

**St. Paul's United  
Methodist Church**

**Inside this issue:**

|                        |        |
|------------------------|--------|
| Margie's Letter        | 1      |
| Worship                | 3      |
| Around the Church      | 4-5    |
| Connections            | 6-7    |
| Calendar               | insert |
| Summer Reading         | 8      |
| Loving Care Ministries | 9      |
| Children's Ministries  | 10     |
| Be Childlike           | 10-11  |
| Youth Ministries       | 12     |
| Conference News        | 13-15  |
| Prayer List            | 16     |

*A Reconciling  
Congregation  
where all are  
invited to share  
the Basics of  
God's love with  
the world*

# St. Paul's Letter

July-August 2010

## Mindful Reminders

Dear Friends,

At this time of year as we enter the lazy hazy days of summer, we are given an opportunity to slow down...at least we sure hope that our days will be more languid. But for many of us, there always seems to be a list of things to do, and until we actually go away on vacation, our days can be as busy as ever.

I know that I started out my week that way. I woke up early on Monday with a long list of things on my to-do list and, in the pause that begins my day, I asked God for some little moment of quiet, some tiny speck of time that would re-open my heart to wonder and the deeper, richer, loving Presence. It wasn't long before I was off and moving from one thing to another and, as I took a break to go home and let the dog out, there it was. I noticed a tiny little wild flower growing up in the cracks in the driveway. It was only a single blossom, but it's bright pink petals waving in the sunshine against the gray of the driveway stopped me short.

I smiled as I realized my prayer had been answered. And so quickly too! That line from Psalm 46 came to mind, "Be still and know that I am God." So I took the psalmist's advice; I slowed down. Not for long...I didn't need a long time to savor that delicious moment. But as I turned from that morning blessing, as I reentered the world of lists and deadlines, I wondered if my day would be less stressed because I had encountered this graceful, lovely flower in the midst of an otherwise hectic day.

I think of Thick Nhat Hahn's encouragement that we practice "mindfulness" in every step of our waking lives. I think of the Buddhists who practice meditation as they walk or even work, and I get it. At least for now I am holding the image of the flower in my mind's eye and letting her beauty work on me. And it is working. After each brief task accomplished, and sometimes in the midst of a project, her graceful colors, her bold upward looking "face" remind me that there is another world right outside my door, right outside my window, even within my own self. If I can practice mindfulness, I can catch a little serenity even on the fly. And on some days, that may be the best we can do, even in these summer days.

So if you are one whose life remains somewhat hectic, I encourage you to ask for some little moment of quiet and allow yourself to be surprised. For surely in this magnificent world, there are signs all around of God's abiding Presence. Happy Summer!

Blessings,

*Margie*

*Lectionary Readings for July-August:***July 4, 2010**

2 Kings 5:1-14  
Psalm 30  
Galatians 6:1-6 (7-16)  
Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

**July 11, 2010**

Amos 7:7-17  
Psalm 82  
Colossians 1:1-14  
Luke 10:25-37

**July 18, 2010**

Amos 8:1-12  
Psalm 52 or Psalm 82  
Colossians 1:15-28  
Luke 10:38-42

**July 25, 2010**

Hosea 1:2-10  
Psalm 85  
Colossians 2:6-19  
Luke 11:1-13

**August 1, 2010**

Hosea 11:1-11  
Psalm 107:1-9, 43  
Colossians 3:1-11  
Luke 12:13-21

**August 8, 2010**

Isaiah 1:1, 10-20  
Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23  
Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16  
Luke 12:32-40

**August 15, 2010**

Isaiah 5:1-7  
Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19  
Hebrews 11:29, 12:2  
Luke 12:49-56

**August 22, 2010**

Jeremiah 1:4-10  
Psalm 71:1-6  
Hebrews 12:18-29  
Luke 13:10-17

**August 29, 2010**

Jeremiah 2:4-13  
Psalm 81:1, 10-16  
Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16  
Luke 14:1, 7-14

**SUMMER SCHEDULE***Child Care***Sunday, 9:15 AM***Worship Service***Sunday, 9:30 AM***Church Office Hours***Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM - 1:00PM***Eunice Tabor***Tuesday, 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM**

**Note: Margie is off on Fridays  
Jacqueline is off on Fridays**

*St. Paul's Letter***St. Paul's United Methodist Church**

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E-Mail: [info@stpaulsithaca.org](mailto:info@stpaulsithaca.org)<http://www.stpaulsithaca.org>*Senior Pastor*

Margie Mayson

*Assistant Organist &**Rehearsal Accompanist*

Andi Merrill

*Director of Church Ministries*

Jacqueline F. Bonner

*Chancel Choir Director*

Andi Merrill

*Administrative Ministries**Coordinators*

Kevin Miller &amp; Sarah Crossgrove

*Bell Choir Director*

Dorothy Preston

*Loving Care Ministries**Coordinator*

Eunice Tabor

*Children's & Youth**Choir Directors*Lydia Dolch &  
Beverly Stokes*Children's Ministries Coordinator*

Laura Dolch

*Childcare Coordinator*

Laura Dolch

*Youth Ministries Coordinator*

Ruth Keagle

*Custodian*

Suzanne Orzel

*Pastor Emeritus*

Robert J. McCune

*Bookkeeper*

Maureen Anguish

*Music Director & Organist*

John W. White

*Ministers*

All The People

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### Summer Worship

9:15 am Sing through  
the Hymnal  
9:30 am Worship  
10:30 am Coffee?  
(see below)



### Summer Child Care

9:15 am Sundays

Child Care



**Summer Office Hours**  
June 21 – August 20  
Monday – Friday  
9:00 am – 1:00 pm

### Concerned about missing Coffee Hour after church all summer?

How about we try a casual approach? If you would be willing to prepare the coffee before the service on a given Sunday (directions are posted by the coffee makers), we can announce it that morning and we'll enjoy fellowship time after the service. No cookies necessary! Just let the person making announcements know that coffee will be available after the service. Thanks!

Summer Coffee Hour



### Altar Flowers

Summertime is bursting with flowers! Wouldn't it be nice to bring some of God's beauty to our altar all year? Is there anyone you would like to honor, remember or celebrate in a special way? Consider supplying flowers for the altar. Forms to reserve your special Sunday are available at the church. Just let us know your preferences and arrangements will be provided. Reserve your date early!

### Ushers Needed for the Summer

To meet our ushering needs for weekly worship we will be trying a more relaxed and informal approach this summer. Rather than contacting people in advance and asking them to commit to ushering for specific dates, we will be **asking folk to make themselves available to usher when present** on an "as-needed" basis. Thus the head-usher for a given Sunday will recruit at the moment, drawing from those in Worship on that day. Hopefully this will reduce stress for our head-ushers by eliminating the need to line up volunteers in advance, while at the same time enhancing opportunities for our members to participate in this important ministry.

If you would be willing to be a part of such an **on-call Usher Corps**, please indicate by writing "Usher" following your name when signing the red Friendship Pad. And we encourage you to let the head usher know that morning that you can help. Questions or suggestions? Please contact Bill Patchen at 351-7814 or Jacqueline Bonner in the Church Office.

## Around the Church

### From the Trustees — New Boiler System

The good news is that we can anticipate warm Sundays every Sunday next winter and for many winters to come. The Trustees decided to replace our old boiler system this year and replace it with three new energy-efficient modular units. Now, if one unit breaks down, there will always be at least two other units operating which should guarantee that we will always have heat! Halco is the company that is installing them and will be working with us in the years ahead to insure that our heating system is up to date and fully functional!



Needless to say, a system to serve the size of St. Paul's is not inexpensive, and so the Trustees are using some of the principal from our endowment funds to cover the costs. But after much careful discussion, it was unanimously decided that this was a wise use of our monies. In addition, some surplus monies reserved for "invitational" ministries was designated to go towards these repairs...after all, there is nothing less invitational than a cold building on a wintry day. Many thanks to Steve Beyers for designing the specifications of the new heating system and our hardworking Trustees for their careful work and dedication to keeping this old church fully operational!

### From Leadership Development



Beginning July 1, a new programmatic year begins for St. Paul's. (This is because new pastoral appointments always begin on July 1, so we have coordinated the programmatic year with the appointment year). As the old year closes we want to thank all those who served in a variety of capacities on our various ministry teams. We are appreciative of the many hours of labor and love that have been given to St. Paul's so that the work of the church can continue.

### Leadership Development

Simultaneously, we would like to welcome all those who are joining a committee for the first time or who have signed up for a second term. Thank you! As this goes to press, we have very few openings left, and we anticipate an exciting new year of programs and possibilities. Many committees do not meet in July, so look to August as the time to begin planning for the Fall!

As we wind down this year, annual reports are being completed as I type this. If you would like a hard copy of the Annual Report after it has been compiled, please let the office know. And if you are computer literate, you will be able to read it on our website. We'll publish the link to the report when it is completed.

When you read the reports, you will be amazed at all that happens around here. I know I am. Again, thank you to all who make this church such a spirit filled, wondrous place!

*Margie*

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## SPUMC Staff Person of the Month

**Maureen Anguish** is the St. Paul's person of the month. Maureen is a valued behind-the-scenes employee. She will, however, admit that through her years of employment as the church bookkeeper, she has slowly been drawn in through the backdoor to become more of a visible figure with church members. She is not an official member of the church family. I suspect members who know her would love to adopt her into the church community!

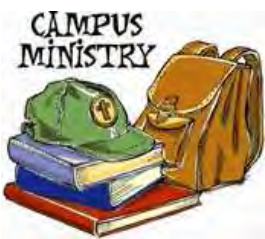
Maureen grew up in Tully. She moved to Ithaca in 1981. For several years she worked for various firms. Around 7 years ago she decided to start her own business. The CEO's of her life (her cats) agreed, and Tabby Bookkeeping was born! Currently Maureen keeps 13 sets of books on a monthly basis, oversees 20-30 other sets of books on a yearly basis and does taxes for folks.

Maureen credits Lee Henderson and Greg Hartz for engaging her services in 2001. When she first began her job, she was a name without a face. She enjoyed being invisible, but this was not to be, as in 2005, she was asked to join the finance committee so the group could ask her questions. People could now put the church numbers with a face. Maureen laughs as she realizes that before she knew it she was also connected with the Trustees and helping the Staff Parrish Relations with their budget. The types of services Maureen provides for St. Paul's include: doing the bills, payroll, and the financial reports.

Maureen sews, crochets and does needlework in her spare time. She usually sells many of her craft items at a couple of shows during the year.

Maureen says she has a great relationship with everyone at St. Paul's. She states that everyone is so nice to work with, from Margie to the members. Thank you, Tabby Bookkeeping and Maureen, for this Purr-fect arrangement!

**Thanks Maureen!**



The **Cooperative Protestant Ministry at Cornell** wishes to thank the members and friends of St. Paul's for the generous donation of \$2,848.99. Such support from friends has allowed the continuation of programs of worship, fellowship and service among students, and to seek new avenues of service on campus.

**Roy and Alma Coats and family** would like to express their thanks to everyone for the many beautiful and meaningful cards-both for get well for Roy and sympathy for the loss of their son, Kim. "Thank you," they write. "We appreciate the many phone calls, food brought and visits which have shown the true love and concern of our church family."

From **Pauline and George Cameron**, "We want to convey our deep thanks to our St. Paul's family for holding our daughter Susan and her unborn child in prayer as we waited out the last weeks of a pregnancy that held some real challenges. On June 7 she gave birth to a healthy baby girl, and all went well. Hallelujah! For all your kind words, your hugs, your emails, and especially your prayers, we are deeply grateful. It was so good to feel that extra caring and support around us."

**Thank You!**

## St. Paul's Connections

### New Pictorial Directories are Available!



Archive that old, dog-eared directory you have at home, and come pick up a brand new pictorial directory after Sunday service. With up-to-date contact information for all church members and color photographs of many of you, the directory is a great way to get to know your fellow St. Paulians. Consult the directory and reach out to help, to share, and to enjoy the fellowship we have at St. Paul's.

The directories will be available in the church office. When you pick up your copy, we encourage you to make a donation of \$5. This money will help us defray the expense of compiling and printing the directory.

### For Sale!

Would you like to have a wonderful St. Paul's keepsake? Recently, we have found 15 beautiful plates that need a home. Sometime in the past, these plates were sold as a money raising project by the women of the church. We haven't been able to find out much about this project. We assume they were purchased and sold around the time of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 1957. The inscription refers to 1953 which was around the time that the addition was built.



The 11-inch Wedgwood China plate, was made in England and contains a picture of the church. The inscription on the back was done in the Wedgwood Studios and reads *"First Methodist Church, Ithaca, New York. Founded 1809, it outgrew its facilities and built new and enlarged churches to meet its needs in 1866, 1907 and 1953."*

If you are interested in purchasing one of the plates, please contact Mary Lou Tenney at 277-6510 or [mlt6@cornell.edu](mailto:mlt6@cornell.edu). The plates are \$30 each and monies raised will be used to further the mission of the United Methodist Women.

### International Student Exchange Program Needs Two Host Families

We have been contacted by the International Student Exchange (ISE) program to help find host families for two high school students who will be attending Ithaca High School this fall. In both cases the host family that previously agreed to host has backed out. Antoine is a 17-year-old young man from Belgium, and Anna is a 16-year-old young woman from Germany. Both students speak English and are eager to join a family here in the U.S. for about 5 months beginning mid-August. Their student profiles are in the church office. Contact Penelope Smith, ISE Director, at 1-800-964-4678

## Grill 'N Games

Looking for a fun, relaxing event to enjoy outside this summer? Come to the **small pavilion at Stewart Park, Friday, July 9 at 6:00 p.m.** for an exciting evening of Grill 'N Games, sponsored by the Spirited Connections Team! Hamburgers (veggie too), hot dogs and lemonade will be provided...just bring a side dish or dessert, if you wish! We encourage you to bring your own table service, but disposables will be available.



We will have lawn games (Bean Bag Toss, Bocce ball, Frisbee) and our favorite board games (Apples to Apples, Taboo, etc.). Bring any that you would like to share, too!

We look forward to connecting by the lake on Friday, July 9<sup>th</sup>!

## Save the Date — Faith & Money — August 22nd



The next in the series of conversations about **Faith and Life**, sponsored by the Stewardship Committee, will focus on the topic of stewardship of our personal resources. We'll meet after worship to discuss our responsibilities as faithful stewards of our own finances and if or how they relate to or reflect the Christian path. Maybe you would like to see St. Paul's offer workshops in budgeting or getting out of debt, or classes to examine scriptures that talk about money. Or maybe you find yourself wondering if there is any connection between spirituality and money. Come join us to explore a topic that affects all of us but is often hard to talk about in church.

Great things are happening for Tompkins-Cortland Habitat for Humanity and the deserving families they serve! In May, two groundbreaking ceremonies were held to celebrate and commence Habitat's newest home building projects. One house is being built in the Village of Dryden for the Couch family while another is being constructed for the Hutchings family in Cortland. Both families received homemade stepping stones created by St. Paul's Faith Explorers to represent the Couch's and Hutching's first steps in becoming homeowners! Interested in becoming part of the actions?

## Help Build!

Sign up to volunteer at:

[www.tchabitat.com/volunteer](http://www.tchabitat.com/volunteer)



**6 Wellsley Drive  
Dryden, NY 13053**

Work Schedule:  
Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays  
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

**33 Arthur Ave  
Cortland, NY 13045**

Work Schedule:  
Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays  
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Habitat homes are built by volunteers, both skilled and novice, who wish to help families in need of affordable, decent housing. Visit [www.tchabitat.com](http://www.tchabitat.com) or call 607.898.4148 for more information.

## Your Church Council Recommends a Good Summer Read

The Church Council as well as the Staff Parish Relations Committee are delving into reading this summer, and they invite you to join them. In wanting to learn more about what makes churches strong in this day and age, Jacqueline Bonner and Margie Mayson spent some time this winter reading over a dozen books about church vitality. They narrowed the list down to two and presented them to Church Council. It was decided that it would be good to read them and meet for a retreat at the end of the summer to discuss them and talk about where we feel God is calling St. Paul's to grow.



If there are other book lovers out there who would like to join us in this “read,” we encourage you to pick up a copy and share your thoughts! God often speaks through a variety of voices coming together, so we welcome your thoughts, insights, nudges, hopes and dreams!

The books are *Becoming a Blessed Church: Forming a Church of Spiritual Purpose, Presence, and Power* by N. Graham Standish, and *Christianity for the Rest of Us: How the Neighborhood Church is Transforming the Faith* by Diana Butler Bass. Both books are available on line through Amazon.com or can be ordered through a local bookstore.

### Getting a Grip! Summer book read takes place July 14, 21, 28

Do you sometimes wonder just how to grapple with systemic problems facing the global community? Are you uncertain about what one individual can do in the face of problems created by our society?

Frances Moore Lappé, author of *Diet for a Small Planet*, blows away the cobwebs of fear-based thinking in her new book: *Getting a Grip<sup>2</sup>: Clarity, Creativity, and Courage for the World We Really Want*. Lappé provides a visionary yet pragmatic approach to individual engagement in creating a world in which we'd actually like to live. *For more information:* <http://www.gettingagrip.org>.

The Adult Spiritual Growth team is delighted to offer a three-week summer book read on Wednesdays, **July 14, July 21, and July 28, from 6:30-8:00pm in the Durham Room**. Lively discussion will be led by Sylvia Bailey and Lesley Yorke. Be sure to join us to discuss a book that Barbara Kingsolver describes as a book that is “like a pair of new glasses, allowing you to see everything around you with greater clarity.”

*Purchasing information:* We have ordered ten copies of the book from Buffalo Street Books, DeWitt Mall (Buffalo St. between Cayuga and Tioga). They are on hold under Sylvia Bailey's name. The cost is \$14.54 (including tax); this price reflects a 10% discount, and we support an independent, local bookstore, too.

*Reading ahead:* The book is neatly divided in three sections; we'll read one whole section BEFORE each meeting date.

*Questions?* Lesley Yorke, [lab14@cornell.edu](mailto:lab14@cornell.edu) or Sylvia Bailey, [sbailey50@gmail.com](mailto:sbailey50@gmail.com)

## Loving Care Ministries

“Summertime and the livin’ is easy...” or is it? It seems that for many it is a time of rest and relaxation, a time to back away from some of the responsibilities we have during the rest of the year. And, yes, it is important to take some time for rest and rejuvenation.

Yet...for many of our members who are unable to attend church the livin’ isn’t so easy. They still live with the difficulties that continue to confront and confine them. Even though it’s summer, our loving care needs go on just the same. There are still those who face medical treatments, surgery, pain, and suffering. So what can you do...

- Remember to keep on praying for those on our prayer list. The list of those with the most current prayer needs can be found in the weekly bulletin and the complete list is on the table in the hall outside the sanctuary.
- If you hear of anyone with an illness, surgery or other need for pastoral care, please, please notify the office or me so that we can meet those needs.
- Spend some time in prayer this summer to consider if God is calling you to be a part of Loving Care Ministries, perhaps as a visitor, home communion server, phone caller or in the card ministry. The rewards are many.

Come and be a part of a ministry that helps make the livin’ more bearable for many of our members who are unable to get to church. To contact me, email [etabor@stpaulsithaca.org](mailto:etabor@stpaulsithaca.org), or call the office and leave a message.

Thanks, Eunice



We would like to thank **Ruth Lovelace** for her ministry as the Prayer Chain Coordinator for the last few months

**Elinor John** has graciously returned to this position. Please contact Elinor at 273-0915 to add someone to the prayer chain.

**Wanted: Persons with a heart for visiting the elderly in private homes, nursing and retirement homes, male and female. Training provided.**

**Rewards are incalculable.**

**Contact Eunice Tabor — 273-5971.**

**Wanted: Persons interested in sending cards monthly to those who cannot attend church, as part of our Card Ministry program.**

**Resources and supplies provided.**

**Contact Eunice Tabor at [etabor@stpaulsithaca.org](mailto:etabor@stpaulsithaca.org).**

# Children's Ministries

## Backyard Bible Club

The summer program for elementary age children is Backyard Bible Club. Each week will feature fun games, a Bible story and lesson, and free play on the playground. Children meet their teachers in the Marketplace after Time with Young Christians.

Volunteer adults are still needed for this summer. Will you consider committing to one (or more) weeks? Prep work is minimal and the lessons and supplies are all prepared ahead of time for you. Contact Laura Dolch at [lauradolch@stpaulsithaca.org](mailto:lauradolch@stpaulsithaca.org) if you are interested!



## Summer Hours — Childcare

### Child Care

Summer hours for childcare will begin at 9:15 a.m. The nursery will be open for children under 2, while children ages 2-5 will be in the preschool room.

## Becoming Childlike

*The wolf shall live with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. Isaiah 11:6*

*Unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. Matthew 18:2-5*

*People were bringing little children to Jesus in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them. Mark 10:13-16*

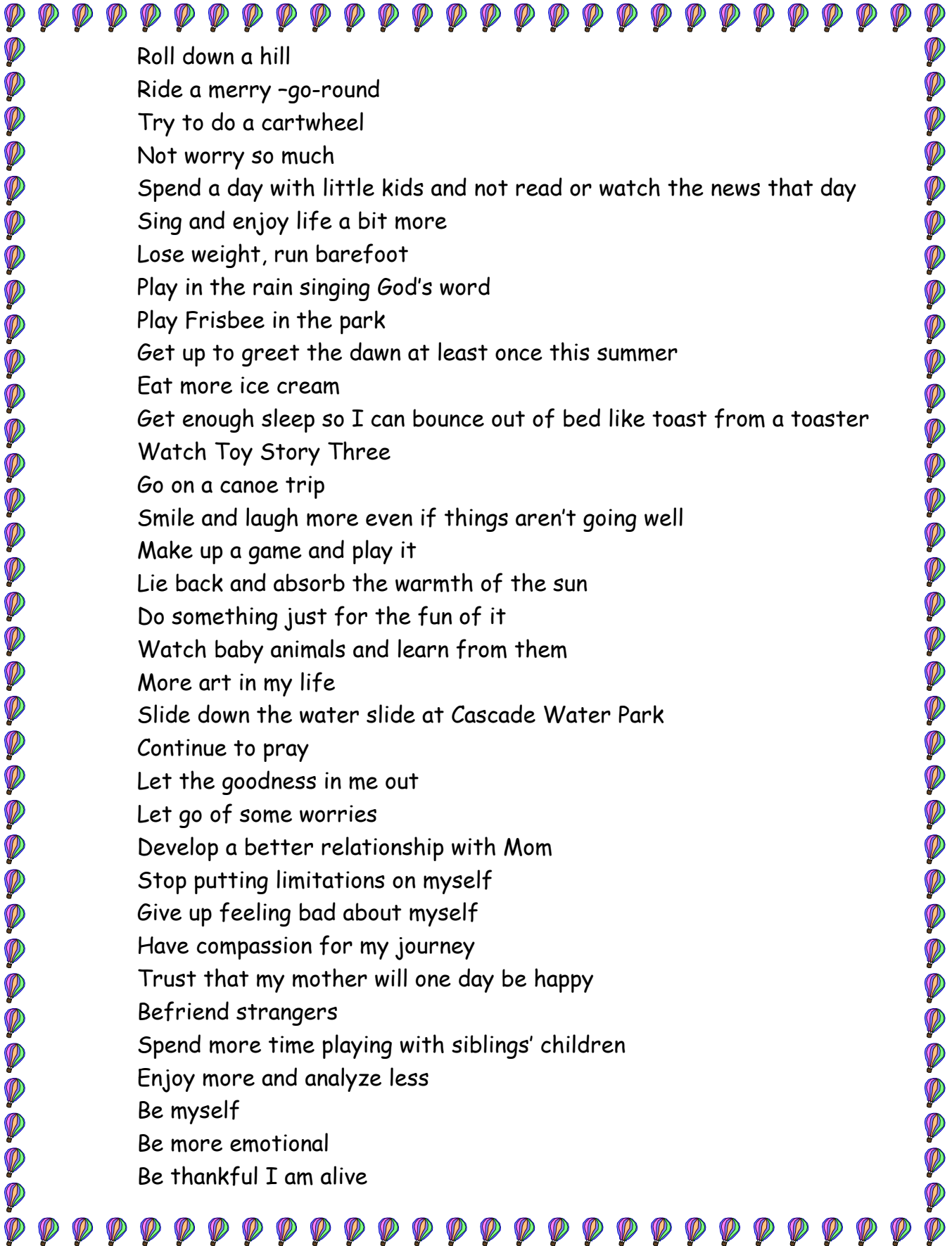
On Sunday June 13 we celebrated the Children's Ministries at St. Paul's and reflected on why children are so important in our midst. Not only are they the future of us all, they are also the portal through which we can begin to glean what the kingdom of God is like. And when we look at things through children's eyes, we see that when children are safe and loved, they see the world as a place where anything is possible, and they *trust* that impossible things will happen; they delight in the simplest of pleasures; they live expecting to be loved and giving back love generously and unconditionally; they believe in justice and find ways to welcome all.

In that spirit, I invited members of the congregation to write down on small slips of paper what they need in their lives to capture a child-like spirit this summer. As I read the many slips that were offered up to God, I was so moved that I thought you all might appreciate hearing some of those desires. So I am offering them here with the invitation to each person who reads this...

May this summer be a time of letting your inner child out to play! Who knows what will happen when we let go of our fears and adult responsibilities and engage in some playful kingdom building activities!!

Blessings to all...

Margie



- Roll down a hill
- Ride a merry -go-round
- Try to do a cartwheel
- Not worry so much
- Spend a day with little kids and not read or watch the news that day
- Sing and enjoy life a bit more
- Lose weight, run barefoot
- Play in the rain singing God's word
- Play Frisbee in the park
- Get up to greet the dawn at least once this summer
- Eat more ice cream
- Get enough sleep so I can bounce out of bed like toast from a toaster
- Watch Toy Story Three
- Go on a canoe trip
- Smile and laugh more even if things aren't going well
- Make up a game and play it
- Lie back and absorb the warmth of the sun
- Do something just for the fun of it
- Watch baby animals and learn from them
- More art in my life
- Slide down the water slide at Cascade Water Park
- Continue to pray
- Let the goodness in me out
- Let go of some worries
- Develop a better relationship with Mom
- Stop putting limitations on myself
- Give up feeling bad about myself
- Have compassion for my journey
- Trust that my mother will one day be happy
- Befriend strangers
- Spend more time playing with siblings' children
- Enjoy more and analyze less
- Be myself
- Be more emotional
- Be thankful I am alive

# Youth Ministries

The legacy vine has been a special project the Sr. High Youth Group has been working on the past two years. On June 6th, the 11th- and 12th-grade small group met to have their last group meeting and had a reunion with the 2009 graduates and former youth leaders, Julie Ann and Nathan Newman. Part of this reunion was to celebrate our legacy vine and to place their handprints on this and truly leave the legacy of their time spent in youth group with future youth group members.



The Middle School Youth group ended their year with their annual mystery trip, June 18-20. Youth were given scripture verses that had clues to each of four destinations. They first traveled to Camp Barton, the local Boy Scout Camp on Route 89, which served as their home base. The Camp Ranger, Dave Carlson was incredibly welcoming and, as a surprise for our group, opened the camp's bouldering wall, allowing our youth to use their climbing skills. He shared with them that the fastest time around the wall was 52 seconds! The youth also traveled to Trumansburg Mini Golf, the Museum of the Earth, and the Creamery.

Part of our trip included a service project in which the youth set up the camp's chapel area for their camping season. During the worship service designed by the youth, our focus was on the paths we take in life, just like the paths we had taken on our mystery trip. Using the scripture verse "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" as a guide, we were reminded that God is there as our eternal light, his word guides us and reminds us that he is always with us. One incredible part of our trip was when one of our youth discovered the clouds had formed a question mark in the sky just above our cabin, symbolizing our mystery trip for us and a true sign that God was with us!

## News from Annual Conference

Fellow St. Paulians:

It is a truth universally acknowledged that wherever there are United Methodists, there is bound to be **annual conferencing**--a time for clergy and designated laity to gather and engage in prayer, holy conversation, motion-making, remembrance, and envisioning the future.

Methodist conferencing began in 1744, with Methodism's founding father John Wesley, and his circle of Methodist field preachers, and has continued in one form or another in Methodist communions around the world ever since. In the United Methodist tradition, **Annual Conference is the basic regional governing body of the church**, adopting policy, credentialing and supervising clergy, and setting the stage for local church ministry under the guidance of our regional Bishop.

Jacqueline Bonner and I shared the privilege of attending Annual Conference on your behalf this year. This was a momentous time to be a member of the Conference, which took **historic and momentous actions** "In The Name of Love," the Conference theme.



- On Friday June 18, 2010, the 202nd Session of the **North Central New York Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church convened to discontinue itself**. Similar actions had been taken in preceding weeks by the Western New York, Troy, and Wyoming Annual Conferences.
- On Saturday June 19, 2010, the first **Uniting Session of the Upper New York Annual Conference—uniting all congregations in the upstate New York area for the first time ever—met and adopted organizing principles** and structures for itself.
- The discontinuances and union were the product of **six years of planning** among the four uniting conferences and two neighbors which, eventually, would receive out-of-state congregations and assets from the cross-border Wyoming and Troy conferences. The **six conferences** had many **differing, even competing**, policies, practices, legal parameters, and operating procedures that required attention as union was considered.
- Despite the challenges, impetus for the plan of union came from the several conferences' shared recognition that **current structures and operations were untenable** in light of marked declines in church membership numbers, marked shifts in regional demographics, and funding and pastoral-deployment challenges.
- In the process of unification, upper New York area bishops Violet Fisher (now retired), Susan Hassinger (now retiring), and Marcus Matthews (now presiding over the united Conference) and a host of planning teams consider **knotty issues** such as new District lines, pastoral appointments, the form of our Conference governance, the location of Conference offices and the Bishop's Seat, assignment and consolidation of assets, pensions, insurance, minimum salary and salary support, camping assets, parsonage standards, and other mandates from the United Methodist Book of Discipline.

- The **closing and uniting conference gatherings took actions necessary to enable the new conference to carry on** Discipline-mandated and legally-required day-to-day functions. A basic governance plan, initial office-holders, and a transitional budget were approved.
- But many proposals for governance, common standards, and funding remain to be approved, most immediately at an adjourned Conference session in September.

What, you might ask, does all this **mean for our congregation** at St. Paul's? Some conference vignettes and observations might point the way:

- At the closing session of our old conference, St. Paul's was one among many congregations remembered in a photo array and stories of ministry in the conference area. The photo array highlighted, for me, St. Paul's role as a congregation of relative substance and vigor in our old conference area, where many churches are small, aged, and struggling with basic upkeep. Our new conference will include **a number of larger and urban congregations**, offering programmatic and budgeting peers to connect with on issues of ministry, finance, and shared giving.
- The closing session of the old conference also offered an opportunity to celebrate the new ministries of St. Paulians (honorary, anyway) **Andrew and Mary Gladstone-Highland**, as Church and Community Workers in, respectively, the Syracuse Westside Urban Mission and the Utica Eastside Mission. St. Paul's connections with these inner city missions, I believe, cannot but help to shape our understanding of and participation in various missions of the United Methodist Church.
- The opening session of the Upper New York conference pointed the way to a **new experience of diversity**—racial, cultural, linguistic, theological—in the churches of our conference. We prayed and offered recognitions in many languages—American Sign Language, native American tongues, Spanish, Korean, and Lao, among others. We sang in many musical styles, particularly gospel; we used print, projections, and call-and-response to get the word out; we affirmed language in the conference statement of purpose that encouraged diversity of theology and practice. Through our conference connections, I think we will better understand the global nature of our church and enrich our own experiences of worship, service, and church community.
- The number of **reconciling congregations** and reconciling United Methodists in our new conference is exciting! Rainbow stoles and reconciling pins abounded at the uniting conference session, offering invitations to start conversations and make connections across the conference, from Albany to Buffalo, Binghamton to the Adirondacks, to strengthen and enhance our reconciling ministries and outreach, both in our local church and in the conference.
- The new conference will also offer **some economies of scale**—but these may focus more on staffing and ministry resources than on shared ministry savings. Questions about health insurance, pension, and insurance costs and coverage are still being ironed out. Our conference and its staff are aging, so these costs may continue to increase—although perhaps at a more manageable level, with larger pools of participants. And one immediate benefit of scale will be the six camping and retreat facilities we will now have access to!

- Conference is an opportunity to connect with old and new friends united in our storied **United Methodist “connection”**-- from former St. Paulians Will Baez and Harold Wheat, now pastors in the north country, to former Ithaca-area pastor John W. Annis, Jr., at age 105, sending greetings and prayers from his home in Florida--and to get a visible sense of our further **connection to the global Methodist church**, through personnel serving the larger church and through conference commitments to mission support for projects such as the Mutambare water project (the destination for our mother's/father's day offerings at St. Paul's this year) and Africa University.
- Finally, a story shared by our friends at Cortland First UMC, about their vision and undertaking to **re-purpose a discontinued church** in nearby Fabius for use as a church-supported community center offered a vital model of church-community engagement. This story of ministry in action--and others like it that will emerge as we come to know our sisters and brothers in Buffalo, Rochester, Schenectady, Albany, and points in between--can help us discern our call to service, the things we as a congregation can do “In the Name of Love.”

We came away from Annual Conference this year filled with a remarkable sense of inclusion, embrace, and new creation. I hope this report has conveyed some of the energy and unifying love that conference embodied. Jacqueline and I thank you for allowing us to be your representatives!-- Karen Kaufmann, Lay Leader



### Interested in Personal Growth and Spiritual Development?

The Light on the Hill Retreat Center invites you to attend one of the informational sessions about its “Hidden Treasure” program.

**Date:** Monday, July 19th 7:00 pm

**Location:** the home of Paige Morgan and Conrad Alexander, 238 Enfield Falls Road, Ithaca, NY 14850

**Date:** Tuesday, August 24th 7:00 pm

**Location:** the home of Sally Lamb and Dave McCune, 260 Coy Glen Road, Ithaca, NY 14850

There is a deep longing in us for great fulfillment, aliveness, authenticity and love. We frantically seek to fulfill this longing outside of ourselves. Yet its fulfillment lies deep within--the hidden treasure or divine Self. The purpose of these evenings is for those interested in the Hidden Treasure Program (a 3 year course of 5 weekends per year) to meet the leaders and students and learn more about the program. Please visit the Hidden Treasure page on the Light on the Hill website: [www.lightonthehill.org](http://www.lightonthehill.org).

Each weekend consists of meditation practices, healing work, teachings and exercises to guide one in the process of finding the hidden treasure (“the pearl of great price”). The group forms a close bond and aids each member in his or her growth.

*“We all have things about ourselves that we would like to shift, let go of, forgive, or awaken. Hidden Treasure is a program that gives us specific tools for this personal transformation.”*

- Rebecca Dolch

*“This program has been truly life-changing for me. Not only did it help me understand myself and learn how to move on after major life shifts, but it also broadened and deepened my view of The Divine. And of course there are the dear friends I made.”*

- Debby Wells-Clinton

**St. Paul's United  
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**Please pray for these members of our church family:**

Virginia Ainslie; Linda Barber and Family; Bradley/Cunningham Family; Don Cameron; Tina Champion; Roy and Alma Coats; Jeanne Corbit; Dockstader Family; Dora Fratelli; Kay Friedlander; Melissa Gould; Bruce and Elinor John; Betty Matheney; Frank Mazurek; Jane Mazurek; Lucille McBean; Connie McDowell; Teresa Motz; Ocello Family; Doug Payne; Ellie Phillips-Burdge; Ruth Shannon; LaVerne Snyder; Ben Richards; Elaine Weiss; Andrea Zheng



Family; Maria Isabel Garcia (Ellie Phillips-Burdge's great niece); Magda and Maryterese Pasquale (friends of Nancy Potter); Sallie Pure's brother John; Emily Reynolds (friend of Mary Lou Slattery); Sigfried Rosenbaum (Miriam Rosenbaum's grandfather); Dorothy Schumacher (LaVerne Snyder's aunt); George Smits (Ruth Keagle's father); Shirley Snyder (LaVerne Snyder's mother); Stephen Taylor (nephew of Bill Sammis); Ruth Tompkins (aunt of Sylvia Bailey); Vincent and Andrea Wan; Susan Welch (daughter of Pauline Cameron); Jennifer Young (daughter of Mary Boardman)

**Please pray for these members of our extended church family:**

The family of Cindy Abbey (friend of Heather Williams); Alex Arnold (nephew of Ellie Phillips-Burdge); Janet Cole (friend of Eleen Weatherholt); Colin Diehm (father of Julie Weeks); Ted Gull (brother of George Gull); Alan and Laurie Hahn (friends of Nancy Potter); Sue Lajza (sister of Elaine Weiss); Jean Mathison (Holly Mathison's mother); John Nobles (Bob Nobles' son); Arlene Preston (mother of George Preston); Motz



To add a name to the **Prayer List**, call the church office at 273-5971.

To add a name to the **Prayer Chain**, please call Elinor John at 273-0915.

*"Bear one another's burdens...." Galatians 6:2*