

UPDATE

September 2016

Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church

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We're back to our normal schedule at LPPC, back in the sanctuary, and pretty much back to another fall.

This month's Update was delayed (call it back to school craziness or whatever makes sense to you), but here it is. This month, we have Beth talking about the Compassion Project and how we are going to evaluate projects going forward, and what our criteria for them are as a church.

Clerk's Clippings discuss the latest Session meeting, as well as a thoughtful meditation by Jen Seat.

The Peace & Global Witness offering is happening in October, and there's more information on it here so you can peruse that well before it takes place.

And the CROP Walk is almost here! If you are thinking of participating or

donating, you can talk to Steve Hunter or look on the website listed in the article.

Welcome back to fall once again in Chicago, LPPCers! Looking forward to all that will bring.

See you Sunday,
Alice Burton

5. The potential of the initiative to grow the compassion project across the broader Lincoln Park community. How likely is the initiative to generate the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for addressing community problems at scale?
6. The degree to which the initiative is likely to be successful.
7. The degree the initiative is synergetic with other community initiatives that are already underway. Recognize and acknowledge that work, and invite those people to join in our initiative.
8. The degree that the initiative reflects the strengths of LPPC.
9. The degree to which the compassion initiative creates a binding force that weaves our community together.
10. The degree to which the initiative is short-term and won't add financial strain.
11. The degree to which we can partner with existing organizations, piggybacking on their networks and experience so we aren't just reinventing the wheel.
12. The degree to which the initiative reflects our basic Christian commitment.
13. The degree to which an initiative meets a majority of our criteria, but not necessarily all of them.

The Team met again on Sunday, August 28th, to move forward with the ideas that are currently being considered. If at any time you would like to join the team or would like to contribute an idea or initiative, let me know. We would welcome the help! I am getting excited about all that we have going on this fall and look forward to seeing you all back in church after a summer of fun and travel.

Clerk's Clippings: Embracing Change: Jumping in Feet First!



Session met Tuesday, August 30, and we embraced technology by Barb Guibord and Jerry Homsy being present with us “virtually” from their place in Door County, WI. This meant we had perfect attendance!

Jennifer Seat offered the opening reflection. Here is what she shared with us.

Embracing Change

Reflections of the way life used to be

The one thing that I have learned since I have been coming to LPPC is how to embrace change.

One of my favorite verses in the Bible refers to change.

Romans 12:2

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

I am not very good at interpreting some of the verses in the Bible; but, even if you just look at it, you would have to guess that it might mean don't go along with the status quo, question your old ways and discern what needs to happen next.

When we have been going through this process I have been excited by the prospect of change but fearful of the consequences of our actions. So, each time we made a decision that involved the risk of losing money, I would feel kind of fearful for the church and congregation. I admit it, I feel protective, and don't want lose the good thing we have here. But I also know that change is inevitable.

FDR said it best...The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.

We are changing every single day of our lives in one way or another, so why be fearful.

Businesses fail every day because they won't change. Relationships fail because they don't change.

I don't think that Lincoln Park Presbyterian Church will ever go down in history as being a failure from not embracing change. Actually, the history of this church is all about embracing change.

So, no matter what happens, we will not be conformed to this world and not change, we have been transformed by the renewal of our minds and we have been discerning what the next step is.

We have jumped in feet first in the deep end of the pool and the water feels just fine.

And as FDR said ... If this doesn't work try something else, but for God's sake try.

As usual, early in our meeting we looked back at the previous two months (since we had not held a regular Session meeting since June), and lifted up what had gone well, not so well, and what we had learned. Several elders shared that they had enjoyed being trained to register voters, and the opportunity, on both days of the Air and Water Show, to register voters as they walked past the church. Most of the responses of passersby were very positive, including several folks who said how wonderful they thought it was that a church would be out on the street corners doing this. We registered 29 individuals that weekend! It was also a wonderful opportunity to introduce people to fair trade goods that weekend, as vendors from Chicago Fair Trade presented their wares on our front lawn both days.

As part of our "looking back", the Worship and Hospitality team asked us to reflect on our summer worship experiences this year. The time of 5 p.m. seemed a good change for summer for some of us, but we wondered if the low attendance reflected that that time for worship didn't work for others. We were reminded, however, that many of those members and friends who hadn't attended often or at all in the summer had other kinds of conflicts (vacations, out-of-town guests, and other summer commitments). We really appreciated the meaningful service led by members of DOOR and the Montclair Presbyterian Church youth. We also liked the overall creativity of the summer services. It was good to use the Dreyer Room for worship in the summer, because it created an

intimate space for the smaller numbers. If we continue summer services in the Dreyer Room, it might be good to think of a different way to arrange the room. We should also be sure that greeters help visitors find their way to the worship space.

There has been much creativity generated this summer by the various teams working on the Compassion Project, and we celebrated that. We also lifted up the very meaningful and powerful affirmation of Gerry Parker's life at her memorial service. The transition to the new financial secretary is going slowly, but giving statements should be available at the end of the third quarter. We then shared personal joys and concerns.

The Focus Topic for the August Session meeting had two parts, which were inter-related. First we discussed a draft of a Plan for Membership Growth at LPPC. These are the introductory paragraphs of the Plan:

At the heart of our plan for membership growth is our vision to transform our neighborhood and city with compassion. We want to engage partners in compassion and we want to invite people to join us in our work of compassion – how we have chosen to live out our faith.

We know our plan for growth needs to include outreach and attention to what it is we are inviting people TO. Given that we will focus on what we will call Externals (outside of the front door of the church) and Internals (inside of the front door of the church).

The draft went on to describe in some detail the Externals and Internals, and we discussed these, adding some suggestions, and basically affirming the ideas in the Plan. We agreed that if this Plan is to work, people need to step up to a variety of responsibilities and it will need a detailed budget.

The second part of our Focus Topic discussion went into some depth about the Internals; specifically some proposed ideas for making the sanctuary more welcoming and intimate. We took a "field trip" into the sanctuary to explore what some of the changes might look like. Stay tuned for more details about how all of this might transpire – it will be exciting!

To close our meeting, Jen Seat led us in a unison reading of the Serenity Prayer:

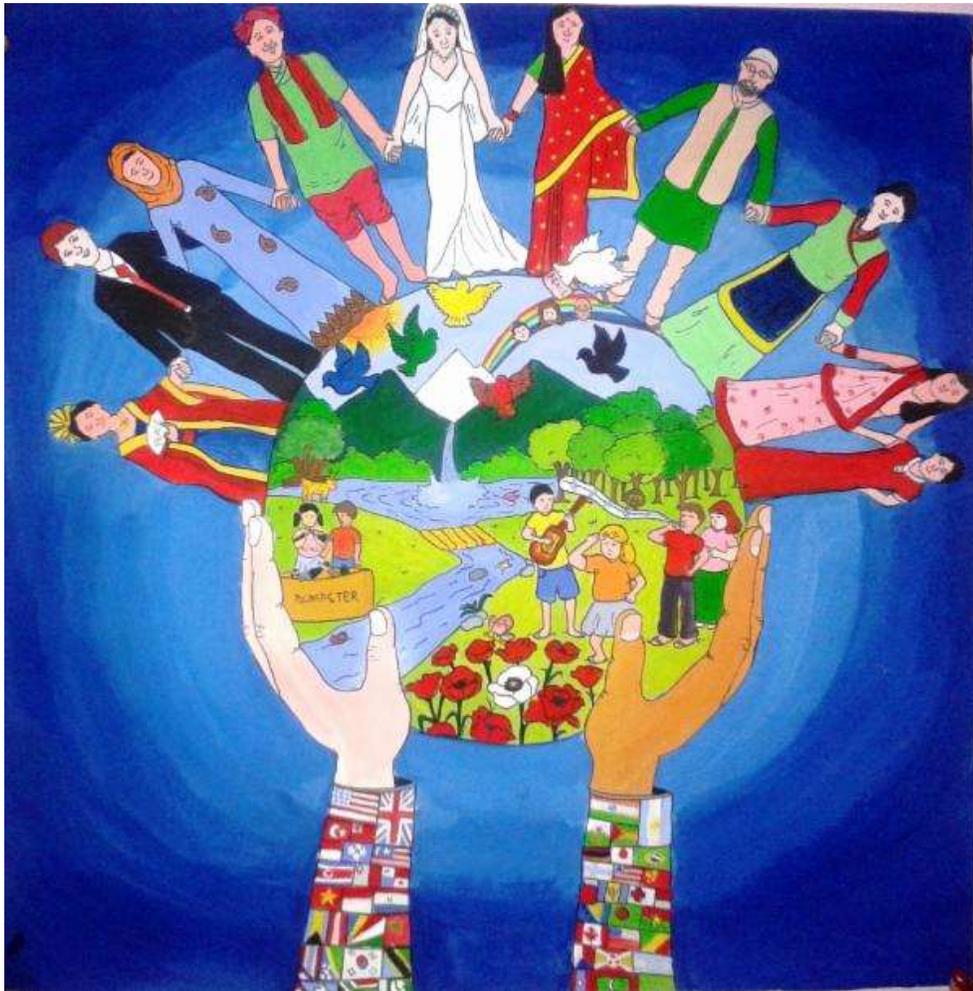
God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.

Jen is right: our congregation continues to take risks and not be afraid of change. May we all embrace change as we live into our exciting future together!

Gail Russell

Clerk of Session

Peace and Global Witness Offering



With a theme, “A Season of Peace,” the annual Peace and Global Witness Offering is asking Presbyterian congregants to spend the next four weeks in daily peace reflection and pilgrimage. On Sunday, October 2, a special offering is collected, helping the denomination equip God’s people around the world to become more “compassionate, prophetic peacemakers; and connect communities of peace in accompaniment, mutual learning and shared action for the reconciliation and transformation of the world.”

The offering itself is shared between local congregations (25 percent), mid councils (25 percent) and national ministries (50 percent); allowing a deepened commitment to the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.

Using words from the psalmist “Can God spread a table in wilderness?” – Psalm 78:19, there are an effusion of shared stories detailing peace efforts helped through our

offerings. Once such story comes from Decatur, GA, where Columbia Presbyterian Church is converting metal from donated guns into rope pumps to be used in villages to help supply fresh drinking water throughout Malawi, Africa. The pumps are on display around the community to make the point that there are too many guns in society and too few resources devoted to meeting human needs.

Throughout the month of September, we'll publish a few ideas and stories in our e-weekly about work going on in the U.S. and in the world regarding efforts to "set" various "tables," and how our contributions help to spread a table of peace for all to share.

CROP Walk

The Chicago CROP Walk has been moved three weeks earlier this year, so time is short! Mark your calendars for Sunday, Sept. 25! Registration and Pre-Walk Fun begins at 1pm with the Step-Off Ceremony scheduled for 2 p.m. at St. James Episcopal Cathedral, 65 E. Huron St. in Chicago.

Our congregation has supported the CROP Walk mission to end hunger one step at a time for decades, leading all Chicago Presbyterian Churches and being one of the top churches overall in participation and fundraising. Last year's walk raised some \$37,500. Sponsor sheets are available, or you can register on on-line at crophungerwalk.org/chicagoIL. All walkers are encouraged to fundraise via the CROP website, which has been redesigned for easier use. Contact me, Steve Hunter, for more details, at srhunterlaw@yahoo.com. Or us this link: <http://www.chicagocropwalk.org/> to learn more. It's going to be a great day!

September Birthdays

1	Emily Porter
8	Marianne Nesler
10	Cari Dufel
13	Emily Waldren
18	Allan Wilson
23	Jeff Davis
23	Ed Bellmund
24	Anne Hunt