

## Our 177th Community House Congregational Meeting - Still a blessing

**C**ommunity House Presbyterian Church conducted our 177th Congregational Meeting on November 9, 2008. The meeting presented an overview of Community House membership, stewardship, finances and newly elected community servants.

### Membership:

The overarching goal of Community House is to bring more individuals and families into our worship community. This will be accomplished by spreading the word that there is a progressive, inclusive, contemplative, active and welcoming Presbyterian church on the Northside of Pittsburgh.

As the word spreads from each enthusiastic CH member to his/her neighbors, friends and coworkers, invitations to join us for worship or for a special event, so that they can see for themselves, will inevitably follow. In this way we hope to increase our membership by fifteen persons during the new year.

### Stewardship:

Stewardship pledge forms were still being submitted by CH members. At that time, \$103,000 had been pledged, including new pledges from six people. The goal of \$115,000 was still seen as possible to meet, since some pledges of long-time members were still outstanding.

### Finance:

There was good news from Mark Senecrope of Independent Controllers concerning CH finances. Because of stringent and successful cost cutting and careful control of expenses, the balance between revenues and expenses was nearly met in 2008, despite an approximate \$15K shortfall in member giving.

Total expenses for 2009, that include but are not limited to, utilities, worship expenses, and personnel salaries and associated costs are budgeted to increase by less than two percent over those of 2008.

Considering the volatility in the economy, this is a credit to the care with which Rev Wayne, Jan Leo and Community House Session members allocate funds.

Additional good news, D.B. Root has been given permission by the Pittsburgh Foundation to begin managing the funds in the Arbuckle Trust. This change is seen as a great accomplishment on the part of Rev. Wayne and a great advantage for Community House.

### Session Members/Trustees of the Corporation:

New CH Elders elected to serve on Session are Susan Ferline (Class of 2009) and Joyce Baskins, Michael Beigay, and Linda Flower (Class of 2011)

These individuals were also elected as Trustees of the Corporation.

Members of Session leaving as of December 2008 will be James Buczynski, Darlene Durrwachter-Rushing, Gina Spangenberg and Eric Holtz. Class of 2009 member, Stephen Jordan died in June 2008.

### 2009 Nominating Committee:

Jay Carson, Claudia Detwiler (Chair) and Derwin Rushing were elected as members of the 2009 Nominating Committee.

### 2009 Congregation/Corporation Officers:

James Buczynski (Congregation Chair), David Springer (Treasurer), and Flo Shaner (Secretary) were elected.

Do you have an idea or article you'd like to see published in our newsletter? Please give your idea or completed article to Bobbi Donovan at [bobbilee@comcast.net](mailto:bobbilee@comcast.net). Please get your ideas to Bobbi 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.

## News from the Community House Session

### New Members – the Promise of Community

**H**ave 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 Wednesdays February 4 and 11, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Please see Rev. Wayne to register. We look forward to having you!

### Christian Nurture

**Y**oung Community House members will have the benefit of being instructed in the faith using the We Believe Presbyterian K through 2 curriculum in the 2009-2010 school year.

Susie Ferline will chair the Christian Nurture and Life-long Learning committee for 2009.

### CHPC Parishes – Space for Grace

**C**ommunity House Session has established the Parish system. Each Session member leads a Parish – a group of church members for whom s/he is responsible to contact to convey important information about church happenings and business. Parish members are also welcomed and invited to contact their Parish leader in cases of questions, concerns or to pass on important information or prayer requests.

In order to help the members of the Parishes get to know each other, each Parish will have the opportunity to host Space for Grace one month per year.

Jen Saffron's Parish will host Space for Grace on Wednesday, January 21.

For those who are unaware, Space for Grace is a mid-week respite from the worries of the world and a time to reflect on the blessings and challenges presented by

### Stewardship - Time, Talent and Treasure

**T**he Community House Presbyterian Church 2009 Stewardship campaign is completed.

The good news is that of the 50 pledges received for 2009, 11 were from new pledgers. The not-so-good news is that seven of the 47 individuals who pledged in the past, did not pledge this year.

Total pledges went from \$103,000 in 2008 to \$96,676 in 2009. Combining this shortfall with the challenging economy means new ideas will need to be generated to balance expenses and revenues. Stay tuned.

Thanks to all who have submitted their pledge cards. If you have not yet turned yours in, please do so by mailing it to:

Michelle Jones, c/o Community House Presbyterian Church, 120 Parkhurst Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15212.

the Christian faith we share. The conversation takes place around the table that is graced with food prepared by participants.

Don't forget, Space for Grace generally takes place every Wednesday of the month.

The first Wednesday is hosted by the Gay and Lesbian Task Force and includes Communion.

The Second and Fourth Wednesdays are led by a member of Community House with the foods brought by all who participate.

Please check the next issue of Unity News for a detailed chart of all the Community House Parishes and the Session member associated with them. Then expect a call from your parish leader about your role in Space for Grace.

We look forward to a year of very special times on the third Wednesday of each month.

### What's coming up at Community House?

January 18 - **First Super Sunday**

Worship followed by lunch and a trip to the John H. Heinz History Center to see "Free at Last?"

February 22 - **Soul Food Sunday**

A highlight of our year and a wonderful way to gather together at the end of Black History Month.

March 21 and 22 **Community House Overnight**

After gathering for dinner on Saturday, we'll enjoy an evening of fellowship and fun. A big breakfast will be followed by worship service.

## On the Hearts and Minds of our Members

### Single-Payer Healthcare

At the General Assembly of the PCUSA (that's us - the Presbyterian Church of the USA) an overture from the Pittsburgh Presbytery was passed by the General Assembly to support "single payer universal healthcare reform".

The wording of the resolution calls upon the national organization, acting through presbyteries and congregations, to "advocate for, educate about, and otherwise pursue the goal of obtaining legislation that enacts single-payer, universal national health insurance as the program that best responds to the moral imperative of the gospel. "

With my Presbyterian hat on, and my board member hat with the Western PA Coalition for Single Payer Healthcare, I will be bringing you news of a spring conference to "educate and advocate" on this issue.

Single payer is publicly financed but privately provided healthcare that includes everyone equally-no exclusions. It is comprehensive, from prevention through long term care. It is also less expensive at the individual and family level and at the national level.

I look forward to bringing you more news as our plans unfold. I would be happy to meet with anyone to discuss this further. And, if you want to learn more on your own, check out any of these websites:

<http://www.pnhp.org/> Physicians for a National Health

Program.

This web site has the largest collection of articles and research studies. A caution is that some studies are two to three years old and the rate of increases in health care premiums, decrease in employer funding, and other statistics have changed.

<http://www.healthcare-now.org/> Healthcare-Now

<http://www.wpasinglepayer.org/> Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Single Payer Healthcare

Claudia Detwiler

### An Invitation to Engage in "God Talk"

Reverend Ron Church is taking his witness energies to the community. God Talk welcomes anyone who is interested in exploring their feelings about God in a relaxed, non-church atmosphere. Rev. Ron will share conversations about God over a cup of hot beverage at a level and pace that fits those gathered.

God Talk takes place on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. at the Affogato Coffeehouse located at 613 Lincoln Avenue in Bellevue. Everyone is welcome. Everyone is accepted.

For directions to or information about Affogato Coffeehouse: 412-761-0750 or [www.bigreda.com](http://www.bigreda.com) .

### Super Sundays!

New in 2009, Community House will celebrate one Sunday a month in an extra special way. In general, the added attraction will be a community meal, either covered dish or purchased, and an activity either prior to or following worship. Please plan to attend and bring your friends and neighbors and *their* friends and neighbors. By combining the experience of our worship service and our hospitality, Super Sundays promise to be a great way to introduce newcomers to the possibilities for their spiritual growth that exist at Community House and to further our own sense of family.

Our first Super Sunday is coming up on **Sunday, Jan. 18**, when we'll celebrate the MLK holiday by visiting the **Senator John Heinz History Center**. We'll visit the entire museum following a provided lunch at church (free will offering for lunch). We'll start off our visit by viewing the new, compelling exhibit, "Free At Last?"

Slavery in Pittsburgh in the 18th and 19th Centuries" (\$6 per person, under age 6 – free, open until 5 PM). Our admission also allows us access to the entire museum, including the ever-popular Sports Museum.

Please see Wayne or Darlene if you would like assistance in paying for the admission fee or if you are willing to sponsor a person/family in need.

Interested in organizing/hosting a Super Sunday? Great! We have sponsors/hosts for January and February but are looking for other members of the community to come forward, as individuals or teams, to host/organize events on other months.

Here's to a great new way to extend the community of Community House