

INTERPRETATION

Sewickley Presbyterian Church Newsletter | September/October 2018

*He has made
everything beautiful
in its time.*

Ecclesiastes 3:11



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NEWSLETTER

The SPC newsletter, **Interpretation**, is published six times a year. Please make submissions to, or if you have any questions contact, Jennifer Johnson at jjohnson@sewickleypresby.org.

VISITATION

If you or a member of your family are in the hospital and would like a visit, please call the church office to let us know.

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FAKE NEWS by Rev. Kevin J. Long

An interesting phenomenon has become very popular in our society as of late, one that sounds like an oxymoron. It's called "Fake News," which typically has to do with reports by traditional news sources or social media outlets about information or events which have no basis in fact, something we simply used to call lying. Now in fairness, some of these fake news sources are intending to be satirical, such as The Babylon Bee, which produces hilarious fake news articles about the Christian faith. But much of the fake news out there is intended only to manipulate and deceive. That has left many of us with a great sense of uncertainty about much of what we read and hear from the media. The phrase has also been transformed by some politicians into a way of dismissing any information, or agency that reports information, which the politician does not like. If a report is not flattering, it must be fake news. How convenient.

Of course, fake news is not restricted to our politics. Over the centuries, there has been a fair amount of fake news written or spoken about God as well, information that does not accurately describe the God revealed in Jesus Christ or the scriptures which point to him. I'm sure that some of that misinformation has been well-meant in an attempt to explain why God does not seem to act the way we wish or expect God to act (eg. "God just needed your father to be in heaven with him; that's why God took him"). Some of

it has been spread in order to justify self-interest (eg. "God endorses slavery because it's in the Bible"). And some of the fake news about God has been spread simply because people do not know better (eg. "If it's in the Bible, it must be historically accurate").

Of course, much of the fake news about God that exists in the world is a result of Christians not living in a way that reflects the character of God to the world. Our very lives can become fake news about God.

This fall in my Sunday sermons, I am going to be examining some misinformation about God. Hopefully, it will help all of us have a better understanding of who God is and how God is at work in our midst. I believe that the Holy Spirit is doing some wonderful things in our church. I hope that you will come worship with us as we seek to faithfully proclaim and faithfully live the gospel of Jesus Christ in grateful response to God's love.

In Christ,
Kevin



FRANK STONER WEEKEND Welcomes Rev. Dr. Thomas G. Long

SATURDAY | OCTOBER 20 | 6 PM

Dinner & Lecture with Dr. Long

SUNDAY | OCTOBER 21

Dr. Long will preach at 9 & 11 AM
(No 8 AM service)

He will also teach our Adult Sunday School classes.



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GOOD LITTLE GIANTS

September 15
5 PM

Join us as we celebrate our *Fall Kick-Off*
with a concert from one of our favorites!

FALL WORSHIP BEGINS SOON!

September 9 | 10 AM

One Worship Service Only | Rev. Dr. Ed Glover, from Urban Impact, will be our guest preacher.

September 16

Worship Services | 8, 9, & 11 AM

Sunday School | 10 AM

Good Little Giants will be leading music at our 9 & 11 AM services.



by Jenny Hay
Director of FriendShip Preschool

The FriendShip Preschool will be welcoming in a new school year on Wednesday, September 5. The staff were busy preparing their classrooms the last week of August and receiving their CPR recertification from Valley Ambulance. FriendShip hosted a "Meet and Greet" the mornings of August 30 and 31 to welcome the children and their families into their classrooms. The beginning of a new school year is always such an exciting time!

Security Doors were installed this summer at the top of the two stairwells on the 2nd floor of the church. The doors will provide security and safety for the preschool children during the weekdays. Two of the hallway bathrooms also received a fresh coat of paint.

The FriendShip Preschool is very happy to welcome church member Gretchen McAdams as the Head Teacher in our PreK classroom. Gretchen is replacing Pat Lear who retired from FriendShip in May after teaching here for 24 years. Gretchen's roots began at FriendShip nine years ago when her three year old son, Caleb, enrolled in the FII classroom with Mrs. Frishkorn. At that time, Gretchen also served on our FriendShip Subcommittee. Gretchen has a B.S. of Science in Elementary and Kindergarten Education and her M.Ed. in School Counseling. She has many years of teaching experience and is very excited for this new opportunity to lead our PreK classroom with Morna Murray. Gretchen and her husband Bruce are Co-Chairing, (along with Mark and Deanna Grubb) the DOL Café, and sons Noah and Caleb are actively involved in the youth ministry programs. Noah was a part of the Confirmation class last year.

We are looking forward to the start of another preschool year as we welcome 84 children this year. We welcome all of our new FriendShip staff and wish them many happy years with FriendShip!

GIVING AT SPC

There are a variety of ways to give at SPC. Check them out below. If you have any questions, please contact Laura Mikush at lmikush@sewickleypresby.org or 412.741.4550.

ONLINE

sewickleypresby.org/give

CHECK / CASH

Make checks payable to Sewickley Presbyterian

TEXT

Text: 73256 / Message: giveatspc

DOLLAR & SENSE

by Laura Mikush, Business Administrator

Did you know that the HVAC in the library has finally been replaced? At the same time, the Property Committee decided to put in a split system HVAC for the Children's Corner/Toddler Room and the FriendShip I Preschool room. These rooms have never had air conditioning and the nursery teachers and Sunday child care workers are just thrilled at the idea of being able to cool the space!

Congregational Meeting

September 23, 2018
12 PM

For the purpose of electing Church Officers.



MUSIC NEWS

by Craig Dobbins, Director of Music Ministries

PIANIST DONNA AMATO IN WORSHIP

Long-time Sewickley native and resident, Donna Amato, returns to participate in the 11 AM service on Sunday, September 30. In addition to performing by herself, Ms. Amato will also accompany the Chancel Choir. Ms. Amato serves on the faculties of both Carnegie Mellon University and The University of Pittsburgh. Early in her career, she resided for a number of years in England. During that time, she recorded many of the piano compositions of one of our former organists, Ethelbert Nevin.

Invite your friends and neighbors to join you that morning!

CHANCEL & HANDBELL CHOIRS RESUME REGULAR REHEARSALS IN SEPTEMBER

Westminster Ringers

Thursday, September 6 at 6:45 PM | Bell Choir Room

Chancel Choir

Thursday, September 13 | Choir Room

Calvin Handbell Choir

Sunday, September 23 at 12:15 PM | Bell Choir Room

WESTMINSTER RINGERS SEEK NEW MEMBERS

The Westminster Ringers are seeking additional members. Prior ringing experience is not required nor is reading music, although it speeds up the learning process.

If you're interested or want to know more, contact Craig Dobbins: cdobbins@sewickleypresby.org/412-741-4550.



GOD LOVE US, NO MATTER WHAT

As I sit in my home chapel (my front porch), I'm reflecting on what I have learned from reading through the Bible so far this year. This is my favorite place for reading Scripture because I feel a part of God's creation. I sink into the green of grass and maple leaves; the white of daisies and fading hydrangeas; the purple of verbena and petunias; the call of birds. I gaze at the passing clouds and am filled with awe at God's splendor. Surrounded by all this beauty, thoughts from reading through the Bible merge with what I see and hear. The overarching message I've been getting since January is this: God loves His people. He created the world I see and hear from my porch, and He created and chose the Israelites centuries ago to carry out His will. God's will sounds pretty simple: love and worship me, only me, said God, and I will care for, guide, and love you forever.

When I was a little girl, sometimes at night when I was trying to go to sleep, I put my hand up in the air so God could "hold my hand." I wanted a physical touch from God, not just a spiritual one. I think the Israelites wanted this too, so they made physical gods, like the neighboring people did, the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, and all those other "-ites." They knew God had told them not to make idols, but it was really hard not to want a god they could see and touch. So they went against God's will, once, twice, countless times.

What I've learned from reading the Old Testament so far, from Genesis to Haggai, is that God forgave these people He had chosen, once, twice, countless times. He had patience with them, again and again. We all wonder about the violence and wars that God allowed and even commanded in the Old Testament, but how about all the times God loved and forgave these people that He had chosen? God asked one thing: love and worship only me. Have no other gods before me. The Israelites didn't do that and neither do we.

I've also learned from reading why God had to send Jesus to rescue His people because of their inability/refusal to follow His will. All the passages – Kings, Judges, Jeremiah, Nehemiah, etc. -- recounting the Israelites' lack of obedience show why Jesus had to leave the realm of God to enter the realm of humanity and save us.

Finally, I've learned from watching the video for the book of Esther that God is never mentioned in this book. Peculiar, as this is the Bible, after all! But the series' creators explain that God is present everywhere in the action of the text, guiding circumstances and people. God uses imperfect, morally flawed people like King Ahasuerus and Haman, Mordecai and Esther, to accomplish His will for His people. It struck me that this is a strong message of hope for our day and age, with imperfect, morally flawed humans abounding...just like those Israelites centuries ago.

So on those days like today when I see God's presence everywhere in creation, and on those dark nights when I don't, and I want a physical touch from God, I will try to remember these accounts of God's unmerited love, patience, and forgiveness. God loves us, and He forgives us. No matter what.

Jane Shadle, SPC Member

FAKE NEWS about GOD

SUNDAY SERMON SERIES

September 16
September 23
September 30
October 7
October 14
October 28
November 4
November 11

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

Rev. Kevin J. Long
Rev. Sarah Bird



SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES

8 AM | Chapel
9 AM | Sanctuary
11 AM | Sanctuary



Sewickley Presbyterian's Fall Sermon Series is determined to solve the question *"What's true and what's not true about God?"*

Don't miss this exciting time where we'll uncover the reality about God and dispel any rumors that have been floating around.

If you are unable to attend on a Sunday and don't want to miss a sermon, visit our website and listen live each Sunday at 9 AM and 11 AM. You can also catch-up by listening to recorded sermons and full-services found on our website too.

SUNDAY SCHOOL
Sunday Mornings at 10 AM for all ages.

WEEKLY GROUPS & CLASSES

Visit our website to read all about our upcoming fall groups and classes.

HELP WANTED

Consider helping on Sunday mornings as an usher! Sign-up on our website today!

Check out Adult Sunday School this Fall!



BEFORE THE LIONS Daniel 1-5

Join us for our Ansby Hall Adult Sunday School class for this exciting series taught by Rev. Derek Davenport.

Sorcery, pierogies, 19th century medicine and apocalyptic paintings. In the month of September, we will explore these subjects as we learn more about the strange and fascinating book of Daniel. From ancient feuds to modern slang, we will approach a familiar character in a new way as we learn what Daniel has to teach us long before he enters the lion's den.

9.16: Week I – Slumber and Sorcery (Daniel 1-2)

9.23: Week II – Exile N'at (Daniel 3-4)

9.30: Week III - Wolves and Runes (Daniel 4-5)

GROW *in the*
GRACE *and*
KNOWLEDGE
of JESUS.
2 Peter 3:18



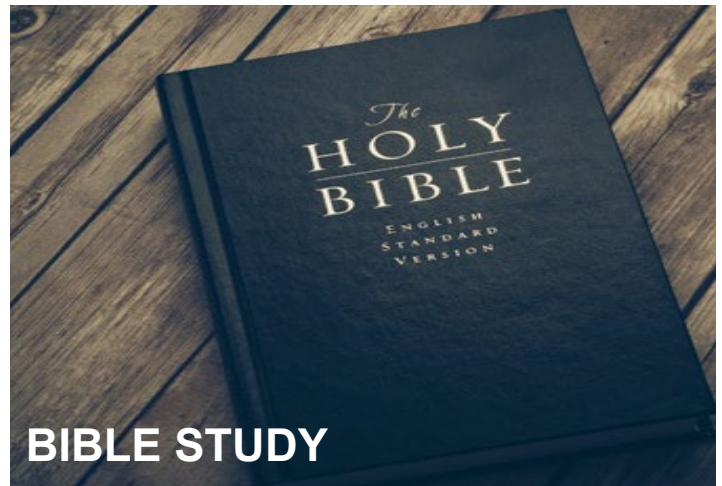
CONNECTIONS

20s, 30s, 40s

Our new **CONNECTIONS** class is geared towards younger members of our church family (20s, 30s and 40s). There is no prep work for this class. Come as you are! Take time to catch up, enjoy some caffeine, and then dive into a video or other lesson designed to help us navigate the way Scripture influences our daily living.

Begins: September 16

Location: Dining Room.



BIBLE STUDY

In this Bible study class, we will begin by taking a look at the Gospel of John in order to gain a deeper understanding of God's Word. Bring your Bibles and plan on joining us!

Begins: October 21

Location: Library





AN EXCITING SUMMER!

by Mike Creamer, Director of Youth Ministries

What a summer it has been. Once June hit, the youth program seemed to shift gears into a crazier, more exciting time because it seemed like every week we had something new and different happening. We started with our intergenerational mission trip to the Czech Republic, a time spent building relationships with and learning from our sister churches there. We were thrilled to have 4 of our high school students join us for the trip, being exposed to the Gospel in a completely different culture.

Next we had the Water Wars, a time of mass hysteria and bombarding one another with water until it looked like we had been swimming all afternoon. I realized quickly that no matter how many times you tell teens not to throw water balloons before we start a game, it's simply unavoidable. The fact remains that regardless of how hard you try, when there is a group of teens with an arsenal of water balloons nearby, there's no chance of walking away dry.

Then came the high school Camping Trip. I am very grateful for the diligence and expertise that Matt Doebler brought to this trip, being our master chef of the campfire, our navigator, our wood supplier, our late-night storyteller, and so much more. With his help our first official high school camping trip was fantastic, and with the added support and help of Caryn Doege we were able to continue to see goofiness prevail in our ministry! There is something deeply spiritual about the simplicity of the outdoors that draws us closer to God in ways we don't typically notice in the midst of our day to day tasks.

July is when the real sprint began, as we left the camping trip and geared up for our trip to East Liberty and Garfield to work with the seminary's Summer Youth Institute to help rebuild houses with Open Hands Ministry. What a joy it was serving alongside people like Mike Stanton and Tim Raufer as we helped gut some of these old houses, rebuild them from the inside out, all in the hopes of blessing the lives of the families in Garfield. It was a moving experience, with plenty of spiritual undertones, reminding

us that we all are in need of rebuilding, allowing Christ to change us from the inside out and enabling us to spread that change to others.

Once late July came, we were ready for our annual trip to the Pittsburgh Project. We took a crew of middle schoolers and had the pleasure of serving with our partners on the north side as we helped in any areas we could. Painting porches, staining fences, hanging gutters, building ceiling fans—we had a variety of tasks all week long. We were thrilled to meet our homeowners, Essie and DeeDee, and spent plenty of time with them throughout the week. Miss Essie taught us all how to dance, Dee Dee surprised us time and time again with pizza and popsicles, and our craftsmen Porter always had a new tool and a new task for us to complete. Even on the last day as we were walking out the door, we realized that Porter and one of our students were still in the basement working on a new project; I guess they just couldn't help themselves!

Finally, we capped our summer trips off with another visit to Surf City with the Pittsburgh Kids Foundation. From start to finish this trip was non-stop excitement. From water tubing and jet skiing to early morning sunrises and late night campfires there were plenty of adventures and stories to be shared. It was a very special year at Surf City for me, seeing such a huge group of our students attend as last year we went more as a trial to see whether or not the trip was worth making or not. "Worth it" is a severe understatement. What makes Surf City so special is how well they can balance fun with faith. The Gospel is preached in a deeply true and relatable way for students, times of worship are engaging and moving, and the activities create high-energy excitement that continues to build all week long.

We are so grateful for an amazing summer together, but we are excited to get things going for the fall again! Thank you all for your prayer, support, and help all summer long.

"What I loved about Surf City"

"The activities were so much fun, and I got to make so many new friends."

"I got to make a few close friends during my time I would've never met if I didn't decide to come. It was also fun and a lighthearted experience where everyone could joke and be themselves where they didn't have to care about what others thought."

"I loved Surf City because I felt like I grew closer to God in the I understand the Bible better and what it's calling me to live out in my life, and I felt His love very strongly. It was so much fun to spend more time with our church group and create new memories."

"You get to try so many new things like jet skis, tubing, blobbing, and so much more while also growing in your faith. I also loved getting to meet new people at a camp in Michigan that actually live just down the road from you in Pittsburgh."

"I really enjoyed Surf City because of the very talented preachers and the representation of the Christian faith in youth. I also loved that the campers freely admitted having doubts because it's really helpful to know you are not alone when you are struggling in your faith. Club is also fun because it's different from standing in pews and singing. It's jumping around and acting crazy while worshipping God!"



SURF CITY



PGH PROJECT



SURF CITY



CZECH



FOR WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED IN MY NAME,

I am there among them.

Matthew 18:20

I love that verse, in fact, I'm a big fan of the whole story put forth in Matthew 18. In this chapter, Jesus gives us some instructions and descriptions of how to live as a community of believers. He discusses welcoming back "lost sheep," how to address issues of sin and forgiveness within the church, and he gives us this simple description: that wherever two or three are gathered in Christ's name, there he will be also. He doesn't say that we must pray a certain way, or that we have to be singing specific songs. He just says that if we are together, in his name, he will be there. This verse has stuck with me through a few events this summer, at our volunteer training event, and at the Amigos game night.

At our Ministry Architect volunteer training, we had a number of people -- all dedicated leaders, teachers, parents, or grandparents -- who were excited to see our ministry grow. I saw Christ that day, but not through our perfectly planned presentation or our breakfast buffet. I didn't particularly notice Him when we looked through curriculum or talked about safe church policies. Where I did see Him was in our volunteers while they were meeting each other, talking over coffee, and greeting new members of their volunteer team. That 15 minutes, where a group of Christians, with a vested interest in helping the children of our church grow, sat together, talking, laughing, listening, and building relationships.

A few weeks later, I also had the privilege of joining the Amigos group at our church to lead them in some group games. While rain outside and flooding inside changed some of our plans, our fun couldn't be stopped. There were 17 of us playing in the Robinson Room until we finally moved down to the Dining Room for snacks and bingo. I saw Christ that night as well. I saw him in the joy filled faces as Ron Charles donned a sombrero and tried to catch things on his head. I saw him in the Amigos group that knows that they are welcome at our church, and in one Amigo saying, "I'll see you on Sunday, Mr. Brian!" When we are gathered in Christ's name, even if the point of that gathering is to be silly and play games, Christ is there also.

I think that fellowship, plain and simple, can be one of the most effective forms of ministry and evangelism. Getting to know people in your church family and feeling empowered and lifted up by your community can be a great thing. With that being said, I'd encourage you to take part in some of our big events this year, particularly our Family Fall Festival on October 19th. It's a chance to enjoy one another's company with some fun activities and snacks to fill your time. And if you can't get enough of Autumn or the Faith House, then join us on the 31st as we pass out candy to local trick-or-treaters and get a chance to see who has the best costumes this year!

Brian Mack, Director of Children's Ministries

UPCOMING DATES

Club 345 begins on September 12
Bible Handout to 1st & 3rd Graders | September 30
Family Fall Festival | October 19
Trick or Treating at the Faith House | October 31
Parents' Night Out | November 16



BUTTERFLY PROJECT

by Elizabeth Szuba, Youth Program Coordinator

How do you teach the next generation about the dangers of hatred and bigotry? By seeing it first hand at Terezin, a Nazi concentration camp. In June, the teenagers and adults who had the privilege of going on the mission trip to the Czech Republic got to witness the cramped, unsanitary quarters and heard stories of the cruelty that took place there. We learned of families separated and read the heartbreaking poetry of the children confined in the Jewish ghetto. One of the poems was written by a young boy named Pavel who was born in Prague, deported to Terezin, and later died in Auschwitz. This poem is the inspiration for a beautiful movement to teach about compassion and kindness called the Butterfly Project. The project was founded in 2006 by the San Diego Jewish Academy and has spread around the world, including the Sewickley Public Library. The goal is to paint 1.5 million beautiful butterflies - one for each child who perished in the Holocaust.

In July, some of our youngest church members and relatives of Czech Mission trip participants had the opportunity to participate in this project along with area children. They learned that despite our differences we are more alike than different. Then they painted a colorful butterfly. These butterflies will be on display at the Sewickley Public Library and are part of the 1.5 million painted around the world.



AUGUST NEWS

by Gretchen Burnham, SPC

We have 25 new SPC aprons for each of us to wear when we serve dinner at CHF. They are navy blue and written above an outline of our church is "Here to Serve".

Thank you to Eric Fulmer for the idea of having SPC aprons and to Carol Weir for finding the company to do the printing. They are fabulous. And although I may have forgotten to join us in prayer, I think we all were reminded throughout the evening as we looked at one another in our aprons, we were "Here to Serve".

The August dinner could also have been titled: "Expect the Unexpected!" It was an absolutely beautiful evening and there was a large crowd for dinner. We were pleasantly surprised to have 106 for dinner! We were fortunate to have enough food for everyone to have nice portions, but not quite enough to offer second helpings. We made up 15 bags of salad and 15 containers of Tetrazzini for take home.

Thank you all for your generosity of cooking, providing food, serving and cleaning up. We couldn't do it without you.

"Go into all the world"

Mark 16:15

MEETING GOD IN MISSIONS

by Barb Swan, SPC Member

For the past three years, members of SPC have traveled to the Dominican Republic to spend a week with Meeting God in Missions (MGM). MGM was founded in 1998 by Jim McDonald, a successful basketball coach and athletic director at Edinboro University. Located outside the town of Hato Mayor, about an hour west of Punta Cana, it is surrounded by vast sugar cane fields, where ethnic Haitians work long hours in the hot sun for little pay. MGM provides a variety of ministries, including construction, children's ministry, optical, medical, dentistry, gardening, sewing, prayer walks, and baseball. MGM's stated goal is to encourage participants into a closer walk with God while serving the needs of the poor in the DR.

Talk to any who have participated in our trips, and you will hear stories of the amazing ways God works in and through us when we step away from our busy (dare I say some times frantic) lives to partner with those whose lives are very different from ours. It becomes a two-way street of giving and receiving God's blessings in many ways. Many of us have gone every year, and look forward to going again in 2019.

In addition to our mission trips, the Mission Committee has given MGM \$5,000 over the past two years. You can find more information on the MGM website gomgm.org.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 2019

January 19 - 26, 2019

\$1090 per person

Scholarships available: speak with
Rev. Kevin Long for information.

Register online:
www.sewickleypresby.org
Events & Sign-Up
Dominican Republic Mission Trip

BACKPACKS IN JULY

by Tina Thomas, SPC Member

The Deacons extend a big THANK YOU to the SPC congregation for your amazing support of this year's Back Packs in July mission project. Your generosity enabled us to deliver over 100 fully stocked back packs to the Center For Hope for distribution to families in need living in our neighboring communities. Monetary and in-kind donations allowed us to give Sue Otto, CFH director, extra supplies she can use to help kids throughout the school year, including new families who move to the area.

One SPC family's generosity enabled us to provide a number of advanced calculators which Sue will distribute to students taking higher level math and science classes. Thank you to Bud, Gary, Elizabeth, Lizzie and Kristina for their transportation and distribution help. I think they would agree with me that seeing the kids' excitement as they pick out their preferred pack is truly a blessing. One woman with eight children, four of her own plus four additional children whose mother was unable to care them, was very grateful for SPC's help. With school supplies taken care of, she can now allocate her limited resources to other needs for her large family. Sue Otto and the CFH families want the SPC to know how much they appreciate everything the church does to help.



Serving Our Neighbors

THE LADLE: A NEW HOME

by Carol Weir, SPC Member

Since its inception over 12 years ago, The Ladle has made its home in the First United Presbyterian Church of Ambridge. This church and its congregation have been instrumental in establishing The Ladle as an organization dedicated to addressing the needs of the disenfranchised population of Ambridge, serving dinner every Monday night, maintaining a Food Pantry, and offering emergency assistance as needed.

After much prayer and discernment and with thanks to the First United Presbyterian Church of Ambridge, The Ladle is moving to a new home: St. John's Lutheran Church of Old Economy, located at 1320 Church Street. St. John's is very excited to welcome The Ladle, beginning on Monday, October 8. SPC will be serving at The Ladle on Monday, October 22.

An Open House and Orientation Session will be held in September for all Ladle volunteers, including those from SPC. More details to follow!

Thanks to Pat and Eric Fulmer for their wonderful idea of providing 25 aprons for those SPC members who serve at The Ladle (see photo below)! The Church purchased an additional 25 aprons for Center for Hope monthly dinner volunteers. Please contact Carol Weir or Gretchen Burnham if you wish to use these aprons for an SPC volunteer event.



SUMMER AT THE CENTER

by Carol Weir, SPC Member

Days are always busy at the Center for Hope (CFH) and this summer has been an especially fun and healthy one for Center youth. Here are some highlights:

The Center was able to offer free lunch, Monday through Thursday, from mid-June through early August, courtesy of the Beaver County YMCA.

Center youth were treated to free summer day camp at the Sewickley Valley YMCA. Transportation from the CFH to camp and back was provided; the kids were able to participate in all camp activities, including swimming!

SPC's donation and distribution of 100 backpacks fully loaded with school supplies continues to be a banner day in early August for CFH youth. This year SPC Deacons asked people to include toothbrushes and toothpaste in the supplies. "I've never seen such excitement about receiving a toothbrush", said CFH Director Sue Otto, as the kids were opening their backpacks. "Several mothers told me how important these backpacks are to their families and that they weren't sure how they were going to pay for school supplies otherwise", she said.

Although the Center for Hope does not typically deal in furniture, staff was able to connect a needy family with two bedroom sets that became available through a local church. "Now I have a bed to sleep in!" said the young son of the family who received the donation.

And looking ahead . . .

A new Fall program at the Center will be the creation of a Praise Band. Inspired by the donation of a Yamaha drum set earlier this year, Sue Otto asked youth at the Center about their interest in forming a band. YES was the answer, so some modest funding has been dedicated to starting this program. Practices will be held several days a week after school for those interested.



“WHAT DID YOU DO?”

Czech Republic Mission Trip

by Sandy Cooper, SPC Member

From June 14 - 25, four youth and eleven adults from SPC embarked on a relational mission trip to the Czech Republic. We have often been asked, “What did you do?” This is a common question to missionaries after they return from a mission trip. Even before we went and explained that this was a relational mission trip, we were still asked, “What will you be doing?”

Before you read on to learn more about this amazing trip, answer this question, “What do you do at church?” You may be able to list dozens of activities like committees, Bible studies, fellowship activities, worship, music, etc. And you can probably be quite specific about “what you do” in those areas. But will that tell us how you are in relationship with God and your brothers and sisters in Christ?

In the Czech Republic, we were nurturing our relationship with God and with our brothers and sisters from Sewickley and the Czech Republic. The kindness and generosity shown to us was overwhelming. Eva Grollova from the Diaconia, and also a longtime friend of SPC, coordinated all the logistics and planning for our visit to the Czech Republic. We can’t thank her enough for the time, love and attention to detail that she demonstrated on our behalf. Rev. Marek Zikmund from our partner church in Prerov and also a longtime friend of SPC, worked with his church leaders to coordinate singing, sharing and worshipping with members of his church. This reinforced our common faith.

One of our final evenings with our partner church in Prerov allowed us to break into very small groups and receive gracious hospitality in the homes of some of the church members. It was the highlight of the trip for many. We worshipped in 2 different churches, learned of the strength of faith during times of deep despair as a country, listened to the story of Jan Hus on a Reformation tour and heard how the seminary is preparing future leaders of the church. We visited Diaconia sites including homes for the elderly, a Roma housing community and preschool, and a hospice. We talked with some of the residents and were aware of the strength of service by the Diaconia in the name of Jesus.

We learned so much about what it means to be a Christian in a society with such a different history than ours. And yet, the worship, the prayers, the meals, the laughter, the tears, the opportunity to get to know one another, showed that through Jesus Christ we have so much more in common. This trip was filled with so much grace. And yet they wondered why we would take the time and money to come so far to be with them. It seemed it was inspiring for all.

Part of the strength of the experience came from the legacy that was left by previous members of our church. It is their relationship with God and with our brothers and sisters in the Czech Republic that paved the way for this relationship to continue. The group that traveled this summer is brainstorming ways in which we can stay connected throughout the year. If you are interested in this relationship, please contact Deborah Murdoch (damurdoch@gmail.com) or Sandy Cooper (msmb.coop@verizon.net). We want continue to grow and nurture this relationship. It would be wonderful to include you!



Sewickley Presbyterian Church

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Dated Material

PLEASE EXPEDITE!

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NEIGHBORS IN NEED

by Neill Simakas, SPC Member

Neighbors in Need is a mission project launched several years ago to collect full-sized toiletries and personal care products for those in need. There are many families in our community that are surviving on very little income, which means oftentimes the non-essential items such as deodorant, toothpaste etc. are crossed off grocery lists.

We will be collecting these items from now until the end of October, at which time will deliver the products to the Sewickley Community Center, the Center for Hope and the Ladle. From there they will be passed on to the families they serve as needed.

Brown woven collection baskets marked "Neighbors in Need" are located at all church entrances. Please help us help our Neighbors in Need!

Financial contributions are welcome, and checks made out to SPC will allow us to supplement the donated items.

The SPC Neighbors in Need committee thanks you in advance for your support!

REQUESTED ITEMS

Shampoo
Conditioner
Toothpaste
Toothbrushes
Feminine Products
Mouthwash
Bar Soap (women's & men's)
Disposable Razors
Dish Soap
Hand Cream
Shaving Cream
Deodorant (women's & men's)
Detergent
Adult & infant diapers

