

Musings

Just as Memorial Day marks the beginning of summer, Labor Day tells us the summer is over. Technically it is not over until the 21st of September – but we all know better. It is a psychological thing that I have never been able to explain. It just is.

Summer, as we have received it, has not been the greatest. It seemed as though it would never stop raining. It was a lot cooler than in recent memory. You know all of the details as well as I do so I will not dwell on them. What we did/do with the days that we are/were given is what is important.

In the strictest sense, this is what stewardship is all about. Stewardship is everything we do after we say, ‘I believe.’ The issue is never whether or not we are stewards – rather the question is, ‘what *kind* of stewards will we be?’ Will we good ones, mediocre or bad ones? Will we do our best or just get by? Will we be careful with what God has given into our care, or will we be careless?

Understanding this simple concept and then applying it to our lives has profound implications for everything we do, and not just for how we interpret it in our churchly living. “Like what?” you ask. Like, ‘how do you treat your life?’ ‘What do you eat and how do you care for your body?’ ‘Do you sleep, play and pray regularly?’

How do you treat others – with respect, understanding and compassion because they also are children of God and a brother or sister? Or, do you find that they are somehow bothersome or an irritant?

How do we treat the earth? Native Americans say that the earth is our Mother and consider the impact of what they do to the tenth generation. Yet, many of our numbers treat the earth rather as a personal dumping ground. As a species, we cut incredible scars in the earth and we waste the precious resources that God has given us as if they were infinite. Many of us use more than our share, at the expense of others, and even grumble we do not have enough.

What do we do with our time? The bible says, “Teach us, O Lord, to so number our days that we may gain a wise heart.” Do we make careful use of our time? Or, do we forget that there are only 24 hours in a day – and only so many days allotted to each of us?

What do we do with our financial resources? Do we place God first or later? Do we share resources in proportion to how God has blessed us or are there other considerations that come into play?

I cannot speak for you – only to you. In my own life, I find a lot of areas to grow and become more of the child of God I could be. THAT is what is so exciting about GPC. It is a place where we can grow together in our abilities to be true, loving, growing children of God. The place where we begin, to renew and to grow in our abilities to be the child God desires is at worship each week. Now that summer is over, I hope that we will see you back here with us, giving thanks to God for all we have received.

Grace and peace,



ADULT BIBLE STUDY:

Wednesday Night Bible Study

The mid-week Adult Bible Study will resume on the 9th of September at 6:30. As in the past we will meet in the Jr. High Lounge for an hour.

If you say you don’t generally read the Bible because you cannot understand it, if you read the posted lectionary readings for the coming week, or if you have ever wondered about what the bible says, this is the place for you to come and reflect with us. You do not need to be a scholar. You do not even have to do any homework – just come and explore with us. This is a wonderful opportunity to talk about the scriptures in a relaxed atmosphere – in bite-sized segments.

Sunday Morning Bible Class

On Sunday mornings (8:45-9:30am), you will find folks sitting around the table in Room 3 studying. With Bibles in hand, the group explores the relationship between the biblical story and our life today. Join us! See Carol Anne for the start of the new session.

COMMUNION

Due to the Labor Day Week end, Communion will be celebrated on the 13th of September. That day also marks the return to our 10:00 hour of worship and the resumption of the Choir.



PUBLIC WORSHIP SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER

<u>Date</u>	<u>Lay Reader</u>	<u>Communion</u>	<u>Usher Team</u>	<u>Front Door Greeter</u>
Sept. 6	Linda Allen	* see below	#6	Sheri MacFarlane
Sept. 13	Tammy Endulovski		#1	Nancy Bodhorn
Sept. 20	Kay Harder		#2	Keith Hadley
Sept. 27	Youth TBD		#3	Velta Rouchon

Communion:

Left: 1. Marie Wilson
2. Sonia Davis
3. Velta Rouchon
4. John Belt

Right: 1. Gretchen Greene
2. Dean Davis
3. J.C. Rouchon
4. Patti Fields

Lectionary Readings for September

06

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Labor Day Weekend

Proverbs 22.1-2, 8-9, 22-23 – a good name is to be chosen above wealth
Psalm 125 – Lord, do good to those who are good and are upright in their hearts
James 2.1-17 – what good is faith without works?
Mark 7.24-37 – the Syrophenician woman spurs for her daughter

Carol Anne Preaching and leading worship

13

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Communion Sunday

Proverbs 1.20-33 – wisdom cries out in the streets – those who listen will be secure
Psalm 19 – let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable
James 3.1-12 – from the tongue comes good and bad
Mark 8.27-38 – who do you say I am?

Theme: Who do you say Jesus is?

Focal Text: Mark

20

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Fall Program resumes – Church School Teachers Commissioned

Proverbs 31.10-31 – a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised
Psalm 1 – happy are those who delight in the ways of the Lord
James 3.13-4.3, 7-8a – a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace
Mark 9.30-37 – who is the greatest?

Theme: The makings of greatness

Focal Text: Mark

27

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Esther 7.1-6, 9-10, 9.20-22 – Esther saves her people
Psalm 124 – our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth
James 5.13-20 – pray for one another
Mark 9.38-50 – whoever is not against us is for us

Theme: Unexpected friends

Focal Text: Mark

Presbyterianism 101 Part 4 in a series

G-1.0400: The Historic Principles of Church Government

The radical principles of Presbyterian Church government and discipline are:

■ That the several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute one Church of Christ, called emphatically “The Church”;

■ **Comment:** Just as the PCUSA is made up of many congregations, so it is that there are many churches, similarly composed, that make up the entire body of Christ that is also known as “The Church.” We are a part of a much larger entity that stretches world-wide.

■ That a larger part of the Church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein;

Comment: The Presbyterian Church, unlike some other denominations, is a representative democracy. We choose people who will serve as the leaders of the various sub-sets of our portion of the church. While all members of the Presbyterian Church are given voice, in the end, the decisions rest with those who are in elected positions of authority.

■ That, in like manner, a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every part, and to all the parts united: that is, that a majority shall govern;

Comment: Presbyterians do a lot of voting. While it is true that a majority – even of only one – decides an issue, a lot of work and conversation goes into that vote before it is taken. In addition, when there are close votes, it is highly likely that those who were on the short end of the vote will return, regularly, to test if it is still the will of the body to uphold the original vote. It is not unusual for people to come to a different understanding of the will of God over time. Even so, like it or not, once a decision is made, it becomes the Law of our church until it is overturned.

■ Consequently that appeals may be carried from lower to higher governing bodies, till they be finally decided by the collected wisdom and united voice of the whole Church. For these principles and this procedure, the example of the apostles and the practice of the primitive Church are considered as authority.

Comment: Just as the Constitution of the United States has an appeals process that ends in the Supreme Court, so the PCUSA has an appeals process that ends in the Permanent Judicial Committee where the decision is finally adjudicated. And then we must decide to work together – just as did the original members of the Church

Adult Education Programs

Second Hour programs are located in the Adult Lounge and run from 11:15-12:15.

13th Pastor Nominating Committee

We are kicking off the 2009-2010 Second Hour program with an update from our **Pastor Nominating Committee**. They will describe the steps involved in identifying a new pastor as well as where they are in the process. This will be very informative and will provide you with the opportunity to find out how you can help. Join us at 11:15 in the Adult Lounge.

20th Water for Sudan

Water for Sudan, Inc. increases the quality of life and health of families in South Sudan by drilling wells to provide fresh, safe potable water. Each day hundreds of thousands of people in Sudan and greater East Africa drink unsanitary water that they have spent hours walking to obtain. This water is contaminated with parasites and Cholera bacteria. Come join us to hear Mr. Salva Dut, President of Water for Sudan, Inc. and project director and also one of the Walking Boys of Sudan give an update (as he was here about 5 years ago) talk about his mission for the people in Sudan to help provide fresh water.

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### **New Member Orientation:**

There will be a new member orientation for anyone interested in exploring membership here at GPC. This gathering will be on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September. We will begin at 11:30 – with lunch.

If you are interested in participating and have not been contacted, please call Lynn Schramel (723-1366), Dick Saxe (426-1051) Scott Cupp (563-7636) or the church office (247-5292) by September 9<sup>th</sup>. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet new people, learn more about GPC and become a part of a growing church family.



### **From GPC to Russia, with Love:**

#### **Women, save the date for “Conversations with Russia”**

Save the date for conversations with two mission workers, Piotr and Ellen, from Russia. Plan to join us for dinner Thursday October 1<sup>st</sup> at 6 p.m. in the fellowship hall for this stimulating event with our fellow Presbyterians.

**Women’s Retreat** payments are now due for Friday, November 13 through Sunday, November 15 at Camp Asbury. The payment schedule is listed on the Kiosk. Plenty of availability is left – please sign up now! Please start saving magazines to bring for a craft project. **Friends & family are invited.**

### **GPC Men’s Invitation**

Join the Men in fellowship at Breakfast at 6:30 a.m. at the Town and Country Restaurant on Chili Avenue (on the first Thursday), September 3<sup>rd</sup>. Dine with the Men at 6 p.m. on September 17<sup>th</sup> (the third Thursday evening), also at the Town and Country Restaurant. Please note that both events are on the first and third Thursday of every month.

### **PRAYER FROM FATHER JEROME, ABBEY OF THE GENESEE**

May the Lord open up the windows of heaven and pour such a blessing upon you that you will not be able to receive it all. May the Lord bless you exceedingly and abundantly, that you may never know fear and needless anxiety.

May the Lord bless you that you may rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy. May your heart overflow with love of Him all the days of your life. Amen.

### **Experiencing a Reverent Worship**

Welcome to the new program year! In order to provide a high quality worship experience, we have adapted the Golden Rules of Theatre Etiquette (as provided by GEVA) for our worship services. Worship provides members and guests with the opportunity to experience new thought-provoking inspirational ideas and communion with God. We want everyone to enjoy his or her time of worship and hope that the experience is memorable each week. Play your part by using the following guidelines:

#### **Golden Rules of Worship Etiquette**

- ◆ Minimize perfume and cologne to help people who are allergic to these products.
- ◆ Explain etiquette to your children. Children enjoy learning new things.
- ◆ Make sure that cell phones, beepers and watch alarms are off or on vibrate mode.
- ◆ Music, announcements, offering, and communion are part of the worship experience. Please remain quiet during these times.
- ◆ If it is necessary to speak to the person next to you, lean in, cup your hands around his/her ear, and whisper.
- ◆ Reverent silence is an appropriate response to wonderful music performed in the context of a worship experience.
- ◆ Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Thank you, and see you in worship!

## GUATEMALA PARTNERS

Things are getting very exciting in the Guatemala Partners Mission group these days! There is a lot of news to report! First of all, we are beginning to plan our next trip to Guatemala and to the village of Panacal to visit with our Achi Mayan friends there. The purpose of this trip is to assess how things are going in their struggle to realize the dream of being self sufficient and self sustaining. Our trip is planned for January 14 – 18<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is welcome to join us on this trip. Feel free to join us at our next meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> - 7:00 PM - at GPC to learn more about it!

Also at that meeting, we will be hosting visitors from the Metro Justice organization: “Ciudad Hermana”, or Sister City. This group has had a longstanding relationship with the village of El Sauce in Nicaragua. They have already experienced some of the ups and downs of this type of mission work and have agreed to come and share their experiences with our group. Michael Argaman and Johanna Connelly will be our guest speakers that evening. Again, this is OPEN to **anyone** who is interested in Guatemala or Central America. Please come and join us!!!

Another interesting development - we have been in touch with an organization called Child Aid / Probigua that operates in the Chimaltanengo / Antigua region of Guatemala. Their mission is to assist in training teachers to become better teachers (as many have never had formal training to become teachers!) and to assist in setting up properly staffed and supplied libraries for the schools in the region. Education is so important in sustaining a viable community and this seems to be the next logical step. Part of our trip to Panacal will be spent talking to the people of the village to see how they feel about this idea.

Guatemala Partners will also be selling the Entertainment Books and they are available right now. They are \$30.00 and are available from any of the members of this mission group. Start using the coupons right away to save more money than the book costs initially! The money from the books goes to the Guatemala mission and the money YOU save goes directly to YOUR pocket! It is a “WIN - WIN” situation!

Everyone is welcome to join us for our meetings, generally they are held on the first Monday of the month. We may be meeting more often as we get closer to the trip in January. You do not have to go to Guatemala to be a part of this wonderful group of people, but you do have to have a love of life and the human family. We welcome everyone and anyone to join us on our next trip in January, 2010!

Tom Ward  
889-5932

## DEACONS PAGE

Please keep in thought and prayer:

**Chris Constable's mother Betty Brown**, at St. John's Home for hospice care  
**John Walker**, recently hospitalized at Rochester General  
**Alice Bird, Hannah Walker's sister**, recovering from surgery  
**Sandy Houseknecht**, undergoing medical treatment  
**Cam Mossgraber**, recovering at home following surgery  
**Wendy O'Keefe**, recovering at home following surgery  
**Bill DeVore**, hospitalized at Unity Hospital  
**Joe Schnabel**, recuperating from surgery  
**Shirley Belt**, recuperating from an emergency appendectomy  
**Linda Allen**, recuperating from surgery  
**Babe Meyer**, recuperating from surgery  
**Kelsey Call** recuperating from surgery  
Continued prayers for **Linda McKibben, Bettie Snaith, and Jim Bartell**



Our sympathy to:

**Tammy, Andrew and Leah Tackling and Family** on the recent death of Tammy's mother **Lois Gudonis** on 7/9/09

## REMINDER TO DEACONS

Our next meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, September 21<sup>st</sup> in Room 2.

**FYI** – There will be a joint Session/Deacons meeting on Sunday, September 27 at 11:15 a.m. in the Adult Lounge. Please try to be there.

**OCTOBER HARBINGER ARTICLES** are due in the office on  
Wednesday, September 16<sup>th</sup> by noon. Thanks!

## PRAYER SHAWL GROUP

Do you know what a Prayer Shawl is? Who gets one? Who makes them? The Prayer Shawl Group meets September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in Room 16 at the church.

**TABITHA CIRCLE** will meet at the home of Pearl Plummer, 52 Mendota Circle, on September 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Please read Chapter 3 in “The Parables of Dr. Seuss (The Cat in the Hat).” If you need directions, please call Pearl at 720-0724.

## CHURCH MOUSE BAZAAR – 32 YEARS OLD!!!!

Circle the date of Saturday, November 21 NOW so you won't miss seeing the best hand-crafted items from old favorite vendors to some new exciting vendors. More info coming soon!!!

## PARENTS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

Please let the church office know your college student's address. We would like to send the Harbinger to them at school each month, and the Deacons occasionally send them cards, etc. at finals time.

## THANK YOU TO SUMMER VOCALISTS AND INSTRUMENTALISTS!!!!



Thank you to all whose musical leadership helped make summer worship special. Our hearts have been lifted by your music!!

## FROM THE TRUSTEES:

GPC Session has tasked the Trustees with oversight of the weekly money counting program. We currently have three teams of counters, each consisting of a captain and two helpers. The teams rotate counting every three months, the current teams serve four times per year. It usually takes about an hour after church service to complete this task. The Trustees recognize the dedicated service of these volunteers: Ron Steinmiller, Debbie Incardona, Ginny Ryan, Tammy Tackling, Dick Saxe, Don Chapin, Paula Sousa, Kay Harder, and Evie Ortman. Loyal substitutes include: Janice Bilohlavek, Eric Vail, and Fitzroy Crosdale. We also applaud Gary Puckhaber and Clarene Cress for agreeing to serve as counters. But, we can always use more people. The greater the number of counters the greater the number of teams and the less frequently they need to serve. If you think this is a way you may wish to serve your church, please contact Ron Steinmiller for more information.

## MUSIC PROGRAM IN TRANSITION – Dean to Deanna

As was announced in the Summer Harbinger, Dean Ekberg has decided to retire from his position as choir director with Gates Presbyterian Church. We are grateful to have been blessed by Dean's many gifts and incredible talent for the past several years. While we will miss him, we wish all good things for Dean in this next phase of his adventure.

There will be a reception for Dean following worship on Sunday, Sept 13<sup>th</sup>. Please join us in sharing our best wishes and our thanks!

We are very pleased and grateful that Deanna Joseph will be joining GPC as Adult and Youth Choir Director. Deanna earned her Master of Music degree and is currently pursuing a Doctorate of Musical Arts at Eastman. She has taught at Smith College and the University of Massachusetts and is currently a member of the Music Faculty for the New York State Summer School of the Arts. Deanna has a wealth of experience and energy and is as excited to be joining us as we are to have her. Special thanks go to Dean for his help in putting us in contact. Please join us in welcoming Deanna!

**LUNCH BUNCH** will begin their crafting season on Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. If you have any questions, please call June Hungerford at 426-2656.

## JR. CHOIR TO START SOON 🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵 🎵

Thinking of joining this group of 1<sup>st</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> graders? Junior choir meets most Sundays from 11:15-12:15, and once a month makes a wonderful, heartfelt contribution to morning worship at Gates Presbyterian. Watch for more details in the Sunday bulletins, but in the meantime keep these dates in mind:

**September 13-** a sneak preview for new members or those considering joining the group.

Come to Room 4 after worship to meet Mrs. White, try on a robe and have a snack. (Yes, the snacks are for returning members, too. Drop by and say hi!)

**September 20-** first full rehearsal in Room 4 at 11:15. Come join the fun!

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Your Nominating Committee is beginning its work to prepare a slate of officers for next year: Elders, Deacons, and Trustees. We also will be finding members for a Task Force to execute the capital fund drive recently authorized by Session and the Congregation.

If you have any suggestions as to people who would be good candidates for these positions, **including yourself**, please contact Whit Beckett (247-2155 or [wbeckett@rochester.rr.com](mailto:wbeckett@rochester.rr.com)) or Sherry Nau (202-1817 or [sherrynau@frontiernet.net](mailto:sherrynau@frontiernet.net)).

## 2010 TIME AND TALENT SHEETS

For 2010, we will be returning to an annual Time and Talent sheet. Our experiment with seasonal sheets was less than successful. The sheets will be distributed this fall, along with pledge cards. If you are aware of any activities which should be added to the sheet, please contact Whit Beckett (247-2155 or [wbeckett@rochester.rr.com](mailto:wbeckett@rochester.rr.com)). One that we are already aware of is Offering Counters.

## BUDGET UPDATE

Through the end of July, pledges received are 56% of the budget. These seven months represent 58% of the years so we are doing fairly well, thanks to all of you! We appreciate your continued efforts to keep your pledge payments up-to-date even though you may not be in church every Sunday.

There is also a concern, which many of you are aware of, that the BOCES program which used our building has made other arrangements for this coming fall leaving a hole of many thousands of dollars in our income expectations. The Trustees are actively seeking one or more replacement "tenants" to fill the gap. If any of you are aware of compatible groups that might be interested in paying for regular use of our easily accessible and handicap equipped facility, please contact one of the trustees or Rev. Cupp.

## PULPIT NOMINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE . . . .

The PNC is now wrestling with the Church Information Form (CIF) which is a multi-part document in which we answer questions about Gates Presbyterian Church.

The questions range from Church size, attendance, and community type to describing gifts, skills, and experiences of the congregation; from key theological issues reflected in our ministry to the top 10 skills we would like to see in our new pastor. It is a comprehensive document and we have input from multiple sources. The analysis, filtering, and formatting of this input is the task in which we are currently engaged. When we have finished the document, it will be forwarded to our Session for approval. We plan a congregational update from the pulpit with the next few weeks and in the next issue of the Harbinger.

Please keep our committee in your thoughts and prayers as we move forward in the selection of our next pastor.

Respectfully submitted,  
Peter Derry and Bill Dassero, Co-chairs

### BELL CHOIR

Rehearsals begin Thursday, September 10 at 6:00 p.m. in Room 2.

### ADULT CHOIR

Rehearsals begin Wednesday, September 2 at 7:30 p.m. – Adult Lounge.

**YOUTH CHOIR** rehearsals begin on Sunday, September 20<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

## MISSION & PEACEMAKING:

### THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Thanks to all GPCers who participated in our Summer Mission Projects:

**Fishing for Food.** Allowed us to donate non-perishable food items to area food pantries.

**Men's Clothing:** We collected men's "gently used" clothing for St. Joseph's House of Hospitality and Grace House (a transitional home for recently released inmates)

**Undie Sundays:** Packages of new children's socks and underwear were collected for Cameron Community Ministries

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

October 4<sup>th</sup> Peacemaking Offering

October 16<sup>th</sup> Preparing St. Joseph's Meal in GPC Kitchen

October 17<sup>th</sup> Serving meal at St Joseph's House of Hospitality

## SUPPORT MISSION AND YOUTH BY PLEDGING TO THE WHEEL-A-THON!

The 2009 Wheel-A-Thon is October 4<sup>th</sup>. In pledging to this 20 mile bike ride on the Erie Canal you are supporting the youth mission projects: Junior High, Senior High and Jamaica. There will be youth in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, September 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> seeking pledges. If you can't find someone to pledge, talk to Carol Anne. Also, if you would like to ride yourself, we would love to have you – only requirement is \$15.00 in pledges and a helmet!

## CHURCH SCHOOL . . . .



It's that time of the year again. Church School is starting really soon and I am so excited! It will be a great year and I cannot wait to see all your smiling faces on Sunday, September 20. The year promises to be filled with lots of fun and excitement! I look forward to seeing you!!!!  
- Amanda

## NURSERY SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Name</u>  |
|-------------|--------------|
| Sept. 6     | Amanda Adams |
| Sept. 13    | Chris Davis  |
| Sept. 20    | TBD          |
| Sept. 27    | TBD          |



## TODDLER ROOM SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Name</u>     |
|-------------|-----------------|
| Sept. 6     | Amanda Adams    |
| Sept. 13    | Tracy Burkovich |
| Sept. 20    | Ginny Smith     |
| Sept. 27    | TBD             |



## YOUTH NEWS

### YOUTH CHURCH SCHOOL BEGINS SEPTEMBER 20<sup>th</sup>

Junior Highs - 11:15 Junior High Youth Lounge  
Teacher: Keith Hadley

Senior Highs - 11:15 Senior High Youth Lounge  
"Quest 2 – The Story" –  
Teachers: Mary Hadley and John Belt

### Youth Group KICK-OFF PARTY - September 20<sup>th</sup>

Kick-off a-sure-to-be great year with a sure-to-be great party!  
For youth entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade to those entering 12<sup>th</sup> grade – watch the  
snail mail for more info.....

## YOUTH NEWS

Sept 1 - 5:00 - Advisor Planning Meeting - (dinner included)  
DEADLINE FOR JAMAICA MISSION SIGN-UP

Sept 10 - 7:00 Youth Committee

Sept 20 - 9:00 - Youth Choir

11:15 - Jr. and Sr. High Church School begins

Youth Group Kick-off Party - Time to be announced

Sept 27 - 9:00 - Youth Choir

11:15 - Jr. and Sr. High Church School

### Attention Youth:

2009 WHEEL-A-THON - a fundraiser to support our summer mission projects - and  
lots of fun as well!

When: Sunday October 4 - 12:30-7:00

Where: Meet at Henpeck Park (corner of Ridgeway and Elmgrove) pedal down the  
Erie Canal for 20 miles and finish at Perinton Park. We will bring you and your bike  
back to GPC at 7:00. Lots and lots of stops so you will have no problem doing this.

**Jamaica bound seniors** - remember you are required to get \$125.00

## Letter from the Associate Pastor .....

I love these last weeks of August – the Dog Days of summer as they are often called. The hot and humid weather demands a slower pace – one that allows time to reflect upon the events of the summer AND to envision coming fall opportunities.

The term dog days emerged in the time of the ancient Romans. It was the time when Sirius, the Dog Star rose at (or about) the same time as the sun. The Romans believed that Sirius was angry and, thus, sent the hot weather. In North Carolina, folks always said that “dog days” were the last days of summer when the dogs were just too hot to move so they lazily laid around waiting for cooler weather.

As for me, I love the dog days of summer! There is something about them that shouts – STOP, RELAX, REFLECT AND ANTICIPATE. On this very hot, very humid dog day of summer, I welcome that opportunity. Summer '09 was full of blessings for me: celebrating my mother's 85<sup>th</sup> birthday in NC, visiting my daughter and son-in-law, the Junior and Senior High Work Projects, Joyful Noyz returning, graduation parties, floating on a raft in Lake Ontario, a catamaran party, out-of-state friends visiting, and so much more. This summer has been busy, but so full of wonderful events. The last days of August also have a way of moving me forward and encouraging me to eagerly anticipate cooler weather, beautiful fall colors, return to routine, and a new program year.

September 20 is our “kick-off” day at GPC. Both Church School and Youth Group begin. Staff members and volunteers have begun planning for the new year. Innovative ideas, dedicated teachers/advisors and energetic children/youth promise a fantastic fall. In addition, Deana Joseph joins our staff as Adult and Youth Choir Director. Deana has already suggested ways to build upon our already solid (thanks so much to Dean) music program. Her enthusiasm makes me want to join the choir – don't worry, I'm not. This is all to say that these lazy days of late summer will soon turn into the exciting days of fall with its new beginnings and new opportunities. I encourage you to find a hammock for dog day reflections. Think about places in which you want to “plug into” this fall's GPC program – from bible studies to one-time mission opportunities – to on-going committee work – to fundraisers – the GPC program offers many places to be spiritually nurtured while serving God.

- Carol Anne

