

West Shore
Unitarian Universalist
Church

Unitattler

A Newsletter for West Shore Families

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 7

MARCH 2011

SPECIAL EVENTS

- **Sunday, March 6,**
9:30 & 11:15.
Sunday School with Children's Chapel for Grades 1-6 led by our Jr. Church members. Please send a few coins with your child for the offering.
- **Sunday, March 13**
Daylight Saving Time begins
- **Sunday, March 20,**
9:30 & 11:15.
Not My Fault!
Intergenerational Worship Service. For children, avoiding blame can be the first major moral temptation and challenge they encounter. But it's a challenge that continues throughout our adult lives. Our Jr. Choir will sing.

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From the Minister

With an Intergenerational Service coming up the Sunday after I write this message, what's on my mind is wondering how many families will take this as a "Sunday off" from church? The record is pretty clear. If this Sunday is like most intergeneration service Sundays, we will have only one-third the number of children and youth in the two services as we normally have attending on a Sunday when there is classes. Moreover, the most regular Intergen service attenders are the same regulars that come to all the services they can, regardless of topic or theme, and that is our elders. For your ministers and LFD Director, it's been a head-scratcher trying to figure out why family attendance drops off on Intergen Sundays.

We like the occasional Sunday off from church just like you do, and we all take them. We're not sure if many families consistently make the choice to take a monthly Sunday away from church when the Intergens happen because they value the consistent attendance in church school classes more highly, or because the Intergens aren't very compelling. The limited feedback we get doesn't sug-

gest that there's significant dissatisfaction with Intergen worship. Last year we surveyed the congregation for opinions about the Intergen Services and got a positive response from an overwhelming number of responders. We were encouraged to keep trying to make the services accessible and interesting to a wide age range with less emphasis on mini-sermons and more on stories, skits, and meanings drawn from these more dramatic presentations. We've tried to respond to that. For the ministers, the Intergen worship services frequently require the most time and work of any we plan during a month.

Part of Kathy's sabbatical time is being devoted to site visits at congregations that

have different models for classes and worship than we have. While there is no plan to change anything in the near future, we would be negligent if we didn't ask ourselves whether this model of Sunday worship is really working for us if it only attracts a third of our regularly attending families. I'd be glad to hear from you about what you think is going on. Talk to me or e-mail me at warnason@wsuuc.org.

See you in church,

Wayne

Rev. Wayne Arnason



Youth News



February Was a Busy Month for Jr. Church.

Together with other Rocky River church youth they spent the night on our front lawn raising awareness about homelessness and \$3012.80—more than twice what was raised last year. *West Life* and *West Shore Sun Herald* featured the youth on their front pages.

To celebrate and thank the youth who participated, the youth leaders hosted a

bowling party on Sunday, February 27. Youth activities for the month also included an ice skating party on Sunday, February 20.

Sunday mornings, our Junior Church members are preparing to present the Children's Chapel service for March 6 and beginning to plan the worship service they will present on **Sunday, May 22.**

Youth Band Plays for Intergenerational Worship. West Shore youth

are amazingly talented. On Sunday, February 27 six young musicians played "Nobody's Perfect" by Miley Cyrus for an Intergenerational Worship Service titled "Everybody Makes Mistakes." The six budding rock stars included Zach Dudzik on guitar, Sam Spellman on bass, Samantha Horwitz on drums, and Shannon Armstrong on keyboard, with Maddie New and Samael Reed doing vocals.

West Shore youth pick-up band played for our February Intergenerational Worship

Sabbatical Update From Kathy Strawser, Director LFD

As I write this article, I am at the exact half-way point in my sabbatical. The time has been both exciting and relaxing, and I'm hoping you might want to hear a bit about it.

In January, I completed a graduate course in oral tradition and story telling at Meadville-Lombard Theological School where I studied the history, value and art of storytelling. As a result, I have a much larger "trove" of stories to share with you, greater understanding of our human need to both tell and listen to stories, and more confidence as a story teller, rather than a story reader.

In February, I set out to experience worship and religious education programs in both UU and non-UU congregations. To date, I've visited and met with religious educators at Unity Church Unitarian (St. Paul, MN), First Unitarian Society (Minneapolis, MN), White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church (Mahomet, MN) and Church on the Rise (Westlake, OH). All but one of these churches have a larger membership than West Shore. Each one employs a different model of religious education. I remain impressed by Unity's thoughtful, proactive parent orien-

tation and involvement; First Unitarian's Heritage suppers; White Bear UU's family service night; and Church on the Rise's intentional focus on the full worship experience for every age group they serve. My plan is to complete similar visits to First Unitarian Church, Rochester (NY), and Bay Presbyterian Church (Bay Village, OH) by the end of the month.

I am enjoying my sabbatical time and the luxury of slowing my pace. I look forward to returning to church, rested and ready to share more of my sabbatical activities with you. See you on Sunday, April 3!

R.E. Calendar

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| <p>Tues., March 1 7:00 pm R.E. Committee</p> <p>Sun., March 6 9:30 & 11:15 Sunday School Chapel for Grades 1-6, led by our Jr. Church members. <i>Please send a few coins with your child for the offering.</i> 10:40 am Jr. Choir</p> | <p>1:00 pm OWL 5/6 Grade</p> <p>Sun., March 13 9:30 & 11:15 Sunday School <i>Daylight Savings Time Begins</i> 10:40 am Jr. Choir 1:00 pm OWL 5/6 Grade</p> <p>Sun., March 20 9:30 & 11:15 Intergenerational Service: Child-</p> | <p>care for infants to PreK Jr. Choir sings</p> <p>Sun., March 27 9:30 & 11:15 Sunday School 10:40 am Jr. Choir 1:00 pm OWL 5/6 Grade</p> |
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