



# ON THE STREET

## The Peoples Church of Chicago Newsletter for October-November, 2012

“A Spiritual Home for People of Conscience”

### CALENDAR

#### Upcoming Sundays

- **Sundays 10am:** Worship Service, Rev. Jean Darling preaching.
- **Sun, Oct 21: Rev. Sam Smith**, on “Isaiah’s Call: Our Call.” Trustees meet after service.
- **Sun, Oct 28:** a shorter than usual service, followed by a “**Burgers, Brats and Bears**” fundraising tailgate party at Ollie’s, 11:30-3pm. \$25, or \$15 if you buy your ticket at church!

#### Other Events

- **Sun, Oct 7, noon:** retirement/ going away party for Bob Ford.
- **Fri, Oct 12:** No Taizé service this time; 7pm Coffeehouse, with songster **Steve Justman**, live.
- **Sat & Sun, Oct 13-14: Open House Chicago, 2012:** tour the building, 9am-5pm Sat, noon-5 Sun.
- **Sat, Oct 20, 10am:** **PBC Board** meets, Molly’s Café.
- **Tues, Oct 23, 6:30pm: Soup with Pastor Jean** – get to know your group – watch for invitations.
- **Sat, Oct 27, 4pm:** Spiritual Beans meets at Inspiration Kitchens.
- **Sat, Oct 27, 7pm:** Joseph Bures classical piano recital.

### Minister’s Notes:

#### Autumn Leaves

*Rev. Jean Siegfried Darling*

Recently we had an interfaith Harvest Festival here, with poetry, and readings from various religious traditions, and music. A pickup jazz group played “Autumn Leaves,” a tug-at-your-heart-strings ballad in a minor key – one of the old jazz standards – but the vocalist, Saalik Ziyad, dressed that number up in high-flying scat so you’d hardly recognize it.

It was almost enough to make you forget what autumn is about.

This time of turning leaves, of darkening time, of cooling time, makes us all a little melancholic, I think. I’ve actually had a hard time getting this newsletter written, because I was fighting this feeling of (as the French say) *tristesse* – no, I wanted to write something inspiring and upbeat!

But at our recent ministers’ retreat we experienced a workshop on “Reconnection.” Last week I preached on “Gratitude: the door to the heart” – the first step – and I was contemplating how to address the second step, “Honoring our pain.”

I realized, even during the workshop, that I was reluctant to go there, without a lifeline. When I spoke to my workshop partner of things that grieve me in my work, in my life, in the world, I jumped almost immediately to the ways in which – in spite of the troubles – I felt hopeful.

What was hard for me – and, I suspect, in this land of optimism, for many of us – is to really acknowledge the fear, the anger, the sadness, and the helplessness that I am feeling in this present moment.

We took part in a ritual in which people were invited to come into the circle and to hold symbols of these dark feelings: a heavy rock, some dead leaves, an empty bowl, a rough stick, and name their truth.

People shared their fear about a cancer diagnosis, their anger over the debt their nieces and nephews were taking on, their grief over dissensions in their congregation, their hopelessness about being able to lessen U.S. militarism in the world. Each person spoke for all of us – emotions we all feel and have (or

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

## Minister's Notes, cont'd

may not have) acknowledged to ourselves. It was a powerful experience, counteracting that "Don't worry, be happy!" tendency that trivializes pain.

It helped allow me to feel – beyond the usual sad feeling as winter approaches – some of my own grief at the changes we've been going through here.

Over the past year, we have undergone a great upheaval here at the Preston Bradley Center, our building. The changes are remarkable, and almost all for the good, moving us toward a brighter future. But change in itself brings sadness, as we grieve the loss of what was. We mourn as a way of helping us end one chapter of our lives and make way for beginning the next.

The big changes included the death of the REST shelter organization, and all that that meant for this building – a new shelter manager downstairs, and the opening of the space on the fourth floor; the arrival of the theater group and all the growing pains and joys that has brought; the birth of the new Arts Center and all the new people, color, and excitement it has introduced to the building. Lots more going on, lots more people around.

But behind my sadness, I think, is one of the biggest changes, Bob Ford's retirement. Bob and I worked so closely together over the past five years, fighting over policy issues, celebrating successes, collaborating and clashing, so that some people thought we acted like we were married. Perhaps we were married, to the building, and the church.

In any case, Bob's health decline and leaving us has been a kind of death. I am still grieving, in spite of the opportunities Bob's leaving brings us.

Before he left with his daughter Melissa to live in New Hampshire, we threw him a great send-off party, at which he was his old witty and well-spoken self, even if frail. And many people were able to tell him how he had touched their lives.

Bob always has had a gift of going right to the heart. I will miss his curmudgeonly presence, his whimsy, his interesting conversation. We wish him well in his new surroundings – we know he will make new friends. But his old ones will miss him.

I find I am grieving, not just Bob's leaving, but at finding new ways and means to do the work that still needs doing, at the changes which must inevitably come, but like dark clouds on the horizon, may bring nourishing rain or violent storms.

Sometimes we just need to grieve – after gratitude has opened our hearts and we know what a secret burden they carry, we can lay that burden down – speak our grief – listen and be heard.

peace, Jean



### "Spiritual Beans"

Treasures of Uptown interfaith discussion group meets on Saturday, October 27, 4-5pm at Inspiration Kitchens, 4715 N.

Sheridan, for another lively conversation. The topic this pre-election meeting is "Politics." For more information, see [www.TreasuresofUptown.org](http://www.TreasuresofUptown.org).

### Classical Piano Recital, Saturday, October 27, 7pm:

Joseph Bures plays music in honor of Nicolo Paganini, whose birthday is today, "Spooky!"



### "Burgers, Brats and Bears"

Sunday, October 28, 11:30am-3pm: Join us at Ollie's Lounge for an indoor tailgate party – no rain or cold, good company, good

food! Your \$25 donation helps keep Pastor Jean for another year! 1064 West Berwyn Avenue. \$35 at the door - get your tickets ahead of time, at the church office, or on Sunday.



## The Peoples Church of Chicago

941 W. Lawrence Avenue

P.O. Box 408319

Chicago, IL 60640-8319

[www.PeoplesChurchChicago.org](http://www.PeoplesChurchChicago.org)

773.784.6633

# Calendar – Oct-Nov 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
21 10am Service Rev. Sam Smith  11:30 Trustees	22	23  6:30 Soup with Pastor Jean	24	25	26	27  4 Spiritual Beans @Inspir Kitchens  7p Joseph Bures piano recital
28 10am Service  11:30-3pm Burgers, Brats & Bears: Tailgate party at Ollie's Lounge, 1064 W. Berwyn	29	30	31  Halloween	<b>NOVEMBER</b>		3
4 10am Service	5	6	7	8	9  6pm Taizé Coffeehouse w Andrew & Casey Calhoun	10  8pm Lakeside Pride Symph. Band
11 10am Service 11:30 Potluck  2-4pm Treasures of Uptown event, Buddhist Temple	12	13	14  6:30 Treasures steering comm., foyer	15	16	17 10 JustEmbrace Sole Care clinic 10-noon PBC bd PC retreat  6-10 4 <sup>th</sup> floor Artists open hse
18 10am Service	19	20	21  Noon-2pm: THANKSGIVING DINNER FOR UPTOWN COMMUNITY	22  HAPPY THANKSGIVING DAY!	23	24  4 Spiritual Beans @Inspir Kitchens  7pm "Amahl" operetta
25 10am Service	26	27	28	29	30	1  <b>DECEMBER</b>  7p Joseph Bures piano recital