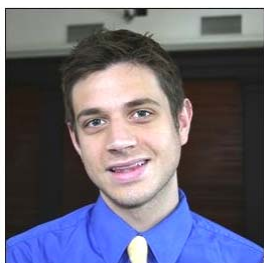
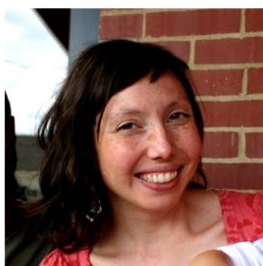


Community House Welcomes our Newest Members

Community House Presbyterian Church is happy to welcome our newest members to our church family. The smiling faces you see below are the outward manifestation of four glowing individuals.



Doug Cloud joins us after deciding to put down some roots in Pittsburgh where he is engaged in a Doctoral program in Rhetoric at Carnegie Mellon. Doug was introduced to CHPC by Linda and Tim Flowers. His parents live in Bellevue Ohio where he spent his younger years. Doug has a long history of working for LGBT rights and found Community House a welcomed fit as a worshipping community. Doug has a soft spot for the genus *Felis*. Just ask his cat Helo.



Denise and Paco Mahone found CHCP through an email invitation from Darlene to join us for Race series. Denise received her MFA in painting and critical theory and has made a name for herself as an accomplished and recognized artist primarily in the sculpture and installation media. Her work was recently spotlighted at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts in Shadyside as part of the prestigious Biennial 2008. Denise is currently on leave from her responsibilities as an Art professor at Duquesne University. Her energy is contagious. So if you're feeling low, just stand close enough to get a hug. You will feel better in a second. Paco grew up in Pittsburgh but found good reason to relocate to cities with more jazz-friendly vibes. While Paco still brings his string bass chops to the stage in limited engagements around the city, he has recently found fulfillment in another talent, writing. As a member of the Manchester Craftmen's Guild staff, Paco works with youth in video/audio production and other skills. As the MCG community engagement specialist, he is also focused on increasing the MCG's profile with Northside youth and adults. Paco was recently asked to assume some of the curator responsibilities tied to the three art galleries associated with MCG. Denise and Paco are the proud parents of Eamonn (A' mon). Eamonn, 2 1/2, loves pizza, raspberries and yoga. He is waiting excitedly for the birth of his new brother who is due to join the Community House family sometime in October. What a joy to anticipate!



Diane DePalma has had a long-time relationship with Community House. She grew up on the Northside and was witness to the community-building done in the early days by the Community House staff. Diane was re-introduced to Community House by Sarah and David Springer in 1997 following the birth of her daughter, Mariah. Diane is a life-long advocate for racial harmony and finds Community House a strong pillar in that regard. Since retiring from the City of Pittsburgh Police Department as Police Commander, Diane has devoted her energies to improving opportunities for children of all racial and financial backgrounds. One particular effort is "Friends and Neighbors of the Northside" that raises funds to support students who choose to attend the racially-balanced, educationally sound Cardinal Wright School. Diane is also on the Board of Directors of the Pittsburgh Homeless Children.



Do you have an idea or article you'd like to see published in our newsletter? Please give your idea or completed article to Jen Saffron at jensaffron@comcast.net or Bobbi Donovan at bobbilee@comcast.net. Please get your ideas to either of the above women by the 15th of the month or articles by the 25th of the month for publication in the following month's Unity News. Please put "For Newsletter" in the subject line. Thanks.

Tending to Our Flock at Community House

Community House takes great pride in the spiritual lives of our children. That is clear from the list that follows. These folks contributed to keep CHPC a vital place for children to learn and experience the values of our faith. Some acted in leadership rolls. Some worked with a group of children every week during the school year. Others chose a

summer Sunday to spend time with the children. A special thank you to all who did.

Sunday school leadership was provided by Sarah Springer (Explorers), Jan Leo and Wayne Peck (Pathfinders), and Darlene Durrwachter Rushing (Praise, and Sunday School Administrator).

Praise 2007- 08

Jeanine Blackburn
Amy Constantine
Claudia Detwiler
Shari Ferline
Susie Ferline
Del Rodriguez
Darlene Durrwachter-
Rushing
Derwin Rushing
Gina Spangenberg
Martin Spangenberg
Sharon Suritsky

Pathfinders 2007-08

Jessica Heathcote
Jan Leo
Wayne Peck

Explorers 2007- 08

Bob Baumbach
Ines Brady
John Detwiler
Gay Fogarty
Betsy O'Neill
Molly Peck
David Perkins
Darlene Durrwachter-
Rushing
Jen Saffron
Gina Spangenberg
David Springer
Sarah Springer

Camp Praise 2008

Amy Constantine
Jan Cox
Bobbi Donovan
Peter Donovan
Tim Flower
Linda Flower
Michelle Jones
Stephen Jordan
Cheryl Lowitzer
Susan Shira Nilsen
Betsy O'Neill
Ben Peck
Joshua Peck
Dion Plater
Emily Hayes-Rowan
Rick St. John
Scott Stegman
Doug Sterling

News from the Community House Session

New members – the promise of community

Have you been joining the Community House family for Sunday worship and feeling finally at home? Have you watched the faces of the children of our faith family and found joy in their joy? Are you ready to make a commitment to put your energies in spreading the Good News that God's love is for all peoples? Perhaps the time has come to consider joining the Community House family. New Member Dinners will be held on September 10 and 17. Please see Rev. Wayne to register. We look forward to having you!

Relationships - Promises kept

Rev. Wayne has chosen an important theme for his sermons during the month of September. It is Relationships and Covenantal Blessings. Four types of relationships will be highlighted:

Sunday 9/7	Covenants of Friendship
Sunday 9/14	Your Covenant with Christ
Sunday 9/21	Our Covenant with Children
Sunday 9/28	Marriage Covenants

What's coming up at Community House?

September 14, Welcome Back Sunday!

September 20 - New baby party for the Mahone Family - Durrwachter-Rushing home

September 20 & 21 - Weekend to be sensitized about Torture; multiple locations

September 24 - Unnatural Causes (Part 1), 7:00 p.m.; CHPC

October 1 - 2 - Janet Edwards' trial; The Priory

October 11 - Walk for Racial Harmony; Pittsburgh Zoo

October 22 - Unnatural Causes (Part 2); 7:00 p.m. CHPC

MORE**News from the Community House Session**

Your Session met after a summer recess and has much news to report. James is spearheading a new, more personal means of keeping CH members up to date with happenings and concerns of the community. CH will offer support to the mission to which Josh Peck will dedicate himself in Atlanta. Janet Edwards is hosting a no-holds-barred event around her upcoming trial. The Special Events committee has secured another thought-provoking video series to share with CH members and our neighbors. And, CH will support the efforts of Pittsburgh United to improve the outcomes for residents of the Northside in exchange for the use of their neighborhood as the site of the commercial development that is pending. All of this was in addition to the regular business of worship, membership, stewardship, and Space for Grace.

These are not your grandparent's parishes

When you hear the word parish, you may think of the traditional division of a geographic area into logical subdivisions that support an integral church and clergy. Community House is taking the community aspect of parishes and making it even more personal. Beginning in September, each member of the CH Session will act as the messenger for a designated group of CH members. Your messenger will contact you when there is an important piece of information that needs to be conveyed to all members. S/He will also pass along prayer requests, and messages of concern. You will be getting your first call from your Session messenger in the next couple weeks. We look forward to the intimacy this responsive interaction will bring.

The DOOR has opened for Josh Peck

Josh Peck proudly announced that he will be setting up a life in Atlanta, Georgia, beginning in early September, to dedicate one year of his life to the Young Adult Volunteer program of the PCUSA. He will be serving at the Central Presbyterian Church in downtown Atlanta. His work will center on mission in various forms in the inner city and is his first foray onto what he presently hopes will be his path seminary and on toward ordination in the Presbyterian Church.

CH sends Josh on his way with prayers and best wishes and a donation of \$1,000 to support the DOOR Project, of which he will be a part. The donation will come for the financial support CH gives annually to support the mission of the Presbyterian Church USA.

Support for GLBT Presbyterians -- bring it home.

Janet Edwards invites all who affirm Marriage Equality to come to her trial by Pittsburgh Presbytery in October. She is mounting a national campaign, "A Time to Embrace: Toward Love and Reconciliation" welcoming anyone, wherever they live, to come and see what God is doing in Pittsburgh. Resources are available to cover travel costs and lodging! On the web go to www.timetoembrace.com . .

Stewardship – Giving back

CH members continue to be generous in their giving. Our donations are slightly higher than at this time last year. This is good news. We have a yearly total giving so far this year of \$64,882 with a goal of \$115,000. Last year at this time we had donations of \$63,835.

The kickoff for the 2008-09 Stewardship Campaign will be held on Sunday, October 5 with pledges collected at the worship service on Sunday, October 26. Please watch for a letter in your mailbox to let you know the status of your pledges and giving so far this year.

Space for Grace reaches out to more members of Community House

Space for Grace offers a mid-week respite to gather around our community table and share a meal, contemplative conversation and peace. Beginning in September each Community House parish will be asked to prepare the Space for Grace meal on the third Wednesday of the month. The evening will be centered around the dining table rather than the worship table. All are invited to attend.

Activities following the Space for Grace common meal will also expand. Each of these activities will begin promptly at 7:15 p.m.

Our Choir is always open to new members. Practices are held the first second and third Wednesdays of each month and before service on Sundays.

Rev. Wayne and Jan Leo will utilize the time to work with young adult members of our church and their parents, replacing the Pathfinders program that had taken place after worship on Sundays.

Rev. Ron Church will organize a faith discussion group for people interested in faith sharing and strengthening their faith life.

On the Hearts and Minds of Our Members

Making the horrors of torture understandable

As a member of Pittsburgh Against Torture, I invite members of Community House Church to join with us on Saturday, Sept. 20 for "Talking About Torture: How Can We Learn to Speak About the Unspeakable". This all-day conference will be held at First Unitarian Church in Shadyside, beginning at 9AM. Lunch is provided. The Saturday conference is free. Registration is not required.

The morning presentation includes panelists who will discuss: Inter-faith teachings about torture; How to change the culture in our mainstream media, TV, internet culture that accepts and promotes torture; How to discuss issues of violence with children; How to motivate legislators to address the issue of torture; and How to raise public awareness about torture in our prisons.

The afternoon session is a presentation by Hector Aristizabal, a psychologist and family therapist. Using the Theatre of the Oppressed as a framework, Hector Aristizabal will perform Nightwind, a solo performance in which Hector re-enacts his own arrest and torture by the US-supported military in Colombia. His performance explores possible outcomes—violent rage or a channeling of the energy into the peace movement. He sees his torture as an ordeal, like any other, rather than a christening into lifelong victimization. Mr. Aristizabal engages the audience in understanding the impact of torture and the process of transformation. Please go to <http://www.ctoatala.org> for more information on his work.

On Sunday, September 21, in a separate event, Mr. Aristizabal will engage participants in a dynamic experiential workshop. This workshop combines Theatre of the Oppressed techniques with traditional storytelling, drumming, improvisational drama and creative ritual, to explore our relationship with power and our ability to influence change. The Sunday workshop is at the Friends Meeting House on Ellsworth Avenue. Cost for the Sunday workshop is \$25. For reservations, contact: Scilla Wahrhaftig at 412-371-3607 or swahrhaftig@afsc.org.

Claudia Detwiler

Walk for Racial Harmony

Saturday, Oct. 11, 2008
Pittsburgh Zoo

Join the Community House group for a fabulous morning at the Zoo while showing your support for racial harmony in our region! The Walk for Racial Harmony benefits the Women of Pittsburgh 2000 in their efforts to establish interracial sister groups which engage in the work of racial reconciliation, and the CCO Minority Ministry Fund which provides support to mentor minority college students. Community House will have a table to publicize our racial justice efforts, so we are also looking for 'table sitters' as well as walkers to join us.

Registration opens at 8 AM, walk begins promptly at 8:30 AM. You must arrive by 8:00 AM to be admitted onto the Zoo grounds as a participant in the Walk. Attending the Walk gains you admittance to the Zoo for the entire day. There will be refreshments and a celebration following the Walk. The cost is \$10 per adult before Sept. 27, \$15 after Sept. 27, kids age 11 and up are \$7 (age 10 and under are free).

Contact Darlene for registration forms and more information.

Reaching out to make a difference

Community House members were brought to a new understanding of the depth and breadth of the division that continues to exist between opportunities afforded persons of different races in the United States. A subsequent discussion has led to action.

Building on our myriad of strengths, Community House will engage 12-14 North Side residents – adults and their selected youth – in a storytelling project that focuses on health and wellness in our community. Youth would interview their peers, family members, community residents, and others, to create compelling audio presentations – The inter-generational recordings that highlight the stories and life projects of North Side youth, ideally will be brought to the public through public radio buy-in.

Recruitment of interested adults, both Northside residents and Community House partners, will begin in September. The program, as proposed, will involve 10 or 12 meetings. Anyone interested in getting more information or in partnering with a Northside family in this exciting and innovative program should contact Darlene Durrwachter--Rushing

Welcome Back Sunday, September 14

We are looking forward to celebrating Welcome Back Sunday in a big way. During the service we will have special jazz and praise music lead by Paco Mahone and friends. A Community House Potluck meal will follow the church service. Please see or contact Joyce Baskins about what you can bring. Come on home to your family and friends at Community House! This is a great Sunday to invite friends and neighbors to join us as well.

Unnatural Causes – Is inequality making us sick?

When candy and fries are more available than fresh produce... When how much money we make predicts how long we will live... Do we all have an equal chance for good health?

The Racial Justice Committee invites all Community House members and friends, as well as the wider Pittsburgh community, to explore issues related to community health, personal health, race, and income status by attending a screening of the acclaimed PBS documentary, "UNNATURAL CAUSES."

The events will begin at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, September 24 and Wednesday, October 22 at Community House.

Conversation, dessert and coffee will follow each presentation. Community House members are requested to bring a dessert or appetizer/snack.

"UNNATURAL CAUSES" examines the connections between healthy bodies, healthy bank accounts and skin color. Our screening will include three of the seven episodes from the DVD series that challenges fundamental beliefs about what makes Americans healthy - or sick - and offers new remedies for an ailing society.

Our presentation of "UNNATURAL CAUSES: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?" coincides with the intensifying presidential-election-year debates focusing on the estimated 47 million Americans lacking health coverage.

While embracing the essential need for universal health care, UNNATURAL CAUSES goes further, questioning what makes people ill in the first place, and probing why economic status, race and zip code surpass even smoking as powerful predictors of health status and life expectancy.

Experts and public health professionals have long emphasized that because these conditions are distributed unequally, so are patterns of chronic disease: e.g., heart disease, stroke, diabetes, asthma, even cancer.

Each episode sheds light on the mounting evidence that work, wealth, neighborhood conditions and lack of access to power and resources can get under the skin and disrupt human biology as surely as germs and viruses.

For more information about "Unnatural Causes" – the California Newsreel production that has aired on PBS link to: http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/episode_descriptions.php

Our sincerity shines through

This piece was found and brought to our community's attention by Darlene. Read and enjoy.

Weekly Wonders

Observations of Ministry in Pittsburgh Presbytery
by Rev. Bob Anderson, D. Min., Professional Transition Specialist, Interim Pastor to Presbytery

August 18, 2008 ~ Wonder-filled People

I'm celebrating a huge wonder. There are a huge number of "wonder-filled" people in Pittsburgh Presbytery. You probably know that because you are one of them, right? You are!

As I meet with pastors, presbytery leaders, ministry teams, task forces, and an assortment of other groups, I'm discovering a huge talent bank of gifted folk. I can't help but wonder what our presbytery would be like if we could all connect and share our gifts more fully? I love nothing more than to spend time with the people and projects about which I am passionate. Today that is you. I have a feeling we haven't begun to tap the wealth of gifts that are ours. I believe God is a God of abundance, and that is proving true in Pittsburgh Presbytery. What would be way cool for me is for you to teach me how we can connect these "dots" so that we

all get to share with others our gifts, talents, skills, passion (that's an invitation!).

I learned last week that Community House Presbyterian is within walking distance of my house on the North Side. I wandered in on Sunday for worship and marveled at the gardens that embrace the building. It turned out that this was a summer project for members – good work! The renovated church building is a soothing blend of colors, light, old and new. We sat around an antique table decorated with an elegantly simple collection of everlastings tucked in a clear glass vase (I wanted to take it home with me). Two pulpits anchored the ends and the Rev. Dr. Wayne Peck preached at one of them. I learned that "endurance" is actually a spiritual discipline. This multi-racial congregation is all about stories, hearing them, telling them, and learning from them. Part of worship was "Telling our Stories." That turned out to be a time of verbally telling stories of thanks and prayer needs. When someone shared a prayer concern the whole congregation raised their voices, "*Lord, hear our prayer.*" I loved that interaction. The prayers of the people were flowing from the stories. Community House is committed to seeing God's wonders through its urban ministry. My wondrous discovery was that this "life saving station" sits across from the emergency room entrance to Allegheny Hospital. Awesome!

More Light testimonial: en - lighten - ment

Last week I was in Pittsburgh for one of my regular visits to catch up with friends and family who live in the area. I ran into my friend, Bobbi who invited me to attend a church service with her on Sunday. She explained to me it was to be a special celebration of MoreLight, to welcome greater involvement of GLBT church members. So what is "MoreLight" and what is "GLBT," and why was there a celebration at Bobbi's church?

Not belonging to any particular religion in this phase of my life, and holding the belief that God is present in every church, temple, mosque and synagogue, I decided to attend. I soon learned that Bobbi's church celebration was to welcome the full participation of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons in the congregation, including the ministry. A recent decision of the Presbyterian (USA) church's General Assembly to remove language that excludes GLBT individuals from ordination into the ministry was even more cause for rejoice. It was indeed a historic decision for people of all religions to applaud.

Although I am not Presbyterian, nor am I gay, I eagerly joined in this joyous celebration of acceptance and inclusion. I was happy to show my support and respect for basic human rights in a world where diversity is often faced with a hard line of resistance.

It also brought back a memory of my own personal day of enlightenment. It was the summer of 1991, when I, as a newly divorced mother, decided to take my two younger children on a beach vacation. I was 37 years old, and not very worldly, nor sophisticated in any regard to anything other than my own sheltered existence.

After a day at the boardwalk of Ocean City, my daughter Mandy, who was eleven years old at the time, and my son Ben, age 9 decided to escape the crowds and go to a place that was not so lively and commercialized. I looked at my roadmap and found a state park that was right on the beach. We decided to go for it, **See More Light on page 4**

More Light continued from page 3 and began our journey into the “beach of the unknown.”

When we finally arrived, I parked the car in a large parking area with lots of other cars. Mandy with her inflatable raft, Ben with his boogie board, and I with my blanket, sunscreen, and latest issue of People Magazine - we were ready for a day at the beach.

Mandy and Ben headed straight for the water, while I sauntered over to just the right spot where I could spread my blanket and catch up on the latest news in the world of celebrity gossip. Not always being one to pay close attention to my surroundings, at first I didn't notice anything out of the ordinary.

But, as I closed my eyes, and listened to the voices around me, I began to realize that there seemed to be a sense of community or affiliation in the air that I just couldn't put my finger on the pulse of. When I opened my eyes, I soon realized that the beach was almost entirely women, many of them in pairs, frolicking, embracing and demonstrating various other signs of affection, as couples often do.

As socially inexperienced as I was, I had never witnessed anything like this, and was not so sure I should expose my children to it. With a rush of discomfort, my first inclination was to gather Mandy and Ben and high-tail it out of there. However, I was reassured to see that the two of them laughing and splashing over the waves, completely unaffected by what was going on around them. My judgment call was to let them enjoy the moment and not to make a big fuss about it.

Meanwhile, in my own state of puzzlement, I decided to make my way over to the snack bar and very nonchalantly ask the man working there, “So, What's going on around here?” I could sense his amusement with me when he explained that this was the “women's beach,” and the “men's beach” was on the other side of the jetty. I saw him smile as I nervously glanced over to the other side. He then added that perhaps I would be more comfortable at the “family beach,” which was about a half mile up the road.

I told him we were just fine where we were and ordered a Creamsicle before going back to my spot on the blanket.

I sat there in my insulated world of self-absorbed indignation and pondered this lifestyle that I did not understand. But I allowed my children to have their care-free day at the beach until they were tired and hungry and ready to go back to the hotel.

As we walked to the car I contemplated how to broach the subject of gay and lesbian behavior, until finally I just blurted out, “So, did you notice anything funny about this place?” They both looked up and gave me a sardonic response of “Noooo. Did you?” I tried to maintain my composure with them as I casually said, “Well, I was just wondering if you might have noticed that the people here may have been gay - or something like that,” and then I winced.

Mandy answered first, “Yeah, so what of it?” Nine-year-old Ben added, “Didn't you notice the pink triangles and rainbows on the cars when we pulled into the parking lot?” I suddenly felt very foolish for a brief moment; a moment that was soon followed by a sense of enlightenment and personal epiphany. How could my young children be so open and accepting of something they were not really a part of, yet I struggled with my own comfort level?

The doors of understanding were spontaneously opened for me and I felt nothing but pride for the wisdom of my young ones.

I can't say that I know what it's like to be “GLBT,” but I can say that I have been liberated to the fact that it is diversity that makes the world go round. The MoreLight statement and the decision of the Presbyterian General Assembly both send a message of acceptance, and a tiny, yet very significant, step in the long road to the day when we can all recognize and celebrate each other for our individuality, knowing that beneath it all, we are all part of one, great, collective humanity at the beach upon a universal sea of little certainty.

Kathleen Burk July 3, 2008