



# ON THE STREET

## The Peoples Church of Chicago

### Newsletter for September, 2012

“A Spiritual Home for People of Conscience”

## CALENDAR

### Upcoming Sundays

- **Sundays 10am:** Worship Service, Rev. Jean Darling preaching.
- **Sun, Sept 30: Rev. Elizabeth Harding.** Trustees meet after service.
- **Sun, Oct 7:** Community potluck after service

### Other Events

- **Fri, Sept 13:** 6pm Taizé service, 7pm Coffeehouse, with special guest **Robert Middleton** playing with **Merry Measure**, live.
- **Sat, Sept 15, 10am: PBC Board** meets, Molly's Café.
- **Tues, Sept 25, 6:30pm: Soup with Pastor Jean** – we'll reflect on the Jewish Day of Atonement.
- **Sat, Sept 29, 4pm:** Spiritual Beans meets at Inspiration Kitchens.
- **Sat, Sept 29, 7pm:** Joseph Bures classical piano recital, "The Art of the Minuet."

### Minister's Notes:

#### Thinking of Sherlock...

*Rev. Jean Siegfried Darling*

Over vacation I read various light things, like the scrumptious nail-biter *Dance of the Assassins*, by Hervé Jubert – a copy I found lying around among the books left behind when the shelter closed last fall. In this tale, a future Britain in which technology has eliminated crime, still needs a department for investigating crime (just in case), and the chief investigating officer is a witch.

The idea of having special powers is especially appealing in this day and age, when we feel so powerless against “evil-doers” wherever they lurk, be it on the streets, in the banks or boardrooms, or in the halls of Congress.

But as soon as we add magic to the mix, we have not only those who use magic for good, but those who do the opposite. Our advantage is not only lost, but we are even more fearful of the unknown magical powers of evil.

This is why I don't believe in magic – it's even scarier than real life.

Sherlock Holmes, another child of the Enlightenment, was the quintessential rational figure, in opposition to the flocks of spiritualists that populated his creator Arthur Conan Doyle's world. Sherlock solved crimes in a seemingly miraculous way – but it was always by use of keen observation, logical thinking, and knowledge of human nature.

(Public television is airing a new series of Sherlock stories set in today's England, with a young Sherlock and Dr. Watson wrestling with current issues – for example, their remake of “The Hound of the Baskervilles” involves Holmes uncovering secret government research into psychotropic poisons that make people hallucinate their worst fears – like giant blood-thirsty hounds that tear people to pieces.)

The odd thing about Sherlock representing rationalism, is that Conan Doyle was himself a spiritualist. Doyle stopped writing Sherlock stories in the early 1900s (he tried unsuccessfully to kill off his hero in 1893). Doyle's interest in spiritualism grew significantly after 1918, when he lost his eldest son in WWI, a brother and two brothers-in-law, all within a short time.

*cont'd...*

### 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](mailto:twolilfishes@yahoo.com).

## Minister's Notes, cont'd

After Conan Doyle's death in 1930, there was even controversy about whether to bury him in consecrated ground, because of his spiritualist beliefs.

He believed in and defended a photograph of a little girl with fairies in the foreground as real – it was later proven to be a hoax. And, even more oddly, Wikipedia reports,

Richard Milner, an American historian of science, has presented a case that Conan Doyle may have been the perpetrator of the Piltdown Man hoax of 1912, creating the counterfeit hominid fossil that fooled the scientific world for over 40 years. Milner says that Conan Doyle had a motive—namely, revenge on the scientific establishment for debunking one of his favourite psychics—and that [his novel] *The Lost World* contains several encrypted clues regarding his involvement in the hoax.

We are torn, sometimes, between the material and the spiritual, in our lives. And though we have science to help us figure out what is real in the material world, how do we know what is “real” in the spiritual world?

What is spirit? What is the spiritual part of our lives?

I've heard myself often say, when I hear about people fighting some political issue, “That's a spiritual problem.” I feel very confident at such moments, and I think that that judgment has to do with people reacting out of a place of fear, or insecurity, or hatred, or some other place in us that is not in touch with the benevolent Spirit that I think rules this Universe.

When we are living within a place of trusting that Spirit, we respond differently in the world. Instead of holding our breath to stop the pain, we learn to breathe; we learn to let the tears fall, we learn to ask for help; we learn to stop and listen, and to look around and see what we can do to help ourselves.

We listen for the still small voice that helps us know what is real for us. And in doing so, we open our hearts to the generosity, the love, that dwell within all of us, that are intrinsic to the fabric of the Universe.

Spirit is elusive, yes, but still real. Perhaps not as fairies, or ghosts – though some people seem to have such experiences – but for all of us, Spirit may more likely manifest in our sense of inner calm, in our joy in life, in our connection with other people or with creative work.

Spirit is a mystery that Sherlock doesn't try to solve.

peace, Jean

## Open House Chicago

The Peoples Church building will be open for tours on the weekend of October 13 and 14. We are one of 300 sites chosen to show off our space during **Open House Chicago 2012**, the Chicago Architecture Foundation's celebration of architectural gems in our area. If you'd like to help us host the event, please contact Pastor Jean or Dave Karcher.



### “Spiritual Beans”

Treasures of Uptown interfaith discussion group meets on Saturday, September 29, 4-5pm at Inspiration Kitchens, 4715 N.

Sheridan, for another lively conversation. The topic this month is “Ghosts and the Afterlife.” For more information, see [www.TreasuresofUptown.org](http://www.TreasuresofUptown.org).

## Classical Piano Recital, Saturday, September 29,

7pm: Joseph Bures plays minuets by various composers, in “The Art of the Minuet.”



## The Peoples Church of Chicago

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# Calendar – September 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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2 10am Service	3  LABOR DAY PICNIC IN THE PARK	4	5  6:30 Treasures steering comm.	6	7	8
9 10am Service 11:30 Trustees	10	11	12	13  10am -2pm Illinois Mobile Drivers License office	14  6pm Second Fri Taizé /Coffeehse w Merry Measure	15 10 JustEmbrace Sole Care foot clinic 10-noon PBC board meeting
16 10am Service	17	18	19	20  1:30 2 Li'l Fishes	21	22
23 10am Service	24	25  6:30 Soup with Pastor Jean	26	27	28	29  4 Spiritual Beans @Inspir Kitchens  7p Joseph Bures piano recital
30 10am Service 11:30 Trustees	1	2	3	4	5	6