

NEWS FROM

Celebration!

A People Serving the Church

Fall 2006

A Harvest of Joys



Franklin Avenue continues to flourish in more ways than one. This year the garden of All Saints House has provided a sweet and prolific crop of tomatoes as well as carrots and Swiss chard, along with the abundance of flowers which now brighten up the corner with Spring Street.

While some of our work is actually sowing the seed and reaping the crops, all our life is a fruitful cycle of spiritual seed sowing followed by joyful harvest home.

For ten weeks this summer one of our row houses was occupied by a group of young adults from Toccoa Falls College in Georgia. Aliquippa Impact Ministries (AIM) is sponsored by the local Crestmont Missionary Alliance Church. The students engaged in an educational program with children at a nearby public housing area, offering mentoring, remedial work and outings to create new opportunities for those children who



are among the neediest in Aliquippa. At the end of their project Mayor Battalini presented each student with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Aliquippa City Council.



We look forward to welcoming Joel Repic, one of the AIM leaders, and Chelsea Taylor who will be getting married in January and moving into one of our rowhouses.

In early July we celebrated the baptism of Thomas Erb-White, youngest son of Companions Deb and Norman Erb-White. In mid-July we celebrated the dedication of Owen Farra, grandson to Mimi and Bill, during the Saturday evening Eucharist.



At the end of July, we welcomed our Bishop Visitor, The Rt. Rev. Christopher Epting, for his annual visitation.



Bishop Epting, The Rev. Susanne Watson Epting, Phil Bradshan, May McKeown, Steven McKeown, Mimi Farra, James von Minden, Margaret Bradshan, Joe Beckey, Bill Farra

Lenten Study

In Lent we spent a quiet hour over soup each Tuesday, listening to “Walking the Bible” by Bruce Feiler. This is his journal of travel from Turkey to Egypt and the Holy Land following the stories of the first books of the Bible from Noah and Abraham to Moses and the Promised Land. Our listening was also a seed, for just two months later James



James and Father Justin

was able to take up the offer of a place on a tour of the Holy Land which included a visit to Mount Sinai where a friend from college days is now a priest and monk in the Orthodox monastery of St. Catherine.

Labor Day House Party

Labor Day brought Companions and friends, including Jeanne Hinton from England, for a sunny day on the back lawn. We fired up the Earth Oven and made kolaches and miscellaneous breads for brunch. Following a competitive session playing Kubba, a Swedish lawn game brought to us by Companions Håkan and Ruth, we finished with truly delicious pizza and ice cream.



Jeanne behind the counter at Uncommon Grounds Café

Aliquippa Community Enterprise (ACE)

This program continues to reach out to women in the Beaver County jail. For many of these women whose lives have been blighted by various addictions, this is a welcomed change of environment and an engaging program. Crafts have always been a part of our offering, and this fall will include knitting and crochet in addition to an exercise program. Local volunteers Marcia Lehman and Jerry DeSena will be leading sessions on Wellness. In the winter course we will offer creative writing to encourage self-expression.



Please pray for the women who want to be involved. The jail has recently been contracted to a private company, which is having difficulty providing transportation to our groups.

Hospitality

With the increase of overnight guest space and the meeting spaces in the Chapel and dining room we have been able to extend hospitality to various groups:

- NAECC (National Association of Episcopal Christian Communities) Annual Meeting
- GOAL (Global Outreach for Addiction Leadership) Board Meeting
- Pittsburgh Diocesan Committee on Racism
- Church of the Ascension Staff Retreat Day
- An evening of discussion on Restorative Justice led by the Pittsburgh Mediation Center
- Uncommon Grounds Café Board Meeting

We continue to have individuals staying with us for retreats and enjoy visits from family and friends from far and wide.



NAECC Participants

(L to R) Masud Ibn Syedullah, TSSF; Donna McNeil, CRC; Fr. Gregory, OJN; Sr. Dorothy-Anne, LSSC; Bill Farra, SCC; May McKeown, SCC; Carle Griffin, OCP; Susie Danielsson, CRC; Sr. Mary-Agnes, LSSC; Tobias Haller, BSG

Patricia Allen

Many long-standing members and friends of Celebration will remember Patricia who first heard God’s call to a life of solitary prayer while we lived on the Isle of Cumbrae in Scotland. After some years in Scotland, Patricia moved to Jerusalem and still follows the call to prayer while living just outside Jerusalem at the convent of the Sisters of Saint Joseph. Some of you have supported her financially and Celebration is now offering to gather together those donations and forward them regularly to Patricia. Please contact Bill Farra if you want more information on how to donate.





At its fall convocation in October, Virginia Theological Seminary awarded Betty Pulkingham an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, in recognition of her longstanding contribution to and influence upon the worship life of the church.

We recently celebrated three years of Taizé worship. This gathering on the first Sunday of each month continues to draw a variety of worshippers from the area.



Bill and Mimi on a return pilgrimage to the Cathedral of the Isles in Millport, Isle of Cumbrae, Scotland, spent an evening reminiscing with friends from the Community's years on the island.



Summer reunion as the generations continue: Stephanie McKeown Tubman with daughters, Fiona and Gwyneth; Graham and Jen Farra with son, Owen



September marked the 13th Annual Aliquippa Art and Music Festival weekend and we joined in the festivities: the parade, the stalls, the concerts.

Aliquippa Community Gospel Choir



May

Bill Joe James

Mimi



Latin American Connection

In November, Robert and Linda Moore will be in Peru for two weeks to work with the faculty and students at San Pablo Seminary in Huancayo. Recognizing that while the formation of pastors clearly needs to be the responsibility of the community and culture in which they live and work, it remains important, because of their limited local access to libraries and periodicals as a result of the poverty and marginalization suffered by the majority of people in Latin America, to help pastors and seminary students gain access to current studies and lines of thought being considered and worked within the wider church. Using an interactive approach derived from the foundational work of Paolo Freire, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, the Moores will partner with both pastors and seminary students to explore new understandings of John's Gospel and the Johannine community and the role both played in the formation of the Christian movement. Contemporary works and articles will be used to inform this study.

Robert and Linda are retired Presbyterian Church USA Mission Co-Workers who lived and worked in Ecuador and Guatemala for 11 years, and continue to work with members of the church in Latin America through workshops designed to strengthen local communities and to serve as witness to our solidarity with the church in Latin America. In July 2006 the Moores and Guatemalan



theologian Antonio Oztzyo, led a workshop on Spiritual Formation for US and Guatemalan members of a partnership between Dallas (Texas) and Norte (Guatemala) Presbyteries.

Linda and Robert are presently living with the Community in Aliquippa, testing their vocation to religious life.

Celebration Volunteer Program

In September 2007 the Community begins a new Celebration Volunteer Program (CVP) to enable young adults from 21 to 35 years of age to live together in community while exploring Christian life and faith through worship, prayer, and hands-on work with the poor and the marginalized. Please spread the word! For info, contact mail@communityofcelebration.com

News from Celebration's UK House

Phil and Margaret Bradshaw traveled to Aliquippa in late July. During their visit they were able to meet with the Community's Bishop Visitor and participate in a service of renewal of vows. While here Phil worked on a



PowerPoint presentation of the Community's history and current life, which Joe Beckey later used on a visit to his former church in Iowa. Margaret and Mimi spent time beginning the organization of the Community's archives.



Renewal of Vows, July 2006

2007 Annual Conference

Seven Times Seventy: The Practice of Forgiveness

Forgiveness is central to faithful Christian living, yet it is one of the most challenging of the disciplines that Jesus requires of those who follow him. This conference will explore the Biblical understandings of the forgiveness God offers us in Christ, as well as practical dimensions of living as forgiving and forgiven people.

Kevin Hackett **SSJE**, a member of Celebration for many years, will lead next summer's conference June 15 - 17, 2007. He presently oversees the worship life of the Society of Saint John the Evangelist, Cambridge, MA, and serves as Publisher of Cowley Publications, the Society's publishing ministry.

