



# News of The Kenilworth Union Church

211 Kenilworth Avenue • Kenilworth, Illinois 60043 • (847) 251-4272

[www.kuc.org](http://www.kuc.org)

Week of February 25, 2007

***Organ Recital at KUC, Sunday, February 25, 5:00 pm. Come to a recital by Emanuel Schmelzer-Ziringer. He was born in the Styrian district of Austria in 1971. He has studied with Peter Planyavsky and Michael Radulescu in Vienna, and holds a diploma with honors in organ performance from the Vienna University of Music. This recital is made possible by a generous grant from Lou and Bill Guthrie.***

## Altar Flowers

The altar flowers are given in loving memory of David J. Swan and Betty E. Goldberg by the family of Edward T. Swan.

## Children's Ministries

Lesson for February 25

The Sunday school lesson for February 25 for **Lambs through fourth grade** is about the Rich Young Man. Is it bad to be rich? What can we do with what we have? *"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the Kingdom of God."* (Matthew 19: 24). The **fifth and sixth grade** will host the Doves in the Bible Habitat. The **seventh and eighth grade** will study the Sermon on the Mount.

Teacher Appreciation  
Sunday, Feb. 25

Sunday, February 25 is Teacher and High School Helper Appreciation Day. Please take a moment to stop by your child's classroom to thank the teachers

and helpers for dedicating their time and energy to foster our children's faith.

High School Helpers are invited to join us on February 25 from 10:00 to 10:30 am for donuts and juice in the library.

Keeping Faith in Our  
Everyday Lives

Please join us on Sunday, March 4 from 4:00-6:00 pm for a family evening with Terry Nelson Johnson. The cost is \$10 per family and child care will be provided. For more information or to sign up, please contact Natasha Mah at 853-2634 by February 26.

## Youth Ministry

Junior High Youth Group

Parents of seventh and eighth graders are invited to a Junior High Parent Meeting on Sunday, Feb. 25 at 10:00 am in the manse.

On Wednesday, February 28 from 6:00-6:30 pm there will be Team #3 dinner in the manse; 6:30-7:00 pm Youth Group free time in the Manse, 7:00-8:00 pm "Telling It Like It Is" in the Culbertson Room with guest speakers.

On Wednesday, March 7, 6:00-6:30 pm Team #4 dinner in the manse; 6:30-7:00 pm Youth Group Free time in the manse; 7:00-8:00 pm "Catacombs", strategy game of hidden surprises. For information about Junior High Youth Group, email [sgarcia@kuc.org](mailto:sgarcia@kuc.org) or [silvi@vahtra.net](mailto:silvi@vahtra.net).

## Alison Tobey Smart Program

### KUC Book Review

The Alison Tobey Smart Committee invites you in the spirit of community and fellowship to examine the content of the book, *The Price of Privilege*, by Madeline Levine. One's greatest virtues can be one's greatest failings, and this book covers such issues as raising children in the wonderful, but sometimes challenging environment such as the North Shore. Our discussion panel will consist of Rev. Jane Lionberger, Sarah Garcia, Susie Kiphart and Dr. Julia Yen. Books will be available for sale in between services in the Culbertson Room for \$20 per copy.

Dates and times for discussions will be announced in future bulletins.

## Lenten Taize Service

Beginning on Tuesday, February 27, there will be a Taize service each week during Lent. The service is an invitation and an opportunity to let God come close in singing, reflecting, and listening for God in the quiet. Come and find nourishment for your soul.

### Lent

Lent begins on Wednesday, February 21 and concludes on Saturday, April 7, the Saturday before Easter. It is a time of renewed attention to our faith as we follow Jesus to the cross. If you and your family would like additional information about Lent, please ask one of our Sunday school teachers or stop by the Children's Ministries office for handout information.

## Adult Education

**Christianity in a Nutshell-King Poor**, (no class on Feb. 18). Last class will be on Mar. 4. We will take a closer look at the Sermon on the Mount and

discuss why it is the foundation of so much of our faith.

**Thirsty for God-A Study of Christian Spirituality (no class on Feb. 18).** Last class on Mar. 4. Spirituality is a word that gets bandied about--as much today in the secular sphere as in religious circles. What is spirituality? What is spiritual growth? Join us to discover these and other questions as we strive to grow in our faith, discipleship and service.

**Movie Review Night:- Rev. Jane Lionberger (Thursday, March 1).** Come and view the film, *Dead Man Walking* at 5:30 pm or come for a discussion of the film at 7:30 pm. A Catholic nun befriends a convicted killer on death row and comes to the conclusion that capital punishment should be abolished.

## Christian Outreach Benefit

Save the date of **Friday, April 20, 2007** for KUC's Annual Outreach Benefit. The benefit will be at Va Pensiero restaurant in downtown Evanston, 6:30-9:00 pm. The Outreach Committee is working hard to make this year's event spectacular. However, they need your help. Please don't forget to mail in your donation forms by **March 1**; it will really make a difference!

Thank you!

Brooke Buss, Dee Fortson, Nancy Henry, Kelly Miller, and Sarah Stuart



Looking Up and Reaching Out  
KENILWORTH UNION CHURCH OUTREACH BENEFIT

*The Care Guild Coordinators for February is Barb Gooden. To volunteer or to let us know where help is needed, please call the Care Guild number at (847) 853-3534.*

# Service of Worship

SUNDAY, February 25, 2007

## TEACHER AND HIGH SCHOOL HELPER APPRECIATION DAY

8:00 AM Communion-Schmidt Chapel  
9:00 and 10:30 AM Worship Services and Sunday School

### Scripture Readings

**First Lesson** Matthew 13: 24-30  
**Second Lesson** Luke 6: 37-38

### Prayer of Affirmation

Strength within, calling us to meet the day; stir new enthusiasm for the tasks before us; delight in the world around us and joy in the company beside us. We go out free from the failures of yesterday and confident of the promise of tomorrow. We will rejoice in this day, in its problems and possibilities, in its problems and possibilities, in its labor and leisure. Go with us. Amen.

### Sermon

**What We Do Not Know** Gilbert W. Bowen

### Music

**Prelude** *Through Adam's Fall*..... Jean Langlais  
*My Heart is Ever Yearning* ..... Langlais

**Anthem** *This Is My Father's World* ..... Trad. English Melody,  
..... Arr. Vicki H. Wright  
Rejoice Singers and Junior Bell Choir  
Kelli Harrington, Conductor and Timothy Mah, Piano

**Offertory** *Not Unto Us, O Lord (Non Nobis, Domine)* .....  
..... Roger Quilter  
Chancel Choir

**Solo** *A Canticle of Peace* ..... Joseph W. Clokey  
Alex Lawrence, Soloist

**Postlude** *Acclamations ("Suite Médiévale")* ..... Langlais

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<b><u>USHERS</u></b> 8:00 am Phyllis Dunbar	<b><u>USHERS</u></b> 9:00 am Paul E. Sortal Gary R. Hosking W. Jeffery Hudson Bob Malott Carol Narup William J. Narup Scott Stacke	<b><u>USHERS</u></b> 10:30 am Mark F. Toledo Mike Harper Mike Harper Charlotte Meyer David Sterrett Allen Weaver Teddy Weaver Don Fox John Martin	<b><u>ALTAR GUILD</u></b> Joan Birdwell Anne Whittlesey
<b><u>GREETERS</u></b> Judith and Jack Wentz Liz and Dave Chandler			<b><u>BUS ATTENDANT</u></b> Jane Mueller

### Ministers

Gilbert W. Bowen, D. Min.  
Senior Minister

Benjamin R. Bishop, M. Div.  
Executive Minister

Jane B. Lionberger, M. Div.  
Associate Minister

Sarah Garcia, M. Div.  
Associate Minister

Susan R. Bottum, M. A.  
Director, Children's Ministries

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## From the Pulpit: February 11, 2007

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Gilbert W. Bowen "This Embarrassing Leader" John 13: 1-5, 12-17

During supper, Jesus, well aware that he had come from God and was going to God, rose from the table, took off his outer garment and, taking a towel, tied it round him. Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash his disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel. After washing their feet, he put on his garment and sat down again. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked. You call me Teacher and Lord, and rightly so for that is what I am. Then if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. I have set you an example: you are to do as I have done for you. In truth I tell you, a servant is not greater than his master. If you know this, happy are you if you act upon it."

One thing is clear. Moods are important to Americans. In contrast to other cultures who seem satisfied just to survive, we have high expectations when it comes to our happiness, contentment, sense of well being. I have never encountered a human soul that wanted to be miserable. Well, there have been a few I have wondered about. The late and great journalist, James Reston, once said, "I come from a long line of Scottish Presbyterians and we enjoy our misery." But most of us covet something like that which the word "happiness" suggests, a measure of contentment, a measure, yes, even of joy. So why aren't we more happy? Why do so few seem to achieve a truly happy life? Is there some mis-understanding, some mis-direction, some tendency to seek happiness in the wrong place?

There are a number of recent studies which suggest hope for happiness from a number of directions which ultimately prove disappointing. They suggest that one dominant hope is in acquisition. We are a consumer culture. And having, possessing, accumulating seems an ever-present and seductive answer which seems at times to promise a measure of happiness. Yet, these recent studies have established that except for those on the very bottom of the economic heap, there is no relationship between happiness and having. Accumulation as a hoped for inner joy and satisfaction proves an illusion. But I do believe that we easily slide into the assumption that having is a minimal prerequisite to happiness. Accumulating enough toys and travels to excite and divert us may well offer a sense of importance, enables us to feel good about ourselves for a time. Hav-

ing youthful looks and vigor against age and disease may diminish the depressing fact that we are growing old.

Now there is, on the face of it, nothing wrong with any of these things, pursuits, diversions. I have and I enjoy having. Life is good here on the North Shore and we ought to be grateful. If nothing else, it drives the engine of economic progress which makes life easier for many. The problem lies in the subtle expectation we easily buy into, that all this will really make a critical difference inside. The problem is the assumption that happiness has something to do with what we surround ourselves with.

Acquisition. And then the studies point to Achievement. Ask our young people about the pressure they feel here on the North Shore and they will talk about grades, SAT's, achievement. About getting into a college acceptable to your parents. April 15 is not just about the IRS. David Brooks writes a piece directed at our high school people. Suggests that the system unwittingly has been whittling them down into bland, complacent achievement machines.

But what is all this pressure at bottom really about. It is about whether I, the teenager, will be able to reproduce the life style of my parents, the life style I see all around me, the life style I enjoy, because if I do not I will be miserable, a failure. A psychologist out in California, Dr. Madeline Levine, has written a new book entitled *The Price of Privilege*. The teaching staff at New Trier is reading it. Several groups here are. The subtitle is "How Parental Pressure and Material Advantage are Creating a Generation of Disconnected and Unhappy Kids. Only recently she began to observe a new breed of unhappy teenagers. When a bright, personable fifteen-year-old, from a loving and financially comfortable family, came into her office with the word EMPTY carved into her left forearm, Levine was startled. This girl and her message seemed to embody a disturbing pattern. Intelligent, able young people whose lives are empty, devoid of meaning. I recommend the book to you.

So what is it that makes for happiness, and do we have any right to hope for it in life? Note first of all, that the Biblical faith affirms our quest. God expects his people to know a measure of happiness. The Psalms are full of injunctions to rejoice. Proverbs speaks again and again about the merry heart.

Jesus' Beatitudes are about happiness. And in this simple but profound story from the night before he died, he offers his friends a way to happiness. "Happy are you if you do this."

Do what? First of all, if he is any example, it involves forgetting yourself and your own happiness. Look at the scene. Jesus and his disciples gather for the most important celebration of the year. Thanks to Da Vinci it is one of the most famous scenes from the New Testament. Is there anybody who does not know it? Bob Hope used to quip that getting old is when you are asked if you were a busboy at the Last Supper.

But few ask about the meaning of what is going on there, what is going on in the heads of those disciples. Well, they have walked into that room in a snit. Right up to that last hour they still held out hope that Jesus was going to make a move to establish a new world order with himself at the head. And they have been arguing about who will get the positions of prominence, secretary of state, secretary of defense. One mother has even tagged along to make a case for her two sons, James and John. We all probably know that mother. But they are all totally absorbed in their own hopes and ambitions and they are miserable.

So defensive and petulant do they walk into that room, that not one of them is willing to take up the usual ritual that preceded any such evening. You have to know about this ritual to understand what follows. Wearing saddles and walking the dusty roads and streets of that time meant that you entered the house with feet not quite presentable for mealtime. A family with the means would provide a servant whose somewhat disagreeable chore it was, after you had removed your sandals, to wash your feet from a basin, drying them with a towel. If they had no such servant, it was expected that each would discreetly clean up.

Now, servant in that culture meant slave. The word for both is the same in Greek. Two thirds of the Empire were slaves. And no one would ever voluntarily do this dirty job, willingly take up the role of servant/slave. So understandably none of the jealous and power seeking friends of Jesus were willing to stoop to the chore, absorbed in their own thoughts, possessed by their own ambitions as they were. But there is one in that room who is not caught up in his own hopes and fears. Certainly he had every right to be. He is about to face the challenge of his life, and he knows it. He knows that less than a day away is arrest, trial, abuse, humiliation and in all probability death. Yet he has set this all aside for the moment, forgotten what he has

ahead of him, out of concern for their mood and where it is leading them.

Now, first of all in his theology this is John's vision of how our God comes to us. Caught up in our self-concern, he does not abandon or abrade. He draws us to his spirit and way with his humility and hospitality. He does for us what we are not willing to do for one another. And so seeks to draw us out of ourselves and our self-centered preoccupation with privilege and power. He takes up the dirty job. He, their Leader, stoops to do the task of the servant/slave. One by one, to their shame and, hopefully, their enlightenment, their salvation, he washes their road-weary feet. Forgetting himself, he serves. For he came not to be served, but to serve. And happy are you if you get this.

With respect to our young friends it may not be a cure all for all their problems, but I think we help our young people best by challenging them to reach out and serve. The best antidote I know against the confusion and blues that teenage flesh is err to, is assisting in Sunday School or neighborhood house or work project where they break out of their self-absorption and learn how important they can be to others who need them, and so learn what joy and satisfaction that can be. Dr. Levine writes, "There is more to be learned from becoming a contributing member of a group than from another hour of cramming." Unfortunately it is not part of the curriculum. But is this not true of all of us? It is out of gratitude for all we have and the desire to be helpful, that we find our own way to lives of meaning against our moods.

And our story reminds us that the loving service that makes for happiness is often simply a change in attitude toward what we do day in, day out. So therefore a great deal of our service to family and friends, community and world is seldom romantic. Washing dirty feet is a disagreeable task. A great deal of our daily labor is dull and sometimes boring. Raising children is oft boring. Staying glued to balance sheets is oft boring. Supervising others is oft boring. Unless we learn to see these differently, see them for what they are, real service to our families, our community, our world without which a world of comfort and reward would be impossible.

And it reminds us that the most important loving service often involves simple one to one relationships. Jesus and Peter. Jesus and Judas. Judith Valente, a fine poet, writes, "When I think of my parents now, I realize they were successful. Perhaps not as this world defined success, but in the sense that they worked hard, raised their family, made ends meet, and lived hon-

orable lives." I would say this holds whether you are thinking of volunteerism, or management of a work force, or serving others in a professional capacity, or relating to students in public or Sunday school. Our greatest impact as servants is invariably the simple acts of care and concern behind closed doors. It is a matter of a cup of cold water.

And it is not only a matter of attitude toward what we must do. It is also a matter of adding to our routine, when a human need presents itself. By reaching out with such simple serving acts as breaking bread and washing feet, Jesus created a revolution inside a few human hearts which sent them out to slowly but surely change the world, make service a thing of meaning and honor. And so two thousand years later we honor service rather than judge it humiliating.

We need to remember that as we go about our sometimes lonely and sometimes boring chores in behalf of the needs of others. Because it is as we in self-forgetfulness give ourselves to the immediate, ordinary needs we encounter day by day, that we in time discover true happiness, deep satisfaction, real joy.

Happiness is born of service. Cliché to be sure. But no less the truth for all of that. Albert Schweitzer said this to a graduating class in a privileged English boys' school back in 1935. He said, "I do not know what your destiny will be. Some of you will perhaps occupy remarkable positions. Perhaps,

some of you will become famous by your pens or as artists. But I know one thing: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found how to serve."

What if this is the real truth for all of us, God is found and he fills up the emptiness in care for the friend whose emotional pot is low, the child whose heart is hurting, the colleague whose world has collapsed, the neighbor or stray who needs the cup of cold water. The witnesses are everywhere to the truth, that happiness is found in washing and welcoming soiled feet, soiled souls.

Many years ago now, a New York Investment Banker got off the train at Grand Central Station each morning to go to his job on Wall Street. Gene Estess began noticing the increasing number of people living there. He couldn't help but notice one person in particular - a woman in her 40's with a black poodle. So, raising up his courage, he one day walked over to her, breaking his direction and routine. Their introduction was simple: "Hello, my name is Gene." "Hello, name is Patricia Keresey, Pat, and this is Ebony." "Pat, why are you here?" "I live here." With this Gene Estess entered the upside-down world of the homeless. With some effort the investment banker got the homeless woman hooked up with a church sponsored program called the Jericho Project. For Ms. Keresey, a leased hotel on Upper West Side, became home. For Mr. Estess, it became a new life, member of the board, giving financial advice at the Friday night tenant's meeting, getting to know and care about them. Some years later after 23 years on Wall Street, Gene Estess retired into the job of Executive Director of the Project which today serves men and women in five residential sites in New York City. And they are so presentable and successful in their program of welcome and rehabilitation that they have been well received by the neighborhoods. He has been singled out for his service by three successive mayors. And nobody has to tell Gene where happiness and meaning lie. He knows.

Polls indicate that of all the people you see at the Mall, 68% say they are there because it is something to do. Friends, the opportunities to know the joy and reward of foot washing are all over the place. We will never run out of dirty feet. And as we learn to serve, as did our Lord each one of us, we will over time come to know real joy and satisfaction. Happy are you if you do this.

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