

Calendar – April 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 11am Roosevelt U. – CRS “High Hopes”
3 Communion 10am Service Noon – Trustees	4	5 6:30pm Treasures	6 10am Partners for Sacred Places site visit	7	8 6pm – Taizé service, Coffeehouse	9
10 10am Service Noon – PC History Day Committee	11	12	13	14 1:30pm – 2 Li'l Fishes	15	16 PBC BENEFIT CONCERT 6pm – Reception 7pm - Performance
17 PALM SUNDAY 10am Service	18	19	20	21	22 GOOD FRIDAY 6pm Tenebrae Svc	23
24 EASTER 9am - breakfast 10am Service	25	26	27	28	29	30 10am – PBC board 7pm – Jos Bures Recital

Minister's Notes, cont'd

I've often spoken of freedom, of liberation – the liberation of the human spirit from the tyrannies of fear, of small thinking, of prejudice, of arrogance.

Galen reminds us that the freedom we value so highly is useless if we think it can be practiced all by ourselves. "Freedom without responsibility is license!" said the great liberationist educator Paulo Freire, with some vehemence. Freedom must be balanced, put in context, by our sense of responsibility to the greater whole of which we are a part.

But in our efforts to bear witness to that responsibility, when we spend so much time doing social justice work, we may tend to focus unduly on all the misery, all the injustice that we see around us on a daily basis. We too often forget the importance of cultivating a spiritual practice that is based on connecting with the divine.

The happiest, the most spiritual people I have known don't dwell on the problems of the world – though they certainly put in time and effort to mentor youth, to heal people, to make quality furniture, or do any number of things that are deeply satisfying.

The practice of expressing gratitude for whatever comes our way reflects our connection with the past; the practice of adding to the common good reflects our connection with an unknown future, a future made up of our children and our children's children.

Galen reminds us of the words of Psalm 118, which he and his family say at dinnertime each night: "This is the day we are given. Let us rejoice and be glad in it."

When our friend introduced into a business meeting the idea of prayers of joy and gratitude, he changed the feeling of the meeting. When we remember to dwell in joy and gratitude, our own hearts are lightened, and we feel connected to one another and to that awe-inspiring something larger than ourselves, call it Nature, Spirit, God.

peace,
Jean



p.s. Look for Jean's sermons on YouTube – search on "Peoples Church of Chicago" or "Rev Jean Darling"

Benefit Performance

Jazz harpist Brandee Younger and friends will be performing here in our beautiful auditorium on Saturday, April 16th, to benefit this, the Preston Bradley Center, refuge to the poor, home to the arts and spirit.

The evening begins with a reception at 6pm, and the concert at 7pm. From Ms. Younger's website:

"A versatile musician who has been proven to defy genres and labels, this young contemporary harpist has created a unique niche in both traditional and non-traditional harp arenas. She is known for sharing the stage with Jazz Royalty Jack DeJohnette & Ravi Coltrane, laying down tracks featuring artists such as Common, Drake and Ryan Leslie, as well as bringing to life the Classic Impressionistic work of Ravel."

Peoples Church history day

On the afternoon of **Sunday, May 22**, we begin exploring Peoples Church heritage with a timeline of important world, Chicago, and Uptown events, and put our experience and knowledge of Peoples Church into context. If you know of anyone with some history here, please invite them! We'll have refreshments, a slide show, and some of Preston Bradley's short radio messages on hand to enjoy.

Mother's Day dinner for the homeless

Members of Second Unitarian Church on Barry will join us on Sunday, May 8th, to help serve a special Mother's Day dinner, with sit-down service, table cloths and flowers.

Mother's Day reminds all too many people of the family they are missing on holidays. It's a blessing to be able to add a bit of cheer to people on one of these days.

The Peoples Church of Chicago

941 W. Lawrence Avenue

P.O. Box 408319

Chicago, IL 60640-8319

www.PeoplesChurchChicago.org

773.784.6633



ON THE STREET

The Peoples Church of Chicago Newsletter for April, 2011

"A Spiritual Home for People of Conscience"

CALENDAR

Movie/Film Night

? No movie in April.

Upcoming Services

? **Sundays 10am:** Worship Service, Rev. Jean Darling preaching.

EASTER season:

? **Sun, Apr 17, 10am:** Join us for **Palm Sunday**, with a lively procession around the hall to the music of Scott Joplin.

? **Fri, Apr 22, 6pm:** Come to our traditional **Tenebrae** service, a service of candlelight and shadow.

? **Sun, Apr 24, 9am:** **Easter potluck breakfast**, followed by celebration.

Other Events

? **Fri, Apr 8, 6pm:** Second Friday: Taizé service; **7pm**, singer-songwriters **The Hollands!**

? **Sat, Apr 16, 6pm:** Benefit for **PBC**, our wonderful building with all its services, with reception at 6pm and concert at 7. Donation at the door.

? **Sat, Apr 30, 7pm:** Joseph Bures holds his classical piano recital, with 4 Chaminade études, one by Liszt.

2 Li'l Fishes

Each Tues, Thurs, Sat and Sunday, a free hot lunch is served downstairs in Anderson Hall. We're working on providing organic sandwiches and salads on other days. All are welcome.

To help out, phone Will Pruitt, volunteer coordinator, 773-754-6102.

Minister's Notes:

"And now we interrupt your regularly scheduled program..."

Rev. Jean Siegfried Darling

The other day, in the middle of what was a productive and lively Trustees meeting, with a good deal of laughter (more laughter means we are moving in the right direction!), one member of the group raised a new item of business.

"I would like us to start a prayer group. A *positive* prayer group."

Later, one of us would say, in a note to this man, that his interjection changed the whole tenor of the meeting –

The general response, I recall, was a sudden relaxing, and an empathetic approving chuckle. In so doing, you had sparked a shift in the meeting, had opened the switch to a siding off the main line, like a passing siding where slower freights await the passing of the crack named passenger trains known for their efficient movement of passengers over long distances. There was no freight on the siding, but it was represented by your diversion, and upon regaining the main line, we were somehow different. We were more cohesive, we felt and thought a bit differently about ourselves as a group, we interacted more calmly.

In the meeting, our friend went on to say that people who focus on positive ideas, on gratitude, actually improve the functioning of their brains. That argument appeals to the intellectuals among us, especially those of us who fear we are losing our minds, cell by aging cell.

But as Rev. Galen Guengerich puts it, there are much more important reasons for dwelling in gratitude. Religion, he writes, "is constituted by two distinct but related impulses: a sense of awe and a sense of obligation."¹ The awe we experience at living in this beautiful world, at our experience of the divine, creates a sense of gratitude, and our awareness that we must depend wholly on things and people outside ourselves creates a sense of obligation toward that larger world. "The ethic of gratitude demands that we nurture the world that nurtures us in return."

cont'd...

¹ <http://www.uuworld.org/ideas/articles/11144.shtml>