

# Snail Mail News from Fairlawn West

United Church of Christ  
"offering hospitality to all God's children"

June 2009  
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## Bldg Lease with New Covenant Community Church

The basic items for an extended lease to share the building with New Covenant Community Church have been defined. The list of those items are on page 3 of this newsletter. There will be an Information Meeting on Sunday, June 7 at 11:00 am in the parlor to share more details. There will be a congregational meeting on Sunday, June 21 at 11:00 am in the sanctuary to authorize the Board of Trustees to extend the lease.

## Inside and Outside Teams

To help us host our building as part of our mission to serve people who are seeking healing and to grow more deeply spiritual in their journey with God, we are starting two new teams. The Inside Team will review and take care of conditions inside the building and the Outside Team will be responsible for the yard, landscape, parking lot and playground. Please sign up in the front lobby or contact the office to indicate your willingness to serve as a servant in this part of our mission in Christ.

## Personals

- Jim Fisher has been in the Cleveland Clinic and is presently in Akron General Hospital.
- TJ Ghinder and Ian Mitchell are graduating from Firestone High School. TJ is going to the University of Akron and Ian to Kent State University.
- Steve Rhinesmith is on a tour of Israel.
- Mary Beth Kluge is on a tour of China.

## Staff

Karen Hodge resigned her position as secretary but continues to do our financial bookkeeping. John Beck is the new secretary and his office hours are 8:30 am to 12:30 pm Monday to Friday. Rich Herbruck resigned as Building and Grounds Supervisor. The Board of Trustees decided not to hire any one to fill that position. Daniel Hauenstein and Megan Gossett continue as our custodial cleaning staff in the evenings.

## Weekly Worship Services

Sunday 9:30 AM  
Friday *Taize* 6:00 PM

## Blessing of the Animals is a blessing

On Sunday, May 31 we hosted in the front yard a worship service for the Blessing of the Animals. Approximately 30 people were here with pets in larger number. We had folks from Fairlawn West and folks from the neighborhood who aren't part of our church community. If you would like to see a copy of the service, it is available in the front lobby.

## Canoe Trip

There are tentative plans for this year's canoe trip to be late June or early July on the Big South Fork which runs from Whitley, KY to Oneida, TN. Our group has run this river twice in the past and it is a very scenic trip. If you would like to learn more, contact David Loar at deloar@yahoo.com or 330-760-7169.

## Wed SOAP Returns

The Bible journaling process called SOAP (Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer) has returned on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm in the Vista Room. John Gossett and Mary Mounts are leading it. SOAPing is a way for you to be able to be more comfortable with scripture and to grow spiritually. Come by at least one night to give it a try.

## David Loar at the Coffee Shops

The Rev. David Loar, our pastor, hangs out at two area coffee shops to open conversation. On Mondays, David is at Angel Falls Coffee on West Market Street in Highland Square from 6:00 to 7:00 pm. On Fridays he is at the Nervous Dog Coffee Bar at 1530 West Market Street from 1:30 to 4:00 pm.

On Sundays he is available after the 9:30 am worship service in the parlor for conversation.

## The “Forgiveness Page”

A new page on the Fairlawn West web site is called the “Forgiveness Page.” It has a host of resources both written and video that can help you personally and help us in our ministry to others to be on a mission of forgiveness. While peace is the goal, forgiveness is the tool.

<http://fairlawnwest.org/forgiveness.htm>

## Fairlawn West on Twitter & Facebook

You can be part of the Fairlawn West community and receive updates and information about our mission and ministry on Twitter and Facebook via the internet. On Twitter search for “fairlawnwest.” On Facebook go to <http://snipurl.com/j83u6>.

## Celebrating the Confirmation of Molly Hauenstein

On Pentecost May 31 we celebrated the Confirmation of Faith of Molly Hauenstein.

## Loar’s Log

When Jesus is on the cross in Matthew and Mark, he begins to pray the psalm we call Psalm 22, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” For 17 verses this psalm rants to God asking why has God forgotten and abandoned us. Then in verse 18 in a dramatic shift, it becomes an affirmation of the certainty that God cares and provides, even when we are in the darkest hour. It winds up with a song of praise which is clearly in close connection to God.

Jesus had recited Psalm 22 over and over in his spiritual journey up to that point in time. The assumption is that what is heard and recorded in these two Gospels will remind the faithful to also recite the full psalm. Those who are not familiar with it, will assume that Jesus is simply ripping God apart. Jesus was reciting from a long used memory in his spiritual practice in reciting this psalm. He recites it both to express his pain and fear with the certain faith that by the end of the psalm he would be closer to God than ever before.

Madeleine L’Engle laments that too many Christians only do regular spiritual disciplines so they can feel good. And when they don’t “feel it”, they quit doing the disciplines. They give up on it. She says we practice the disciplines day after day whether we “feel it” or are moved by them in the moment or not. We need to practice them over and over again so like Jesus on the cross, it will be 2nd nature for us to begin to recite and remember and offer to God what we could not provide on our own. Especially in the darkest hours.

This is the dilemma facing much of the church today. As the financial crunch sets in, many churches are struggling organizationally. Budgets are cut because offerings and other sources of mission resources are down. Too much like the world, the “church” is overwhelmed by the conditions of the world.

Like Jesus on the cross, these are the times God is

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Bldg Lease with New Covenant Community Church items

1. New Covenant Community Church (NCCC) to move their service from the Fellowship Hall to the Sanctuary. Fairlawn West worship music will start at 9:20 am. New Covenant Community service to start at 11:05 am.
2. NCCC to pay \$4,000 per month. At the end of the calendar year the building and maintenance expenses which include: utilities, custodial, maintenance and repair, yard and parking lot, security system, tuning and maintenance of pipe organ, and part of insurance expenses will be totaled. Either congregation will pay the other to balance the annual costs at a 50/50% shared expense. That is if the amount that New Covenant Community has paid by the end of the year is less than 50% of these costs, NCC will pay Fairlawn West the balance and if is more, Fairlawn West will pay NCC the overage.
3. Lease to have an eighteen month no cause termination and a three month termination with cause...for either party.
4. The New Covenant Community Pastor's office to move to our present Christian Education office and NCC Music Director and Financial person to move into the present office for the NCC Pastor. The Fairlawn West Tech team will also share this latter office with them.
5. New Covenant Community communion table to be moved onto the sanctuary chancel for shared use.
6. The large organ in the Fellowship Hall and the chairs around the walls of the Fellowship Hall will be removed.
7. A joint team of two from FWUCC and NCCC be created to finalize the lease.
8. A joint team of up to six people total/3 from each congregation will meet at least quarterly to review the shared building relationship.

## You are blessed when...

"...you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.

"...you're content with just who you are—no more, no less. That's the moment you find ourselves proud owners of everything that can't be bought.

Excerpted from the Beatitudes, Matt 5 (The Message)

*(Continued from page 2)*

## Loar's Log continued

calling the church to offer to the hurting world the deep faith and rich blessings of God. But if all we can do is mimic the pain of the world, we have nothing to offer. And the carols of Christmas that proclaim "Emmanuel" (God is with us) ring hollow and empty as the real times of God's presence are less sure.

I have seen too many church newsletters in recent months and heard too many stories of churches succumbing to the terms of this world. Like Christ on the cross, we are called to remember, to recite the Gospel reality, and to reach out even when we feel the pinch. Remember, "its not about you."

Times like these are a test of how strong and deep faith we have grown in Christ during those more easy times. Were we just going through the motions for show, or were we like L'Engle reminds us, practicing for times like these. When our own human resources are thin, but our spiritual resources are deep and sure.

Now is the time for Fairlawn West United Church of Christ to focus more than even on ministry to the world around it rather than chewing its own fingernails in concern about its own ability to persevere. With humans, everything will fail. With God, all things are possible.

Grace and peace,  
David Loar, Pastor

## Free Jazz Concert for Gulf Coast Home Rebuilding

Trinity UCC at 215 High Street in Wadsworth is hosting New Orleans street musicians David Leonard and Roselyn Lionhart on Sunday, June 7 at 4:00 pm. A freewill offering will be received to help with the continued rebuilding of homes along the Gulf Coast from the destruction of Hurricane Katrina. For more info on the performers go to [davidandroselyn.com](http://davidandroselyn.com).

## **Our Vision and Mission - Core Values and Bedrock Beliefs**

We are a group of people who are part of a church, but trying not just to be a "church". We are really trying to be "Church." We are working hard at asking God for help in overcoming the ways for years we have become exclusionary. We are asking God to help us to "let go and let God" which sounds good, but we are still trying to get more clues about what that means for us and the whole blooming world. We believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, but when we talk about what that means, we find there is a lot of variety among us. And there are some of us who are tired of talking and are just trying to "do it."

**Commissioning at the end of Sunday worship** Go forth into the world. Be of good courage. Hold fast to that which is good. Render to no person evil for evil. Strengthen the fainthearted. Support the weak. Help the afflicted. Honor all people. Love and serve God rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **Core Values**

- learning and growing as disciples of Jesus Christ
- transforming lives through God's grace and forgiveness
- gathering as a community known as "the body of Christ"
- worshiping God using creative expression
- welcoming the variety of people who are our neighbors
- leading spiritually centered lives

### **Bedrock Beliefs**

- We believe God creatively gives us life.
- We believe we are called by God to be disciples of God's beloved Jesus Christ
- We believe that God's Spirit is the power that guides us to "go forth into the world."
- We believe that prayerful conversation (which means more listening on our part) is the center piece of the life of a disciple
- We believe that we will never die. God raises us from death through the life, death, and resurrection of God's Son, Jesus Christ.
- We believe it is through forgiveness and grace that God gives us hope that never ends.

We use these in our personal lives and as the boundaries of our life as a church and in all the decisions we make about our ministry. The Core Values and Bedrock Beliefs or the "DNA" set the boundaries of our life together.

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