

Grace Notes

Community of Grace Presbyterian Church

September 2008

September Highlights

[Mission & Outreach Reaching New Heights](#)

[Intensive Missions Grow at COG.](#) The Summer of 2008 will be remembered for an expansion in our intensive mission work. Not only have more people stepped up to help those in needs, but more opportunities have been provided through COG.

[Be the Church: Put Your Faith in Action.](#) Our new program theme for the year is announced, based on the description of a purpose-driven life described in Matthew 5.

From the Pastor's Desk:

[A Story of How God Really Works.](#) Pastor Marty shares a story of God working at COG through new technology.

Our Church Community

[25th Anniversary Celebrated with Style.](#) □ It is not often that people have the opportunity to be present when a church can celebrate 25 years. We had that opportunity this summer, and the celebration that went with it was fantastic!

[Session Notes.](#) Here you will find the notes from the August 12 Session meeting..

[Annual Session Retreat.](#) Due to vacation schedules, the Session did not meet in July. In August Session will have both a regular meeting and their annual retreat.

[September Financial Update.](#) Here is our updated monthly financial picture provided by Tim Fluetsch.

[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.](#) Here you will find a listing of the current elders and deacons.

Children & Youth

Faith in Action...

[Touch a Young Life This Year.](#) □ Here is a listing of opportunities to connect with our young people as the new program year gets under way.

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



September

Mission & Outreach Reaching New Heights **Intensive Missions Grow at COG**

by Dave Adamson
Elder

This summer Community of Grace took another big step in making a difference in **mission and outreach** to those in need...and in the spiritual development of its members. We expanded both the number of participants and the breadth of our intensive missions. These week-long mission projects challenged more of our members in many new ways. Through those challenges, they provided not only a more personal level of service to those in need, but a faith-building experience for those who participated.

New this year was a family-oriented service trip to those in **Mexico** who needed help in constructing new housing. Joining with Amor Ministries, our COG delegation donated their time and talent for a full week (June 20-27) to this project. This inter-generational experience brought 17 kids, moms, dads, and young adults together with fellow Christians from around the country to address a very real human need.

Continuing a series of annual youth mission trips, ten of our members traveled to **San Francisco** to connect first hand with those in need in our inner cities (June 29-July 7). Sleeping on the floor of an old church in the “Tenderloin District,” these volunteers worked at the SF Rescue Mission, Salvation Army Mission Center, distributed meals, and shared their lives with those in need. Members of our congregation joined this group by donating fast food gift cards, following their progress through emailed updates through a prayer coordinator, and praying regularly for the success of their mission.

Partnering with Good Shepherd Lutheran, eight COG members spent a full week with the **Royal Family Kids Camp** (August 3-8). Several other COG members traveled to support the camp for a portion of the week. Under the direction of John and Shelly Horel, 30 foster children who have a history of abuse or neglect received a very special summer camp experience at Camp Utaba. Christian themes and daily worship were central to the design of this camp.

Besides these intensive summer mission projects, COG members continued to make sandwiches for the **homeless**, conducted a car wash to support the “**Ulster Project**,” supported a car show for the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, and conducted a food drive for the **Crossroads Urban Center**. PW launched its annual **farmer’s market** in August for mission projects. Finally, COG conducted a week-long **Vacation Bible Camp** for 60 children in the community, many of whom are not from COG member families!

Our church has come a long way toward putting its faith into action. Many thanks to all who volunteered and supported our volunteers!



Be the Church: Put Your Faith in Action!

by Lorrie Gaffney

Children and Youth Director

I was walking along a beautiful river in Durango Colorado, with my 4 sisters-in-law and a cousin several weeks ago. We all froze as a cell phone rang and Kathy spoke with her doctor to find out if she did in fact have breast cancer. Our hearts sank as the conversation continued, without shouts of joy, an indication that the news would not be good. You never know what is in a day. Kathy went on to share that she was at a new point of searching for God’s purpose for her life, even prior to this diagnosis.

There are lots of books written for all ages on discovering purpose and living a purpose-driven life. *The Message* (Matthew 5:14) shares a teaching of Jesus on the purpose of life. Here Jesus says to us:

“You are here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world.”

Since we know that the very being of God is love, then we know that we are here to see, point to, and share God’s love in beautiful and various ways.

This year our church will adopt a new general focus: **“Be the Church...Put Your Faith into Action”**. We will be challenged in all areas of ministry to put faith into action by taking ministry beyond the walls of the church. How might this happen? One suggestion was to perform a Christmas pageant for a nursing home or assisted living center. Another was to set aside a Sunday where we replace our regular worship time with a day of serving our community and beyond. Other ideas included inviting our friends and neighbors to join us in joyful service, and organizing small groups that study and then seek a way to put their study of God into action somewhere. YOUR creative ideas for taking regular ministries out into our community are needed. Please share them with the leadership team and Session as we also serve one another within the church.

Jesus continues in Matthew 5:15...

God is not a secret to be kept. We’re going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don’t think I’m going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I’m putting you on a light stand. Now that I’ve put you on a hilltop, on a light stand – shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you’ll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.

If you ever find yourself those perennial nagging questions...

- *What is my purpose in life?*
- *Is there something more?*
- *Why does life seem monochrome?*

Read and pray Matthew 5. God has created your life for important purpose. In fact Christ has no hands but yours. Your hands are the very hands of Christ in our world today as the Holy Spirit works through you. Join Community of Grace in discovering, experiencing and sharing God-colors in places of need.



From the Pastor's Desk:

A Story of How God Really Works

by Pastor Marty

Before I tell this story I want to thank all the major and minor players. Thank you to Lorrie Gaffney, Dede Carpenter, Sandy Growe, Tom Keene, Bob Rollins, members of the church who have suggested getting video projection for the sanctuary, members of the church who cautioned against spending too much money, Session elders who have held discussions about video projectors at numerous meetings, and anyone who prayed that we could someday have decent video projection in the sanctuary. (Hopefully I've remembered everyone J)

Several years ago, as we were finally finishing the 22-year task of owning a fully-functioning sound system for worship, people began suggesting more frequently the need to add video projection into the sanctuary. We were using a 1950's slide projection technology for a 2008 service of worship. Other congregations across the country had integrated video into worship. We had used video in our sanctuary from time to time, but it was a hit and miss endeavor. So, as the idea surfaced again to purchase video projection equipment, it now seemed like the right time to get it. When we began to take bids, we thought maybe \$10,000 would be needed. We had consulted other congregations similar to ours and \$10,000 seemed like a real number.

Unfortunately, when the bids came in, the real number was more like \$20,000. We were very disappointed. With all the other priorities in our congregation from program to parking lots, the video projection system was still needed but ended up near the bottom of our priority lists because of the cost.

Recently, we had the usual technological problems that come with trying to use one video projection system for 3 services in separate areas of the church on one morning. At the 8:30 service the system worked. At the 9:45 youth service the system worked. But in the process of transferring it back to the sanctuary for the 11 AM service, some cord didn't get plugged in or some button didn't get pressed so that when the projection system was supposed to function, it didn't. The next Sunday, the same thing almost happened again.

The next week Lorrie came to Dede and I and asked if we could somehow find in our budgets the cost for a basic projector for the sanctuary. The projector we had at that time was donated for youth ministry, and was being used in the sanctuary as a last resort. We checked our budgets and found some monies in the worship budget. I asked Sandy to look for projectors that were roughly the same projection power as the youth projector. She recommended several, and one was purchased for \$600. Bob Rollins fiddled with it and Tom Keene integrated it into the sanctuary worship and, voila, we now have a wonderful projector that cost only \$600 instead of \$20,000. To top it off, it is 10 times more powerful and clear than the youth projector...an added, unexpected, unplanned for, blessing.

Isn't it amazing how God works through the mess of life's frustrations and persistence. Thank God and thanks to all who made this story come true. May we all find the hand of God in our own messy frustrations and persistence.

Blessings,

Pastor Marty



Our Church Community

25th Anniversary Celebrated with Style

Denise Harris

Program Committee Co-Chair

On August 9th and 10th COG celebrated its 25th anniversary. It started with a picnic at Willow Creek Park on Saturday and ended with worship service on Sunday.

On hand were special guests Jim Lappen and his wife, Barb. Jim was the first Pastor for Community of Grace.

Saturday was well attended with about 165 people. Joe Morley catered the main dish with church members bringing wonderful salads and desserts. It was fun to look at old pictures and hear stories on the beginnings of COG. The weather cooperated beautifully and waited to pour down rain just as the picnic ended.

Jim preached on Sunday a sermon similar to his first one here. We had 200+ people attending. We also heard from Bob Rigstad, Jacque Beddoes, Linda Adams and Linda Page. There were certainly challenges in the development of our church! Through much perseverance and determination, COG was formed. We finished worship by going outside and burying a time capsule under the cross tower. The first shovelfuls of dirt were by Jim, Barb, Ed Taylor, the Beddoes, Elmer Steineke, the Adams', and many more of the founding members. It was awesome to hold hands during the charge with all these people that made our worship at COG possible. The festivities were wrapped up with a reception in the gym with more pictures and a slide show.

Many thanks to all who helped put together this wonderful event!



Session Notes *(Meeting of August 12, 2008)*

by Dave Adamson
Elder

1. NEW CLERK. Session welcomed Jane Cooper, our new Clerk of Session, to her first meeting.
2. FINANCIAL REPORT. Tim Fleutch presented the monthly financial report. He reported that “we are in good shape going into the end of the year.”
3. 25th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION. The Session received a report on the 25th anniversary celebration. Session VOTED to send a letter of appreciation to Kelly and Denise Harris for their volunteer leadership in putting this celebration together.
4. RETREAT OUTLINE. Session reviewed the proposed outline for the upcoming retreat.
5. PRESBYTERY UPDATE. Session heard a review of the transitions and processes taking place in Presbytery.
6. WORSHIP. The regular worship schedule is scheduled to resume on September 7, at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.
7. MISSION & OUTREACH. Session VOTED to send letters of appreciation to the leaders of our intensive mission activities and VBS conducted over the course of the summer.

Annual Session Retreat

by Dave Adamson
Elder

On August 16 the Session met in Park City for its annual retreat to discuss and develop priorities for the program year to come. Besides our continuing efforts, these priorities will be used by the Session and staff to frame new initiatives and programs for one to three years to come.

After a full day of prayer, sharing, and listening to the many perspectives present, five activities were identified as being useful for the continued growth of our church. Listed in priority order, the following activities were identified for our attention during the year to come:

1. *Continue our growth in Mission & Outreach activities*
2. *Explore the possibility of hiring a part-time youth director*
3. *Develop a plan to increase our presence in the community*
4. *Develop volunteer leadership in our church*
5. *Develop a strategy to intentionally connect people with our church and their faith*

Given all of the other tasks normally expected to be accomplished in order to continue our regular programs, it is understood that we may not be able to take up all of these new activities this year. However, these are clearly areas of interest identified by the elders and staff.


In addition, over the next three years the Session will focus on the following three long-term projects (not prioritized).

- *Develop & Implement a Church Growth Plan*
- *Review Executive Leadership Compensation*
- *Maximize Our Facility To Further Our Ministries*



July Financial Update

by Tim Fluetsch
Elder

2008 Income & Expenses	 Financial Update	Current to 7-31-08
		Budget Year To Date
		Year To Date
<u>Income</u>		
Pledges	\$210,161	\$226,492

Other	\$35,214	\$30,800
Total Income	\$245,375	\$257,292
<u>Expenses</u>		
Personnel	\$134,373	\$133,939
Outreach & Mission	\$40,091	\$36,213
Operations	\$70,041	\$73,636
Children & Youth	\$4,350	\$8,341
Adult & Family	\$2,112	\$3,529
Worship	\$1,877	\$2,041
Total Expenses	\$252,947	\$257,701
Surplus (Deficit)	(\$7,571)	(\$408)

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)

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

Expressing Our Faith: National and International Service
(www.pcusa.org/navigation/mission.htm)

What Presbyterians Believe (www.pcusa.org/catech/studycat.htm)

Church Officers

Board of Deacons

Deacons Moderator: Lisa Wiscomb

Class of 2009

Randy Carter
Dave Fry
Barb Gentry
Lori Packard
Sharon Riley
Wes Starkenburg

Class of 2010

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

Class of 2011

Kim Beaslin
Elaine Nordberg
Linda Page
Marianne Wedertz
Lisa Wiscomb

Session

Session Moderator: Pastor Marty Shelton-Jenck

Clerk: Jane Cooper

Class of 2009

Tim Fuetsch

Class of 2010

Pat Holmes

Class of 2011

Kelly Harris

Children & Youth

Faith in Action...

Touch a Young Life This Year

by Lorrie Gaffney

Children and Youth Director

Among the many ways of putting your faith into action is to involve yourself in the lives of our young people. Community of Grace has many rich opportunities for those willing to share their lives and their time.



Children's Ministry

- + **Sunday School teachers plant seeds for a faith that grows.** There are many ways to support our Sunday School ministry. Join a teaching team, be a sub, organize the storage closet, provide snack, help with our covenant rewards and more. Your involvement makes a difference.
- + **iLIGHT! Choir.** We were blessed with an amazing children's choir director for the past several years. Gael will not be returning this year and we will miss her passion for connecting children with God through music. There is a saying "when a door closes God opens a window". Yesterday I received a call from Kathy Moore that she would like to offer our children a gift that she received 35 years ago by leading a musical of Shadrach, Meschah and Abednego with our children and youth. More information while follow, but in the mean time check out Daniel Chapter 3, and grab the Veggie Tales version for your kids.
- + **Secret Lake All-Church Hike makes no secret of God's amazing creation.** Join Pastor Marty and Connie Marshall on an easy hike Sept. 14. Carpool from COG at 3:00 pm. Bring a friend, a light jacket, water bottle and snack for a reward at the top. Connie, long-time Alta marketing director, will share information about the surrounding area for those interested.
- + **ACTS** leaders and 5th/6th graders put their faith into action by serving young children through puppet ministry, as well as retired seniors, under a Youth Leadership Team of confirmed High School seniors – truly intergenerational ministry!
- + **Circle of Friends, Children's Worship leaders** reinforce the Sunday School message through puppet message and activities. You are invited to worship God by sharing something joyful and creative with our kids. There are many

possibilities. Got a favorite craft, snack, music, game or craft? Marilyn Branath would love to hear from you!



Youth Ministry

- ✚ **The Message** returns on Sept. 7 to put real faith and real life together through video, music, scripture and application. Invite someone to discover God's love, purpose and direction; **serve as a host** that welcomes youth, especially those who are new, into the Message.
- ✚ **Confirmation for 9th graders** and above will have an organizational meeting in Sept. Look for information in the mail. Pray about whether God may be asking you to be in a faith-mentoring relationship with a youth. You have likely heard a mentor say: *I received more than I gave.*
- ✚ **"Sheer Fun"** (*planning quarterly fun recreation for Jr./Sr. High*) wants you to be involved on the team to plan and lead activities of fun that any youth or friend is welcome to attend.
- ✚ **Jr. High Foundations** will be developed this year with your help. Talk to Lorrie about joining in planning for the needs and wants for this age group to grow in faith and enjoy God
- ✚ **Youth Leadership Team** is a new ministry for confirmed high school youth to put their faith into action through ACTS planning, mentoring younger kids and serving seniors.

September Prayer Calendar

by Millie Nielsen
Prayer Coordinator

1. On this Labor Day and every day may I serve you with gladness.
2. Bless the servant work of our deacons.
3. God, give me an ear that really hears what you are saying.
4. Give me a loving heart that tries to understand how other people feel.
5. Guide Pastor Marty, Dede, and Lorrie and give them wisdom.
6. Lord, open my eyes to the beauty you have given us in the world.
7. May our Sunday School educational program bring us into a closer relationship with you and may it inspire us to extend your love with others.
8. Cultivate in me a holy expectancy for you, Oh God.
9. Father God, help me give thanks for growth, humility, patience, and courage in the midst of suffering .
10. Lord, help me to be your loving presence in the world today.
11. I pray for comfort for people living with illness, infirmities of old age, and loneliness.
12. Give strength, courage, and steadfast faithfulness to our sister church, the Immanuel Church, Kiraro, in Kenya.

13. Lord, I pray for peace, safety, healing, understanding, and an end to hatred.
14. May worship this morning ignite my spirit to shine outward so that others will see your love through me.
15. May the seed of your word planted by New Beginnings church grow and bear fruit.
16. Thank you for the faithful work of our session members as they lead this congregation.
17. Lord, show me how happiness comes more from giving than from having a lot of things.
18. Today help me see reminders of your grace.
19. Lord, help me to accept other people with love as you do.
20. Today I pray for safety and peace for people in countries devastated by war.
21. Thank you, Lord, for the music in today's worship service and bless all of the musicians.
22. Lord, ground my spiritual life in the trustworthiness of God.
23. Oh God, help me to understand other people and not to be too upset when they do not understand me.
24. Loving God, teach me that I can choose to be happy.
25. Lord, help me to love my enemies and to pray for them.
26. I pray for the ministry of Community of Grace and for our church family.
27. Open our hearts to hear your word in worship today.
28. Help me to love other people and leave them their freedom to be different.
29. Father God, show me the things that really matter and help me to use my energy in the best possible way.
30. Lord, I pray for wisdom for world leaders and for ordinary people in their joys and sorrows.

