



ON THE STREET

The Peoples Church of Chicago Newsletter for April, 2008

"A Spiritual Home for People of Conscience"

CALENDAR

Film/Movie Night –

- ? Fourth Friday, April 25, 6-8pm.
"Akeelah and the Bee" –
followed by discussion.

Song and Hymn Sing –

- ? Every Thursday, 5:30 – 6:30pm.

Upcoming Services

- ? Sunday, April 13, 10am: Service.
1pm Reception, 2pm **Installation.**
- ? Sunday, April 20, 10am. **Earth Day** service. It's also the first day of Passover.
- ? Sunday, April 27, 10am. Special music service, with **Maggie "Catfish" Siegfried** leading singing.

All services followed by coffee and light refreshments.

2 Li'l Fishes

Each Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, a free lunch is served in the lower floor Anderson Hall of the church. All are welcome.

If you would like to volunteer, come by after 10:00am, and Isaac will put you to work.

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You're Invited

Installation Ceremony for Jean Siegfried Darling

as Congregational Development Minister
of The Peoples Church of Chicago

Sunday, April 13

Reception, 1pm
Ceremony, 2pm

Minister's Notes:

Panic Attack

Rev. Jean Siegfried Darling

How do you handle pressure?

Some people are cool about it – those are the ones you'd like to have near you if there were a fire or some natural disaster.

Most of us are not, and we have to develop strategies to deal with unexpected things happening to us, or if we have too much to do, and not enough time. If we haven't anticipated having to choose how we act ahead of time, we may not act the way we want to when we are under pressure.

We've all experienced people in public positions (or even in our own families!) whose mood is foul, their responses snappish, and who only reluctantly give us what we need. We might even find ourselves responding this way at times!

There are two stories I like to keep in mind for such occasions. One was the mother of my friend Jimbo, who worked in a factory. When the boss came and told her she was working too slowly, she replied, "You know, I only have two speeds, and the other one is slower!" This is about dealing with the pressure someone else is putting on you, and finding ways to reclaim some control over your own work. In situations like this, it's essential to claim what you need – not to think your needs are unimportant. **cont'd...**

Minister's Notes – cont'd

How can we feel free enough to claim our rights as human beings, not frightened by the thought that we might lose our job if we mouth off like Jimbo's mother did? It's part of living as whole persons to make sure our lives are not dominated by fear, or by any other destructive emotion. We do have that choice.

The other story has more to do with how we respond to others, when we feel stressed.

A friend of mine, an older woman, played a rather devilish part in a play I put on at a previous church, and did a fabulous job. When I remarked how well she played the part of this "dark" character, which seemed so unlike her own nature, she told me about her father, and how he taught them "always to be kind."

This is a lesson we should all be taught as children. But many of us are not – it wasn't part of what my parents told me (even though they would have agreed). It is valuable to have it said out loud, so that we can more easily keep it in mind.

When you're feeling snappish, try not to act it out, but note it to yourself, and give yourself a break. I try to remember that relationships with other people outlive most everything else, and also are the source of nurturing in our lives. So stand up for yourself, and be kind while you do it.

peace, *Jean*

First Responders

Bob Ford, Ex. Dir., Preston Bradley Center

"We Emergency Shelters are the First Responders for people who have lost their places of residence. The difference from the first responders we usually think of – fire, police, paramedics – is that people come to us, not we to them. What they all have in common is that they are looking for some kind of assistance." The speaker is a small Eritrean man named Ghide Uqbit, Shelter Director for Uptown's three REST overnight Interim Housing/Shelter sites. The Men's Interim Housing site is in Peoples Church, and it also has a few Emergency Shelter beds.

"Each person who comes to the shelter is in a very big hole," Ghide continues, "and is looking for someone to help him climb out of it. Most immediately, such people need a safe place to be, a shower, a bed, and something to eat. But their

problems are usually much deeper than that. And in the shelter itself, at night, we can do very little about them."

But REST actually can do much more for them over a period of time. The emergency bed is only the first step. REST is part of an overall city "Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness" by providing housing first, then supportive social services. For many, the first stop is REST's Emergency Shelter, then Interim Housing, and finally permanent housing. REST also provides other social service care during the daytime to treat the disabilities which homeless people often have—physical disabilities, addictions, physical or mental illness, and stresses from physical or emotional abuse.

Much of the funding for these services comes from the Federal government through HUD—the Department of Housing and Urban Development. In recent years, HUD has decided that its primary business should be housing, because people are more likely to be healed from treatment rendered while they are living in stable housing. Hence, they have moved away from funding social services while people continue to live in temporary shelters.

REST houses up to 180 people a night in its Emergency Shelter and Interim Housing programs, and hosts another 100 in permanent housing in single room occupancy (SRO) units and small apartments located in the Uptown area. It also provides case management, Basic Life Skills, a mailing address, telephone message service, a free weekly medical clinic, Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings, access to addictions treatment, access to mental health services, and pre-employment training.

Without REST over 2,000 homeless persons in Uptown annually would not find First Responders at Peoples Church to help them leave the streets behind --permanently.

In solidarity with the disadvantaged,
Bob

Coming Up:

"Akeelah and the Bee"

We continue **Movie Night**, the fourth Friday of the month, with this "genuinely sweet and determinedly inspirational family film" (reviewer Kenneth Turan, LA Times), about a girl from a low-performing school in LA who triumphs in spelling and learns life lessons along the way. Join us for popcorn and the movie at **6pm, April 25**, followed by discussion.