



ON THE STREET

The Peoples Church of Chicago

Newsletter for July, 2014

“A Spiritual Home for People of Conscience”

CALENDAR

Upcoming Sundays

- **Sundays 10am:** Worship Service, with Rev. Jean Darling preaching.
- **Sun, July 27:** UCC Illinois Conference Minister **Rev. Jorge Morales** preaching. Don't miss it!

Other Events

- **Tues, July 8, 6pm:** **Treasures of Uptown** interfaith steering committee, foyer.
- **Fri, July 11, 7:30pm:** **2nd Friday**, Live music from **David Drake** at the Coffeehouse in Molly's Café.
- **Sat, July 12, 8pm:** MCC, the Muslim Community Center, hosts a community **Ramadan dinner** at 4380 N Elston.
- **Sun, July 13, 2pm:** Tour the **Weiss Hospital Roof Garden** atop their parking lot with Treasures of Uptown.
- **Thurs, July 17, 1:30pm:** 2 Li'l Fishes Development committee, foyer.
- **Sat, July 19, 10am:** PBC Board, Molly's Café.
- **Sat, July 19, 4pm:** Spiritual Beans discussion, “Judaism,” with Ken Perlow – Golden Pancake Rest. on Broadway.
- **Sun, July 20, 11:30:** Planning for the Labor Day Picnic after church.

Minister's Notes:

No Time for Cynicism

Rev. Jean Siegfried Darling

These last few weeks I've been watching some powerful footage on television from the year 1964, when the black people of Mississippi stood up to the all-white power structure.

Fifty years ago people said that Mississippi was so isolated that it was not really like part of the United States. Blacks worked on plantations farming or in white people's homes doing domestic work – no longer slaves – but not really free, either.

In 1964 only 6.4% of blacks in Mississippi were registered to vote, and those who tried to register could be threatened, be beaten, could lose their jobs. The KKK walked openly down the streets in their robes and hoods.

Civil rights organizers came up with a three-pronged strategy for challenging racism in Mississippi in 1964 that they called “Freedom Summer.” First, they brought a thousand workers from the North – young idealists, black and white – to register voters. Then they established summer Freedom Schools, to teach children (and adults) about black history and democracy. And they created the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party, to send an alternate slate of delegates to the 1964 Convention in Atlantic City, challenging the all-white Mississippi delegation.

Freedom Summer was no lark. The volunteers spread out all over the state, in every little town. They went two by two, black and white, house to house in the black neighborhoods, to ask people to register to vote. They came to admire the black families who took them in and fed and housed them, at great risk to themselves.

Freedom Summer workers were threatened and harassed by whites who resented their coming to upset the “natural order” of things. And when three of those young Freedom Summer volunteers were kidnapped and murdered, the rest of the country began to understand just what a dangerous place Mississippi was for anyone who challenged the status quo.

The leaders of the Civil Rights movement knew how important it was that people get the right to vote – otherwise they would never be able to change the laws or the way the laws were administered.

cont'd...

2 Li'l Fishes

2 Li'l Fishes serves 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

The waters seem so muddy now. Race does not seem to be such an obvious factor in our society's problems today. Or has it just been transformed? Have the offensive old racist stereotypes just been transformed into offensive new racist stereotypes? To judge from the proportion of our young people of color who are fouled by the criminal justice system, that's what it looks like.

Were things really so much clearer then? Maybe we just see more clearly with hindsight.

Black people are still being disenfranchised. It has been done through laws that strip ex-felons of their right to vote – as in Florida, Iowa, Kentucky and Virginia.³ And this year the Supreme Court struck down part of the landmark 1965 Voting Rights Act, resulting in some Southern states immediately reenacting some of the same discriminatory voting restrictions that people worked so hard to get rid of, those fifty years ago.

The *Nation* magazine writes:

Since the 2010 election, twenty-two states have passed new voting restrictions, according to the Brennan Center. This includes requiring strict voter ID to cast a ballot, cutting early voting, making it harder to register to vote and rescinding voting rights for non-violent ex-felons. New restrictions will be in place for the first time in fifteen states in the 2014 election. All across the country, we're seeing the most significant push to restrict voting rights since Reconstruction.⁴

Voting is a small part of democracy. Democracy also means having a voice at public meetings, being able to influence public policy, having a vibrant civil society – the voluntary organizations that make up the life-blood of a democracy. Voting, if a small part, is still an essential part.

To me, democracy is the expression in political life of our equality as God's children. It's a vital part of our religious life, and a way of helping to secure justice for all of us. So, register! Help others to register! And vote!

peace, Jean



³ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/10/08/felon-voting-rights_n_1924535.html

⁴ <http://www.thenation.com/blog/180389/fifty-years-after-freedom-summer-voting-rights-act-needed-more-ever>



David Drake at the Coffeehouse, Second Friday, July 11

Join us in Molly's Café at 7:30pm for live music from folk artist David Drake, plus fresh brewed coffee, and Ludie's yummy desserts.

Love to Garden?

Sun, July 13, 2pm: Let's plan a community garden – start with a **tour of the rooftop garden** on the Weiss Hospital parking structure. Meet at 2 by the elevator. Sponsored by the Treasures of Uptown Interfaith Action Coalition, www.TreasuresofUptown.org



"Spiritual Beans" interfaith discussion Saturday, July 19, 4pm

Treasures of Uptown meets at Golden House Pancake Restaurant for another lively discussion – this time on Judaism, with Ken Perlow. See www.TreasuresofUptown.org.

UCC Conference Minister to preach:

Sun, July 27, 10am:
UCC Illinois Conference Minister **Rev. Jorge Morales**, former community organizer, a man with a discerning mind and a big heart. Come show your support!



The Peoples Church of Chicago

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July 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY Office closed	5
6 10am Service	7	8 6pm Treasures steering comm., foyer	9	10	11 7:30pm Second Friday with David Drake	12 8pm – MCC Community Ramadan dinner
13 10am Service 2pm – Rooftop garden tour, Weiss Hospital parking structure	14	15 7pm – Lawrence- Sheridan neighbors mtg, Molly's Café – with ice cream!	16	17 1:30 2 Li'l Fishes	18	19 10 Sole Care foot clinic 10 – PBC board 4pm – Spiritual Beans
20 10am Service – Nadine Keys preaching 11:30 Labor Day picnic planning	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 10am Service – Rev. Jorge Morales preaching	28	29	30	31	1 AUGUST <i>Pastor Jean is during</i>	2 <i>on vacation August</i>