

United Religious Community
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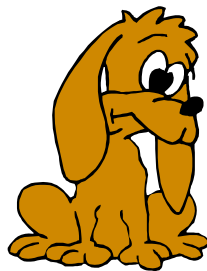
If you wish to be removed from the TORCH mailing list, please call 574-282-2397 or email urc@urcsjc.org

Want to receive TORCH by e-mail?

We have found that many congregation leaders on our e-mail list were not receiving or opening the attachments of their issues of TORCH. This issue is being mailed to all congregations. **If you would rather we send it by e-mail please call the URC office at 282-2397.**

**INTERNATIONAL
DAY OF PRAYER FOR PEACE
OBSERVANCE**

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21ST, 2011
11:30 AM
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING**



**“Bark For Life”
August 28th.**

The American Cancer Society’s Relay For Life of South Bend is hosting a walk called “Bark For Life” at Howard Park on Sunday, August 28th, from 2:00 to 5:00 pm. They are inviting all people and canine companions to join in walking and raising funds for local cancer services and research. The fee for early registration is \$15 per dog. Onsite registration will begin at 1:00 pm and the fee will be \$25.

For more information visit their website: www.relayforlife.org/southbendin or call the American Cancer Society at 574-257-9789.

United Religious Community of St. Joseph County

URC TORCH

Volume 39, Issue 3

AUGUST 2011

Dear Members and Friends,

It is time to celebrate! We continue to improve many areas of operation; consider the following:

- April: Twenty clergy members met to consider forming a county-wide clergy association and are working forward to see that happen.
- May: The Annual Prayer Breakfast was a great success. David Campbell was an inspiring speaker.
- May: A most amazing young woman, Diane Boerstler, joined us and has volunteered more than half of her time at the Advocacy Center.
- June: The Annual Meeting was held and it was a great success! Hearts Afire and Peacemaker Awards were presented and there was a good turn out from congregations.
- June: Successful petitioning of the court allowed our trust fund to pay off the mortgage! 501 N. Main St. is Your URC Home - come and visit!
- June: Board Committees - Finance, Program, Membership, and Building and Grounds were designated and members were selected to represent those committees.
- July: Rebecca Ekamp, from Catholic Charities Senior Aide Program joined us also.
- July: Received Bunge Trust dollars for homeless assistance.
- August: We were notified by United Way that FEMA assistance will soon be distributed.

Since March, David Kiely of Sunnyside Presbyterian Church, Rev. Bruce Naylor of Zion United Church of Christ, Rev. Bradley Bohrer of Crest Manor Church of the Brethren, Tina Rekhi of the Sikh Faith Community, Sylvia Sebert of Southside Disciples of Christ and Rev. Eva Buthy of St. Andrews United Church of Christ have all joined the Board of Directors. Carolyn Call and Barbara Wilson were approved for membership on the Board and will join the August 29th meeting.

Next year, in 2012, the URC will celebrate 40 years in the community. Please keep this in mind as we look forward to planning several events. We would welcome volunteers to serve on this special committee. Also, there are several important dates to remember for this fall - please check the calendar of events in this issue of the TORCH.

Blessings and Peace,

Rev. Dr. Carol Mayernick, Interim Director

STAFF

Rev. Dr. Carol L. Mayernick,
Interim Executive Director

Joyce Williams,
Administrative Assistant

2011-2012
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers:

Robert Stockman, President
Bahá'í Faith, South Bend

Rabbi Eric Siroka, Vice President
Temple Beth-El, South Bend

John Pinter, Treasurer
St. Joseph Catholic Church, South Bend

Marguerite Taylor, Secretary
First AME Zion Church, South Bend

Rev. Barrett Berry, Past President
Pentecostal Cathedral, South Bend

Board Members:

Rev. Bradley Bohrer,
Crest Manor Church of the Brethren

Rev. Eva Buthy,
St. Andrews United Church of Christ,
Mishawaka

Fr. Matthew Cowden,
St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church,
South Bend

Karen Dwyer,
St. Bavo Catholic Church, Mishawaka

Rev. Leonard Jepson,
First English Lutheran Church, Mishawaka

David Kiely,
Sunnyside Presbyterian Church

Rev. Bruce Naylor,
Zion United Church of Christ

Rev. Nancy Nichols,
Broadway Christian United Methodist Church,
South Bend

Tina Rekhi,
Sikh Faith Community

Sylvia Sebert,
South Side Christian Church

Rabia Shariff
Islamic Society of Michiana

Don Sporleder,
First Presbyterian Church, South Bend

ADVOCACY CENTERS NEWS

The Advocacy Center of the United Religious Community continues to provide vital assistance to the less fortunate members of our community. The South Bend location at 501 N. Main Street will continue to be open **Tuesdays and Thursdays from Noon until 2:00 pm.**

In the first seven months of 2011 we provided over \$39,121.00 in assistance to the needy in 380 households.

On behalf of those we serve, the URC and the Advocacy Centers would like to thank all the individuals, organizations and congregations who support our mission and services! In these uncertain times, your donations are vital to those less fortunate.

Here's one client's story, shared with us by Diane Boerstler:

Imagine sheer terror of being a mother, abandoned in a faraway place, with a tiny baby, a two year old toddler, and a thirteen year old with autism. Naturally, you know no one in the area, your plans have failed and you, that tiny baby, and your two other children are left to walk the streets of South Bend with no shelter, no food, and no way back home. You haven't bathed for days, all of the shelters are crammed full of others in desperate need.

The generosity of others has failed you and you are left wondering how you will ever piece your life back together and make the journey home where two older children and an ailing grandmother desperately await the care that you provide. Suddenly, you see hope or rather a wonderful client of Hope Rescue Mission takes you under her wings and tells you about The Advocacy Center of the United Religious Community at St. Joseph County. She walks you and your babies down to see us, and that's when your entire experience in South Bend changes for the better.

**RECENT GIFTS RECEIVED**

Christ the King Lutheran Church
First Presbyterian Church, Mishawaka
Fr. John Conley, CSC
Immanuel United Methodist Church
Memorial Presbyterian Church
Prince of Peace Church of the Brethren
South Bend Christian Reformed Church
St. Andrew's United Church of Christ
St. Bavo Catholic Church
St. Peter's United Church of Christ
Temple Beth-El
Unity Church of Peace
Zion United Church of Christ

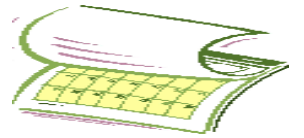
The URC and Advocacy Centers assist thousands of low-income people a year. While their needs are consistent our income is not. The URC depends on your generosity to make our work possible. Any and all donations are greatly appreciated.

**THANKS FOR YOUR
UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT!**

Widowed Women & Men Social Support

The Widow/Widower support program meets on the **2nd Tuesday of every month at 1:00 p.m. at St. Peter's United Church of Christ, 915 N. Ironwood Drive, South Bend.** If you know of someone who needs support through recent loss or just friendship, let them know. We invite you to keep this group strong and vital!

SOME DATES TO REMEMBER



August 14th, 5:30 pm
WWM Picnic at Potawatomi Park, Site #8

August 19th 8:00 to 11:30 am
Family Therapy Seminar
Family & Children's Center

August 20th, 8:30 pm
Moonlite Madness Golf Outing at Knollwood
Michiana Youth Ministries

August 21st. 4:00 pm
CROP Recruiters Gathering
Sunnyside Presbyterian Church

August 28th, 2:00 pm
Military Day at Coveleski Stadium
South Bend Silverhawks vs. Lake County Captains

August 28th, 2:00 to 5:00 pm
"Bark for Life" American Cancer Society Benefit
Howard Park, downtown South Bend

August 29th, 5:30 pm
URC Board Meeting, at 501 N. Main St.

September 21st, 11:30 am
Day of Prayer for Peace at County-City Building

October 2nd, 2:00 pm
CROP Walk for Hunger
Howard Park, downtown South Bend

October 30th, 1:30 to 3:00 pm
Community Gathering to Heal Domestic Violence
St. Mary's College, Student Activities Center

URC ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON JUNE 12TH

About 80 people attended the Annual Meeting of the URC at the Jewish Federation on Sunday afternoon, June 12th. The theme of the day was "Reclaiming Our Past - Moving to the Future". Interim Director Rev. Dr. Carol Mayernick gave a brief presentation about the history of the URC and explained what the organization plans for the future.



Election of Officers was held: Robert Stockman of the Baha'i Faith Community was elected President and Rabbi Eric Siroka, Temple Beth-El, Vice President. Treasurer is John Pinter, St. Joseph's Church, South Bend and Secretary is Marguerite Taylor of First AME Zion Church.

Hearts Afire Awards were presented to Rev. Martha Carroll, Pastor of Southside Christian Church and Sara Stewart, founder of Unity Gardens. The 2011 Peacemaker Awards for Youth were presented to Emily Reth and Emily Birr of Crest Manor Church of the Brethren.

Recognized for their contributions to the mission of the URC were Maria Kaczmarek, Director of Dismas House, Tom Broden of the Task Force on Homelessness and Rev. Eva Buthy, Pastor of St. Andrew's United Church of Christ in Mishawaka.

It was encouraging to see the community support for the URC and everyone agreed it was a very nice event.



Family Therapy Seminar to be held August 19th

The Family & Children's Center Seminar Series provides education and training to social service professionals throughout the region on issues pertaining to the health and wellness of children and families. The three hour sessions are provided free to the community and offer three Continuing Education Units.

The August 19th session on Family Therapy will be held at Morris Park Country Club from 8:00 to 11:30 am and includes breakfast.

The presenter for this seminar will be Christine Johnsons, MSW who is a therapist for the Positive Peer Culture Program.

For more information or to register for this event call 574-855-5822.

AARC Professional Development Series to be held October 14th.

The Alcohol and Addictions Resource Center will sponsor a Professional Development Series on Friday, October 14th. The featured presenters will be R. Andrew Chambers, M.D., Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Indiana University School of Medicine and Daniel DeBrule, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology at Indiana University South Bend.

Six CEUs are available. The cost for this session is \$60. For more information call 574-234-6024.

First Baptist Church Celebrating 175 Years of Ministry



On September 11, 1836, a small group of faithful followers of Christ gathered for worship, prayerfully seeking God's will as they organized a new congregation, the First Baptist Church of South Bend. In doing so, these people began a legacy of living, growing, serving and sharing in Christ's love. It is a legacy that continues 175 years later as we faithful followers continue to gather for worship at First Baptist, prayerfully seeking God's will to serve and share His love with one another and with the world.

With great joy and pleasure we announce the plans for our 175th anniversary. We have kicked-off our year-long observance in which each month we will be highlighting various aspects of the ministry of FBCSB through the past and the present. We are creating a timeline around the inside of our building to illustrate significant moments in the 175 years of ministry at FBC.

The culmination of this anniversary will be a celebration weekend scheduled for September 10-11, 2011. On September 10, we will have a catered dinner on the lawn to reunite, reminisce and enjoy the fellowship of former pastors, members and friends of First Baptist Church. On Sunday morning, September 11, at 10:30, we will gather for a very special celebratory worship service in which Rev. Dr. Jerry Cain, president of Judson University will bring our message. A light brunch and further opportunity to connect with one another will follow.

Sunday, September 11, has other significance as well as we mark the 10-year anniversary of the terrorist attacks on our country. In light of this tragedy, we are reminded of the great need in our world, and the great call from our Lord, to be Christ's light of love and mercy in the dark and broken world.

Please reserve the weekend of September 10-11 so you may join us for this joyous, historic moment in the life of First Baptist Church of South Bend. Details can be found on the church's website: <http://fbcsouthbend.org>.

Rev. Janell Bloem, Pastor

URC Promotes Season of Understanding

The URC encourages each area congregation to dedicate some part of its worship service on the weekend of September 9th - 11th as "**Commemorative Worship Service**". We are inspired that as we memorialize the 10th anniversary of 9-11, our community is strengthened as we seek to build bridges of understanding among all of our faith communities. Be on the lookout for upcoming events as part of our *Season of Understanding*. To register your interfaith activities as part of the URC-promoted *Season of Understanding*, please contact the URC office at 574-282-2397.



The South Bend Silver Hawks will host a special day for military families at Coveleski Stadium on **Sunday, August 28, 2011** to honor those serving our country. Discounted tickets of \$4 will be offered to military family members.

The Silver Hawks take on the Lake County Captains at 2:00 pm. From 12:30 pm through the sixth inning, a vendor's area will be open where various organizations will have tables set up to provide information about the services they provide to military families.

Various ties to the military will be present throughout the game. Children of deployed military will be introduced with the players before the game and other special events are planned.

The event is sponsored in conjunction with the MMSN (Michiana Military Support Network) whose mission is "to build community awareness and understanding of the issues affecting veterans, service members and military families in our local communities." The URC is a founding member of this support group. For more information or to purchase tickets on-line visit www.silverhawks.com or call 574-235-9988

CROP Walk meeting to be held August 21st.

The United Religious Community will once again be a supporter of the CROP Walk for Hunger. This year's walk will take place on October 2nd at 2:00 pm, beginning at Howard Park.

A meeting for CROP recruiters will be held at Sunnyside Presbyterian Church on Sunday, August 21st from 4:00 to 5:00 pm. A representative from each participating congregation is urged to attend this important gathering.



You may already know this story, as it is one of hope, generosity, and love overcoming all barriers. It is a story that we are fortunate enough to see in mirrored experience and hear in the relieved sighs of mothers and fathers who have nowhere else to turn, and it is one of sheer amazement.

The desperate young mother described above, is not a regular client of The Advocacy Center; in fact, she had never been to South Bend. She owns a home in Maine, and was suddenly thrust into a precarious situation when her fiancé's father died. They were promised that if they could only make it out to South Bend they would be able to attend his funeral, and the generous gift of his well-maintained vehicle. They crafted a plan; they would take Greyhound from Maine to South Bend, and return in the vehicle with additional money left to them by his father. Susan is on permanent disability and her fiancé has been laid off for over a year. Susan, her fiancé, and her children had a ride to his home in southern Michigan, they had a home to return to, they had a plan, but their plan failed. After their arrival in June they attempted to contact her fiancé's sister who had promised to pick them up and take them to his father's home. His sister never responded, leaving them to fight for survival on the streets of South Bend, without shelter, without a car, without food. The car that they were to receive was never gifted to them and no one had room for a woman, a man, and three young children, so they were left to walk the streets of South Bend alone. Her beautiful children never saw the man whom they knew as grandpa buried; they never made it to Michigan to say goodbye.



Name and photo are representative of this client.

After a full week scraping by to survive on the streets of South Bend they were introduced to The Advocacy Center and were received with love and hope. Susan broke down into tears as she regaled us with her entire story, it was heart wrenching, and we were determined to help. Due to the generosity of the congregational members of the URC, and a special gift of generosity from Christ the King Lutheran Church, and the Saint Bavo Parish Chapter of the St. Vincent de Paul Society a solution was found. Susan, her fiancé, and her three beautiful young children discovered the blessing of a ride home, and were able to attain safe shelter in a hotel across from the airport.

We see miracles like this every single day at The Advocacy Center because of the extreme love that is found within the congregations of St. Joseph County. You hear the cries of the desperate, the hurting, and the hungry in St. Joseph County and you respond with an incredible abundance of love and support, and for that, Susan, her family, and all of the staff at the United Religious Community of St. Joseph County are eternally grateful.