



# The Link



Fourth Avenue United Methodist Church, 318 W. St. Catherine, Louisville, Ky. 40203 502-585-2176  
Official Supporter of the Fairness Campaign  
Pastor: Rev. Jean Hawxhurst  
December 2008

**Mission Statement: To share the love of God in the heart of the city.**

## Pastor Jean Comments

Author and educator Dr. Malidoma Some was one of the presenters at this past month's Festival of Faiths. I found his story compelling and his wisdom fascinating.

He was born in Burkina Faso, West Africa, in the Dagara tribe, but when he was just a boy, he was taken from his tribe by well-meaning westerners. He was raised in English speaking schools and lost his native language. When he got older, he chose to return to his tribe and re-learned their ways and their faith. He now is a bridge between two cultures. Dr. Some holds three masters degrees and two doctorates, from the Sorbonne and Brandeis. He currently divides his time among his home in Oregon, Europe and the nations of Africa.

In his village in Africa children are named for the gift they are believed to possess. Malidoma means "he who makes friends with the stranger." His parents must have been very perceptive, because that is exactly what this amazing man's purpose in life seems to be. One of the things I heard him say was, "It is possible we have been brought together at this time because we have profound truths to teach each other." Only a person who is open to both listening to others and open to offering what she or he brings to the table is able to do that.

What struck me most of all Dr. Some's wisdom was his belief about what he called our "indigenous self." Each person is created in a unique way, with a special character and special gift. When we are living as we were created, we are living as our indigenous selves. And, when we are living as our indigenous selves, we are aware of our unique gift.

Dr. Some said all people have a special purpose or gift with which he or she is born. The gift is sacred, and it is unique. When someone does not use the gift given to him or her, the village suffers. A gift not used creates social dysfunction in the person and in the community. On the other hand, if we trust the gift given to us, we become the protector of it. And, when all in the village use our gifts, the result is divine.

We talk so much about giving gifts at this time of the year. (And, later in this issue you will find a couple prayers to share before and after opening our Christmas presents.) But, maybe the best gift we can give those around us is the gift we find in our indigenous selves. Maybe the best thing we can give to the world is to be the people we were created by God to be.

Who is that for you? What gift do you bring?



Jean Hawxhurst

## Charge Conference

This year's Charge Conference will be held on December 3 at 6:30 p.m. in the parlor. All Leadership Council participants (all leaders of the church) are invited to attend. We will elect 2009 leadership, set our mission together giving, set salaries, and offer reports of ministry in 2008. Our District Superintendent, Dr. Michael Gibbons will be in attendance to conduct the meeting.

Pastor Jean would very much appreciate all reports being in to her **BEFORE DECEMBER 1**, so she can prepare all the paperwork for the conference.

## Christmas Open House

From Pastor Jean & Jerry You are invited to come to our home on Friday, December 5th any time from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. for our annual Christmas Open House. This is our way of saying thank you to all of you who bless us throughout the year. So, please come! You don't need to bring a thing. We will just enjoy your presence! Our address is: 5719 Prince William St.



## Special "Blue Christmas" Service

As a part of our weekly community prayer time, on Wednesday December 10 from 5:30 to 6:00 p.m. we will share in a time of special prayer in our chapel. Sometimes the holiday season is not easy for us. There are memories of loved ones no longer with us, relationship challenges within our families, financial struggles, and health issues. All of these things can make us blue. This prayer time is designed to acknowledge that. So, you are invited to come together and pray together for each other, our congregation and God's world.

Some other resources are:

Norton Healthcare Grief Care Information Center  
502-629-5926

Compassionate Friends of Louisville 502-231-5630  
Hosparus Bridges Center for Grief Counseling  
502-456-5451

## Children's Christmas Party

On Wednesday, December 17 we will join with our sister congregation, Christ Church United Methodist once again to provide a special Christmas party for our children and the children of our community. We will share a meal together, participate in craft-making, hear the story of Christmas, and both give and receive gifts. Children will not want to miss this special time from



6:00 to 7:30 p.m. Gather in the parlor for dinner. and invite your friends!

## Christmas Eve Service

Our traditional Christmas Eve service will be held once again on December 24th at 5:00 p.m. This will be a time of hearing the story of Christ's birth, singing, praying, ringing bells, lighting candles, and joyful celebration. For more information contact the front office, or see Pastor Jean.



## Saturday Bible Study

We continue to be blessed by Dr. Dean Harper of St. Paul United Methodist Church with a quality Saturday morning Bible study. The study is open to all members and anyone in the community. It is held in the art room from 11:15 to noon. We are currently studying the Gospel of Mark. You do not need to make a reservation - just show up!

## Who's Missing

Your Nurture Team would like to ask us all to look around us and think about who is missing among us. Are there people you usually see in the pews on Sunday morning, or who you usually see in the groups you attend, who are not there, please take a moment to give them a call. Part of being church means to walk with journey with each other. If someone is missing, even for a couple weeks, we are diminished. Please do your part to keep us all connected.

## Wednesday Open House

The Wednesday Open House is nearing the end of its first semester. Many thanks go to Jose Gonzalez for leading our praise and worship time, and to Peggy Bennett and Carol Rhodes for creating our snack suppers.

December's schedule is a bit different:

December 3 - Charge Conference at 6:30 p.m.

December 10 - Nooma series video at 6:00 p.m.

December 17 - Children's Christmas party at 6:00 p.m.

December 24 - Christmas Eve service at 5:00 p.m.

## Loving God's Creation

As a member of Kentucky Interfaith Power and Light, Fourth Avenue is committed to doing our part to

care for God's creation. Here are some tips from Louisville Gas and Electric that will do just that - and save you money!

⇒ Save up to \$75 a year by using a programmable thermostat (call 1-866-857-2665 or log onto [www.eon-us.com](http://www.eon-us.com) <<http://www.eon-us.com/>> for more information).

⇒ Save up to \$25 a year by changing your 5 most-used light bulbs to compact fluorescent light bulbs.

⇒ Save up to \$45 a year by simply adjusting your thermostat down 2 degrees in the winter and up 2 degrees in the summer.

⇒ Save up to \$50 a year by having your HVAC system tuned up in the spring and fall.

Added together, that's an easy savings of \$195 every year!

## Advent and Christmas

Advent is the four-week period before Christmas during which we Christians prepare for the Christmas celebration. The weeks are meant for us to prepare ourselves for the coming of the Christ and each have a different theme: hope, peace, joy and love. This year you are invited to take the Advent preparations as seriously as you ever have. Make this be a time when you remember the story, realize what it means, and tell the good news on every mountain top you can find.

As Christmas comes, we celebrate Christ coming into our lives: both as a tiny baby many years ago, but also as the Living God still today in our hearts.

So often we get caught up in the gift giving and receiving associated with Christmas. Here are two prayers to help us keep our focus on Christmas this year.

### A prayer before gift opening:

*The gifts are here, Jesus, and we are here as well. And, we know you are here, too. For you come, as you promised, whenever we gather in your name. We thank you for these gifts. We thank you for each other. But most of all, O Christ, we thank you for your nearness here. It is the best Christmas gift in the world, and it is a gift that will surely last forever. Thank you! Amen.*

### A prayer after gift opening:

*The gifts are open, Jesus. Soon our celebration will be over. Soon our thoughts will drift to other things.* **Page 3**

*Even so, you are still here. Be near us, Loving Jesus; we ask you to stay close by us forever and love us, we pray. Bless all your dear children with your tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with you there. We are forever yours. Amen.*



## Help Ministries

HELP Ministries, the ecumenical local area ministry for our Old Louisville and downtown area, is thrilled to announce its new location at 1031 South Fourth Street, less than half a block just north of our church building. If you would like to volunteer to welcome clients or help with paperwork please let our HELP representatives, Mary Anne Tenfelde and Pastor Jean, know!

## Commitment Sunday Update

Thank you to everyone who turned in commitment cards this year. As of the time of this writing, our financial pledges to the church were running about 6% above what they did last year. If you haven't yet turned your commitment card yet, please do. It will help us set our budget for 2009.

## Personal Notes:

- ▶ Our love and condolences to go Jack Benz and his family on the death of our dear sister, Jean Benz on November 12. Jean was remembered and celebrated in a service of worship on November 15.
- ▶ Congratulations to Rev. Susan Lowe, who was ordained on November 16.
- ▶ Congratulations to Jennifer Steiner (Jack's daughter) and Gordon Shirley, who were married on November 15.
- ▶ Congratulations to Marissa LindOn (niece of Roxie, Elaine and Rita Robinson) on the birth of her new daughter, Emmoni, on November 16.
- ▶ Congratulations to Matthew Blandford and Amy Walkup, who will be married in Hawaii on December 4.
- ▶ Thank you to Michael Catron for writing a special piece of music which will be shared in our December 14 worship service. The piece was designed for our congregation's 120th anniversary.

## Calendar for December

- Nov. 30 - The Hanging of the Greens at 10:45 a.m. in the sanctuary
- Dec. 2 - Trustees meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the Keystone/Circle Classroom.
- Dec. 3 - **Charge Conference** at 6:30 in the parlor.
- Dec. 5 - Open House at pastor's house from 5:30 to 8:00

p.m.

- Dec. 6 - Wesley House Christmas Bazaar
- Dec. 6 - Bible Study in the art room at 11:15 a.m.
- Dec. 7 - The second Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 10 - Community Prayer - Blue Christmas at 5:30 p.m. in the chapel
- Dec. 10 - Wednesday Open House at 6:00 p.m. in the parlor
- Dec. 13 - United Methodist Men's breakfast at Frisch's (Poplar Level Road and Expressway) at 9:00a.m.
- Dec. 13 - Bible Study in the art room at 11:15 a.m.
- Dec. 14 - The third Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 14 - United Methodist Women's Tea at noon in the parlor.
- Dec. 16 - Fourth Avenue's 120th anniversary date.
- Dec. 17 - Children's Christmas Party at 6:00 p.m. in the parlor.
- Dec. 20 - Bible Study in the art room at 11:15 a.m.
- Dec. 21 - The fourth Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve service at 5:00 p.m. in the sanctuary
- Dec. 25 - Christmas - Offices Closed
- Dec. 26 - Offices Closed
- Dec. 27 - Bible study in the art room at 11:15 a.m.

### Grief support group

The next "Grief Support Group" will be Sunday, December 21st, at 9:30am in the Library. If interested, please contact Wayne Anderson at wrapjo@bellsouth.net or 727-4637.

*"Cute is when a person's personality shines through their looks. Like in the way they walk, every time you see them you just want to run up and hug them."*

Laura White Morris

### December Birthdays

- Dec. 3 Wayne Anderson
- Dec. 5 Shawn Coffey
- Dec. 11 Gil Schroerlucke
- Dec. 11 Wendi Wise
- Dec. 13 Mary Ann Brockwell
- Dec. 13 Sarah Cooper
- Dec. 14 Wilma Larkins
- Dec. 14 Pauline Ricks
- Dec. 18 Jane Heil
- Dec. 19 James Craig
- Dec. 26 - Dorothy Rose

A question from "Tommy" Thomas:  
*Why do we say "happy as a clam?"*

See page 6 for the answer.

### Memorials and Honoraria

Gifts in memory of Jean Benz have been received from Polly Bennett, Charles and Mary Ann Brockwell, The Circle-Keystone Class, April DuVal, Fay and George Edwards, Norvin Fust and Lucy Mitchell.

A gift in honor of Steve Wenger has been received from Ruth Line.

A gift in honor of Gil and Bettye Schroerlucke has been received from Lucy Mitchell.

A gift in honor of Nancy Walker has been made to the Open Door ministry by Martha Zoeller.

### Calling All History Buffs

by Sarah Ewing

Our Fourth Avenue History Team has made good progress sorting and storing some of Fourth Avenue's life story. Now we're looking for that history buff who would like to continue the process. That person will cooperate with the new History Club and coordinate other possible future history-emphasis activities. If there are more than one of you "out there" you could be a Team. If that is your interest, please contact Pastor Sarah. Yea Team!



## The United Methodist Women:

By Joyce P. Wilmoth

**Rose Circle - December 2 @ Edy Johnson's at 10:30 am.**

**Benz Circle - December 9 - @ UL University Club at 11:30 am.**

**Wesleyan Women - December 15 @ Paula Sammons House at 6:00 pm.**

**Morton Circle - December 19-@ Trudy DuVal's house at 6:30 pm.**

**Christmas Tea - December 14 - in the parlor 12 noon.**

**A big thank you to UMW members who filled 16 Operation Christmas Shoeboxes for Smaritan's Purse. \$112.00 postage was contributed by the**

**Benz Circle Love offering, plus other individual donors.**

**Are you a history buff?**

**History was made November 4, 2008 when Barack Obama was elected president of the United States of America. Congratulations to our new president.**

**A History Club is being formed in February 2009. This informal club will meet on Mondays at 10:30 am (monthly) in the Library. Tentative date is Feb. 16, 2009. We will be sharing memories of 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue UMC.**

**Please contact Les Gross, Sarah Ewing or me if**

## Courtland's Corner

From Courtland Rose

**Karen Lovett's artistic expressions were enjoyed by all.**



## Arts and Spirituality

### Laura Curry

Laura Curry's art work is currently on view in Central Hall and will remain through January 3<sup>rd</sup>. Her "meet 'n greet" will be December 7<sup>th</sup>. Nina Hedricks' show begins January 5<sup>th</sup> with her "meet 'n greet" scheduled for Sunday, January 11<sup>th</sup>.

### Meetings

The Board of Trustees will meet Tuesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6 PM.

The UMM will have their last breakfast meetin of the year at Frischs (on Poplar Level Road) on Saturday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM.

The Phoenix Health Center is having their transition group meeting (homelessness to homefulness) in the Circle Fellowship Keystone classroom every Tuesday from 1 to 2:30 PM.

## Link Changes

Editor

Always trying to improve the product, some changes are taking place at the Link "office". (Of course we don't have an office). We are adding two staff writers (unpaid of course) who will help in covering in more detail church happenings. They are Connie Meyer and Joyce Barnett. Of course Courtland will continue to provide pictures and script. Feel free to talk with any of these about The Link. We will continue to try to provide the most helpful newsletter we can. Your suggestions are always welcome.

## Mountain Mission Truck

From Pastor Jean

The United Methodist Mountain Mission truck, will be coming to Fourth Avenue on Tuesday, December 16. If you have items you would like to donate to our brothers and sisters in the eastern Kentucky mountains, please bring them to church by Monday, December 15.

## Meet Gregory King

By Joyce Barnett

Greg is a new member whose picture was printed in last month's Link. He is the son of Ronald King, who is both a choir member and a member of a Sunday School class. It was Ron's father who invited him to visit the church and he says he is glad this happened. In Gregory's own words, "it felt right to be here. The building is comfortable and very beautiful."

Gregory is a native of Louisville, but has travelled extensively. He has spent time on farms in Tennessee and has socialized and made friends in New York City.

Gregory teaches at Nativity Academy in the After School program.

## Congratulations

By Connie Meyers

Congratulations to Isa Hairston, Tammy Jeffries' nephew, for making the honor roll at Central High School with all A's. Isa, 17, was also awarded a special trophy for his outstanding basketball play along with academic performance. Isa has lived with his Aunt Tammy since he was nine years old, and has always wanted to be a pastor and play basketball. He is an avid University of Louisville fan. We are all proud of Isa's academic and athletic accomplishments. Keep up the good work, Isa!



### *Tommy's Answer*

*The original expression was "happy as a clam at high tide?" This refers to the fact that clam diggers collect their quarry at low tide. When the high waters hide them from view, clams are blissfully safe.*