

# Calendar – May 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 communion 10am Service 11:30 PC Trustees <i>in Molly's Café</i>	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 10am Service Noon – Growth Committee <i>in Molly's Café</i>	10	11	12	13	14 6pm Taizé svc, 7pm Coffeehouse, <i>in Molly's Café</i>	15 <i>P.C. auditorium:</i> 7pm Joseph Bures Classical piano
16 10am Service 11:30am Potluck	17	18	19	20 7pm Book Group, <i>at Borders</i>	21	22
23 Joe Cherry 10am Service 12 noon – New Member class <i>in church foyer</i>	24	25	26	27	28 <i>P.C. auditorium:</i> 6pm – Film Night “Lean on Me”	29
30 10am Service	31					

## Minister's Notes, cont'd

Thomas Moore, in his *Writing In The Sand: Jesus, Spirituality, and the Soul of the Gospels*, writes that a new approach to Mary Magdalene as the possible wife/ lover of Jesus allows our sexuality to take part in our spiritual life. Instead of it being cut off, a secular thing wholly divorced from spirituality, sexuality can be a door to spirit which has been missing from the teaching of the gospels as they've been interpreted from very early days.

This idea has caused a lot of controversy, and it can be a difficult thing to consider – we are so used to associating spirituality with “higher” things – that is, not of the body.

But that disconnect – of spirit and body – has caused a lot of tragedy and pain, as in the long-term identification of women with bodily temptation. Tertullian, for example, one of the early Church Fathers writing in the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century, said that women, as the current representatives of Eve, should wear mourning clothes to represent their continuing sorrow for causing the Fall. He even wrote of women, “You are the devil's gateway.”<sup>1</sup>

I'm grateful that most people have left that idea behind.

But we (perhaps especially European-Americans) may still be uneasy overcoming our Puritan roots and claiming a joyful and earthy connection to our animal side – but even more, taking it a step further to find deep spiritual meaning in our sexuality.

Spring, with its eruption of color, these “green fires,” this “blaze of growing,” puts us in touch with our desire to touch the divine with our whole selves, including this part formerly banished to a secret closet, off-limits and *certainly* unmentionable in church.

Decades (centuries!) of repression have led to terrible acts of sexual acting-out, as the scandals in the Catholic Church demonstrate. In the early 1970s when the sexual revolution of the 1960s reached our churches, a lot of bottled up desire was released, leading to a lot of bad behavior – I mean behavior that hurt people and left a lot of wounds in communities.

I'm hopeful that in the coming years, as we humans incorporate a healthier, more complete, approach to our bodies and our sexuality into our spiritual lives, we will learn not to use and abuse others sexually, we will learn to appreciate our body as a gift.

What does this mean? For me, the greater integration of body and spirit releases us to a more complete life, a sense of being more fully alive.

Maurice Sendak, a favorite children's author of mine, expresses it more baldly. His book *In the Night Kitchen* was criticized for displaying his little boy protagonist Mickey naked. Sendak, in an interview, said with some impatience, “We are sexual beings! Everything we do is sexual!” It is absurd, he said, to try to separate our sexuality from the rest of our lives.

Sendak means something much greater, much richer than the usual understanding of sexuality. Life, life energy – God energy – suffuses our whole bodies – passion for living, joy, arises from our being engaged in every way with this gift of life.

Here's to spring, to the merry month of May!

peace, *Jean*



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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/tertullian27.html>



# ON THE STREET

## The Peoples Church of Chicago Newsletter for May, 2010

*"A Spiritual Home for People of Conscience "*

### CALENDAR

#### Film/Movie Night –

**Fri, May 28, 6pm: "Lean On Me"**  
– students of a besieged high sch. principal help him save his school, starring **Morgan Freeman**.

#### Upcoming Services

- ? **Sundays 10am:** Worship Service, **Rev. Jean Darling** preaching, with stories and poetry and music.
- ? **Sun, May 16, 10am:** Service, followed by **monthly Potluck**.
- ? **Sun, May 23, 10am:** Seminarian and history buff **Joe Cherry**. **New member class** following service.

#### Other Events

- ? **"Second Fri," May 14, 6pm:** **Taizé service**, followed by **"Somebody else's poetry" Slam** at the **Coffeehouse**.
- ? **Sat, May 15, 7pm, Piano Recital:** Joseph Bures plays "Tale of Woe," classical music from the greats.
- ? **Thurs, May 20, 7pm: Book Group** meeting at Border's Books on Broadway. We'll take a look at the **Muslim Jesus** through articles and Sufi stories. Get copies of the readings from the church office.

### 2 Li'l Fishes

Each Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday, a free lunch is served in Anderson Hall. All are welcome.  
If you would like to help, phone Will Pruitt, volunteer coordinator, 773-754-6102.

#### Minister's Notes: "The Merry Month of May"

*Rev. Jean Siegfried Darling*

Ah, May! So many associations!

The riot of blooms and greening – we celebrate the life that has been hiding beneath, within the drab browns and tans of winter. So many poets have taken on the daunting task of capturing this heady time. One of my favorites:

"This spring as it comes bursts up in bonfires green,  
Wild puffing of emerald trees, and flame-filled bushes,  
Thorn-blossom lifting in wreaths of smoke between  
Where the wood fumes up and the watery, flickering rushes.

I am amazed at this spring, this conflagration  
Of green fires lit on the soil of the earth, this blaze  
Of growing, and sparks that puff in wild gyration,  
Faces of people streaming across my gaze.

And I, what fountain of fire am I among  
This leaping combustion of spring? My spirit is tossed  
About like a shadow buffeted in the throng  
Of flames, a shadow that's gone astray, and is lost."  
- D. H. Lawrence, *The Enkindled Spring*, 1916

May Day, reminding us of a time of bonfires and couples newly wed, of ancient pagan holidays, so cheerfully portrayed by Julie Andrews in "Camelot" as she sings:

"It's May! It's May!  
The lusty month of May!...  
Those dreary vows that ev'ryone takes,  
Ev'ryone breaks.  
Ev'ryone makes divine mistakes!  
The lusty month of May!"  
- Lerner and Lowe

These lovely, earthy writings remind us of our very visceral connection to the Earth, to the natural world. Birdsong in the cool and fresh early dawn sounds like rejoicing – and who are we to say that the birds aren't filled with the same joy we feel?

There are still too many remnants of a culture and religion that saw humans as separate from and superior to nature – we saw it as dangerous, in need of taming, and also as symbolic of our own "baser" (animal?) nature.  
**...cont'd**