

Equality of Opportunity and Equality of Participation in the Presbyterian Church are Protected

**A**t the end of May, the Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) of our Synod heard the remedial complaint raised by East Liberty Presbyterian Church, Sixth Presbyterian and Dr. Wayne C. Peck against the Pittsburgh Presbytery for its move to require certain "essentials" for the ordination of elders and pastors. The aim of the Presbytery was in effect to create a discriminatory position regarding sexual orientation of elders and pastors. The complaint was against procedural irregularities following from the Union Overture of Pittsburgh Presbytery.

The PJC issued a stunning rebuke of the Presbytery's action, sustaining three of the four complaints. The decision upholds the belief that *all* may freely serve within the Presbyterian Church.

Says Wayne, "The top level issue in the whole thing is standing up for equality of opportunity and equality of participation. As evidence, after three days of testimony, the term GLBT came up just twice. This is the same legal argument, almost to a 'T' as to what was happening 30 years ago with women's ordination. If we look at it through this lens, the real issue is equality and whether we believe in that or not."

The trial took place in Washington County. The court represented our Synod, which consists of 1400 Presbyterian churches in three states. The judging panel was comprised of eleven elders from throughout the Synod. The head of the PJC was the President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in Washington County.

It is highly anticipated that the Presbytery will appeal this decision to the General Assembly, the national meeting of the Presbyterian Church in San Jose in 2008. If so, because of the strong legal backing and precedent-setting win at the Synod level, Wayne says, "We anticipate winning this case, again!"

### Meet the Session of the Community House Presbyterian Church

The role of the Session is to provide guidance and oversight for all aspects of worship, outreach, education and planning for Community House. Session members are chosen by the Nominating committee based on their willingness to serve. Session meetings are held monthly. Terms last three years. Current members for 2007 are The Rev. Dr. Wayne Peck and the following Elders: James Buczynski, Amy Constantine, Darlene Durrwachter-Rushing, Eric Holtz, Janet Holtz, Michelle Jones, Nancy Koerbel, David Perkins, Jen Saffron and Flo Shaner. If you have a question, suggestion or concern about Community House, you may discuss it with a member of the Session or by email at [info@communityhousepittsburgh.org](mailto:info@communityhousepittsburgh.org).

Session News

#### Announcing *Unity News*

The CHPC Session decided there would be value in beginning to publish a Community House newsletter. The newsletter, *Unity News*, is to be issued monthly and has those who worship at Community House as

its primary audience. The newsletter will include information about important happenings within the worshiping community, the Pittsburgh Presbytery, as well as the surrounding neighborhoods and our nation. Included will also be a section for joys and concerns. Our progress as stewards of our church family will also be tracked. If you have ideas for articles, a joy or concern, or a calendar item please contact Amy Constantine at 412-243-1948.

#### Lifting up our voices

The CHPC Session recommended and has undertaken a new process for ensuring that the announcements, joys and concerns of our Church family are voiced and lifted up in an orderly way. Members of the Session facilitate the process during Sunday worship taking note of the various prayers of those gathered. The intentions are reprised as we receive our final blessing. In this way, the Session intends for all those who have opened their hearts and all those who hear will remember the needs and joys raised in prayer as we go through our week.

## Tech corner

### We've made a world-wide connection

Community House has moved into the e-world with a bang. Our new website, thanks to Jan Leo's unwavering determination, is a joy to behold. If you haven't visited yet, make it a point to log on to [www.communityhousepittsburgh.org](http://www.communityhousepittsburgh.org) and see just how much you've been missing. In addition to being a simple way for you to catch up on what's up at Community House, the site offers you an easy way to introduce our unique ministry to others you think might be interested in joining us for worship, for Space for Grace, for special events or as new members.

### Newsletter on line

The newsletter will be available in hard copy on the

Sunday after publication. The newsletter will be available on line as soon as it is available and as an archive for future use.

### New email addresses

Wayne and Jan have changed their work email addresses after a long struggle with the old ones. Please update your contact files accordingly. Wayne may now be reached at [wpeck@communityhousepittsburgh.org](mailto:wpeck@communityhousepittsburgh.org). Jan can be contacted at [jleo@communityhousepittsburgh.org](mailto:jleo@communityhousepittsburgh.org). The general address is still [info@communityhousepittsburgh.org](mailto:info@communityhousepittsburgh.org)

Check back to this section to see what's been added to our website that might be of interest to you.

## Our Northside Connections

Much excitement is on the horizon in our surrounding community. The Northside of Pittsburgh is poised to undergo some significant improvements that will enhance life for the residents and those who visit. Community House will act as an anchor for the good that surrounds us, offering a welcoming place of faith and support as we grow through the advances.

### Houses to Homes

Construction is underway just a few blocks from Community House to add affordable housing to the area. In November of 2006, ground was broken on property in the Alpine Avenue and Jackson Street vicinity of Federal Street. Once completed, Federal Hill's 60 new homes and 40 new condominiums will be available for those who choose to make the Northside their residence.

### A gathering place of great promise

Plans are in the works to build the newest branch of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh on the lot at 1210 Federal Street. Watch for news of the groundbreaking proposed for the autumn of 2007.

### New life for a local eyesore

The Pittsburgh Urban Redevelopment Authority acquired and closed the Garden Theater on North Avenue. The theater has a long history that often brought its former owners into conflict with neighborhood residents and families. Plans for the theater's restoration include renovating it as a tourism place of interest. The theater's new life will be dovetailed into the new community effort to revitalize the adjoining areas of Federal Street and North Avenue.

## Our Stewardship Progress

Our contribution of treasure for the week ending May 27 was \$2,202. Our year-to-date total is \$41,429. Our giving to date puts Community House on pace for an annual total of \$102,588. We set a goal of \$115,000 at the beginning of 2007. Thank you to all who are helping to keep Community House a vital part of the worshipping community in the Presbyterian Church. Watch your mail for important updates about Time, Talent and Treasure.

### What's coming up?

Sunday, June 24 – Following worship, Darlene and Derwin Rushing will lead a group of interested children and adults on a tour of the glass exhibit "Metamorphosis, the Life Cycle of a Glass Bead (in which Darlene has two pieces) at the John Heinz Regional History Center. The day will continue with a tour of the permanent glass exhibit and the new Sports Museum. Children's admission will be free thanks to tickets that Joyce has secured. A number of adults may also benefit from any remaining tickets. Please contact Darlene or Derwin at 412-231-6105 if you are interested in carpooling. Sign-up sheets will be on the tables by the elevators. More information about the History Center and the glass exhibits is available at <http://www.pghhistory.org/>.