

# The Tidings

*Rev. Jamie P. Washam, Pastor*

*Underwood Memorial Baptist Church  
1916 Wauwatosa Avenue  
Wauwatosa, WI 53213  
(414) 258-4246  
Email: [underwoodchurch.com](mailto:underwoodchurch.com)*

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*"We are living proof that Jesus Christ is our peace who makes  
strangers into friends, breaks down dividing walls and builds up real persons."*

## *From the Pastor*

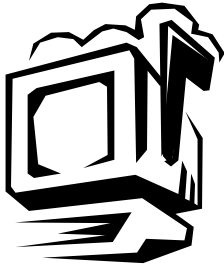
*Glance at the sun.  
See the moon and the stars.  
Gaze at the beauty of earth's greenings.  
Now, think.*

- Hildegard von Bingen

As spring begins to manifest here in Wisconsin, we cannot escape the nearness of the earth, the surprising rich brown of the muddy soil after months of the stiff and silent whiteness of snow. The ice melts, watering underground roots, and exposing items lost to winter's layers. In front of my house alone, I found several cell phones, articles of clothing, and other bits of garbage and various other items gone missing in the winter drifts. Likewise inescapable are the media reports on global warming, and our complicity in it. What else might be revealed in the thaw, and how is this relevant to us as Christians? We are called to be good stewards of this earth; we are called to care for God's creation. All that God makes is good, and we have the responsibility and privilege of taking good care of it. We are to love our neighbors as ourselves, and that means thinking about how our actions, how our choices bless or pollute others, next door, and around the world, human, plant, and animal. We must make connections between the cars we drive, and the cost of obtaining the fuels that make them go. Where does our food come from? Who grew it, and where, and with what? Every choice we make from what we eat to what we wear to how we get about has the potential to help or harm.

We follow Jesus Christ, who lived and breathed and walked on this earth. This alone ought to remind us of the value of this world and its resources. Jesus closes the gaps between heaven and earth, holy and ordinary, visible and invisible, time and eternity, yours, mine, and ours. He teaches that God is present in all of these. Nothing is outside of the realm of God. Indeed, Jesus reminds us that we are to work to create heaven here on earth with this mud and this air and these hands.

May this spring be a season of wonder, awareness;  
may your muddy hands nurture heaven here on earth.



## BULLETIN BOARD

### DEAR UNDERWOOD FRIENDS,

I wish to express my sincere thanks for all your prayers, cards and calls during my recent surgery and recovery. Your kind expressions meant so much to me and gave me a feeling of support that really made a difference. It was all so much easier because of your support. You are truly a loving church family! Pat Ransom

### FROM MARTHA MERKT

First, I'd like to say thanks to Kate, Eric and Laura for their efforts in making my 90<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration possible and to the church for providing space and convenience.

For over half of my 90 years, Underwood Church has been a vital part of my life, not only as a place of worship, but as an institution that has enabled me to shed the shackles of my many latent or acquired prejudices. The strong leadership that Underwood's pastors have shown from its founder, Enoch Underwood, to our present multi-talented Pastor Jamie Washam, has been incredible. And the supportive congregation with its diverse talents and interests and service, continue to enrich the life of this church.

Blessings and all my love to each and all.  
Thank you, Martha Merkt

### THANK YOU

Thank you so much for your contribution of chairs to Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity ReStore. The profits from the store will be used to continue building homes for needy families in Milwaukee. Jeri Kavanaugh

## EASTER WEEK SERVICES

**April 1st** PALM SUNDAY  
10:00 a.m.

**April 5th** MAUNDY THURSDAY  
Service 6 p.m.

**April 6<sup>th</sup>** GOOD FRIDAY  
12 Noon Bethel-Calvary  
Methodist Ch  
72<sup>nd</sup> & Center St.

**April 8<sup>th</sup>** EARLY EASTER  
8:00 a.m.

BREAKFAST  
9:00 a.m. Please join us.  
Egg Hunt to follow

EASTER WORSHIP  
10:00 a.m.

### WALKING THE BIBLE

The DVD, "Walking the Bible", will be shown in three parts on Wednesdays, **April 11, 18, and 25**, at 7 p.m. Jack Kearnan will serve refreshments and lead discussion after. All are welcome.

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

During the past month, Underwood Church welcomed new members, Markie Anna Wenzel, Tina Casey and Kalubi Nsabaka.

### CAMP TAMARACK

**April 30<sup>th</sup>** is the deadline for the early registration discount of \$15. See the bulletin board for times and registration forms for the summer of 2007.

### CHOIRFEST 2007

The 23<sup>rd</sup> annual CHOIRFEST will be held on **Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**, at 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church, West Allis.



## THE LIBRARY CORNER

Not too much is happening in the library right now as I continue to recover from my surgery.

However, at long last, we have a copy of the DVD, "**Not in My Name!**" that features our pastor, Rev. Jamie Washam, Cindy Sheehan and other peace activists.

This documentary was produced by Philippe Borrel, a French filmmaker, to be shown on French public television, and also on Germany's public television.

It was this film that brought Erick Belzic to visit Underwood in August 2006, and later two women from Germany who had also seen the film.

It is about an hour long and is well worth your viewing.

We have a new book being processed, "**The Healing Quilt**" by Lauraine Snelling, who has written numerous Christian books. The cover states, "Joining together to change their community, four women experience a surprising restoration of hearts and lives."

Watch for it soon.

*Carolyn Sanders*, Librarian

## ALTAR FLOWERS

Please consider signing up on the Altar Flowers Chart on the bulletin board (located outside the church office) to donate a flower arrangement in honor of or in memory of someone or for a special event. Ordering is quite simple. Call Alfa Florists at 414-475-7080 and order for Underwood. They will deliver on Saturday.

## COUNTDOWN TO RUMMAGE SALE

**Only 31 days remaining. . .**

until the **April 21<sup>st</sup>** Rummage Sale.

Here's how you can help.

- ❖ Plan to help set up and price (see dates and times below)
- ❖ Come to help that day
- ❖ Volunteer as cashiers
- ❖ Bake items to sell at the Bake Sale
- ❖ Start bringing your items and put them on the left half of the stage

We will start working on the sale Monday, April 16 and every day that week from 9:00 a.m. to noon or later.

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings (16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>), we ask that people come to help from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. We need every available person to help that week, either mornings or evenings! It is a lot of work, but it is fun. Remember the proceeds go to Mission Projects.

Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup> will be here before we know it!

## HEART SISTERS CLEANING BEE

Calling all Heart Sisters!

At 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, **March 31<sup>st</sup>**, the Heart Sisters will be giving Underwood's kitchen a much needed spring cleaning.

All cleaning materials and rags will be provided. Bring a small bucket if you have one. We plan to scrub the cupboards and drawers, discard things not needed, clean the two refrigerators, and sort items in some of the cupboards.

Dress in your grubs and join us on that Saturday. We'll have fun. Remember that "Many hands make light work"...

# RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ESSAY CONTEST

To engage high school students in church-state issues and to generate interest from a wide range of Baptists, the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty has launched its 2nd annual Religious Liberty Essay Contest. Open to all Baptist high school students in the classes of 2007 and 2008, the contest offers a grand prize of \$1,000 and airfare and lodging for two to Washington, D.C. Second prize is \$500, and third prize is \$100. Winners will be announced in the summer of 2007 and will be featured in the BJC's flagship publication, Report from the Capital. The grand prize winner will also be recognized at the BJC board meeting in Washington, D.C., on Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>. The deadline is MAY 21<sup>st</sup>.

Students entering the contest are asked to use their understanding of the importance of the separation of church and state and the prophetic role of the church to respond to the following quote by The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr: "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and critic of the state, and never its tool."

Essays are required to have a minimum of 700 words and no more than 1,000 words. They will be judged on the depth of their content and the skill with which they are written. Students should demonstrate a sound knowledge of the subject matter and support their assertions and provide bibliographical references. Essays that do not meet the minimum qualifications will not be judged. Completed essays and registration forms should be e-mailed to [essays@BJCOnline.org](mailto:essays@BJCOnline.org). Upon receipt, entrants will receive a reply as a receipt of their entry.

# CONGRATULATIONS UNDERWOOD

A recent letter from Rev. Sam Brink, Minister of Mission Support, thanked Underwood Church for its strong mission outreach in 2006. Just how strong is Underwood in relation to all other churches in Wisconsin? Underwood is:

- 6<sup>th</sup> in RMMO
- 4<sup>th</sup> in America for Christ Offering
- 3<sup>rd</sup> in One Great Hour of Sharing
- 4<sup>th</sup> in total AB Mission Support
- 7<sup>th</sup> total United Mission Support Per Capita Giving by Worship Attendance
- 2<sup>nd</sup> in Total United Mission
- 8<sup>th</sup> in Total AB Mission Support Per Capita Giving by Worship Attendance
- 6<sup>th</sup> in ABW's Ministries Love Gift

**WOW!** More details can be found on the mission bulletin board.

# BUILDING A DREAM OF PEACE IN EL SALVADOR

After decades of civil war, two hurricanes and an earthquake, the people of El Salvador are working to rebuild their lives and communities. This summer, you can work with Salvadorans to help rebuild. Plan to participate in a mission trip to El Salvador this summer, **June 16-23<sup>rd</sup>**. We will travel together to the Central American country to help with their ongoing Parque de la Paz (Peace Park) project. Work has already begun to create a place where children can safely play, women from the local cooperative can work together on their crafts, and church people can gather to worship. All teens and adults are welcome to participate. Make this a summer of service and expansion.

# PRAYER CONCERNS

**Members:** Tifuh Amba, Jim Christenson, Bette Day, Marge Gaeth, Nancy Heimerl, Joyce Johnson, Jack Kearnan, Janice Melcher, Pat Ransom, Virginia Reininger, Charlyn-Mai Roberts, Carolyn and Joe Sanders, Shari West Schmit, Dee Schowalter, Sadie Sleik, Shirley Tupper, Llew Walker, Lisa Wilkening, Tim Wilkening.

**Friends and Others Known to the Church Family:** Tifuh Amba's mother, aunt, Anne Marie, sister, Mourine Amba; Chausiku Abedi's and Mukubi Sikisi's children; Judy Chan and her co-workers; Pam Clark's mom, Wilma Clark; Nancy Fritter's mother, Jean Thomas; Kathie Hanold's friends, Jimmy & Faith Givings; Steve and Nancy Heimerl's brother-in-law, Frank Slayton; Margaret Jeske's Cousin, Erwin Zapf; Joyce Johnson's niece, Jean Kate Moten; Chad & Sarah Kafka's friends, Brian & Anita; Diana Lemke; Janice Melcher's friend, Kali; Jesse Merkt; Grace Morgan's son, David; Sei Pramenko's sister, Masa; Julie Sander's friend, Lilli's daughter, Amelia; Carolyn & Joe Sanders' daughter, Jenneane; Shari West Schmit's father, Owen West; friends, little Shannon and brother Danny, Stacey, Crystal, Sarah, Jessica, Jess, Sharon, David, Bob, Sammie & William, Sandy, Mary, Al and Nancy; Rhonda; PFC. Mario S. Vasquez, friend of Shari, serving in Baghdad; and all soldiers in active duty; Earl and Carol Schultz' daughter-in-law, Gayle Schultz; Keith and Virginia Wick's nephew, Leo; Wendy Whitaker.

## A VIEW FROM THE PEW

by Bette Day

"I don't know why you feel so bad about not having transportation to your church tomorrow morning," an aide said to me last year. "Do you think it a sin not to go? There is church here Sunday afternoon in the Chapel and the Tudor Oaks bus goes to at least two churches each week." She further shared some of her opinions about churches and I could see why she did not understand my desire to worship with my own congregation.

Some of the members of Underwood are part of three or more generations in the same church. And some of us are seeing our own children maturing in their faith and taking leadership roles in the congregation. I do not have that experience; we moved too much. I have been active in about a dozen churches over 75 years, and probably more active than appreciated the previous ten.

But all of us chose this church as the one we wanted to be a part of. There are many reasons but no one was dragged here struggling and membership was an act of our own free will. When one joins some churches there is a commitment spelling out the responsibilities of the new member and his/her connection with the church. This is done more frequently on foreign mission fields, though the Church of the Savior in Washington, DC is convinced that the new Christian should strive for high standards and it helps to be held accountable. If the new member, why not the one who has been a member longer?

I ask myself, did I join Underwood because of the high standards it holds for pastoral leadership? Ought I then to see that the budget provides enough for competitive salaries and for continuing education? Was the main attraction the fellowship and sociability of the people I met? What should be my part in providing hospitality and good times for the members and friends? Maybe my lack of concern for social justice was jolted by a project at the church. I thus have a duty to aid in financing such programs as well as praying for and being a part of a serving team. And perhaps I would feel called to push for including in the budget funding for some "Dream" to be used when God leads one or more to explore a new avenue of service.

Churches have different ways to accomplish having the funds the budget needs. One size does not fit all. Members might be expected to tithe. Or they may engage in money-making activities. A

young seminarian was added to the staff of a downtown church. In a conversation with the senior pastor after several weeks, he remarked, "Central Church is a group of people selling concert tickets, household gadgets and food to each other to get money to pay the utility bills, salaries, and more, and calling it church work! If I were given a call to this place I would remind them of Christ accusingly overturning the tables of the money changers. I would insist on people **giving** preferably by pledging." The older minister chuckled. "You wouldn't get the call if you stated your belief in that manner. There are many forms of giving to the needs of the church and some churches use more than one. Part of your task is to teach and inspire your congregation that good stewardship is part of the expectations of being a Christian. God loves a cheerful giver, and there is usually cheerfulness at a money-making social event. New members get to know long-time members when working on a fund raiser. And some people have more time than money and find in baking for a sale that they can do their part. Filling a need in the community might also be a strong motive for serving a meal during a festival and the profits, while useful, may be quite secondary,'

The responsibilities of as Christian and a church member go far beyond what money he/she gives to the church. How one's money is spent says something about the Christian. How one's time is spent also says something about the Christian. Do our pursuits reflect Christ? If it is MY church I have a responsibility to give to it as much, at least, as I receive from it.