

## Pastor's Corner

### *A Song for the Summer and Interactive Sermons*

Have you ever caught yourself humming or singing a song and are not conscious of it until you are well into the song? Or how about a song that keeps playing in your head over and over again until you force yourself to focus on something else to get it out of your head? Don't you hate it when it keeps coming back? Summertime reminds me of those sorts of situations; music at the beach or a summer concert on the lawn. I love it when I am at a concert and the lead singer urges the crowd to take over the song. Whatever you think of Bono and U2 they sure know how to engage the crowd and even with over 20K in attendance people blog about the intimacy they've experienced.

This summer on Sunday's we are looking at a familiar song from the Bible – Psalm 23. But I don't want to have its words just rumble around in our heads. I want us to engage this song and hopefully some of its imagery will be for us a song of contentment, peace, refreshment, restoration and hope for our world.

I believe sometimes as clergy we can get so focused on what we want to communicate that we neglect to listen to the spiritual journeys of those who are seated in front of us each week. That is why I desire our time to be interactive as we worship together. How many times have you said to yourself or to a family member something like the following, "what was great about being at church today was I got to catch up with ...?" So let us come together, sing together, and share together God's wonderful involvement in our lives – together. I think we all will be better for it.



### **Candlelight, Chainsaws and Cleanup**

On a recent evening a good number of UPB members could be found cutting up a downed pine tree, cleaning up storm driven water or climbing ladders to diagnose lighting problems. A thunder storm wreaked its havoc but that became an opportunity for the members of United Parish step

up once again to care for their church and their neighbors. The Christian Education Committee was to meet on this same evening and the electricity was out but undeterred they met by candlelight. These past two months I have had numerous opportunities to observe the beauty of love in action within this church family. It has been wondrous to behold. This was most vividly displayed during the recent illness and passing of Dick Freudig. This beauty did not go unnoticed by a neighboring congregation. I agree with the sentiment of Jan Barbato, "You certainly are a caring, hardworking, wonderful group of people." Let me take this opportunity to thank you for demonstrating a beauty of love that has been an encouragement to me.

This bodes well for the future of United Parish of Bowie. The declaration of Christ comes to mind, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." I believe this foundation of love has the potential to build a strong and vibrant congregation.

Rev. Steve Howell

### **An Additional Note on Our Very Dedicated Christian Education Committee:**



I stopped by to check on the office one Thursday evening to find one worried board member waiting for our "chain (saw) gang". As Steve said, it was no surprise when they pulled up and worked in the dark and through a brief down pour to clear the neighbor's driveway. I then continued toward the church to find no power, no air conditioning but a dedicated group inside holding a séance...oops, I meant planning Sunday school classes. Those candles were hypnotizing! (And I may be mistaken, but there were a good number of ladies there who survived the lightning strike not too long ago!)

### **Keeping You Informed**

*Dear Members and Friends of United Parish:*

During this time of transition at United Parish, it was thought that we should try to send out more frequent communications to keep everyone informed.

With that in mind, we will also be increasing our email notifications with reminders and notices going out frequently. Please make sure I have your current email addresses. Several addresses have “bounced” recently and I will be contacting you by snail mail if that has happened. Also be sure to include emails of youth and other members of your family who wish to be included. I am including an update form in this newsletter and will also be emailing it this coming week. Please use that to provide me with any information you wish to include in the directory updates. I will have pages of updates to place in your 2008 directories later this summer. Also feel free to ask to be included in the directory even if you have not yet joined the church. Many members and friends have requested that we keep information in the directory for those who have moved away but are still interested in keeping in touch. The directory is not a membership list, but a list of members, friends, and families in our United Parish Family!

And if you don't have email, you won't be left out. I will be mailing announcements to people on our “non-emailers” list. Just remember---your messages are at the mercy of the US Post Office!

Yours in Christ,

Patty Keys  
Church Secretary

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## Life at the Church During the Week

### *A Temporary Resident: Bowie Nursery Childcare*

The Board has signed a short term lease with this group so they may continue their operations in our church. This was facilitated by the departure of Play Day in January of this year so that the space was available for use on weekdays. This group has been in business for over 10 years but recently had to move since their former landlord, Nevy Shalom, sold their building and the new ownership had other plans for their space. They will be looking for a more permanent location for their facility over the coming months. The county has granted them a permit for up to 12 children at our facility. The lease

expires no later than December 31, 2008. The two proprietors, Jo Ann and Dawn, are very nice people and have expressed a desire to work with the church in a flexible manner. We wanted to let everyone know about this new program so no one would be alarmed by unfamiliar cars and people at the church during the week. If you have any further questions in this matter, please feel free to speak with any Board member.

### *A Sad Farewell*

As many of you probably know, we have been renting space to Weight Watchers for several years now. They have been great tenants providing a link to the community and a significant rental income to United Parish. In June we were given notice that Weight Watchers have been able to secure a storefront property—a long time goal of theirs. They moved to their new location on July 18<sup>th</sup>. Please keep in mind that while this is great news to Weight Watchers, it is a major loss to United Parish in many ways.



We wish them the best of luck in their new location in Mitchellville Plaza on Central Avenue.

### *From Weight Watchers*

Friends at United Parish,

Many thanks for your great hospitality over the years! We will miss you!

But we wanted you to remember Weight Watchers with “Sizzle”! (We were given a cook book for the library titled: “Sizzle It”)

Maureen Fieldler & Theresa Hymes

(Weight Watchers Monday Evening)



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## Church Dictionary

*Choir:* A group of people whose singing allows the rest of the congregation to lip-sync.

## United Parish of Bowie—Has a New Look!

Thanks to the excellent taste and determination of the Decorating Committee---we have a beautiful new Sanctuary. For those who have not been here recently, we are looking good! The sanctuary was painted this past year and now we have a beautiful new altar area in wood and new carpet – complete with new carpet smell!

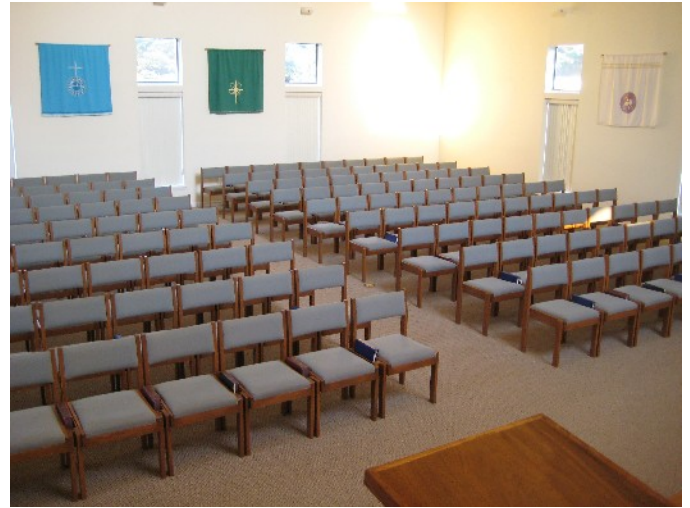
Our New Look in Pictures:



New Carpet in a freshly painted Sanctuary



Altar area now refinished in wood.



And with our new found beauty---of course.....

**REMINDER:** Please do not bring food or drinks into the Sanctuary. Thank you.

### News from Louisville!

My new life in Louisville is going very well. My house may take a year to be fully set up, but in the meantime it's very comfortable. It's nice to have some space to spread out. I've hired someone to paint the interior in July. I would have preferred to do it myself, but I won't have the time. This is a job that can't wait because the previous owner was quite the smoker, so all the walls in the house are hopelessly stained.

The job is also going well. I'm thrilled with the challenge of working in the World Missions department of the PCUSA. I was at the Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship last week, which was held in St. Paul. And I'll be at the General Assembly at the end of this week, which will be in San Jose, CA. In the fall I'm planning two big trips. The first will be to six countries in Asia: Japan, South Korea, China, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The second will be to six countries of

Central Asia, beginning in Kazakhstan and ending in Afghanistan. I never thought I'd be such a world traveler. As you can imagine, I'm feeling very blessed.

Grace and peace,  
Mike

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## **Adult Education, Fall 2008**

The first adult education course will be a study of "The Letter from James." James emphasizes the importance of actions along with faith, and has been prominently mentioned by several current presidential candidates. The class will run from Sunday, September 7 to Sunday, October 5. Adult Education begins at 10:00 AM. This class will be led by Doug Snyder.

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## **News Briefs**

***Our Sunday School Children experienced the Jerusalem Marketplace at the Vacation Bible School at the Village Baptist Church.***



Many of our Sunday school children attended the week-long Vacation Bible School (VBS) at Village Baptist church and enjoyed the experience very much; and at the same time received valuable Christian education there in July 2008. The theme of the VBS was Jerusalem Marketplace. Each of the first four nights, the children learned about the road Jesus took to the cross by experiencing the culture of ancient Jerusalem! The last night was the time of celebration with a wonderful show by the children including pictures taken during the week and special praise songs.

The names of children who attended the VBS are Dean Asman, Bridget Asman, Maggie Yates-Gregory, Aaron Saudager, Sharon Saudager, Teagan Yates-Gregory, Sofia Asman, and Amos Saudager. The names of the UPB members who served as story tellers at the VBS were Marva Connolly, Linda Hutchinson, Penny Simpson, Donna Tanner, and Diane Eades.

The VBS was a wonderful treat! We are very thankful to members of the Village Baptist church for inviting us to be a part of this fine program.

## **The Sunday school classroom gets a "face-lift"!**

The members and the friends of the Christian Education Committee are planning to give a much-needed "face lift" to the children's Sunday School classroom in the hopes of transforming it into a bright, comfortable, and inviting place primarily for the kids, but for adults as well.

According to current plans, the work will start on Saturday August 16th and will be completed in two weeks. This will enable the children to start their brand new Sunday school year (2008 – 2009) in the newly-decorated room.

The committee members plan to paint the room (walls in pastel yellow and the trim in white); paint the wooden cabinets in white; replace the window curtains with new matching ones; and replace the existing rugs with new carpets in bright matching colors. Additionally, the room will be equipped with cork boards, Christian posters, and floor pillows to make Sunday school experience positive and conducive to spiritual growth.

You are invited to stop by and take a look. Your comments and suggestions will help a great deal in continually improving the learning environment for the kids.