



Northminster GAIT

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Children and Worship – Children can Experience Faith

In the church, young and old belong together to share in the worshiping community with each other. John H. Westerhoff III has suggested that it is critical that three generations be involved together in the faith community. Too often the church separates the generation in its programming and worship or completely ignores the older as well as the younger generation. The older generation is the generation of memory. The younger generation can be the generation of vision, but only if there is memory, which is provided by the older generation. The middle generation is the generation of the present, which confronts memory and vision with reality. (Westerhoff 1983, 53-54).

There are several different views about how churches welcome children into the faith community. Some observe infant baptism; others practice the dedication or presentation of young children. Whatever a particular denomination believes, how children are involved in congregational worship services is an indication of how the members follow through on the statements they made during the infant dedication or baptism service.

As a denomination that celebrates infant baptism, the baptism is considered to be a sign of belonging to the church, of welcome into the family of God. The words of the sacrament emphasize this belonging: “God has made you members of the household of God, to share with us in priesthood of Christ.” (PCUSA Book of Common Worship, 1993)

The experience that people have as children eventually will contribute to their behavior as adults. If children develop a sense of belonging with the family of faith, they may be more likely to want to maintain and increase their relationship and identity with the church and with God. If children feel unwelcome and out of place, they may want to sever their ties with the church.

In worship, children can develop their identity with the people of God. This feeling becomes a foundation for future participation in the ministry of the church and for a relationship with all Christians throughout the world.

When children are meaningfully involved in congregational worship, they can realize through experience the positive potential they have as children of God. Favorable messages about a child’s behavior may be interpreted by the youngster as affirmative statements about self and thereby reassure the child of God’s love and care.

In Matthew 18:1-4, Jesus refers to a child to illustrate the characteristics needed to enter the kingdom of heaven. Here is an expanded list of the important qualities of children: joy, honesty, receptivity, tenderness, awareness, affirmation, complete involvement, motion and rhythm, clear communication, expression of feelings, energy, generosity, acceptance, simplicity, enthusiasm, creativity. Adults would be wise to bring these unassuming and genuine features to other roles in the church, such as fellowship, learning, and mission. Adults need to be willing to learn these attributes again from children, to be receptive to the childlike spirit that opens individuals to the gospel. When children worship with the congregation, adults may see this childlike nature in action.

Next month – the final installment: What Children Can Contribute to Worship

Rev. Dr. Stacey D. Jones

Pentecost – U2 Eucharist

Sunday May 11th will be a busy day at Northminster. Not only is it Mother's Day we will also be welcoming our confirmands to our church as well as celebrating Pentecost with a special U2 Eucharist. On this special day we will enjoy the music of U2 along with traditional liturgy as we celebrate communion by intinction (coming forward and tearing bread from the common loaf and dipping it in the common cup). This service will be a multi-sensory experience.

Christian Scharen, a 39 year old pastor and professor at Yale Divinity School, said he's often argued to older colleagues that U2 is heavily influenced by Christianity. He wrote a book on the subject, "One Step Closer: Why U2 Matters to Those Seeking God," and says it doesn't surprise him that some congregations have caught on. If you're a Bono fan, you'll recognize the thought that where you live should not determine whether you live or die." The Gospel warns us that taking care of the needy is what will separate the good from the bad at the final judgment. And this is the focus of the U2 Eucharist. The opening hymn will be "Pride (In the Name of Love)," an early hit. As the music is played we will be reminded in picture of famous believers such as Harriet Truman, Rosa Parks,

and Martin Luther King, Jr. Several songs you will hear during the service will sound more like angry lamentations than hymns of praise. "Peace on Earth," inspired by a deadly bombing in Northern Ireland, questions why God won't halt human suffering.

"Jesus can you take the time to throw a drowning man a line," Bono sings. Some might not be able to relate to the shades of doubt and anger, but the struggle is evident in the Bible. For example, Bono echoes the 40th Psalm in the opening lines of the band's song "40", belting out, "I wait patiently for the Lord. He inclined and heard my cry."

Things to know about U2...The one paragraph version: They have always been a Christian band, but avoided signing with a Christian label because they didn't want to preach to the choir. "You" in their songs is often God. Sometimes it is God addressing us. There was an on line attempt recently to come up with one song by U2 that wasn't referring to things spiritual and no one was able to do so... The image of God as lover, luring us closer, or our desire and hunger for God are regular themes. So are themes of social justice and doing our part to bring about the reign of God.

I hope you will come and enjoy a totally different sort of worship service as we celebrate Pentecost and remind ourselves that worship happens in many different ways for many different people.

GAIT announcement for Endowment

Submitted by Stephen Gilbert/Chad Olson

Northminster Now Has an Endowment

The Stewardship and Finance Committee has recently created an Endowment for the church. The endowment is a pool of invested funds from which the church draws only the interest as income.

The Endowment provides for the mission and ministry of this church for generations ahead by making it possible for members of the congregation to extend their stewardship beyond their lifetime.

Christian people are called to be faithful stewards of all the gifts of God - time, abilities, the created world and money, including accumulated, inherited and appreciated resources. The Endowment can help you deepen your impact on mission/ministry through Christian financial planning and giving.

Your gifts to the Endowment fund can be designated for three categories. The interest from gifts in each category can be used for the following:

- **Capital Improvement** - for special projects that enhance or repair the physical structure and safety of NPC.
- **Worship & Music** – for the enhancement of the worship service and music programs of NPC.
- **Mission Fund** – for Christian Education, outreach programs, and local, national, and global mission projects.

The Endowment Fund offers many ways by which you can make a lasting gift to your church: cash, securities, mutual funds, bonds, CD's, charitable gift annuities, deferred gift annuities, real estate or personal property, life insurance policies, retirement plans (IRA's, 401(k), 403(b), Keogh), bequests by will, charitable remainder annuity trusts, and more.

The Stewardship & Finance committee is working on setting up some educational seminars about planned giving where you could learn more about the above and Christian estate planning in general. If you are interested in attending such a seminar, mention it to any member of the S & F Committee and we'll have a better sense of the level of interest.

We are still figuring out how to put together a small Endowment Committee, which will recommend the approval of the gifts to the endowment to the Session. We are also deciding who will manage our Endowment funds: the Presbyterian Foundation or a private funds management company. We have met with Karen Krum of the former, and with a representative from Edward Jones. We hope to vote on that in the next S&F meeting on May 5. The

Presbyterian Foundation has the advantage of ensuring that we invest in socially responsible stocks and they also contribute some of their management fees to mission. However, they have a lower rate of return (5%) than the typical private management company (7-8% or more). Also, the Foundation doesn't let you ever withdraw your endowment principle. We intend not to ever withdraw it, of course, but it might be nice to have that option in the case of an emergency.

In any case, your contributions to the Endowment will be managed by a professional investment manager, which may give you confidence that your assets will continue to support the church long beyond your lifetime.

You might wonder why we have set up an Endowment fund when we have plenty of mortgage debt to pay down. We have heard from members that they might feel led to contribute to an Endowment because of its staying power. We feel comfortable having both giving options, and of course will continue to encourage everyone to reduce that mortgage principle!

2007 Peacemaking Funds

Submitted by Karen Thompson

As you may recall, the Peacemaking Offering is one of four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the PC(USA), and its purpose is to support peacemaking initiatives and peace education throughout the church. Twenty-five percent of the offering received is retained by each congregation. In April, the NPC Board of Deacons voted to put NPC's share of the 2007 offering (\$134.75) toward the BorderLinks trip to Mexico next January.

The Sonora Desert, along the US-Mexico border between Arizona and Mexico, is an intimidating and inhospitable place. It is one of the largest and hottest deserts in North America. Yet, everyday migrants risk everything to cross this desert--often taking their children with them--in an effort to find a better life.

They are at the mercy of the elements, the border officials, the *coyote* guides, and the international policies that have them in a stranglehold.

BorderLinks is committed to raising awareness about immigration matters and inspiring action; they are also working on ways to provide greater opportunities at home for the disadvantaged.

Right now they are working to establish:

- meal programs and education about healthy nutrition and sustainable food practices;
- a community garden;
- programs to teach computer skills and English to the unemployed;
- a free clinic;
- a daycare program; and
- a shelter for migrant women.



The BorderLinks staff shared this in the March news-letter, "(Renewed vision) doesn't take away the pain or suffering we witness along the way, but

it keeps us going, keeps us moving toward a world in which people, within and across social borders, respect and care for each other, value and celebrate differences, and build healthy and just communities where everyone has equal opportunity for a full and dignified life."

If you'd care for a first-hand look at this program and its positive impact, consider taking the trip yourself in January 2009.

Deacons

Request for Support from Pete Feltman

Submitted by Karen Thompson

The Deacons would like to share a request received from Pete Feltman, a young seminarian from North Central Iowa Presbytery. You may remember Pete, as he occasionally helped his sister, Sara, with the NPC Youth Group a few years back. Pete is also the son of Presbyter David Feltman, who served at First Presbyterian in Fort Dodge for 17 years.

Pete is currently in his first year of graduate studies at San Francisco Theological Seminary and has the opportunity to take a summer class called *Contextualized Christianity in Ghana*. The class will spend two weeks (May 26-June 8) in Ghana, studying how Christianity has spread in that west-African country and meeting with Ghanaians to see how they manifest their spirituality and to learn of the impact Christianity has had on them.

The cost of airfare and tuition for this trip is \$2500, not including required vaccinations, visa fees and daily living expenses. Pete has set a fundraising goal of \$3000 and has asked our congregation (and others) for assistance. In his letter, Pete acknowledges that "every-where you go, someone is asking you for money," but adds that "no amount is too small, and anything will help."

Here are some of the expenses he is facing:

Vaccinations:

- Meningitis - \$113
- Hepatitis A & B - \$75
- Polio - \$27
- Typhoid - \$67
- Yellow Fever - \$97
- Ghanaian Visa - \$164.75
- Passport Photos - \$25
- Food - \$240
- Air fare - ~\$2000

Could you help Pete with \$20 for a day of food, or "sponsor" one of his vaccinations? If so, please drop a check in the offering plate with a note on the memo line, and we will be sure it gets sent to him ASAP. And, in any event, please pray that this will prove to be a fruitful experience for this budding young minister from our Presbytery, as well as for his colleagues and the Ghanaians they meet and come to know.

If you are interested in visiting with Pete about this trip, or about his seminary education in general, phone 415-250-6837 or send e-mail to petefeltman@yahoo.com.

Deacons



Cents-Ability Update

Submitted by Karen Thompson

Thank you! By setting aside just 2 cents per meal and participating in our collective effort to help relieve hunger, you helped Northminster donate over \$300 to the Emergency Residence Project in January, February and March.

The Bethesda Community Food Pantry will be the recipient of our second quarter's collections.

Our next Noisy Coin Sunday will be May 11th!

*Your cents, my cents,
Put them all together,
We can make our world
A whole lot better.*

■ Deacons

Budget Balancing Challenge

Submitted by Chad Olson

You may have some additional money coming in May, in the form of the federal government's Economic Stimulus Package. The Stewardship & Finance Committee members, with approval from the Session, are asking you to consider the Budget Balancing Challenge.

As you may recall, the 2008 budget was not balanced, with a currently deficit projected at \$6000. Please prayerfully consider tithing (giving 10%) of your Economic Stimulus rebate to help balance the remaining budget shortfall. Please mark your checks "BBC" on the memo.

Thank you for your continued your support of the life and mission of Northminster Presbyterian Church.



Pentecost (the Presbyterian way)

Submitted by the Deacons

This year's Pentecost Offering theme, "When you send forth your spirit," from Psalm 104:30 calls on us to push our comfortable boundaries and offer our resources to make a difference in the lives of children, youth, and young adults. Our offering provides a way to directly meet the needs of these people.

40% of the Offering is kept by our congregation for use on behalf of children at risk.

10% supports General Assembly Child Advocacy Ministries.

25% supports General Assembly ministries with youth.

And 25% supports Young Adult Volunteer(YAV) opportunities.

This year Pentecost is on May 11. There will be a "special" service you don't want to miss, and a birthday cake for the Church after the service. You are also encouraged to wear red. So---bring your generous hearts and celebrate with us on May 11!

Soakin' Up the Son

Submitted by Lori Sulzberger

This summer, campers at the Presbyterian Camp on Okoboji will be "Soakin' Up the Son" as they explore what it means to live each day focusing on God's Son. Each day campers will delve into a new parable searching for what God is speaking to us through these stories of Jesus. And, of course, campers will enjoy age appropriate activities such as arts and crafts, archery, swimming, water trampoline, canoeing, group building games and activities, cookouts, bonfires with S'mores, prayer, worship, Bible

study, campouts, fishing, and lots more. There is even a special music camp where youth are given the opportunity to produce and perform a musical.

Through some generous gifts, the Christian Education Committee is able to offer **\$100 scholarships for camp** this year. Camps are offered for children in pre-school through high school. Check out the brochures in the gathering space for more information about the Presbyterian Camp on Okoboji. See Michele Rogers, Lori Sulzberger, or Mary Jo Larsen for more information on camp scholarships.

Last Day of Sunday School Event – May 18

Submitted by Mary Jo Larsen

The Christian Education and Fellowship Committees are working together to hold an end of Sunday School event.

Following the church service on May 18th, there will be a brunch in the old sanctuary. We will then have a time to share what has gone on in our classes and finish up with some songs that the children have learned. So, come a little hungry on May 18 and join us for brunch and sharing. (This replaces the Hot Dog Heaven and Bike-a-thon activities that have been held past years.) Hope to see you then.

Mother's Day Gift Idea

Submitted by Jan Beran

Remember your mother, grandmother, special friend by 'buying' a Mother's day card saying that you purchased, in their honor, a safe insecticide treated bed net that will prevent a mother, baby or child from being bitten by a malaria bearing mosquito.

There will be a table in the Gathering space where you purchase your card

DINNERS WITH 8

Submitted by Greg Daley

The action is about to start again. However, I need a little help. The master schedule has been misplaced and I believe I only have 4 of the 5 groups that participated.

Group 1-Parsons, Cutlip, Daley, Sally and Ellie V.

Group 2-Larsen, Barnes, Helmer, and Pat Severson

Group 3-Beran, Schulze, Beall, White, and Curtis

Group 4-Nau, Sulzberger, Brandau, and Jones

When somebody reads this that was in another group, will you please call me and let me know who is(was) in your group. In the meantime, I really would like to have more couples or individuals that are interested in getting to know your fellow congregation members a little better. All the feedback I have been hearing is very positive. If you want an excuse to have a nice evening out, what better reason than this do you need. If you are interested in signing up, please call me. You don't want to miss out!!!

Thank you in advance for your information and interest. Greg Daley 231-6147 or 292-7565

Acolytes for May

The upcoming schedule for candle lighters is as follows:

May 4 Connor Olson & Ben Sulzberger

May 11 Nick & Garrett Johnson

May 18 Tierney & Claire Rogers

May 25 Jack Rogers & Ben Perrin

June 1 Andrea Daley & Emily Helmer

GREAT JOB EVERYONE!! THANKS FOR YOUR HELP WITH OUR WORSHIP SERVICES.

Pastor News...

Rev. Jan Scott will be installed as pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church in West Des Moines on June 1.

The congregation is invited to attend. More details will be in the weekly e-news.

You're Invited

The Perrin family would like to invite you to Kylie's Graduation Open House on May 24th 4pm-7pm. address: 3730 Eisenhower Ave. Please come and celebrate her achievement!

Church Humor

3-year-old Reese:

"Our Father, Who does art in heaven,
Harold is His name. Amen."

A little boy was overheard praying:

"Lord, if you can't make me a better
boy, don't worry about it, I'm having a real
good time like I am."

After the christening of his baby brother in church, Jason sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong, finally, the boy replied, "That preacher said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, And I want to stay with you guys!"

I had been teaching my three-year old daughter, Caitlin, The Lord's Prayer for several evenings at bedtime. She would repeat after me the lines from the prayer; finally, she decided to go solo. I listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer: "lead us not into temptation" she prayed, "but deliver us from E-mail".

One particular four year old prayed, "And

forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets."

A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church service, "and why is it necessary to be quite in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."

Six-year-old Angie and her four-year-old brother, Joel were sitting together in church. Joel giggled, sang and talked out loud. Finally, his big sister had had enough. "you're not supposed to talk out loud in church."

'Why? Who's going to stop me?' Joel asked.

Angie pointed to the back of the church and said; "See those two men standing by the door? They're Hushers!"

Happenings in May

May 1st: Ascension of the Lord; Acts 1:1-11; psalm 47; or Psalm 93; Eph. 1:15-20; Luke 24:44-53.

May 4th: 7th Sunday of Easter; Acts 1:6-14; psalm 68:1-10, 32-35; 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11; John 17:1-11

May 5th Happy Birthday Joyce Shiers
Happy Anniversary Mike and Linda Meetz

May 6th: Happy birthday John Thurston

May 11th Day of Pentecost; Acts 2:1-21 or num. 11:24-30; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; 1 Cor. 12:3b-13 or Acts 2:1-21; John 20:19-23 or John 7:37

Happy birthday Emily Larsen

Happy Mother's Day!!

May 12th: Happy Anniversary Chuck and Debbie Johnson

May 14th: Happy Anniversary Scott and Maria Maffett

May 15th Happy birthday Greg Thompson and Tracy Rogers

May 17th Happy birthday Fred Kleppin and Cameron Merritt

May 18th Trinity Sunday; Gen. 1:1—2:4a; Psalm 8; 2 Cor. 13:11-13; Matt. 28:16-20

Happy birthday Larry Jahn

May 19th Happy birthday Daniel Vigil

May 22nd Happy birthday George Beran

May 23rd Happy birthday Peggy Cutlip

May 24th: Happy Anniversary Jerry and Diane Parsons

May 25th 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time; Isa. 49:8-16a; psalm 131; 1 Cor. 4:1-5; Matt. 6:24-34

Happy Birthday Leona Nau

May 26th Happy Birthday Jan Beran & Ainsely Jones

Happy Anniversary Brad and Leona Nau

May 30th Happy birthday Kayley and Kelli Helmer

GAIT Deadline for June is Monday, **May 26th**. Please e-mail your articles to rpcykp@msn.com or put them in the GAIT editor's box next to the church office