



# LaPorte RePorte



*News from LaPorte New Church Swedenborgian*

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2016

## Summer Picnic!

A few bugs. Hot (80°+). Humid (100%). Sunshine, but thunder in the distance. Perfect picnic environment!

Inspiring worship. Sweet laughter. Lovely songs. Scrumptious food. Caring friendships. Beautiful nature.

It was good to have so many share this day together, but know that all those unable to be there were greatly missed. We hope that you are well and will re-join us again very soon.



## Sanctuary Re-Dedication

Have you seen our church sanctuary yet after its four long weeks of renewal? Many say it feels warm, glowing, and freshly beautiful. Rev. Kit desires to offer a re-dedication blessing of the sanctuary on **Sunday, September 11**. We will, of course, honor those who died on that terrible day 15 years ago, and at the same time it seems appropriate to dedicate our newly refurbished church to continue to be a place where peace can be found and is encouraged in everyday life.

TRUE • KIND • USEFUL



SASHA SILVERMAN  
AND JOHN ODHNER

**Is it true?  
Is it kind?  
Is it useful?**

**Let's Journey together  
Oct 16-week of Nov 13**

The New Church Journey offering this fall is the 5-week program *Mindful Communication Challenge: Be True, Kind and Useful*. There will be a sign-up sheet for Monday or Thursday evenings that this series will be available. The workbook cost is \$16 for hard copy, \$10 as e-book.

**Mindful Communication:** Sometimes it's hard to know how to share ourselves authentically. The *Mindful Communication Challenge* offers structure to help us improve how we connect with each other. Paying attention to how our words, tone, and actions (even our intentions) affect others, and asking ourselves "Is this true? Kind? Useful?" can help us speak from the heart. These tools help us weed out any thoughts and feelings that are not grounded in reality or love, and also help us dig beneath words to see our common humanity, with our deeper, universal needs.

Since true connection feels heavenly, *Mindful Communication Challenge* is grounded in symbolism from various Parables found in the New Testament that explore "The kingdom of heaven" as well as descriptions of what a heavenly community looks like from the works by philosopher and theologian Emanuel Swedenborg.

***Our yearly Journey programs are open to all so do your friends a favor...invite a couple to come with you! We ourselves know that our church offers special insights but others may not be so aware. It's really up to each of us to share the secret of this gift of God's love and wisdom that we know and live by.***

## Thank you!

Heidi, Jane, Kit, Pete, Aaron, Penny, Erika, Paige, Luke, Ryan, Barb, Gail, and Steve for removing all items so the sanctuary could be repainted.

Gail, Pete and Pat for cleaning up after a big rain sent excess water into the Sunday school area.

Jane, Pat, and Gail for overseeing Sunday services while Rev. Kit was away in July & August.

Gail for repairing the choir loft curtains while the church sanctuary was being replastered and repainted.

Connie, Jane, Gail, Pat, Kit, Pete and Steve for putting everything back in the church after the painting was completed, including a thorough cleaning of each item.

Gail, Dawn and Kit for the time and expertise they gave to make wonderful wedding memories for Amanda and Marty.

Pat and Gail for setting up for the picnic.

Gord and Pete for their continuing efforts on siding the back porch of Manna House.



"Love" by Ukrainian sculptor, blacksmith, and designer Alexander Milov for the 2015 Burning Man Festival in Nevada.

One of the most powerful art pieces from Burning Man: A sculpture of two adults after a disagreement, sitting with their backs to each other. Yet, the inner child in both of them simply wants to connect. Age has many beautiful gifts but one we could live without is the pride and resentment we hold onto when we have conflicts with others. The forgiving, free spirit of children is our true nature. Remember this when you feel stubborn.

Dear Friends,

This last Sunday, Aug. 28, our church held our annual Potluck Picnic Sunday, returning to Creek Ridge County Park. We had a great turnout and enjoyed the blessings of the Lord's Sabbath Day together, which in part came from good visiting and fellowship within the beauty of God's creation. I'm posting pictures of the creek and some awesome clouds on our LPNC Facebook page. Isn't it amazing how enriching it is to personally connect, communicate and share a few laughs with one or more people, where the central focus of the day is on loving God and one another? When we choose to love God and one another, more of the Divine flows through us. No wonder Sabbath-keeping is including in the Lord's great Ten Commandments—it helps us feel deep healing and happiness from our Wonderful Counselor, who dwells within us all.

By the way, I do know sometimes I choose to use words with you that sometimes may seem quite "churchy" or of what we call, "church-speak." The word "Sabbath" is a good example of this. When I do, my intention is never to accidentally turn someone off. In short, I feel deeply that it is wise for me to still continue to use such words because it is part of the language of the Lord's very sacred Ten Commandments, which are the foundation of our New Church faith. This word appears in Scripture 154 times, and in Swedenborg's writings 311 times. Fascinating! With that said, I have a lot of compassion for reactions of discomfort, because many years ago I felt that way too.

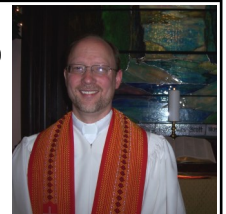
Then I did some in-depth introspection,

and I discovered that I had unconsciously allowed the fundamentalist "Right" of Christianity to steal these ancient, sacred words away from me, by plastering them with speech and tones that I honestly do not feel comfortable with as a believer. Thus, I don't intend to create road blocks for anyone's mind within our congregation. As an ordained minister who pledged in my soul on my day of ordination to offer God's Word within the light of the New Evangel given through Swedenborg's mission, I promised not to alter and change core words, beliefs and terms that were providentially chosen by God to be laid down in Scripture as they are. If I water things down, then I am stealing truth away from the Lord in a spiritual sense, which I cannot do.

So you see, when I use the term "Sabbath," I am referring to a day or time of rest from labors and temptation battles we often face in life. Sabbath moments are spiritually centered times of innocent openness toward what is good and true, times of worship, and charity toward my neighbor. One way of looking at the heart of Sabbath time is to recognize that it's about choosing to open up and *communicate*—with God and one another. And then, the veil between the natural and spiritual worlds thins, and one can feel that Heaven has been around and within us all along.

This Fall our church will again offer a spiritual formation and growth Journey Program, which will meet at Manna House on Thursday evenings. Its title is, "**Mindful Communication Challenge.**" The structure of this five-week program is designed to help us improve how we com-

## Pastor's Corner



municate with one another. In this course we will ask ourselves, "Is my communication true, kind and useful?" We shall meet through the weeks of **Oct. 16-Nov. 13 from 6:30-8:00pm**, looking at **listening, authenticity, identifying central feelings, paying attention to what is really useful in our words, and our willingness to open up to the Divine and with one another in a spirit of love and peace.** That is, to become vulnerable by choice. In this program, we will focus in on how our words, tone and actions affect us all.

This program will launch at our church on Sunday, October 16. I offer you these two verses from Scripture to help you in praying to the Lord as we shall soon engage in this great theme together: "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear." (Eph. 4:29) And, "There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing." (Prov. 12:18)

Please sign up or let me or Barb Halle know by Sept. 25 if you want to participate in our Journey Program this Fall, so we can order your book. The cost per book is \$16.00.

May God's universal Love and Light shine on all,  
Pastor Kit

## In Our Hearts & Prayers

Bill and his friends  
Emily and Laila

Jim  
Kathy J.

Sandy and Pete  
Johanna and Angelina  
Raymond  
Dave and Pam  
Pat P.

Sheryl  
Tammara and her sons  
Tony, Sr.  
Connie  
Judy and Chuck's family

Pat's family  
Jane  
Tina  
Gordon & Jodell



**Four Weeks of Careful Work** in steamy July & August brought a lovely new look to our beloved sanctuary and a more stable foundation for its walls and ceiling. It began with choosing paint colors (Thanks, Rev. Lisa Solwold!), then several church members and friends removed all items to the basement or the street level lift hallway. Rose Brothers Paint Company moved the pews offsite. Then Classic Plastering put a bonding agent and fabric mesh on the entire wall and ceiling area, filling and covering all crack-damaged plaster. Next a coat of new plaster material was applied.

Rose Brothers returned and latex-painted all surfaces, including the perimeter wainscoting, window trim, doors and altar. Then, carpet cleaning. By the August 21st Holy Communion service, the sanctuary was miraculously put back together again, as if not a piece of it had ever been out of place. But it is now warm and glowing with new colors of Apple Turnover and Golden Pastel. Much gratitude to God and to all others who helped make this happen.

Please come to the September 11 *Sanctuary Re-dedication* service for Rev. Kit's blessing of our 'new' church.

Photos by Steve Tukos and Barb Halle



## Reflection

*Grow strong in the Light of My Presence.*

*As My Face shines upon you, you receive nutrients that enhance your growth in grace. I designed you to commune with Me face-to-face, and this interaction strengthens your soul. Such communion provides a tiny glimpse of what awaits you in heaven, where all barriers between you and All that I Am will be removed.*

*This meditative time with Me blesses you doubly: you experience My Presence here and now, and you are refreshed by the hope of heaven, where you will know Me in ecstatic Joy.*

Sarah Young, *Jesus Calling*

Our sanctuary, this holy place, deeply touches the spirit of many as they feel the peaceful presence of God, within its midst, among His people, in His love and compassion. May we recognize this holy place as our gift from God.



## “Why are the Americans so big?”

The Director of Missions at the Wichita First United Methodist Church shared with Pat Tukos that the translator had been asked this question when the locals saw the size of the strong Americans who came to work on a South American mission trip. The translator told them, “That is because they have always had enough food; always – from the day they were born.”

Did you know that about one-third of all child deaths in the world are caused by malnutrition? Can’t wrap your brain around what 1/3 means? It means that: Every day, more than 16,000 children die from hunger-related causes – about one child every 5 seconds. Upper arm circumference is one measurement of malnutrition. An average 5-year-old’s upper arm is about 7 inches around. A severely malnourished child’s upper arm would be less than 3 inches around. Make a circle with your finger and thumb. That’s the size of a malnourished child’s upper arm. Not only is being hungry miserable, but it severely affects a child’s bone and brain development.

### What can you do to help?



1. You could join the CROP Walk and ask people to sponsor you.
2. You could sponsor someone who is walking.
3. You could put a donation in the special bowl located in the back of the church.
4. You could pray for the poor and hungry.

To be involved in this effort to reduce hunger, please see Pat for more information about:

**The LaPorte County 31<sup>st</sup> Annual CROP Hunger Walk; Sunday, Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> at the Presbyterian Church of LaPorte, 307 Kingsbury Ave.** Gather at 1:30 p.m. for the 5K walk at 2:00 p.m.

LaPorte and Michigan City take turns hosting the CROP Walk each year; this year it is LaPorte’s turn.

CROP stands for “Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty”. It is sponsored by Church World Service which works in 80 countries (including our own) by:

- Providing emergency food aid and long-term development assistance
- Developing sustainable, safe sources of drinking water
- Promoting educational opportunities for women and girls
- Supporting infant health and nutrition services

25% of the money raised in our CROP Walk is distributed to food pantries in LaPorte County. Some funds are used to assist after natural disasters in the United States and elsewhere. Others are used for such things as digging wells and buying seed and tools to help break the grip of hunger in impoverished nations.

## The Youngers

*All friends of our youth are warmly invited to any and all happenings. The more, the better...for everyone!*

- Sunday morning Childcare for ages 3 and under.
- Tony Kalinowski, Jr, will be confirmed into membership, September 4.
- Tweens meet at the church, Friday, Sept. 16, 7-8:30 pm, for fun and a pizza party.
- Teen League meetings at Manna House, Sept. 9 & 23, October 14 & 28, Nov 11, Dec 16, 7-9 pm.
- Sunday School begins September 18, 10:00 am after Children’s Message, ages 4-16.
- SCYL East Coast Teen Retreat, October 7-10

## Progressive Christianity

This is a label that seems to fit who we are as a church. Our denomination certainly has been ‘progressive’ throughout its history. Progressive Christianity has been defined as this:

- We believe that following the path and teachings of Jesus can lead to an awareness and experience of the Sacred and the Oneness and Unity of all life;
- We affirm that the teachings of Jesus provide but one of many ways to experience the Sacredness and Oneness of life, and that we can draw from diverse sources of wisdom in our spiritual journey;
- We seek community that is inclusive of all people, including but not limited to: conventional Christians and questioning skeptics, believers and agnostics, women and men, those of all sexual orientations and gender identities;
- We know that the way we behave towards one another is the fullest expression of what we believe [and love];
- We find God’s acceptance in our search for understanding and believe there is more value in questioning than absolutes;
- We strive for peace and justice for all people;
- We strive to protect and restore the integrity of our Earth;
- We commit to a path of life-long learning, compassion and selfless love.



You may have noticed that we have stated ourselves to be a Progressive Christian Community on our pamphlets and signboards. Of course, our faith is enhanced by the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg which has as its basis the Holy Bible. His words have given the Bible stories deeper meaning as we apply their intent to our individual and collective lives. Always, the Lord God is the essence of our existence; He is the Alpha and Omega, our beginning and our end.



# Looking Ahead...

Ongoing Manna House Groups  
AA: Sober Circle, Saturdays, 10:15 am

**Service Type**      **1st & 2nd Sundays: Alternative; 3rd & 4th: Traditional**  
**Charity Sundays when Rev Kit is away**

## **SEPTEMBER**

4, Sunday      First Sunday service, Confirmation service  
9, Friday      Teen League meeting, 7-9 pm, Manna House  
11, Sunday      Re-dedication of our Sanctuary, Potluck  
16, Friday      Tween Pizza Party, church, 7-8:30 pm  
17, Saturday      \*Sunflower Fair\* *We need you all to help!*  
18, Sunday      Charity Sunday (Soothing Sundae)  
First day of Sunday School  
Johnny Appleseed Festival in Fort Wayne. Rev  
Kit officiating at its Sunday worship service  
23, Friday      Teen League meeting, Manna House, 7-9 pm  
25, Sunday      Holy Communion  
30, Friday      Board meeting, noon, at Manna House

## **OCTOBER**

2, Sunday      First Sunday service  
7-10, F-M      SCYL East Coast Teen retreat  
9, Sunday      Charity Sunday  
14, Friday      Teen League meeting, 7-9 pm, Manna House  
16, Sunday      Holy Communion  
Journey 5-wk program begins  
28, Friday      Teen League meeting, 7-9 pm, TBA  
28-30, F-Sun      Tween Retreat at Manna House

## **Sunday Worship Series, Sept 11, 25, Oct 2**

These three fall messages will focus on our taking care of each other, the church, and our community and on the **spiritual and mutual benefits of giving and as well as receiving.**

We're coming back together after a busy summer which took most away from their Sunday worship time. Let's fill our sanctuary and Sunday School once again with the same love, warmth, joy, friendship, and compassion for each other that we also receive from God, no matter what season it happens to be.

## **COFFEE HOUR HOSTS**

Sept 4	HEIDI'S HOPPERS	Nov 6	GAIL'S GOBBLERS
Sept 11	POTLUCK	Nov 13	POTLUCK
Sept 18	GAIL'S GOBBLERS	Nov 20	CONNIE'S COOKS
Sept 25	CONNIE'S COOKS	Nov 27	PAT'S PALS
Oct 2	PAT'S PALS	Dec 4	JUDY'S JOYS
Oct 9	POTLUCK	Dec 11	POTLUCK
Oct 16	JUDY'S JOYS	Dec 18	BARB'S BUDDIES
Oct 23	BARB'S BUDDIES	Dec 25	NO COFFEE HOUR
Oct 30	HEIDI'S HOPPERS	Jan 1	HEIDI'S HOPPERS

## **PASTOR'S DAYS OFF**

A reminder that Rev. Kit's days off are Monday and Tuesday. Unless it's an emergency, please allow him this time.

## **TIDBITS...**

### **Sunflower Fair & Charity Sunday (Sept 17 & 18)**

Lots of work on Saturday, lots of appreciation on Sunday (Sooooothing Sundae). Come and find out!

Thanks to you!, our **GiftBack** check to the denomination in June was \$1597. It was graciously appreciated.

**'Like' our Facebook page;** it'll become more known.

**Smile.Amazon.com** Please use this site when shopping Amazon so LPNC gets a donation.

Plan ahead for a **January Journey** program, *Reset Your Life Path, Find Your Purpose, Change the World* by Mark Gelhaus (Mary Hedge's brother).

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