



ON THE STREET

The Peoples Church of Chicago

Newsletter for June, 2012

“A Spiritual Home for People of Conscience”

CALENDAR

Movie/Film Night

- **Fri, June 29, 6pm:** TBA. Popcorn, discussion.

Upcoming Sundays

- **Sundays 10am:** Worship Service, with Rev. Jean Darling preaching.
- **Sun, June 3, 10am Children’s Day.**
- **Sun, June 10: Juneteenth** celebration, with guest preacher, **Savannah Mason.**
- **Sun, June 18: Fathers’ Day,** with **Ed Feldmanis** preaching.
- **Sun, June 24:** All church **Potluck** after service.

Other Events

- **Fri, June 8, 6pm: Second Friday** Taizé service and Coffeehouse, with **Andina & Rich,** live.
- **Sat, June 30, 4pm:** Spiritual Beans meets at Inspiration Kitchens on Sheridan.
- **Sat, June 30, 7pm:** Joseph Bures classical piano recital, Auditorium: “Bits and Pieces” – from Joseph’s 18 most favorite composers.

Minister’s Notes:

Joy and Sorrow Woven Fine

Rev. Jean Siegfried Darling

It’s June – with mid-summer coming... Summer, a time for leisure, for celebrating the joys of life by being in the great outdoors. And later this month, the annual Gay Pride parade – you can hop on the Unitarian Universalist float, or just watch it go by – and *that* is a joyful event!

Dr. Preston Bradley ended all of his radio talks with the cheerful admonition, “Keep looking up!” He spoke of the silver lining to every cloud, and regularly inspired members of the church and those who listened to his radio broadcasts, keeping them feeling positive about their lives.

How the attitude toward gays has changed in my lifetime! Just last week President Obama came out with his statement that it was time gays and lesbians could marry, like other couples. Some people still are uncomfortable with the idea, but most young people just don’t think twice about the issue – of course, gays should have the same rights as everyone else!

I’m grateful for this boost to the cause of equal rights for our GLBT sisters and brothers.

But lately I’ve just been feeling kind of sad. It’s hard to tell where it comes from, whether it is the world situation, or that work is hard, or just what. But I’ve wondered if I sound like Preston Bradley’s shadow side: “Don’t get complacent - every silver lining has its cloud!”

Looking for inspiration, I picked up one of Thomas Moore’s books, *Writing in the Sand: Jesus and the Soul of the Gospels*. Moore quotes Oscar Wilde, writing from prison, where he spent two years at hard labor for “gross indecency” – being gay and unrepentant:

Jesus’ “primary desire was not to reform people,” Wilde wrote, “any more than his primary desire was to relieve suffering. To turn an interesting thief into a tedious honest man was not his aim.”¹

cont’d...

¹ Thomas Moore, *Writing in the Sand*, p.xii, quoting from Wilde’s *De Profundis*.

2 Li'l Fishes

Starting soon, 2 Li'l Fishes will serve a free hot lunch every day but Wednesday, downstairs in Anderson Hall. All are welcome.

To help out, contact Will Pruitt, volunteer coordinator, twolilfishes@yahoo.com.

Minister's Notes, cont'd

Wilde had been a successful poet, journalist, and playwright, known for his biting wit, flamboyant dress, and glittering conversation. He had become one of the most well-known personalities of his day. He lived his life for pleasure, until his arrest and trials, his time in prison.

Prison broke his health, and he died in Paris only two years later, at the age of 46. I thought, What a waste of a brilliant life! The piece Thomas Moore quotes from, *De Profundis*, was not published until five years after Wilde's death. How often society has chewed up and spit out talented people because they were gay or lesbian, when to be gay was unacceptable.

But as this piece of writing makes clear, Wilde's experience in prison, though hard, was profound, and illuminating, to him – he gained an understanding of suffering that most of us never get with a lifetime of living. He remembered a line from Carlyle that his mother used to repeat to him:

'Who never ate his bread in sorrow, Who never spent the midnight hours Weeping and waiting for the morrow, - He knows you not, ye heavenly powers.'

The purpose of life is not to live for pleasure, but to live fully, wholly oneself, undivided. Wilde wrote,

I now see that sorrow, being the supreme emotion of which man is capable, is at once the type and test of all great art. What the artist is always looking for is the mode of existence in which soul and body are one and indivisible: in which the outward is expressive of the inward...

In his earlier life, Wilde had expressed a certain bitterness, saying once "that there was enough suffering in one narrow London lane to show that God did not love man."

"I was entirely wrong," he said, in prison. He came to understand Jesus' nature as that of the artist – "an intense and flamelike imagination":

He understood the leprosy of the leper, the darkness of the blind, the fierce misery of those who live for pleasure, the strange poverty of the rich.

...

Behind joy and laughter there may be a temperament, coarse, hard and callous. But behind sorrow there is always sorrow. Pain, unlike pleasure, wears no mask. ... Truth in art is the unity of a thing with itself: the outward rendered expressive of the inward: the soul made incarnate: the body instinct with spirit. For

this reason there is no truth comparable to sorrow. There are times when sorrow seems to me to be the only truth... Out of sorrow have the worlds been built, and at the birth of a child or a star there is pain.

For us, our pain reminds us of the wholeness of life. The poem by William Blake tells it:

Joy and woe are woven fine, /clothing for the soul divine: /under every grief and pine /runs a joy with silken twine.
...We were made for joy and woe; /and when this we rightly know, /safely through the world we go.

peace, Jean



Andina and Rich at the Coffeehouse

Come to the meditative Taizé service to unwind from your stressful week, with chants, poetry and quiet reflection. Stay for the Peoples Church Coffeehouse: Start with Sandy

Andina, Chicago's resident singing/guitar-and-dulcimer-slinging smart aleck, add Stephen Lee Rich (Madison's friendly neighborhood yodeling cowboy), add harmony and humor, then shake and stir.

Treasures of Uptown

"Faith: Alive in Action" – come to an interfaith group discussion on the connection between service and faith, featuring leaders from local service organizations. **Sunday, June 10, 2-4pm**, at the Buddhist Temple of Chicago, 1151 W. Leland Avenue – parking available. For more info, see www.TreasuresofUptown.org



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Calendar – June 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29 1-2pm worship – JustEmbrace 1:30 2 Li'l Fishes – Molly's Café 6:30 Treasures mailing party	30 6:30 newsletter mailing party	31	1	2
3 Childrens Day 10am Service 11:30 Trustees	4	5 1-2pm worship – JustEmbrace	6	7 6:30 Treasures steering comm.	8 6pm Second Fri w Andina & Rich	9
10 10am Service 2-4pm Treasures event at Buddhist Temple	11	12 1-2pm worship – JustEmbrace	13 6:30pm Worship committee	14	15	16 10 JustEmbrace Sole Care foot clinic 10-noon PBC board meeting 1-3pm Puppet workshop
17 Fathers Day 10am Service	18 ← <i>Pastor Jean</i>	19 1-2pm worship – JustEmbrace <i>in Phoenix for</i>	20 <i>Unitarian Univ.</i>	21 <i>Assoc. General</i>	22 <i>Assembly ...</i> → Gay Pride – Back Lot Bash	23
24 10am Service 11:30 Potluck	25	26 1-2pm worship – JustEmbrace	27	28	29 6pm Movie Night	30 4pm Spiritual Beans at Inspir. Kitch. 7pm Joseph Bures recital

Researching a passing phrase can be like unpacking those Russian nested dolls.

However much private support Dr. Bradley may have been able to give to gay members of his congregation, they still had to keep it to themselves, live a double or a secret life.

Spiritual Beans (a project of Treasures of Uptown) continues its lively interfaith conversations around the table at Inspiration Kitchens, 4715 N. Sheridan. The next gathering will be on Saturday June 30, 4pm – the topic is Silence. See you there!

Sorrow, then, and all that it teaches one, is my new world.

I used to live entirely for pleasure. I shunned suffering and sorrow of every kind. I hated both. I resolved to ignore them as far as possible: to treat them, that is to say, as modes of imperfection. They were not part of my scheme of life. They had no place in my philosophy. My mother, who knew life as a whole, used often to quote to me Goethe's lines - written by Carlyle in a book he had given her years ago, and translated by him, I fancy, also:-

'Who never ate his bread in sorrow, Who never spent the midnight hours Weeping and waiting for the morrow,
- He knows you not, ye heavenly powers.'