

UNITED METHODIST HOUSE NEWS

Box 115 Chautauqua, New York 716 357-2055

Christmas 2009

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice!
The gift of Christmas comes to bless us
again....not so that we can possess it....
but so that we can give it away for others!
Christmas is merry when we do!
At the United Methodist House we are
praying that the blessings of this season
might be understood and lived out all
year long! Hope! Joy! Peace! Love! Merry Christmas!

the president's message...

Christmas Always Comes At Night

Many years ago I heard this poem and I've never forgotten it. When I came across it again, I saved it because I thought it was so appropriate for our time.

In almost every year since, I have been reminded of the "darkness" that surrounds us. It is very real. Sometimes the darkness is personal. Some darkness we bring upon ourselves. Sometimes, it is a part of the society in which we live or because we are at war. The daily news is a litany of darkness and ugliness.

Into this world, Christmas comes. Into our dark world, the Christ Child - The Light of the World - comes.

Christmas always comes at night
When men grope blindly for a light
Christmas could not come by day
That is not God's or Nature's way.
Can Wise Men see a star at noon?
Can Shepherds hear the Angel's tune
When sun is bright?

Death on the Cross will come at eve
When weary daylight takes its leave---
And Resurrection fits the dawn
When patterns for new days are drawn.
But Christmas comes in deepest dark--
Through black despair men see a spark
Embattled with the night.

Franklin D. Elmer, Jr.

As you prepare to welcome Jesus anew, I hope you will realize and celebrate that God has chosen to live with the human family and has given each one of us a piece of the light. Sometimes the light is obscured or buried with pain and sometimes it is forced into a corner. But it IS there for each of us. Even though dim, the light is there, ready to kindle, eager to expand and always refusing to be contained.

St. Francis said, 'There is not enough darkness in the whole world to extinguish even a single candle flame.'
Think on this message of the candle light the next time you are at Chautauqua and look over at our House. Each window has a single candle burning all through the night. Some people call them 'Friendship Lights' and they certainly make our House look warm and welcoming. But they are also reminders of the One whom we serve and celebrate --the Light of the World! May it be so in your Christmas celebrating!

Blessings, *Bob Richards*

Property Committee Report

Git 'er Done! That was the theme for this year's fall clean up at the house. I had a list of 21 different jobs that needed to be completed this past weekend to get the house ready for winter. They ranged from cleaning the kitchen cupboards to moving all the porch furniture into our storage room. Truthfully, I didn't expect to get everything completed this weekend. Especially when I was awoken by the distinct sound of rain on the roof at 4:30 in the morning. I was planning what we could put aside to avoid the rain.

But, we had an amazing group of eleven individuals who came together to work as one. And I do believe that the Lord had a hand in it also, the rain stopped around ten and we had no rain for the rest of the day. We all worked diligently, moving from one task to another without many pauses. We stopped for lunch around noon, we ate and rested for an hour and a half and then back to work. We finished up with everything by three o'clock. We were tired but satisfied.

On Sunday, those who stayed at the house on Saturday night went to church at Hurlbut. As we were introduced to some people, one lady called us the 'non-stop workers'. She had observed us working throughout the day and she gave us that very nice compliment. My thanks to all who helped make this weekend a success.

All in all it was a very uplifting weekend at the house. And we are looking forward to having you come work with us in June at our spring workdays to get the house ready for the summer season.

I forgot to include in my list of donations last time two new chairs for the porch that were donated by Hazel and Jack Getman. Thanks so much for you continued caring for the house.

We have acquired recently two twin sized sleeping chairs for the suite. They will take the place of an old sofa bed that had seen its last days.

Plans are moving forward for the installation of a fireplace in the larger parlor and for the upgrading of our front landscape. All this is possible because of your continued support of the house and its activities.

Chuck Bolan, Property Chairman

Are you considering donating stock to the United Methodist House? You can avoid capital gains and get a deduction. Here is how.... Electronically: Ask broker to transfer them to Online Brokerage Services, DTC. # 0443 to the account of The United Methodist House Fund, acct. # HJ8-044670.

By mail: Fill out the form and mail it with the stock certificate to Northwest Financial Services:
Northwest Financial Services
Att: Timothy Greenlund
237 Second Ave.
Warren, PA 16365



In consideration of the acceptance by you for the account of the United Methodist House of Chautauqua Inc. account #HJ8-044670 of the following securities:

Quantity	Description	Certificate Numbers
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Standing in my name and delivered to you, I do hereby relinquish all right, title and interest in and to said securities and I do hereby finally and irrevocably release and discharge you of any claims by me or my legal representatives with reference thereto, including the proceeds of the sale of other disposition thereof.

In addition you are hereby authorized to charge my account with the applicable stock transfer taxes.

Dated _____

_____ Signature

_____ Signature if joint account

State of _____ County of _____

On this ____ day of _____ before me personally came

_____ to me known and known to me to be the individual(s) described in and who executed the foregoing instrument and who acknowledged that they executed the same.

From the Finance Committee.....

We have good news tonight! (with apologies to Gabriel Heater of WWII days)!!

The House is completely rented for the next summer season, something that has never happened before at this early date. And the retreat season rentals are coming in at a high rate!

This means we have a strong income stream for the next year. However, we still depend on another source of income -- the gifts you and I make to the House as a part of our individual giving. Please remember that your gift is an important part of our financial planning to make the House an outstanding witness on the Chautauqua Campus.

We still continue to upgrade the House facilities that were started when we paid up our 1999 expansion mortgage. We did go for six years, concentrating on the mortgage and waiting to do the normal maintenance items that an 1888 home would have.

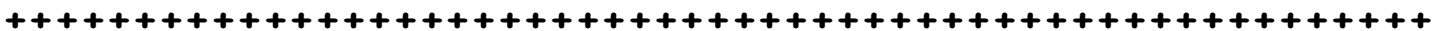
We continue to upgrade the House and, if you have been following Chuck Bolen's Property Committee reports over the last several years, you are aware of the many ways we have updated and refurbished the House.

But we continue to update and improve. Again, please remember the House when you review your yearly giving. And thank you for being so faithful in the past. We will use your gifts carefully.

Chris Redmond is working to bring our web site into the 21st Century and that will give you the most recent views of the House. You will like what you will see!

We have a porch that encourages people to stop by, a new host couple that continues a strong welcoming presence and a reputation for being the outstanding Christian Witness on the Chautauqua Grounds. Thanks to you for your help!!

Bruce Burr, Chair, Finance Committee



Please share in our United Methodist House ministry at the Chautauqua Institution!
United Methodist House Rentals are available all year.

Reservations for the Chautauqua season were taken the first Monday in October, for the following 2010 summer. Reservations for the Retreat season are taken anytime...up to 24 months in advance. **Retreat weekends that are available** 2/12 and 2/26/10, all the weekends in March and April, every weekend in May except for Memorial Day weekend. We have started taking reservations now for 2011 Retreat Season.

*All the rooms have been booked for the 2010 summer season in every week.
Please call Hurlbut Church (716) 357- 4045 for reservation information.
Office Hours are Monday- Friday from 8:00 am- 2:00 pm.*

Please check the new and improved United Methodist House web site: umhouse.com

United Methodist House Trustees

Class of 2010

WPA Trustees
Rev. Bob Richards
Rev. Larry Homitsky
Chuck Bolan

Class of 2011

WNY Trustees
Avion Brooks
Bruce Burr
Rev. Matt Golibersuch

Class of 2012

Chautauqua Community
Trustees
Laura Corey
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Doug Thompson
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Rev. Patricia Harbison
Rev. Larry Baird
Judie Peterson
Rev. J. Paul Womack

Retreat Season Hostess

Cindy Shuff

Summer Host Couple

Karen and Bob Douds

Newsletter Editor & Assistant

Nancy Richards
Debbie Caruso

Check Out Our Web Site

Since the summer, the Communications Committee has been hard at work making improvements and changes to our web site. Chris Redmond, a long-time summer visitor and supporter of our ministry at the House, has volunteered to help us refurbish and redesign our out-of-date web site. As postage rates rise, and rules and regulations by the Postal Service get more stringent for all bulk mailings, we need to look for better and more efficient ways to reach all of you.

Go to "United Methodist House at Chautauqua" or umhouse.com and see the great photo gallery as well as the fall newsletter. Chris has added information about renting and life at our house. You'll be pleased to see that the information is current and interesting. Chris is still working on it, but we are thrilled to have his help with this important project and hope you will return to the site to see how it is evolving.

The United Methodist House is never quiet at Chautauqua.

The porch may be empty...everything has been stored away at the end of the porch in the canvassed area awaiting winter. Work parties have been busy preparing and winterizing the house as another season (winter) quickly approaches.

We continue to have weekend retreat groups come and use the house throughout the winter. It doesn't matter the time of the year people still come together at our special house. They come to worship, meditate, fellowship, work together, and enjoy the peace of Chautauqua Institution.

Behind the scenes the board and committees work to plan programs, recruit chaplains, even to take reservations for the summer and retreat season rentals.

Come and discover what others have as they have stayed at the United Methodist House. This is a wonderful place to come anytime of the year.

The communications committee is working to update the mailing list for our newsletter.

We are asking for the assistance of our members in contacting us should their address change, or requesting to be removed from our mailing list if you are currently receiving this newsletter and no longer have an interest in the House or Chautauqua. We are mailing to 660 addresses currently and seem always to be adding more names! It's costly and wasteful to send mail where it's not needed, so we ask for your help in this matter. On the other hand, if you know of persons who would like to receive this mailings, please let us know about them so they can be added!

Newsletter Mailings The Postal Service has new strict restrictions on having correct addresses for bulk mailing, which is part of its efforts to reduce the undeliverable-as-addressed mail. If we send out a newsletter with a wrong address, we are paying for the postage to mail the newsletter out to you and then we pay the postage to have it returned back to us. Please help the United Methodist House with your correct addresses. Drop us a post card at PO BOX 115, 14 Pratt Ave Chautauqua, New York 14722.

CHAPLAINS COMMITTEE

Interested in serving for a week as Chaplain at the United Methodist House? Do you know someone who would be good in this position? Is there someone who would benefit from this experience? If the answer to any of these questions is YES... then send your request to:

The United Methodist House
Attention: Chaplains Committee
Box 115
Chautauqua, NY 14722

Your name will be entered into the computer and you will be given consideration when the Chaplains are being selected during January-February. If selected...you will be called to determine a suitable date and given more information. Each year three Chaplains are selected from the Western Pennsylvania Conference, three from the Western New York Conference, and three "at large" from other areas of the world. We are not lacking for persons interested in serving as Chaplains...but are always happy to hear from those who would like to serveso the very best Chaplains may represent all United Methodists at Chautauqua each season.

FEED BACK FROM OUR CHAPLAINS

In a letter to Drew Theological Alumni, Vice-President and **Dean Maxine Clarke Beach** writes that "For a week this summer I was the United Methodist Chaplain at the UM house at Chautauqua Institute in western New York. It was a wonderful week of lectures and worship and conversations. During that week I sat on the big porch and talked to Drew alumni/ae from every decade since the 1940s. Again, I was amazed at the way that the years on the Madison campus had formed ministries and influenced the value system of congregations and families.

There were children who had lived in Wendel and a man from the 70s who had gone to school with his future mother-in-law and was now talking to me with his father-in-law, another Drew graduate. And there was another man who spent his entire ministry with the mentally ill and another who had been a district superintendent and conference program director."

She goes on to write, "Chautauqua was started to educate Sunday School teachers and has grown into an ecumenical/interfaith gathering for renewal in religion/education/arts/music. It was started around the time of Drew, with the same passion of educated clergy and laity....The goodness of the vision of committed people in the mid 1800s has grown and widened to include new dynamics and new challenges of this present age."

From **Dr. Richard Heitzenrater**, he writes "Just a word of thanks for getting us connected up with Larry (Homitsky). We spent the last week at the United Methodist House getting to know the Douds, becoming reacquainted with Bob and Shirley Homer (old friends from when I was a pastor in Butler) getting to talk with Barbara Burr, realizing that John Peterson (another guest) was the brother of a classmate of my wife, visiting with my brother and sister, etc., etc. (to say nothing of the concerts, recitals, worship, lectures, devotions, opera, Shakespeare, and other events that we attended). It was a marvelous week and we appreciate the chance to participate as chaplain for the U.M. House!

And from **Rev. David Keller**; "Kathy and I greatly enjoyed our experience at Chautauqua last week when I was the United Methodist Chaplain at the Methodist House. Thanks for all your work over the years to keep that tradition and ministry in place with all the capital improvements.

Each Season, we find that those whom we have thanked for coming to serve as Chaplains turn around and thank us for the opportunity to be in our house, with our hosts and guests, and for their time in such a special and unique place. We're grateful to learn of their experiences, and are glad to be able to share them with you, our faithful members and supporters of our House who make it all possible.

GIFTS GIVEN AS MEMORIALS or HONORING FAMILY MEMBERS

We are sincerely grateful to those whose support comes to us through gifts given as memorials or to honor family members and friends. We recently received a gift from **Dr. Bruce and Barbara Burr** in honor of the 60th wedding anniversary of Ed and Fran Lopus. Another donation was given by **Forrest and Anna White Klingman** in memory of **Lloyd R. White**.

Many thanks to you for these thoughtful remembrances.

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Merry Christmas!

The United Methodist House

A year round center for retreats and renewal at Chautauqua

Offering a positive radiant expression of United Methodist Christianity.

Providing for spiritual refreshment, quiet renewal, friendship and fellowship!

The United Methodist House is centrally located at the heart of the Chautauqua experience! And the United Methodist House is available during the retreat season (September - May) for church and family groups! For information and reservations call 716 357-4045 or email hurlbut@netsync.net.

Merry Christmas!