



THE

# Harbor

NORTH PARK COVENANT CHURCH

May 2011

## **Student Recital May 1**

Monica Laytham, student at North Park and friend of North Park Covenant Church, invites you to a free piano recital on Monday, May 2, at 7:30 p.m. in Anderson Chapel on the campus of North Park University. All are invited. The recital will feature solos and duets of Brahms, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and others. A light reception will follow. Please come!

## **Children's Choir Expands Musical Skills**

Linden Christ, Director, Children's and Chancel Bell Choirs

The Children's Choir is looking forward to sharing their bell ringing and vocal selections with the congregation at the 11:00 service on Mother's Day, May 8. We've spent 30 minutes every Thursday this spring developing our ringing skills, with the help of Eileen Thorpe, in preparation for that day.

## **Upcoming Women Ministries Events**

Laurie Rizzo

The Women Ministries Fall Retreat will take place at Covenant Harbor in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, over the weekends of September 16-18 and September 23-25. Women from NPCC have traditionally gone to the first available weekend, but you are welcome to go to either. There will be registration forms on the Women Ministries bulletin board in the coat room near the women's bathroom, or you can contact Laurie Rizzo at [oreo\\_60657@yahoo.com](mailto:oreo_60657@yahoo.com). Registration starts early this year, May 15. Please return your form to Laurie Rizzo by May 15, and she'll mail it.

Other dates of note: The next Women Ministries meeting is Tuesday, May 3, at 7 p.m. in the parlors. The Women Ministries Strawberry Social is Sunday, June 5, following the 10 a.m. service.



# FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

## Of Roots and Wings

Judith P. McCullough, Interim Senior Pastor

I just finished reading what I wrote for the first column I did for *The Narthex*. It was all about beginnings, hopes, and plans for this church as we moved into a transitional time together. I said the interim period would be at least 12 months; by the time I leave, it will have been more than 21 months. Babies have been born, and friends have joined the Saints Triumphant.

In that first column I talked about trusting God in three ways: that we would take time to heal and let go of past disappointments; that we would move into new ministries together and strengthen existing programs as we finished up the Veritas process; that we would see a church profile formed and a pastoral search underway for a new permanent senior pastor. All three of those directions have seen God's leading and grace.

Beginnings are important times, and we began well with so many of you willing to be supportive and helpful, ready to take on tasks, and move ahead in new ways. You provided us with warm and comfortable living space. It has been a joy to live and work with all of you. And now it's time to think about this interim time coming to a close. One thing I

know about life in general: it's important to begin well, and it's important to end well. Because none of us like goodbyes, we sometimes don't do the ending things very well. I do want us to end well.

And so I share some thoughts about this. I have to begin by admitting that I'm not good at this "good-bye" thing. I always cry a lot, and that's frustrating because our culture frowns on showing real emotion—at least that which is sad. But there is a sadness to saying goodbye, and I acknowledge that. But there's also a positive side as we await that which is to come. And because God is so gracious, we can trust that it will be good and fulfilling.

The words above, by Macrina Wiederkehr, have always been helpful to me in times of saying good-bye. I share them with you.

Tom and I prepare to leave in a month. There will be many more opportunities to spend time together before that, however there won't be enough hours to do all the things we'd like to do. So we'll share in the goodness of these days and not be afraid of our tears or of saying real things to each other. Just as God has blessed us in our beginnings, so God will bless us in our ending times. And God has already gifted us with so many memories and experiences that, as we go, much of who you are goes with us.

See you in church!

*Roots and wings I've wanted most of all.  
My longing to stay and my longing to go,  
come wrapped in the same package. I struggle.  
Very much the same it is when we fall  
into each other's lives.*

*Our roots say: Stay! Set up your tent! Be at home here!*

*Our wings say: Continue your journey!*

*Don't get too rootbound!*

*Keep dreaming of something beyond!*

*When you love someone you have to let them go.*

*It's the only way to keep them.*

*Pastor Judy*

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# CHRISTIAN FORMATION

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## What Is It To Be Holy?

Matt Kennedy, Youth Minister

I believe in redeeming words. There are words that become worn out from overuse. There are words that have been emptied of meaning because of their abuse. These days I'm thinking of the words *holy* and *sacred*. When first falling on my ears, these words seem a little obtuse. They're "churchy" words, so loaded with religious baggage that I think we fail to comprehend their true meaning. I recently found a wonderful explanation of the word *sacred* from the TV show "Glee" (of all places!). In a recent episode, the character Kurt was in an argument with his father about their tradition of Friday night family dinners. Kurt had missed a number of family dinners, and his father reminded him that they should be considered sacred times. "Friday night dinners are a ritual. The whole point of having something sacred is that it takes precedence over other things . . . if you start giving up sacred things you've got nothing to hang on to." I found this a fitting explanation of sacred and could draw lots of comparisons to life in the church. After all, when you consider all the ways Jesus compared the kingdom of God to a meal or a banquet, it seems that when church is at its best it should be like a family meal.

May 22 is Confirmation Sunday. Our youth will be leading us in worship as they gather around this year's confirmand. The rite of confirmation is sacred and important. It is the act of proclaiming for one's self the faith one has received and claims ownership of. Confirmation is similar, but distinct from church membership. Both are covenants individuals make to each other in light of God's holiness and grace. They are sacred promises. Though you can put one's date of baptism, confirmation, and membership on a calendar—those in and of themselves are no more sacred moments than the life lived from those moments on. More important than a baptism is that you are baptized. More important than confirmation is that you are a disciple. More important than your date of membership is that you are a member. These are things lived out. These are things that take precedence. Worship, service, and mission are more than things we do, but who we are. These are things we hang on to. These are things that are holy. Being a part of the church is more than merely what we identify as our religious affiliation on census forms. Being a part of the church is more than being a part of a social club. It is a calling to be a disciple. It is a calling to be "holy" and to have an identity in Christ that takes precedent. "Just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.'" (1 Peter 1:15-16)

PASTOR MATT



## From Libby Piotrowski, Children's Minister

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### Vacation Bible School Update

### Donation Items Needed

*This list has been updated since last month and is also kept, updated, in the church office.*

The registration forms have gone out! The donation items are coming in! Our participants list is steadily climbing! And we need your help! Are you:

- Willing to give some of your time that week?
- Musically inclined?
- Able to donate something from the revised donation list?
- Willing to help chaperone a field trip on Wednesday afternoon?
- Willing to help make lunch for the kids on Friday afternoon?



Dates: June 20-24, 2011

Times: 9-12, Monday through Thursday (with an optional field trip on Wednesday afternoon)  
9-1 on Friday

Cost: \$15 before June 1 or \$20 at the door (field trip registration *must* be done by June 1)

Who: Preschool-5th grade (Grade indicates school grade entering in the fall. Preschoolers *must* be potty trained; no pull-ups.)

### Staff Needs

*Children in 6th grade and up and adults are invited to come on as staff.*

Family Leaders: 17 people needed

Workshop Leaders: 12 people needed

Musical Leaders: 6 musicians (all instruments are welcome!) and 1 (or more) motions leader(s)

Pyramid Childcare: 2 volunteers each day

Baby wipes: 20 tubs

Balls that will float (any color): 20

Baskets (various sizes, shapes, and colors)

Black Sharpie markers: 8

Clay jars (pottery)

Crayola marker sets: 16

Fancy toy jewelry

Hula hoops: 20

Large pieces of fabric (any material; rich, deep colors)

Large plastic tarp: 1

Large sponges: 20

Large white canopy tents: 4

Old blankets and sheets (any color)

Old towels: 12

Paint markers: 12 sets

Paper towels: 18 rolls

Plastic buckets (4- or 5-gallon): 15

Plastic greenery (ferns, other plants)

Plastic plates (gold): 12

Rope: 100 feet

Straw: Small bag or a ¼ of a bale

Stuffed animals (will not be returned)

Toilet paper: 50 rolls

Topsoil: 5 bags

Toy shields: 3

Toy spears: 3

Wheelbarrow (will be returned): 1

Yarn (any color): 5 skeins

Thanks to everyone for your donations thus far, and for those yet to come!

## May Sunday School Birthdays

- 1 Harry Piotrowski
- 3 Hikari Sugisaki
- 11 Claire Schlensker
- 13 Nikolas Erickson
- 18 Anna Palmquist



## Musical to Follow May 18 Faithbuilders

Linden Christ, Director,  
Children's and Chancel Bell Choirs



On Wednesday, May 18, our Faithbuilders entertainment will be provided by the DePaul Community Music Division's Prelude Choir, directed by Linden Christ and featuring our own Lena and Tobin Schiller. The children, ranging from 5 to 9 years old, will perform the musical *Child of the World* at 6:30 p.m. after dinner. The performance is 30 minutes long and will be followed by dessert. We hope you can join us for this special performance!



*Children of the church choose eggs to decorate at the April 9 Women Ministries Brunch*

*Eileen Thorpe helps as children make edible Easter egg "baskets" out of rice cakes, chocolate frosting, and coconut "grass" topped with jelly beans.*





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# OUR MINISTRIES

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## Gladys Larson Remembered

Ingrid Forsberg

*Gladys and I fell in love with each other over a period of almost two years.*

*We met through the Stephen Ministry Program.*

*Gladys could not see well, but nothing escaped her. She took in everything around her.*

*She loved coming to church with me, and I enjoyed bringing her. She would smile when hearing my voice and when I hugged her.*

**STEPHEN MINISTRY**



*We had many opportunities to smile together.*

*She and I both grew up in Northern Minnesota, and we bonded over our childhood memories of the north woods.*

*Together, we took deep breaths of the cold air and enjoyed the brightness of the sun reflecting on the snow.*

*We enjoyed being in the wind and escaping from the*

*Nursing Home when the weather was like a beautiful Minnesota day.*

*I encourage you to reach out to someone like Gladys in whatever way you can.*

*Fall in love with someone 95 years old, someone who sits in a wheelchair, someone who has poor vision and poor hearing.*

*Have the honor of singing happy birthday to them with their friends.*

*Thank you, Gladys, for sharing your last years on earth with me.*

*You truly have been God's messenger to me.*

*I will always treasure your quiet wit, your beautiful smile, and your patience.*

*Peace to your memory.*

When I was assigned to be with Gladys, my first thoughts were that it would be better for me to pick the person I should be with. I wanted to make this suggestion at one of our Stephen ministry meetings. I struggled with being assigned to someone who was in nursing home. Why was I given this assignment? This was my way, I guess, of trying to protect myself from the unknown. Also, I wanted to be with someone who I could meet at the coffee shop and talk with for an hour. What would I do with a 93-year-old woman in a nursing home? I did not like my assignment. But then I recalled that my promise to myself when I signed up to become a Stephen Minister was to be open and honest, to accept what was given to me, and to struggle with all the feelings that it provoked. Now, two years later, I can say that God revealed to me, through Gladys, the beauty of a life that had been weathered and worn. I learned that blessings from God can only be received when we are willing to trust and give up our desire to have what we want from our investment. Today, I will say that my assignment was a priceless gift. Thank you, Gladys.

## With Thanks for Tutors

Tom McCullough



The North Park Tutoring Partnership (NPCC, NPU, and Peterson Elementary School) started over 20 years under the leadership of Jo Katter. Every Monday after school 25 to 30 students are in the parlors for help with homework assignments. But the more significant impact on students and tutors are the relationships that develop and lead to learning, friendship and outreach to the diverse parts of our community. Members of the our group during this 2010-11 school year are students with relatives in Mexico, India, Pakistan, Jordan, Syria, Vietnam, Philippines, as well as the United States. A big “thank you” is due this year’s tutors and subs:

- 23 members and friends of North Park Covenant Church
  - 3:30 Session Coordinators: Tom McCullough, Roger Nelson (also serve as last-minute subs)
  - 6:30 Session Coordinators: Samantha Johnson, Andy Meyer (also serve as last-minute subs)
- Tutors: Connie Barkley (pictured), Amy Bauserman, Wilma Cruz, Fran Fostey\*, Jan Gray, Naomi Jackson,

Janet Lundgren, Andy Meyer, Jan Olson, Peter Olfelt, Hannah Schukas, Peter Strom, Daniel Swanson-Nystrom, Ruthanne Werner, and Chuck Wiberg. Substitutes who agreed to be on call: Sandi Kersten, Barbara Johnson, Marilyn Nelson, Mark Schukas.

- 25 North Park University students

Tutors: Megan Ford (Campus Coordinator), Katelyn Anderson, Jenny (Undarmaa) Batkhuyag, Jenny Bussman, Peter Butkevich\*, Joel Brand, Isaiah Brown, Jennifer (Nhi) Bui\*, Anna (Oyunxaya) Dashdoudog\*, Mirya Diaz, Christy Frees, Hannah Gaskns, Tristin



Jackson, Olivia Kinnear, Sarah Locklund, Kate O’Brien\*, Kristin Ngo\*, Peter Olfelt, Kelly Reichel, Molly Schulting\*, Sam Stephan\*. Substitutes who agreed to be on call: Zach Hayes, Ben Rico, Mary White, Samantha Vidal

Special thanks go to Ruthanne Werner, who has agreed to be the Tutoring Team captain for the coming school year.

(\* denotes those serving one semester)



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# CHURCH REPORTS

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## First Quarter Financial Report

Barbara Johnson, Treasurer

The first quarter of our financial year is complete, and our homing place needs the help of its family. Envelope offerings are under budget by \$18,848, and Fulfilling our Commitment contributions are under budget by \$5,178. Total income is under budget by \$27,552. While our expenses are also slightly under budget (which is good), the bottom line is that total income is under total expenses by \$10,258.

Remember that our giving reflects ministry done by this church, not just dollars! Thank you again for the generous pledges you made to the 2011 budget, and thank you even more for remembering those pledges as you give generously. Remember Malachi: “Bring your tithes and offerings into the Lord’s storehouse, and see if He will not pour out a blessing that you cannot contain!”

## Thanks to Lenten Participants

Sharon Peterson for the Music Committee

Thank you to the many people who enhanced our worship during Lent: Evensong music, organized by Sandi Kersten, that complimented the Faithbuilders dialogues; special music during Holy Week provided by choirs and instrumentalists; all who contributed to the services on April 27 and 28, in celebration of the Central Conference’s 125th Anniversary; and the Axiom Brass Quintet concert on April 9, sponsored by Elizabeth Petersen. Your selfless service has glorified God and blessed our congregation.

We are actively planning for next year at the same time we are involved with another busy May. Our spirits are richly blessed by your support, prayer, and musical participation. Thank you.

## Additions to Columbarium Increase Usability

Eric Palmquist

The columbarium space, settled along the north side of the church, is now furnished with a stone communion table and sculpted steel gate.

The project began just over a year ago as a conversation between Grace Nelson, Becky Nelson, Chuck Wiberg, Walt Schiller, and me in the small corner classroom of the church basement. The conversation included questions about placement, material, cost, and construction. After a meaningful time of sharing thoughts and dreams I was commissioned to begin the project.

In memory of Burton Nelson, Grace and the family wished to add a communion table to the columbarium. Inspired by a trip to Coventry Cathedral, Grace shared her vision for a “church without a ceiling”. The cathedral had been bombed in World War II, destroying the roof and leaving only the walls intact.

The location and design of the space was intended to focus the worship in toward the church as a symbol of our hope, rather than out toward the world. Using the same arches and clover of circles found

in the sanctuary window behind it, the 14-foot gate was designed to complement the architecture of the church. The gate is designed with three interconnected crosses, reminding us of Christ's victory over death, while the gothic point of the arch draws our thoughts up toward heaven. Fashioned with hooks, the gate may be dressed with a parament sash of liturgical fabric or other adornment for worship. With time, the stone communion table will weather to match the stone toppings of the columbarium wall.



The communion table and gate were commissioned in memory of Burton, his passion for people, and his love of the Lord. Let us view this space not as another physical achievement for the church but as a symbol of our living response to Christ's love and promise of everlasting life. We fondly remember all of the saints and their witness to this Good News.



# All-Church Retreat:

Over the weekend of March 18-20, a group from our church went to Covenant Harbor Bible Camp in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin.



*Collages of people at various stages of life (left) were given stories by their intergenerational creators of what that particular stage might look like.*



*Skits centered around Bible stories were given anachronistic flair (above, left, and below)*



# How Goes the Walk?

va, Wisconsin, for a weekend of fellowship and worship. The theme of the weekend was “How Goes the Walk?”

*Meals were shared in the dining hall, as participants sat at different tables and with different people each time.*



*The nice weather allowed for some good time outdoors, too.*



*A group of kids challenged Pastor Matt to a game of Apples to Apples during some of the weekend's down time.*



## A Forgotten Disease

Bill Werner, MD, MPH

Ruthanne and I recently attended a remarkable concert at Symphony Center featuring violin virtuoso Itzhak Perlman. In addition to the music, which was sublime, what made the evening especially memorable was the fact that both Mr. Perlman and the conductor, James De Preist, are polio survivors. The event was sponsored by Rotary International as part of its campaign to “End Polio Now.” Except for the adult survivors of the polio epidemics of the mid-20th century, polio is largely a forgotten disease of the developed world, thanks to effective and safe vaccines. However, polio remains a problem in parts of India, Nigeria, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Polio is caused by an infection of the nervous system by a virus. It can develop into inflammation of the tissues surrounding the brain causing meningitis or, more commonly, it can invade nerve pathways in the spine that leads to destruction and paralysis. There is no cure for polio. Treatment is focused on relieving the symptoms and preventing complications. Survivors of the paralytic form of polio may later develop muscle weakness, fatigue, and even paralysis. This late manifestation of polio is called post-polio syndrome or PPS. It is not a recurrence of the disease but a failure of nerves

# HEALTH MINISTRIES FORUM



*Most Americans  
born after 1960  
have no direct  
experience  
with polio . . .*

and muscles that had overcompensated during the recovery phase of polio.

Seeing Mr. Perlman painstakingly walk across the stage with the aid of crutches and braces and Mr. DePreist conduct from a wheelchair brought back childhood memories of the fear of “catching” polio. Growing up in the 1950s, I remember the dread that anticipated the polio epidemics, which seemed to occur every summer. Instead of a carefree vacation from school, public activities were restricted and gathering spots such as swimming pools were closed. One of my earliest memories was of our mother taking my brother and sister on several buses to get a series of polio “shots” at a public health clinic.

Most Americans born after 1960 have no direct experience with polio, and I have been asked by young relatives to describe the illness. Because pockets of polio exist in the world, the possibility of its resurgence is a concern, especially if global eradication is not achieved. Smallpox was the first disease to be eliminated worldwide, and the smallpox virus now only exists in a handful of secured research laboratories. With effective

vaccination programs, polio can become the second epidemic to be considered eradicated.

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# OUR WORSHIP IN MUSIC

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## *Amahl* to Return to NPCC

Linden Christ, Director, Children's and Chancel Bell Choirs

The Music Committee is proud to announce the presentation of Gian Carlo Menotti's opera, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, on February 11 and 12 at North Park Covenant Church.

Menotti (1911-2007) wrote this opera for television in 1951, and it has been performed all over world. It involves adult and children's choruses, dancers, and animals, and is accompanied by orchestra.

The story: A crippled boy, Amahl, and his mother are visited by the three kings who are searching for the newborn Jesus. Amahl decides to give his crutch to Jesus and is miraculously healed, and he joyfully accompanies the three kings to give thanks to the Christ child.

If you would like to be involved as an orchestra member, singer, animal, dancer, help out with set construction, costume creation, prop contribution, donations, advertising, or any of the other numerous jobs needed for putting together a production of this sort, please contact Linden Christ, director, at (309) 339-0671 or [lindenchrist@gmail.com](mailto:lindenchrist@gmail.com). Also, if you have any of the set, props, costumes, or materials from the 2003 *Amahl* performance, we would appreciate the return or loan of them. Thank you!

## From the Organ Bench: Patience Is a Virtue

Sharon R. Peterson, Organist

Receptive make our spirits, our need is to be still.  
As dawn fades flick'ring candle, so dim our anxious will.  
Reveal your radiance through us, your ample strength release.  
Not ours, but yours the triumph in the pow'r of peace.  
- O God, in Restless Living, #446, *The Covenant Hymnal: A Worshipbook*

At a recent Chicago Symphony Orchestra concert program notes about Bruckner's 4th Symphony spoke to me about the music we were hearing: "It is patience, certainly, which many listeners today do not bring to Bruckner, and he will not divulge his greatness without it. . . . The slow movement moves at a deliberate and relentless gait, but it's shrewdly paced and lovingly told, and there are movements of almost unimaginable beauty. The grand climax is truly impressive only if one has made the slow ascent." (Phillip Huscher, program annotator for the CSO, March 31, 2011.)

Isn't this a lot like how God reveals himself? Yes, there are times God answers our prayers quickly and clearly. Often, however, God takes his time responding, forcing us to be patient. This is a difficult lesson to learn. We don't like waiting, and we rarely think waiting will improve the outcome.

Yet, like a slow-moving musical masterpiece, God works at his own pace and responds to us as he knows best. We must learn to trust the waiting, becoming more and more receptive through the process. Then we will experience his "Triumph in the power of peace." May you be blessed with this peace during this Eastertide, the result of our patient Lenten waiting.



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## WORDS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

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### **Hanging at the Mosque 'Til Midnight: Who Ever Would've Thought?**

Andy Larsen

Almost two years ago in Seattle, an amazing new chapter began in some efforts I have been a part of as a Covenant minister building bridges with Muslims. I had the wild opportunity to speak as a special guest in a mosque, to a community of Muslims gathered for prayer on Friday. This was their "Sunday service"! Their Imam, now one of several trusted Muslim friends, had invited me to address our efforts as Christians in bridging to the Muslim community. A rich time of conversation and building of friendships continued until midnight! I could hardly believe what I was experiencing. We've done a lot together since then, including a recent dinner we hosted with the John Perkins Center for Reconciliation at Seattle Pacific University for about 40 Imams and Christian leaders to build friendships and to begin to explore what we can do together for our communities. Much has happened in a short time as we've focused on facilitating church to mosque, Christian to Muslim, relationships in our broader Covenant church family. Who ever would have thought this would be possible in our post-9/11 world? I clearly didn't see it coming.



Vitriol can easily overtake our interactions with each other in the world today. Many see religion as partly to blame. However, as we seek to live more in line with our respective Holy Books, the command to love God and our neighbors as ourselves, the tone changes dramatically! This has been my experience. But clearly we need to put feet to our creed. Too often we are content to say we believe, while stopping short of living out the ethic of Christ's love to our Muslim neighbors. We must not stop short, out of fear, indifference, or something worse, from engaging Muslims as Christ calls us to. Please join us as North Park Covenant Church begins a journey to love and engage our Muslim neighbors in our community. We will be visiting a local mosque on May 13. Check with the church office regarding details.

# New Vision for Swedish Church Plant

Paul Couleur



The Evangelical Covenant Church has largely benefited from Swedish immigrants that pioneered a faithful commitment to form the denomination we belong to today. We bring this your attention with the news of a church plant that will be a joint effort with both the Swedish Mission Church and the ECC that will be located in Gothenburg, Sweden. From 2004 to 2006 I was able to serve Fiskebäcks Missionkyrka (Fiskebäck Mission Church) and contribute to the efforts of spreading the gospel in Sweden.

Aaron Thompson and Sara Moller, both of whom are graduates of North Park Theological Seminary and have served at the Fiskebäck Mission Church, are pioneering a new vision for the area. They, along with members of that church, are moving toward the hope for a new international church. “Our hope is to start a new fellowship in Backa that reflects God’s kingdom in its beauty and diversity where people can grow as Jesus’ followers. We long to do so in openness with other churches in Backa, so that we can proclaim and demonstrate God’s whole Gospel to His creation.” The church is still in the early stages of being formed. Aaron and Sara, along with others, are meeting to get the permission and guidance they will need to begin this new work. Our prayers go with them as they start this new and exciting adventure.



*Kay Olson, Samantha Johnson, Sandy De Varenne, her daughters, and their friend enjoy some brunch before learning about a Ukranian egg-dying technique (below) at the April 9 Women Ministries Brunch.*





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# COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

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## Help JPUSA Win a Playground

Jesus People USA, an Evangelical Covenant Church, runs the largest shelter of its kind in Chicago, Cornerstone Community Outreach. They recently entered a contest run by a non-profit organization in Washington, DC, and are one of 10 finalists out of 118 entries. Five of the 10 will each be awarded playground equipment valued at \$15,000. The five winners will be determined by online voting. If you're willing to help, go to <http://projects.kaboom.org/vote2011>, register, and vote for Cornerstone Playground. Each person is eligible to vote once a day until May 10.

The playground at Cornerstone is on a rooftop. It's the only outdoor space for the 100 children who live in the shelter. It was constructed fifteen years ago as a memorial to Kathleen Larsen, daughter of then president of the Covenant Paul Larson and his wife, Elizabeth. Kathleen had volunteered with the kids at the shelter prior to her death in 1996.

If won, this award will be used to update the structure and provide shade from the hot Chicago summers. They have an excellent chance to win if Covenant friends will take the time to register and vote daily. Please vote and spread the word!

## House-sitters Needed

Are you going out of town Memorial Day weekend and would like a house sitter? Matt and Nicole Kennedy are looking for a place in the North Park neighborhood for Nicole's parents to stay from May 27-30 while they're visiting from out of town. Please contact Pastor Matt at [matthewpkennedy@gmail.com](mailto:matthewpkennedy@gmail.com) or (253) 549-8523 if you're interested and willing to host some guests.

## Are You Ready for Some Softball?

Anders Johnson

Summer is approaching, and that means Covenant Softball is nearly upon us. The league is co-ed, and we play against other area Covenant churches throughout the summer. Games are on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at Winnemac Park behind Amundsen High School on Damen Avenue just south of Foster. We're looking for dedicated, slightly to mostly athletic, good-humored players of both genders (we're always in need of women) who want to have some fun and fellowship this summer. Please contact "Da Coach" (that's me) at [anders1521@gmail.com](mailto:anders1521@gmail.com) if you're interested in playing. Let's play ball!



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# OUR PEOPLE

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## May Birthdays

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*Kids play carpetball outside the dining hall during the All-Church Retreat.*



**Removed for Privacy**

## COVENANT HOME OF CHICAGO

### CUSTOMIZED SUPPORTIVE LIVING

*\* Home Care is also available through  
Methodist Senior Home Care*

2720 West Foster Avenue, Chicago, IL 60625

**Please call (773) 506-6900 to schedule a visit.**

Covenant Retirement Communities does not discriminate pursuant to the Fair Housing Act subject to any exemptions that may apply.



## In Loving Memory: Virginia M. Ohlson

Eloise Nelson

Probably no other North Park Covenant Church member has received as many international honors as Virginia Ohlson, who died April 10, 2010, at age 95 at Covenant Village. From 1940 to 2002, she received 43 awards from Japanese organizations, American health associations, and Covenant institutions.

She was the first non-Japanese citizen to receive the "Third Order of the Precious Crown" from the emperor of Japan in 1991 for her contributions to that country. After World War II, at General Douglas MacArthur's request, she helped rebuild the war-ravaged nursing profession in Japan. Later she was director of nursing for the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission, examining the effects of radiation from the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings.

While in Japan, she established close bonds with young nurses in her Bible study class. Many kept in touch with her all her life.

Virginia grew up in North Park in a two-flat built by her father on Spaulding Avenue. She was a lifelong member of North Park Covenant Church, serving as a Sunday school teacher, choir member, and on church and national Covenant boards.

As a girl she set her sights on being a missionary nurse, influenced by a neighbor, Ruth Nordlund Nelson, a public health nurse who championed missionary service. Virginia received an R.N. degree from Swedish Covenant Hospital, and B.S., master's, and doctoral degrees from the University of Chicago.

She began teaching at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1963. In 30 years there, she helped establish a public health nursing master's program, headed the Department of Public Health Nursing, and initiated and directed the Office for International Studies. She served as a consultant on public health nursing internationally, returning several times to Japan.

She received the highest awards offered by U.S. nursing associations. The Virginia M. Ohlson International Studies Endowment at UIC was also established in her honor. Over the years, her church gave her two recognitions, North Park College, five awards, including an honorary doctorate in 1983, and Swedish Covenant Hospital, three, including the Spirit of Compassion Award in 2002.

Her sister, Dorothy Lundbom, who lives at Covenant Village, survives her along with nieces and nephews.

Virginia Ohlson was God's missionary to Japan and to international students world-wide. She was also a blessing to North Park church, where she was nurtured and served so faithfully.



Update on Our  
Members and Friends



**Removed for Privacy**



*Mel Soderstrom gives Delores a hand on a recent trip to the Greater Chicago Food Depository. (Photo courtesy of Doug Swanson-Nystrom)*



## NORTH PARK COVENANT CHURCH

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### PASTORAL STAFF

Judith P. McCullough, Interim Senior Pastor  
Matt Kennedy, Interim Youth Minister  
Libby Piotrowski, Children's Minister

NORTH PARK FRIENDSHIP CENTER  
Joanne Ekberg, Executive Director

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### WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday School for All Ages 9:45 a.m.  
Sunday Worship Services 8:30 and 11 a.m.

Ann-Marie O. Frisk, Editor & Designer • Terri VanDerVeer, Office Manager  
*Submit your news for the June newsletter to [narthex@npcovenant.org](mailto:narthex@npcovenant.org) by May 15.*