her voice to that effort. She was not only elected to Session, but she joined our work to bring about change in the Presbyterian Church (USA) in ordaining glbtq persons to leadership. She was a commissioner to the denomination's General Assembly several years ago, and served on a

committee where that issue was hotly and painfully debated. She almost left the national gathering before it ended, because she was so distressed with what she was hearing from fellow Presbyterians. But she stayed. Even though she was not pleased with her committee's decisions, she stayed to make her voice heard. How typically Jo Ann!

At LPPC, Jo Ann offered her leadership in all kinds of efforts: chairing the committee that developed the "Vision 2000" statement, leading the very successful capital campaign for the renovation of the church building (including housing the Lincoln Park Community Shelter in this building), developing annual stewardship campaigns, discussing her participation in the General Assembly at an educational event, serving as our church's Presbytery commissioner, volunteering regularly in the Shelter, especially staying overnight, counting the offering weekly, walking in the CROP Walk and the Pride Parade each year – the list is unending. She also served on the Presbytery's Committee on Ministry for a number of years, and worked with at least one church during a time of transition, just like the one LPPC is going through right now.

I was privileged to visit Jo Ann twice during the last weeks of her life – once by myself, and once with Kent Organ and Gerri. Even in those moments, she still didn't miss much! She was excited to learn church news, and had her usual strong, but well-informed opinions. She was her feisty and faith-filled self, right up to the end.

So – well done, good and faithful servant, and well done, very good friend. We will all miss you. I will miss you, but I celebrate your feisty, beautiful life and witness.

Gifts to honor Jo Ann's life, her faith and her passion for justice can be sent to:

- Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church, 600 W. Fullerton Pkwy., Chicago, IL 60614
- Lincoln Park Community Shelter, 600 W. Fullerton Pkwy., Chicago, IL 60614
- Sarah's Circle, 4750 N. Sheridan Rd., #220, Chicago, IL 60640

-Gail Russell

Getting to Know You: Donald Knight – Organist and Choir Director

Donald was born in Indianapolis, but spent the majority of his childhood in Lafayette, IN. His dad was a finance and credit manager for a local furniture store chain and his mom worked in the as personnel director at a local department store. He has one brother who resides in Georgia.

Donald says he knew music was his calling from a very early age. He began playing the piano by ear as a very small child. His parents encouraged his musical abilities and arranged piano lessons. He was mentored by a church music director and played his first public worship service at age 11, an experience which he described as "baptism by fire."

After attending boarding school in his youth, Donald auditioned and was accepted as a piano major at Indiana University in Bloomington. He also wanted to study voice but was told he would have to audition. At his vocal audition there was no one to accompany him. So he accompanied himself and was admitted also as a voice student. Upon graduation from IU, with his Bachelor of Music degree in hand, he moved to New York City and began studying voice with a professor from the New England Conservatory of Music.

During his time in New York, Donald performed as soloist with the New York Philharmonic, the American Symphony Orchestra and the Indianapolis Symphony

Orchestra and presented numerous recitals across the United States, many of which were broadcast on radio. He has toured with the Camerata Singers, the Norman Luboff Choir, and the Columbia Artists Community Concerts Series.

He moved to Boston and completed his Master of Music in Voice at the New England Conservatory of Music. Over the course of his career, Donald has studied with such notable artist teachers as Richard Knoll, Zinka Milanov, James Shomate, Pierre Bernac and Dr. Ronald Combs.

Donald moved to Chicago in 1975 where he continued to perform and teach. He has been a vocal coach at Northeastern Illinois and DePaul Universities. Many of his students enjoy professional singing careers with the Chicago Symphony and Lyric Opera choruses and several have sung and continue to sing principal roles in opera houses throughout the United States and abroad. He was the founder and director of the Union Singers of Lake Bluff and the music director of the Bethany Union Church in Chicago. For the past 15 years, Donald has served as organist and music director at Mayfair Lutheran Church in Chicago.

Donald has travelled extensively and is an avid dog lover. He shares his home in downtown Chicago with Lila, a Miniature Whippet and Jack Russell Terrier mix.

About his career in music, Donald says, "I am one of the lucky ones who was given certain talents by God. I did nothing whatever to deserve those gifts; a little of this and a little of that. I realized quite a long time ago that if I have a talent that means the most to me it is a certain aptitude for bringing out the best in others and, perhaps, helping them to develop their individual potentials." Donald attributes finding out about the LPPC position from dear friend Norma Williams who was the head of the

voice department at DePaul for some time and a former member of LPPC.

Please join me in welcoming Donald to our LPPC family.

-Don Hunter



*Newly arrived Organist and Choir Director
Donald Knight*

'Tis the Season for SERRV

Yes, it's true. It's already time to sharpen your pencil, start that Christmas list, and begin your Christmas shopping by ordering from the SERRV catalog. It features jewelry, crafts, chocolate products and a host of other beautiful items. SERRV's mission is to try to eliminate poverty by helping low-income artisans and farmers from around the world improve their products and their communities. Then SERRV partners with these workers to sell their crafts and foods through the SERRV catalog.

And when you buy items from SERRV, any profits come back to Church and Society's mission fund—a win-win-win situation: for the farmers and artisans, for the mission fund, and for the persons who receive the gifts. Be good to yourself by making year-round gift-giving easy--order your birthday gifts and hostess gifts early through SERRV.

So join us at the back table during or after Hospitality. Lean back, sip your coffee or tea, and browse through the catalog. Orders will be taken on November 13 and 20. See Marianne Nesler if you have any questions.

--Church and Society Ministry team

Getting to Know . . . Maureen Wilson

Not many Presbyterian seminarians have a rigorous Jesuit education, but that is just one surprising facet of Maureen Wilson, LPPC's seminary assistant for 2011-12.

She grew up in Indianapolis where she as an only child she lived with her parents and dog Annabelle Lee. And though her parents are not church-goers, Maureen's curiosity was piqued when she took a course in religion as a high school student at Brebeuf, a Jesuit prep school.

"When I was junior, a friend knew I was looking around at churches and invited me to Second Presbyterian. I loved it," she says of what she found at the Hoosier capital city's imposing "tall steeple" church similar to Chicago's Fourth Presbyterian. Maureen began attending regularly and was baptized and confirmed as a high school senior.

For college, she attended another Jesuit school, Xavier University in Cincinnati, where she majored in theology and minored in peace studies all the while insisting "I didn't want to go to seminary at all."

"I loved that education," she says of the demanding Jesuit standard. Still "I didn't feel there was a space for me . . . that there was a space for a female administrator" when asked why, as a budding Christian, she didn't join the Catholic Church which had been so important to her education. At the time "I was getting better answers to my questions" at Second Presbyterian, she adds.

Like former LPPC seminary assistant Joe Genau and former member Matt Richardson, Maureen opted for a year of service as a young adult volunteer in World Mission for the Presbyterian Church after college graduation.

"It was an amazing experience," she says of living with three other Americans while doing tutoring local school children to late night outreach with a Presbyterian Church in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

"It was a very strong community and we are still close," she says. After returning to the U.S. she lived and worked in Indianapolis and then moved to New Orleans to work, pray and trying to discern God's plan.

Now 27, she hopes that LPPCers will be patient and friendly as she learns her way around. Attending her first LPPC committee meeting with the Property and Finance ministry team indicated she will not have a problem meeting that goal, she laughs.

And what does she do for fun in away-from-church hours?

"I like to sleep," she admits. "I like movies and hanging out with friends. I have two amazing roommates. And I like music—my roommates' call it old people's music—but older music like Artie Shaw."

-Sharon Stangenes

Alternative Christmas Shopping

As you mark the calendar for the holidays, budget some time and money to shop LPPC's own seasonal pop-up shop the Alternative Christmas Store on Saturday, Dec. 3 and Sunday, Dec. 4 and Dec. 11.

We will have items to delight those on your Christmas list and you will feel better knowing the money spent goes directly to those who most need it. Everything from Free exchange coffee from small farmers in South America to honey products from ex-convicts trying to making a living and a life right here in Chicago. We are adding new vendors and baked goods to the mix as well.

-Sharon Stangenes

Special Times Call for Special Meetings: Clerk's Report

Our Interim Pastor Kent Organ wanted to get to know the Session better. And he wanted to try on some of his ideas for size with us. So he called a special meeting for Tuesday, October 18.

It was a very good idea, because we needed to know him better too. Some of us had worked with him in ministry teams or in other tasks, but we hadn't met with him together as a whole Session, with him as our moderator. This was the first chance we had to work on this time of transition together. It was also the beginning of our life together as a working leadership team.

The conversation was wide-ranging. However, there were two topics that were the most important: discussing the retreat on October 29, and discussing the next steps in our time of transition, specifically focusing on the role of the Transition Team.

Kent had proposed that what had originally been scheduled as a Session retreat, become an open invitation to the congregation, at least for the morning section. He wants us as a congregation to use the time together for "remembering our story" – sharing memories as our faith community, LPPC, and as a part of the whole history of people of faith. This will be the first in a series of events leading us forward as a congregation into this time of transition together. Then in the early afternoon, the Session will meet separately to help us as elders prepare for our leadership role in the stewardship campaign.

The other key aspect of the Session meeting was to look in more depth at the role of the Transition Team, and at the five

"developmental tasks" of the time of transition and change for congregations and their leadership without an installed pastor. Kent identified the five tasks: coming to terms with history (which we'll begin to address on the 29th), discovering a new identity, allowing and empowering new leaders, renewing denominational linkages, and committing to new leadership and a new future.

We discussed the current Transition Team, and whether we needed to form a new vision team. We agreed that we'd recently developed a very meaningful new vision, so that it would be good not to create a whole new group to start all over on a task we'd already accomplished. We learned from Kent about additional tasks for an ongoing Transition Team, related to the five "developmental tasks". But we also acknowledged that the current Transition

the time together for "remembering our story"

Team hadn't recognized that their tasks might continue for quite a while longer. We had an honest conversation about

workloads, and not demanding too much of already stretched leadership. We agreed with Kent's proposal to enlarge this team with two new members, and brainstormed about possibilities. We also agreed that each member of the current team needs to consider whether or not they want to extend and expand their role as members of the Transition Team. The current team will meet with Kent in early November to discuss all this further.

We know we have lots of work to do – but it's really important and exciting work! Thanks to Kent for challenging us and leading us into this time of transition. His valued experience as well as his enthusiasm for this work will be an inspiration to the Session, the Transition Team and the congregation as a whole.

-Gail Russell, Clerk

And God Said, “Come out and Play!”

And we say, “Come along and join us,” for the 2012 Women’s Retreat. Together we will explore the theology of play and all the ways that God invites us to be joyful together. In the midst of times that feel so serious, so challenging and sometimes so overwhelming, here’s an invitation to explore ways to balance our lives and to find time for play (whatever that means for each of us), even as we continue to work on all the serious things that feel so compelling.

A traditional Apache story describes how the Creator made humans able to walk and talk, to see and hear . . . to do everything. But the Creator wasn’t satisfied. Finally, the Creator made humans laugh, and when they laughed and laughed, the Creator said, “Now you are fit to live.”

We are pleased that the Rev. Mieke Vandersall, who is currently the Director of Presbyterian Welcome in New York City, will lead us in exploring this subject. The focus of this year’s retreat was her suggestion, and she has worked with other groups on this topic.

Our retreat will be held February 3-5, 2012 at Siena Center, on the shore of Lake Michigan in Racine, Wisconsin. It will be the 28th year that women from Lincoln Park Presbyterian and First United Church of Oak Park have gathered together. As always, our weekend will include time to greet old friends and meet new ones – time to explore the beauty of the Lake Michigan shoreline in winter – and time to claim rest and restoration from the busy-ness of our lives.

Women of the church: you will receive more information about cost and registration via e-mail in mid-December. Watch for it! And, in the meantime, **SAVE THE DATE.** If you have questions, please see Gerri Mead

and/or Gail Russell, both members of the planning committee. We’ll see you at the retreat.

-Gerri Mead

Hunger Walk 2011

Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church came through once again for the Church World Service CROP Walk and for victims of poverty, war and natural disaster. Our congregation fielded 15 walkers and raised over \$2000 this year, proving once again that we have the power of much larger congregations. Those participating included, from left to right in the photo below, Seminary Assistant Maureen Wilson, Dave Geilen, Gale Morgan-Williams, Jacob Parker, Robert Guenther, Seri Porter, Sharon Stangenes, Emily Porter, Marianne Nesler, Gail Russell and Gerri Mead. Not pictured but present were Pastor Kent Organ and his wife Vicki, Walter Meyers and Steve Hunter.

This year’s walk had a surprising and welcome change. It was 5 kilometers instead of 10. I can personally attest that the shorter walk was easier on legs and feet, but still raised money and awareness.

Thanks to everyone who walked and who pledged. Your efforts pay off throughout the coming year, and provide for immediate responses to natural disasters and war, as well as long term support for the hungry.

-Steve Hunter

