



The Advocate

2006: Reaching Out to Tell Our Story

November and the changing leaves signifies the beginning of the changing year. Soon we will be celebrating Thanksgiving and then Christmas. The New Year will roll in with all its celebration and anticipation.

In 2005 we have been anticipating what God is creating and we are seeing some new and interesting things emerging. John Davis along with John Harshbarger, Sally

Kurzdorfer, and Margi Secor are dreaming and implementing a ministry called "The Gathering Place." This ministry will provide a safe comfortable space for all of us to enjoy whether it be in meetings, birthday parties, spiritual support groups, Bible studies, or just light (or heavy) conversations about life and our faith journeys. Dylan Haro is exploring his

call to ministry as he, along with three friends, reach out to the youth of San Diego to engage them in a time of Games, Music and Company.

These two developing ministries will add to the ongoing ministries in which we already participate. The vision is to reach beyond ourselves into the community: to our friends, family and acquaintan-

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Happy Birthday Peace Resource Center!

Join us in celebrating the Peace Resource Center's 25th Anniversary! The annual PRC Souper Supper will be a birthday celebration with a variety of soups and breads prepared by our Peace Cooks and a Birthday Cake! Music entertainment will be provided by April, Claudia and Tim and Pete Anderson. Linda Williams will share readings from *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Stories for a Better World*.

The celebration will be Sunday, November 20, 2005, 5:30—8:30 p.m. at the Church of the Brethren. The suggested sliding scale donation is \$20 for adults and \$5 children for under twelve. For reservations and information, please call 619-263-9301. Reservations may be ordered or donations sent by mail to PRC, 3850 Westgate Place, San Diego, CA 92105.

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Special points of interest:

- Nov 4: World Communion Day
- Nov 20: PRC Celebration
- Nov 20: Pancake Breakfast
- Nov 27: Start of Advent
- Dec 10: Holiday Bazaar

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ces who need to know the comfort and support we find in the faith we have in Jesus. These ministries will engage everyone in conversation, healing and spiritual direction; an opportunity that may change who they are, and even change the way we, ourselves, look at life.

In order for all these ministries to continue in 2006 we need your support. We need you to help with your time, talents and finances. Perhaps you could volunteer to be a host at The Gathering Place, or

Share the joy from the comfort and support we receive from our faith in Jesus.

you could plan a support group that would meet there. What talents do you have that the church could utilize in making the church program happen? Can you send a card as a part of a caring ministry? Could you share in a telephone call to follow up after a hospital visit and help Pastor Sara schedule congregational visits? Can you pledge a portion of your income to help provide for the ministries of the

church?

There are so many ways you can help. Dream, vision, and then follow your heart in ministry. But perhaps most importantly we ask for your prayers. Prayers for our leaders, prayers for those who attend, prayers for those who already are involved in the community of faith and prayers for those who will be visiting with us in 2006. Let's begin to tell our story to those we meet and then watch to see what God creates.

Sara Haldeman-Scarr

Inspiring District Conference in Modesto

“Do Justice, love tenderly, walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8). This was the theme of the 2005 Southwest District Conference. It took place in the beautiful new church compound of the Modesto COB. Joanne and Milton Ewert, who were interim pastors here at First Church of the Brethren a few years back, were part of a team which organized the many worship, educational and fellowship sessions of October 7-9. Modesto Pastors Erin and Russ Matteson provided able leadership.

A highlight of the weekend was a seminar led by Steve Reid, Professor of Old Testament Studies at Bethany Theological Seminary. He explained that the translation of the Micah text should have been “create justice” rather than “do justice”. According to Reid, we must realize that “in creating

justice, risk is a constant companion”. We must be willing to readjust our thinking continually, because “justice is a moving target.”

The business portion of the conference included the approval of a resolution that the Brethren Benefit Trust should divest itself of holdings in the Caterpillar Corporation, known to produce D9 militarized bulldozers used by Israeli Defense Force to destroy Palestinian homes, agricultural land, roads and other infrastructure. Further, the new resolution encourages all COB agencies and individuals to review their own investments and take appropriate action.

In other sessions we learned of the work of various district congregations. Some were feeding the homeless on a weekly basis. Others

were providing child care or bringing inner city youngsters into community. One church made 100 handmade quilts for people in need! And of course, our own San Diego church is noted for its leadership in the area of peace and justice.

The beautiful worship services, complete with organ, piano, string quartet and full choir, were uplifting. The “upside-down cake” meals varied our seating so that we could get to know people from all the different congregations. Hope to see you next year at the 2006 Southwest District Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona!

Sally Kurzdorfer

Friends Center Building Update: Phase I Completed!

A major milestone has been reached in the Friends Center construction project with the completion of Phase I.

On Monday, October 24, thirty-two cubic yards of concrete were poured to form the remaining section of floor slab. Starting at 7:30 a.m., a crew of about 12 workers toiled to get the concrete pumped into place, leveled to the proper height, and finished to a smooth surface. The exhausted workers



completed final finishing with power trowels at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 29, was a day of celebration for all volunteers and participants in the project to date. A big Thank You! to all who have helped to bring the project this far. We look forward to your continued support through the remaining construction.

High School Peace Writing Contest

Peace Resource Center is announcing the 16th Annual Peace Writing Contest for San Diego County High Schools, 2005, 2006. Violence and conflict are all around us. The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11, 2001, the continuing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as incidences of violence on school campuses and in our communities, challenge us to find ways

that violence can be ended. Where do we go from here? Students are asked to address the question, "What Will My Generation Do to Help Create a World Free of War and Violence?" with creative ideas about how to end the injustices that fuel hatred, intolerance and violence and how to use nonviolent means to resolve conflicts. Entries may be essays or creative writing. The contest is open to all San

Diego City and County high school students, grades 9-12. Winners will receive \$100 for an essay or a creative writing (poem, story, play, etc.). All entries must be received by Tuesday, April 25, 2006, at Peace Resource Center. Call the PRC at 619-263-9301 for more information. "You must be the change you wish to see in the world." Mahatma Gandhi.

Peace On Earth Holiday Bazaar

Support local peace, justice and environmental groups by buying socially responsible gifts this year at the Annual Peace on Earth Holiday Bazaar. The Bazaar will be held on Saturday, December 10, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 4011 Ohio St., San Diego (corner of Lincoln & Ohio in North Park). Items available for your holiday gifts are toys, cards, crafts, books, ornaments, calendars and more! For more information, call Peace Resource Center 619-263-9301 or Project YANO 760-634-3604.

Report on “Justice That Heals” Dinner

We are deeply grateful to First Church of the Brethren for its support of the Justice That Heals 2005 dinner /auction event.

This event was the result of a partnership with Amicus Project, Inc, and the Restorative Justice Mediation Program, Inc. who have found in each other mutual support and fervent commitment to restorative justice.

Your sharing came through donated items as follows: *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Stories for a Better World* books (and sponsorships, Linda Williams), a Total Trolley (Sally Kurzdorfer), a French Gourmet Dinner for 4 (Judy Stout), computer software

(Cheryl Old), a Grandfather’s Clock (Ken Aeschbacher), jewelry and fine glassware (and charge of the silent auction, Pat Perry), a trampoline and 75 ft. power cord (and assistance in event coordination, sponsorships, Pearl Hartz). Of all donated items, the clock brought the highest bid. Margi Secor created data sheets and took care of registration and sponsored others. Supporters by their attendance also included Gordon Jacobsen, Dylan Haro, and Robert Neighbours. Other support came by way of donations from persons unable to attend.

We were inspired by Azim Khamisa’s personal story of for-

giveness and by his heartfelt support of restorative justice. The evening was informative and fun-filled. Now that the event has been established, we look forward to a much bigger 2nd Annual “Restorative Justice 2006” event.

Proceeds exceeded by about \$700 the hope of many of us that in the first year we would at least cover expenses. Gains this year included learning to work in collaboration with Amicus, pitfalls to avoid, and what really works. So we’re set for an early start and substantial returns next year.

Pearl Hartz, Pat Perry, and Margi Secor

Outreach in the Community

Sign-up Time for Interfaith Rotational Shelter

Every year our congregation participates in the Interfaith Rotational Shelter of the San Diego Ecumenical Council. We serve the homeless by providing five dinners at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church. This year, we have an opportunity to help during the February 19 through March 5 rotation. If you would like to help provide and serve a meal during this time period, please contact Sally Kurzdorfer at (619) 445-6319. For information on the shelter program, visit www.interfaithshelter.org, or call (619) 702-5399.

Call by Mid-City for Individual Food Items!

The Mid-City Christian Service Agency is very grateful for the many bags of food our church has donated this year. The Witness Commission will continue to collect food items in November and December. Please continue to donate any non-perishable foods in the large Christmas box at the side of the sanctuary. A special need, though, has arisen for individual items to hand out to homeless individuals. The following items would be especially welcome:

6-12 ounce juice or punch in cans, plastic bottles or cartons
Individual packets of raisins, nuts, seeds
Candy and power bars
Packages of chips, pretzels, crackers
Cheese or peanut butter cracker packets
Applesauce or pudding cups (non-refrigerated type)

Board Meeting Summary October 6

The Treasurer's report indicates a year to date positive cash flow of \$2,470.51 through September 31, 2005. There is a balance of \$25,578.54 in the MIR fund.

The balance on the Brethren Foundation investment on August 31, 2005 was \$139,509.60. The investment is distributed among: Balanced Fund (\$36,956.59), Bond Fund (\$36,465.96), Domestic Stock Fund (\$34,644.59) and Short Term Fund (\$31,442.47).

The Executive Committee met on September 20 and October 1. The committee reviewed plans for the stewardship campaign, selection of a Church Secretary and the pastor's work schedule. Rae Stern was hired for the position of Church Secretary.

The Stewards Commission reported that a lease agreement for a new cellular phone antenna has been signed

with Cingular. Flooring in the parsonage kitchen has been replaced. The insurance company is paying for the repair of a damaged patio bench. The commission is developing a policy on the use of the Praise Band keyboard.

The Nurture Commission is working on plans to support youth wanting to attend National Youth Conference and is preparing for Advent. Carol is collecting Ritual of Friendship information each Sunday and passing it on to Pastor Sara and the church office.

The Witness Commission is conducting a food drive for the Mid-City Christian Service agency. A bulletin board has been installed outside the church sanctuary. Everyone is encouraged to post announcements in it. A teddy bear/toy drive has been started to children who are survivors of the hur-

ricanes in the Gulf Coast.

The board chair is still looking for a Church Clerk.

Members of the Witness Commission presented a proposal to convert the Anna England room into *The Gathering Place*, a place for people to gather together and experience a sense of community and fellowship in a safe space. The board approved Phase I of The Gathering Place plan with the understanding that there would not be any budget requests against the current operating budget. The board would have to approve Phase II before any work could begin. The individuals responsible for implementation are John Davis, Sara Haldeman-Scarr, John Harshbarger, Sally Kurzdorfer, and Margi Secor.

The board approved a scholarship payment of \$100 to Cherilyn Williams out of memorial funds.

A Handsome Office in Need of New Paint

Scripture suggests that the prudent person does not put new wine into an old wineskin.

If you have gone into the church office recently, you will see that the interior has been transformed into a more modern office space, with contributions from Gary Stern, Pastor Sara, and the church. You may also note that, with one exception, the walls have not been painted in years. That one exception is a wall that Ken and Alvin patched and repainted, along with putting some insulation in the ceiling and rerouting communication and power lines. But Alvin and Ken have a building to finish. Lets help out and finish this needed repainting.

The stewards have set Saturday, November 12 as a time for this. This is our regular November church

workday. Not too many have been turning out for workday, but just about anyone can handle a paintbrush or roller. Work will begin at 8:00 a.m., but show up whenever you are able.

It may be that Saturdays are inconvenient for you, even though you are itching to volunteer your help. So, we are reviving the list in the foyer that mentions repair and maintenance jobs that need doing. If you spot something that you would like to help with on this list, contact stewards (John M, Rick P., Sylvia N., and Dottie M., with Pastor Sara as defacto member) for more information. Also, you may add needed repairs to this list, at your discretion.

John Mortimer

Advent: Our Light and Our Salvation

The congregational leadership teams are making plans for our celebration of the birth of Christ. This year our Advent theme is "Our Light and Our Salvation" (Psalm 27.1) with the challenge to make your own life a witness to the Word of Life. On Sunday November 20th with you Sunday morning program you will be receiving a copy of our Advent devotional entitled, "Our Light and our Salvation". This devotional is written by Henri Nouwen, one of the most widely read spiritual writers of our time. Nouwen engages us in thoughtful expressions of hope and longing for God's presence during a season of the year when we renew our hope in Christ and deepen our appreciation of the incomparable grace of our redemption in Christ. Then on the first

Sunday of Advent you will receive a bookmark that shares daily scripture readings for the season of advent. These readings will supplement the Nouwen devotional and round out your daily spiritual reflection time in God's presence.

"The Hanging of the Greens"

Come celebrate the start of Advent on Sunday, November 27, 2005 at 10:15 a.m. The start of the "hanging of the greens" to decorate the church will be incorporated into the worship service. There will be a potluck lunch following worship. After the meal we will finish the hanging of the greens.

Advent Calendar

- Nov. 27: Hanging of the greens during worship, potluck after worship
- Dec. 4: Worship, Potato Bar fundraiser, CBM. Concert at the Methodist Church (7:00 p.m.)
- Dec. 10: Christmas open house at the Parsonage (1:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.)
- Dec. 11: Worship
- Dec. 16: All Church Christmas Celebration (7:00 p.m.)
- Dec. 18: Worship
- Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Worship, Eucharist Celebration (9:00 p.m.)
- Dec. 25: Christmas Celebration Worship (10:15 a.m.)

News of Our People

Sunkyung Lee was baptized into the Body of Christ and received as a member on October 23, 2005. Her son Haanbi was an active observer of the event.

Pat Perry's address has changed to 3545-5 Valley Road, Bonita CA 91902.

Lee Albert completed a thorough reorganization of the church's music library. He invites everyone to attend a special Christmas music performance at the United Methodist Church in Mission Valley. The concert will be held on Sunday, December 4 at 7:00 p.m.

Pattie Stern, former co-district minister, continues to slowly improve, but may be in the hospital for a few more weeks as she gains strength. At this point,

she is not able to read cards or engage in conversation. Send mail to: Irven and Pattie Stern, 1140 Darlow Dr., McPherson, KS 67460-2750

Pastor Bill Haldeman-Scarr of Pomona Fellowship Church of the Brethren. Pastor Bill was brought to the emergency room on October 26, with a rapid heart rate. He was released from the hospital on October 27 after the doctors stabilized Bill's heart rhythm. Please hold Pastor Bill and his family in your prayers.

Prayer cards can be sent to:
Pastor Bill Haldeman-Scarr
875 W. Orange Grove Avenue
Pomona CA 91768-2914

Fundraising for 2006 National Youth Conference

The theme for this year's conference which is to be held at Colorado State University in Fort Collins CO on July 22-27, 2006 is "Come and See" from John 1:39.

In this passage, when the disciples asked Jesus where he was staying, instead of just telling them, he invited them to "come and see." This is in keeping with Church of the Brethren heritage; letting actions speak louder than words. By inviting the disciples to come and see, Jesus was calling them to a disciple's life. NYC is our invitation to come and see who God is calling us to become as individuals, as disciples of Christ, as the Church of

the Brethren, and as people of God living in a broken world. Jesus' invitation to the disciples, and to us is "Come and see."

We currently have two youth and one advisor planning to attend. With costs around \$600 per person the youth are hoping that you will help them raise money for this life-changing trip. On Sunday morning, November 20th the youth will provide a pancake breakfast to celebrate the season of Thanksgiving. The Pancake Breakfast will be ready to serve at 8:30 am and conclude around 9:30 am. Come, enjoy the break-

fast and then go to Sunday School, or enjoy Breakfast, conversation and then a worship experience to touch your heart.

A second Fundraiser is planned for December 4th, which is our Congregational Business Meeting. The youth will be providing a Potato Bar lunch that Sunday. Enjoy a baked potato topped with many of the traditional toppings, beverage and dessert. At the conclusion of the meal you are invited to stay to hear the story of the ministries of the congregation through the reports of our ministry teams.

Church Women United: World Communion Day

Our next celebration will be World Community Day, Friday, November 4, 10 AM, at Bethel Baptist church, 1962 Euclid Ave. On this day we are called to be "A Light to the Nations".

On Missionary Inspiration Day, October 7, we raised \$210.00 to be given to Church World Ser-

vice Blanket program to replace those that CWS gave to the hurricane survivors.

Saturday morning the International Breakfast and Fashion show was delightful. The models displayed an array of fashions from around the world (including our U S of A). Pat Perry, in a

Sari from India, was one of our lovely models.

Hope to see you next Friday at Bethel Baptist Church. Call me if you are staying for lunch, (619) 287-8468.

Anna Harshbarger

Sunshine Social Society Christmas Shopping

Sunshine Social Society is taking a trip to Carlsbad and you are invited to join us.

Would you like to go to the Carlsbad shopping district to do some Christmas Shopping? The Sunshine Social Society is scheduling a trip to Carlsbad on Thursday December 1, for just that occasion. The group will meet here at the church and car

pool to Carlsbad. What a great way to make new friends, talk about the church, and do some Christmas Shopping all on the same day. If you have questions, need more information or would like to go, you can call Judy Toohey at 266-0026. She also would love to take your reservation.

Teddy Bear Drive

The bear group of San Diego will be having its annual teddy bear/toy drive for children. This year toys will be given to the survivors of the hurricanes. There will be a box wrapped in Christmas paper in the back of the church starting on the first Sunday in October. All the toys donated must be new.



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The Whole Bible in a Year?

The Whole Bible In A Year? No, just the New Testament in a year. I will be leading a group that will read the entire New Testament in one year, beginning January 1, 2006, and I invite you to join me. This might sound like a lot of reading, but it only averages about five chapters a week.

We will meet once a week to share with each other what impressed us during the week's reading. This is not a Bible study, but a time of Bible sharing. We will not be analyzing each word, and I don't want us to get bogged down by controversy, but I guarantee each of us will hear God speak!

Your first question might be, "Why?" We each have our favorite Bible verses which we read frequently and which guide our lives as individuals. The Church of the Brethren has favorite verses which we read and quote frequently, and which guide our church life. Yet there is a treasure trove of scripture which we just don't stumble across frequently in our daily walk. Reading the New Testament consecutively gives us a chance to discover "new favorite verses" and helps us become more familiar with God's Word.

The meeting time has not been determined and can be flexible. It will depend largely on who is interested

and when they are available. Since this program is flexible, it is even possible to have more than one group with a different facilitator. I will do a sample program for Sunday School within the next few weeks and have chosen the book of James for the sample scripture reading. Lee Albert has covered part of James a while back in Sunday School, so some of you are already familiar with it. If you are interested, please read the book of James, and then listen during worship service for the announcement regarding when the Sunday School class will be. Feel free to contact me to discuss this further.

Margi Secor