

# Grace Notes

Community of Grace Presbyterian Church

July 2009

## July Highlights

**July 27-30**

**Summer Program for Kids.** “Come to the Waters” is the theme for this year’s summer event for kids ages 4 years to 4<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Coming in the Fall of 2009**

**Stephen Ministry Training.** Interested members will have an opportunity to receive training to become Stephen Ministers this fall.

**Adult Rhinos.** A COG team of 16 adults traveled to New Orleans in May to help with a Habitat for Humanity project. Dede Carpenter shares her reflections on the experience.

**Families, Faith, & Action.** There are several opportunities in July for families to get involved in service.

## Our Church Community

**Session Notes.** Here you will find the notes from the Session retreat of June 15-16.

**Presbyterian Links.** Here is a listing of helpful links for those who are interested in our denomination’s work at the national level, including what Presbyterians believe.

**Church Officers.** This is a listing of the current elders and deacons.

**July Prayer Calendar.** Prayers from the hearts of our members. *“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.” James 5:16*

Thanks to XMISSION for providing our church with free internet access and a website.



**Coming July 27 -30**  
**Come to the Waters**

by Lorrie Gaffney  
Area Director, Children & Youth

***Come, all you who are thirsty,  
Come to the waters - Isaiah 55:1***



**Come to the Waters -**

our summer program for kids to engage powerful stories of God's love demonstrated through water! Crafts, games and other activities make learning fun, and empowering, as kids discover they can make a difference.

**Who:** Kids ages 4-4<sup>th</sup> grade; under 4 are welcome with a parent that accompanies them; 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> graders may sign up to be helpers.

**When:** July 27-30<sup>th</sup>

Thursday, July 30 will be an all-family, all-friends, all-church picnic celebration with water games, food and fellowship.

**Where:** Community of Grace Presbyterian Church, 2015 Newcastle Dr. Sandy

**Register:** [www.communityofgrace.eventbrite.com](http://www.communityofgrace.eventbrite.com)

**Making a difference:** Children are encouraged to bring an offering for the purchase of water filtration systems that provide a life-time of clean water to families in Mexico.



Come to the Waters is offered by COG as a gift, in honor of  
God's abundant giving.

Share the gift with a friend or neighbor!

**Coming in Fall 2009**

**Stephen Ministry Training**

by Millie Nielsen  
Stephen Minister

***WHAT ARE STEPHEN MINISTERS?***

Stephen Ministry involves ministry to the care receiver's feelings. Stephen Ministers listen to care receivers as they share painful feelings. At times a Stephen Minister may help carry the most difficult feelings people ever bear. A Stephen Minister may walk through the valley of the shadow of death with another person, experiencing with him or her the deep feelings of sadness, fear, and despair that come from profound grief. A Stephen Minister may also share care receivers' feelings of joy, hope, and gratitude to God for healing when it seemed life was over.

Does this sound like a ministry you would like to be involved with? A training program will be provided starting this fall. Please contact Sherry Britt, 801-733-0083, or Millie Nielsen, 801-944-4671.

## Adult Rhinos

by Dede Carpenter  
*Area Director of Adult and Family*

An increasing number of adults at Community of Grace are grabbing hammers and tool belts and putting their faith in action building homes in Mexico and most recently in New Orleans. The RHINO project is sponsored by St. Charles Presbyterian Church in New Orleans and focuses on Rebuilding Hope in New Orleans through new home construction; efforts are partnered with Habitat for Humanity to provide well designed 1100 square feet homes for low income families.

Our Rhino Team included 16 adults who were committed to sharing their somewhat limited construction skills but, 100% of their heart in the effort to make a difference in the lives of those in need.

What did we experience?

- An amazing faith community at St. Charles Presbyterian church which welcomed us with open arms...feeding us spiritually and physically with their incredible commitment to God's call to serve others.
- Dedicated young adults involved with Habitat for Humanity and AmeriCorps who are supervising and leading construction projects with both heart and knowledge.
- Team members from an East Coast college who chose to come to New Orleans and build homes during their spring break rather than heading for Fort Lauderdale beaches.
- Time to share stories and life experiences with others
- Actual progress on four homes at the construction site!
- An opportunity for one member of our team to share God's love with a classroom of young children in a struggling public school system.
- Brown bag lunches provided by Loaves & Fishes, a volunteer organization which in turn is feeding 300-400 construction volunteers daily in the greater New Orleans area.
- The flavor and uniqueness of New Orleans...beignets, crawfish, jazz music, the French Quarter and avenues lined with a canopy of trees draped in hanging moss and beads!
- God's presence



## Families, Faith, & Action

by Dede Carpenter  
*Area Director of Adult and Family*

This summer we have multiple opportunities for families to engage service projects!  
(Contact [dede@cogpc.org](mailto:dede@cogpc.org) for details on any of these events)

- **Sandwich making and serving** at the Salvation Army is scheduled Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup>.  
**Everyone is welcome** to join in the sandwich preparation after the Worship service and then 6 adult volunteers are needed to serve the sandwiches that evening.
- **Crossroads Food Co-op** Saturday July 25<sup>th</sup> 9:30-11:30am  
Our partnership continues to grow and we now have over 100 families in the neighborhood using the Community of Grace distribution site! Volunteers of all ages are needed to help stage and distribute food items
- **Faces & Places** Sunday July 26<sup>th</sup> following Worship  
An all church opportunity to walk and pickup trash along the Jordan Parkway from 9800 south to 10600 south



## *Our Church Community*

### Session Notes *(Retreat of June 15 & 16, 2009)*

by Jane Cooper  
*Elder*

The Session met for its annual retreat on two consecutive evenings, June 15 & 16, 2009, at the homes of Pat Holmes and Chuck Stolfa. Session members spent time on prayer, reflection, sharing, listening, valuing, and discussing spiritual growth as we began work on formulating plans and priorities for the coming year.

- Elders participated in an exercise of “Appreciative Inquiry” designed to recall the most memorable experiences with our church congregation; the things we value most deeply in ourselves, our church, and our denomination; the core values of our church that give life to our congregation; and the three wishes we personally have for our church.

- Elders read and reflected on some of the 25 comments received from members of the congregation on “Why I Love Community of Grace”. After this time of sharing Session was asked to think and pray about how we can build on these strengths.
- Session members discussed a handout called “The Seven Habits of Healthy Churches” and shared how they felt COG scored on the rating scale of healthy characteristics. We want to invite and encourage members of our congregation to grow and mature spiritually and to develop a deepening relationship with God as they make a commitment to serve, share, and be a blessing to others.
- Pastor Bill discussed creating more small-group opportunities incorporating fellowship, service, and spiritual dimensions that will help our church grow. He challenged Session members to get involved in developing small groups and encouraging lay leadership involvement.
- Session reviewed the basic elements of our Core Spiritual Identity and the “Great Ends of the Church” from the PCUSA Book of Order. Six main purposes of church were also discussed: worship, prayer, learning, fellowship, service, and outreach.
- The importance of stewardship as a **spiritual practice** was emphasized as a concept we want to share more fully with the congregation. Session reviewed details of a new stewardship program that we will be using this year.
- The church budget looks reasonably healthy as the congregation continues to give faithfully as we move into summer. Session and the ELT discussed budget priorities for 2010, putting a high priority on hiring a part-time youth director who would play an essential role in connecting with our youth and shaping vital youth programs at COG.
- Session will draft a Mission Study outline during the summer in preparation for election of a Pastor Nominating Committee in the fall comprised of members of the congregation. The PNC can then begin the process of searching for an installed pastor.

## **Presbyterian Links**

Here are some helpful links for those who are interested in our denomination’s work at the national level:

Home Page, PCUSA ([www.pcusa.org](http://www.pcusa.org))

Presbyterian 101 [Facts about Presbyterians] ([www.pcusa.org/101](http://www.pcusa.org/101))

Expressing Our Faith: National and International Service

([www.pcusa.org/navigation/mission.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/navigation/mission.htm))

What Presbyterians Believe ([www.pcusa.org/catech/studycat.htm](http://www.pcusa.org/catech/studycat.htm))

## **Church Officers**

Board of Deacons

*Deacons Moderator:* Lisa Wiscomb

### **Class of 2010**

Cynthia Alex  
Debbie Bybee  
Denise Harris  
Brooke Holyoak  
Tom Keene  
Bonnie Sackett

### **Class of 2011**

Kim Beaslin  
Barb Gentry  
Elaine Nordberg  
Linda Page  
Lisa Wiscomb

### **Class of 2012**

Erica Adamson  
Scott Adamson  
Sherry Britt  
Wes Starkenburg  
Keith West

Session

*Moderator:* Rev. Bill McGuinness

*Clerk:* Jane Cooper

*Treasurer:* Tim Fluetsch

### **Class of 2010**

Pat Holmes  
Chuck Stolfa

### **Class of 2011**

Kelly Harris  
Debbie Colt

### **Class of 2012**

Jane Cooper  
Alwyn Vanderwalt

## **July Prayer Calendar**

by Millie Nielsen  
*Prayer Coordinator*

1. Lord, I give you praise for sun and slight breezes, for the long days of your creation.
2. Bless and renew Pastor Bill, Kathy, Dede, and Lorrie as they plan and lead ministry at Community of Grace.
3. Set me free, Lord, to try new ways of living: free to forgive myself and others, free to join the battle for peace and justice.
4. As I thank God for the freedoms we enjoy in the United States, I also pray for guidance, humility, and wisdom for our country.
5. Through today's worship and sacrament, give me new life as a worker with Christ.
6. Lord, free me to set aside my burdon of security.
7. Renew and restore our deacons as they pour out their love and care upon the members of Community of Grace.
8. Bless our sister church, Immanuel Church, Kiraro in Kenya, so that your light shines brightly through them.
9. Lord, teach me to fit into your priorities instead of asking you to fit into mine.
10. Lord, help me to celebrate with those around me who are feeling joy and to strengthen those who are suffering.
11. Lord, I pray for peace, comfort, and healing for all who are mentally or physically ill.
12. Lord, bless our musicians as they lead us in praise through music during worship.
13. Almighty Father, give your strength and healing to those who are fighting addictions.
14. Give me an awareness of the magnitude of your love.
15. Oh God, save me from neglecting quiet times and being obsessed with business.
16. Grant me grace, Lord, to see you today in the ordinary and simple moments of my life.

17. I give thanks for the Ulster Project which brings Catholics and Protestant youth together to foster understanding and reconciliation.
18. Forgive me for my arrogance and self-deception and renew in me the joy of a childlike faith.
19. In worship today help us to honor you in the prayers we share, the gospel to which we listen, and the hymns we sing.
20. I pray for families struggling with marriage problems and with family issues.
21. God of truth, give wisdom to our session as they lead our congregation.
22. Lord, save me from glorifying armaments of war and wishing our enemies dead.
23. Almighty God, give me your knowledge and good judgment.
24. Father, thank you for firmly grasping my hand in yours. Guide me and hold me up when I am weak.
25. Lord, make me a peacemaker at home, at work, and in all of my relationships.
26. God of wonder, help us to recognize your presence in the familiar things around us in this House of Prayer.
27. Father, forgive me when I worry unceasingly. Reassure me with your promise to take care of all my worries.
28. Help me, Lord, to be honest with myself, come clean to you, receive your forgiveness, and live a new life in your grace.
29. Lord, deliver me from token concern for the poor, the lonely, and those difficult to love.
30. Faithful Father, sometimes I want to quit. Thank you for never quitting on me. Fill me with your patience, love, and understanding.
31. Lord, tune my heart to your wisdom.

