

# Wesley Summer Journal

July – August, 2001

## The Mayor of Bear Lake

*By Rev. Larry Nielsen*

There was a week that was at once wonderful and dreadful. The wonderful part was the wedding of Janika Vandervelde and Larry Fuchsberg. These two persons are a delight and their love for each other unmistakable.

In that same week came news of the deaths of two persons, not a part of Wesley, who were friends. One was a woman named Linda, 53, who died of cancer. She died in the prime of her life and it was sad. The other person was a man named John, 57.

Mary Ellen and I have a cabin on a little lake named Bear Lake “up north”. I began to build that cabin in 1972 when my children were small and we had lived in several parsonages. It is a place that they remember. It is suited to small children and peace-loving adults. There are 14 cabins and permanent homes on the lake and no public access. You cannot get to another lake from there and the road we are on is a dead-end.

Throughout our life there various persons have bought and sold places until we are the “old-timers” and keepers of the memory. John, however, was the mayor.

John lived there with a succession of golden retrievers all named Amber. He retired early from a good job with a great pension and devoted his time to Bear Lake. His wife lived in the cities and would arrive every now and then as she did not share his enthusiasm for life in the woods.

Every time any of us would begin a project, John would appear on his four-wheeler. He would always want to give advice and direction for every facet of every task. He would comment on the color that you had chosen to paint the cabin, the size of the room that you were adding on, the quality of the material that you were using to improve the driveway, and more. He was also willing to help, but always his voice was heard giving directions.

While John was not arrogant and tried not to be rude, he was bossy and overbearing, often bordering on obnoxious. When we asked him to stay for coffee he almost always declined and then talked for another 20 minutes. He had a good heart and wanted the best for “his” lake.

We understood and accepted John, sometimes having to tell him that we had had enough. We also knew that he was lonely and that his health was not good. We also knew he was a diabetic and that he was not taking care of himself. The men at the lake often talked to him about being more careful about his health.

The last time that we saw him, he was at the neighbor’s place giving directions on the repair of a large outboard. He came over to give us a bad time about being there so little just before we left.

The next morning, that same neighbor called us at home to tell us that he had been missed and they found him. This week his widow and I will plan a service for John at the lake in July.

What the reminder is for me is that we do not know the length of life. I am thankful that John and we parted on a good and positive note. I am sad that I was not able to be of more help to him. I do promise myself that I will not let another person’s anger or behavior push me away from relationship. It is my hope that all of us can be a little more gentle and loving with each other trying to see what it is that is causing the pain-causing behavior. God calls us to love one another and that we must do.

## Looking for Wesley's Future

The Strategic Plan Committee has been meeting to map out the way in which the people of Wesley will find God's plan for our future. We are interested in a plan that is both a strategic plan based on sound principles and a spiritual plan founded on prayer. Everyone in the Wesley family will have a place in this process.

By the time that you read this, the Administrative Council will have spent time looking at the "rules" of our congregation. The rules are those things written and understood that govern our life together.

The next step will be to gather small groups of the congregation in what is know as a "home meeting." There will be groups of six to ten or so persons who will be lead in a discussion of what is important about Wesley. EVERYONE will be invited to participate in one of these meetings.

The first meeting will be a pilot to test what we are doing. It will be held on Sunday, August 19 with Jemel Aguilar as facilitator. The other meetings will be held on September 16, 23 and 30--all Sundays. Be sure to save time on your calendar for one of these! You may be asked to host one of these in your home and a number of them may be held at Wesley.

The members of the Strategic Plan Committee are Harriett Mhoon, Steve Schultz, Marylee Fithtian, Clarence Schadeegg, Jemel Aguilar and Larry Nielsen. Marylee, Clarence and Larry have been participants in the Holy Boldness, Urban Academy.

## Restoration Phase I draws to a close

Now that the 1999-2001 phase of the Restoration campaign has officially drawn to a close, the Finance Committee wishes to thank all who contributed. You've helped Wesley move toward its goal of being debt-free in 2003!

To commemorate those who contributed \$500 or more, there's a new plaque hanging in Lillebridge Hall titled "Restoration". Check it out – it denotes these names:

Emily Engle	Vera Engle	Gayle Englund
Mabel Ferguson	Fred & Phyllis Huskey	Dave & Kris Jones
Nalani Lavedure	Harriet Mhoon	Steve & Jan Mitchell
Larry & Mary Ellen Nielsen		Judy Reynolds
Leland Schubert/AHS Foundation		Steve Schultz
Mark Sobotka	Marcia Wahoske	Marc Wing

## Update on the Restoration/Debt Reduction Campaign

*From the Financial Secretaries  
Kris and Dave Jones*

For the recent Restoration/Debt Reduction Campaign, Wesley has now received pledges totaling approximately \$91,000! This is wonderful news, as it will allow us, as a congregation, to pay down the debt incurred for the Restoration work performed a few years ago. Actual gifts received are \$22,000 to date.

If you have not yet pledged but would like to do so, there are extra pledge cards in the church office and on the table in Lillibridge Hall. Cards can be returned in the offering plate on Sunday morning or to the office (Attn: Dave & Kris Jones).

We will not be providing special envelopes for these gifts. When you make a gift for this fund, please identify it clearly on your envelope that this gift is for "Restoration/Debt Reduction." This label will help both the Sunday morning counters and us identify the designation of the gifts.

As always, thank you for your gifts to Wesley Church!

# From Saturday Meals

*By Deb Black*

As a I sit here at my computer and stare at a blank screen, I am thinking of all of you . As some of you know I have been going through some health problems, and the fear of unknown is a hard road to walk. With the help of all of you I have found the faith to trust our Lord, and to put that trust in Him. I have the faith to walk on. I have seen my fellow members go through their own problems and stand strong in their faith. Members like Harriet Moon, who is unable to walk like me, but her faith made my walk easier not just for myself but for my family as well. How do I thank all of you for your prayers and love? All I can say is I will try to live each day as a example as all of you are to me. Maybe through our work with Saturday meals we can pass on our faith. I had to miss my Saturday to work as a coordinator and my dear friend Heidi Bergaman covered for me. Thanks again Heidi. Don't get to comfortable to my keys girl. Gene Byrd wants to thank all who ordered Tupperware for the fundraiser - she came in first place out of 31 folks. Good job Gene. Tim and his fellow workers did a great job cooking for our guests. Tim you are just the best—and wouldn't it be nice if we could do a mystic brunch for our guests, I dream big—you cook. I regret to say I have not been working on the grant but I have not forgotten, I swear. July will be busy, wish all of us luck, and keep those prayers coming.

## Justice Ministries

*By Marylee Fithian*

### McGruff Houses Needed

The Minneapolis Police Dept. would like your help with an important child safety issue. We are looking for McGruff House volunteers to open their homes to young children who need emergency help from a trustworthy adult. Children who use McGruff Houses are most often lost, locked out, hurt, frightened or bullied and simply need an adult to make a phone call for them.

The program is open to anyone who is regularly home mornings or afternoons. The application process is simple and orientation for the program is offered at various locations each month. To get involved, please contact Kathy Zierke at 612-673-2809.

## Food Shelf Collections

Perhaps a good way to remember this date is to remember that the first Sunday of each month is Communion Sunday. As you come to church to celebrate in the feast at the Lord's Table, remember to serve the Lord by bringing something for those less fortunate.

## Prayer List

**Those who are homebound**, especially Violet Geiman, Tom Hemingway, Lillian Ingebretsen, Carol Ingram, Selma Johnson, Florence Kilgard, Gayle McElrath, Sharon Miller, Harold and Olive Nelson, Mabel Nelson, Celeste Pearson, Kay Peterson, Bertha Sathre, Lois Sodergren, Mable Swanson, Mabel Thompson, John Wagner, and Vera Williams.

**Those who are ill, recovering, or requested prayer**, especially Deb Black, Judy Reynolds, Lucille tuggle, Cheryl Cannon, Pat Fulton, Julie Christianson, Alfonso Wilson, Tina, Hugh Wing, Virginia Temple, Ada Jones, Brenda Reed, Mark Jackson

**Those who are suffering from loss or grief**, especially Nalani Lavedure and her mother, Marge Davis, in the death of Nalani's step father.

**Let's also keep our leaders in our prayers.**

## Thoughts of Sorrow:

Our prayers and deepest sympathies are given to Nalani Lavedure, her mother, Marge Davis, and all the family at the death of Nalani's step father.

# Financial Report

By Emily Engle

	<u>Y2001 Budget</u>	<u>Y2001 April YTD</u>
REVENUES:		
Regular Giving	87,300	26,116
Other Offerings/Special Gifts	30,300	13,082
Endowment Support	30,000	10,000
Outside Support	15,700	5,559
User Fees	14,500	2,137
TOTAL REVENUES	177,800	56,894
EXPENSES:		
Worship & Music	2,500	1,310
Adult/Children Education	500	122
Justice Ministries	6,900	2,144
Evangelism	5,700	2,262
PROGRAM	15,600	5,838
Staff Parish	103,400	37,124
Trustees	43,700	29,409
Finance	14,500	4,389
Administration	4,800	1,696
Kitchen	1,800	539
Apportionments	14,700	3,958
STAFF/BUILDING	182,900	77,115
TOTAL EXPENSES	198,500	82,953
REVENUES OVER(UNDER) EXPENSES	(20,700)	(26,059)

As of the end of May we have received \$31,049 in Regular Giving. Our projected Regular giving for this same time period was anticipated to be \$35,256. Therefore, we are \$4,207 behind plan. Keeping your pledge current, especially in the upcoming summer months, helps Wesley to pay its obligations on a timely basis.

## COAM

Events in July includes a day long trip to Amish Country, around Osseo, WI. on July 19<sup>th</sup>. They'll head to Buena Vista Overlook and a visit to the Butler Sheep Farm. Also, tour a woodworking shop to see how the Amish use old technology to make modern furniture. Then a visit to an Amish Farm to tour their barn, house, examine their buggies and see the horse drawn machinery.

The bus leaves at 8 A.M. from Bethel Lutheran Church, E. 42<sup>nd</sup> Str. and return about 5:45 P.M. Cost is \$44.00. You can call the CoAM office to register.

Two trips you may want to take are: 'Canada Magnifique' and will go by motorcoach July 11-21 to visit squeaky-clean and floral Ottawa, also Montreal, Quebec City and Toronto.

Or 'Majestic Alaska' from July 11-24. Travel will be by air, motorcoach, and a cruise ship of the Holland-America Line. You'll visit Vancouver, British Columbia then cruising along the inward passage, it will thread its way among the islands of Sitka, Juneau, Ketchikan and then up to Anchorage. So much more. You can look at the brochures on the bulletin in Lillibridge Hall or call the CoAM office.

COAM is the Cooperative Older Adult Ministries. For information about COAM or events, please call June Este at 612-721-5786.

# Summer Worship Celebration Schedule

## Sunday, July 1, 2001, Fourth Sunday after Pentecost, Holy Communion

Worship 10:30 AM

Scripture: 2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14; Psalm 77; Galatians 5:1, 13-25; Luke 9:51-62

Sermon: Rev. Marylee Fithian

## Sunday, July 8, 2001, Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Worship 10:30 AM

Scripture: 2 Kings 5:1-14; Psalm 30; Galatians 6:7-16; Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

Sermon: *Unexpected Results*

## Sunday, July 15, 2001, Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Worship 10:30 AM

Scripture: Amos 7:7-17; Psalm 82; Colossians 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37

Sermon: *How Much Should I Love?*

## Sunday, July 22, 2001, Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Worship 10:30 AM

Scripture: Amos 8:1-12; Psalm 52; Colossians 1:15-28; Luke 10:38-42

Sermon: Rev. Marylee Fithian

## Sunday, July 29, 2001, Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Worship 10:30 AM

Scripture: Hosea 1:2-10; Psalm 85; Colossians 2:6-15; Luke 11:1-13

Sermon: *People of the Open Door*

## Sunday, August 5, 2001, Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, Holy Communion

Worship 10:30 AM

Scripture: Hosea 11:1-11; Psalm 107:1-9; Colossians 3:1-11; Luke 12:13-21

Sermon: *The Goodness of God*

## Sunday, August 12, 2001, Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Worship 10:30 AM

Scripture: Isaiah 1:1, 10-20; Psalm 50; Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16; Luke 12:32-40

Sermon: Rev. Judy WestLee

## Sunday, August 19, 2001, Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Worship 10:30 AM

Scripture: Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80; Hebrews 11:29-12:2; Luke 12:49-56

Sermon: *The Signs of the Times*

## Sunday, August 26, 2001, Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Worship 10:30 AM

Scripture: Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71; Hebrews 12:18-29; Luke 13:10-17

Sermon: *The Bent-over Woman*

# CCNP Restorative Justice Program

In February Marylee Fithian and Monroe Bell started their one year terms as co-chairs of the Restorative Justice Advisory Team. As well as facilitating the Advisory Team meetings, the co-chairs also develop the meeting agendas and act as representatives of the Advisory Team. We asked them the following questions:

*Tell us a little about yourself.*

**Marylee:** I'm a retired United Methodist clergy person. Nowadays I love to read, knit, go camping and travel with my spouse of 45 years. I am the Justice Ministries Team Leader at Wesley United Methodist Church and active in reconciling the roles of ministry and advocacy. I have three kids, ten grandchildren, a dog and a cat.

**Monroe:** I'm also a retired United Methodist Minister and have served congregations in Minnesota and El Salvador. I have also been a church organist and director and college music teacher. I have two children and four grandchildren.

*What would you most like to see happen with the program in your area as co-chair?*

**Marylee:** I would like to increase community involvement and to foster better and closer connections to the neighborhood organizations. I would also like to see the program handle an increased caseload.

**Monroe:** I, too, want to strengthen bonds with the four neighborhood associations and further increase our caseload.

*What brought you to this program?*

**Marylee:** The community organizer came to my Justice Ministries meeting to talk about restorative justice. I felt that some of my skills matched the needs of the program so I took the training to become a facilitator.

**Monroe:** I've had a life-long commitment to working for reconciliation and restorative responses to offenders.

## Work With Dignity

Work with Dignity is sponsored by the Shalom Community, of which Wesley is a part. It is a completely volunteer organization and places more people in jobs in Hennepin County than any other organization, including the Salvation Army and Alliance of the Streets. Work with Dignity has many permanent jobs available in the area. If you need a job, or know of someone who does, contact George Brady at 3207 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55406.

Please check the bulletin board in Lillibridge Hall for current weekly listings for jobs.

Work with Dignity is excited to announce plans for the **1<sup>st</sup> Annual Walk with Dignity** on Sunday, September 9 at 2 p.m. to begin at Epworth Church, 3207 37<sup>th</sup> Ave. So. Walk with Dignity will be a 2-mile fundraising walk for which participants will collect pledges and donations. There will be a picnic for the walkers and volunteers. All monies raised will help Work with Dignity fulfill its mission to "prepare adults, not currently employed, to enter the work force and become self sufficient." Help Work with Dignity get men and women off the streets and into full time employment.

3 Great Ways To Help:

- \*Recruit a Team Captain from your congregation
- \*Form a team to represent your church
- \*Pledge a walk participant

We will provide team captains with an information packet complete with map and pledge forms.

Please call for details call 612-724-1551.

## Other News

### Cards

If you have old Christmas cards Jim Miller is willing to bring them to the children at Shriners Hospital. they're used for crafts. Bring them to the office, anytime.

### United Methodist Summer Camp

Booklets are available on tables in Lillibridge Hall. There are camps for kids, older youth, adults, families.

### Vacation Bible School

This year the school will be held at Kingswood from July 16<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup>. For grades K-4 and transportation is available. Cost is \$80.00 but scholarships are available. Registration is due by July 1<sup>st</sup>. To register or for more information please call: Carolyn Johnston at 952-927-6739.

# Convocation 2001: Revival (boldly embodying the inclusive presence in the UMC).

Convocation 2001 will be the largest ever gathering of United Methodists working for the inclusion of all God's children. Come and be part of hands on workshops, embodied worship and dynamic speakers. Come to celebrate and be celebrated as we claim our church, revive our spirits and breathe life into dry bones. After Convocation return home energized and revived to continue this dynamic ministry on a local level.

Sponsored by: Reconciling Ministries Network. For more info you can call 773-736-5526. Financial assistance is available.

## Letters

*Bishop Paul Egertson of the Southern California West Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) sent this letter to H. George Anderson, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA to explain his decision to take part in the ordination of Anita Hill in St. Paul, MN.*

With a heavy heart, I write to inform you that I have accepted an invitation from St. Paul/Reformation Lutheran Church, St. Paul, MN., to participate with others in the ordination of Anita Hill...

Our hearts are heavy because we are torn here between two loyalties. On the one hand, there is the church which has nurtured me and my family for as many generations back, in America and Norway, as our parents can trace. It is a church in which my wife, raised in another denomination, found the freedom of grace. It is a church my father and I have served, and one of my sons will soon serve, as Pastors, along with a number of uncles and cousins. It is a church in which I am glad to be a member and am pleased to serve.

On the other hand, there are within this church a number of gay and lesbian persons who are being systemically precluded from full participation in its life by exclusion from ordination, not on the basis of individual character but on the sole basis of belonging to a particular class of people, namely, gay or lesbian persons who are in or open to committed relationships. One of our sons is a member of that class. In response to an inner call first experienced as a teenager, he fully prepared himself for ordination by completing all requirements set forth by the ELCA. But he is nevertheless precluded. So we know first hand the injustice of a policy that excludes persons like him from ordained service. His experience has led us into personal relationships with several others who have suffered the same exclusion. This is not merely about our son. It is about all the sons and daughters of faithful Lutheran parents throughout this country who have been made outcasts in their own church, by the very church they sense a calling from God to serve...

The realization of this injustice led me to accept speaking opportunities first within our Synod and then outside our Synod, advocating for the full acceptance of gay and lesbian people in the life and ministry of this church. By any measure, 'full acceptance' includes the blessing of committed relationships and the ordination of those, otherwise qualified, who are living in such relationships.

In spite of this public advocacy that was fully known by the voting members, I was inexplicably elected Bishop of this Synod in 1994 and installed in 1995. I have never been able to escape the conviction that this office was put upon me as a place from which to bear witness on behalf of those I have come to know as the outcasts of our day, among whom Jesus can surely be found. At the same time, I knew this office would require more than a single interest, so I made and have fulfilled a promise to give this issue no more emphasis than it proportionately deserves among the many concerns facing this church. I have addressed it only but always when asked or when others raised it...(There follows a long list of his activities to advocate for full inclusion in the ministry of the ELCA).

The point in listing these efforts is to demonstrate the lengths to which I have gone to fulfill the obligation I inwardly feel and my commitment to work within appropriate bounds when doing so. Yet, while having their rightful place and some salutary effects, all these efforts have been only words in search of responsive action. A time comes when words cry out to become deeds. I find it self-evident that movements of change in both church and society do not arise as voluntary actions from within our organizations. Progress on the inside is most often

stimulated by pressures from the outside that make delay or avoidance no longer possible inside. That point was made so memorably by Martin Luther King Jr., in Letter from a Birmingham Jail, that it needs no repetition here.

I believe those who continue to work faithfully for change within an organization, as I have so far done, should be commended for every effort they make. But I also believe that engagement in that way is relatively safe for the participants. As necessary and valiant as that service may be, they nevertheless risk nothing more than the frowns of those they seek to change. The real risks are taken by those who put themselves and not just their words on the line. At this point in my ministry, I can no longer advocate this cause with credibility from a position of personal safety. I am called to join in solidarity with those who are willing to be hurt as well as be heard, walking the way of the cross.

St. Paul/Reformation Lutheran Church has voted to move forward outside the bounds of constitutional partnership in the ELCA. They do so only after one of the longest periods of intentional ministry with and to gay and lesbian people of any congregation in this church. They do so with a candidate as qualified by spiritual gifts, academic preparation and experience in ministry as any Ordained in this church. They do so after exhausting every reasonable avenue of recourse available within the polity of this church. This is no act of defiant congregationalism, but an act of conscience-driven faithfulness to their ministry of the gospel. I cannot stand by in safety and cheer them on. I need to stand with them.

By doing so, I know that I am crossing an implicit and explicit boundary line of trust within this church. That is what makes my heart heavy. But that is also the point. I do this consciously and conscientiously in protest of a church law I perceive as unjust. I do so in both fear and faith. My fear is that this action may stimulate forces of resistance to new levels of reaction and move the cause backward rather than forward. My faith is that, in the long run, this action will help our church more fully become the inclusive fellowship we intend it to be. Until gay and lesbian people in committed relationships are fully accepted in our pews and pulpits, that outcome will never be realized.

Lord, have mercy on us.

## **Name correction**

Kristi Berglands' daughters full name is: Silje Marie Bergland Drarvik. Her birthdate is: May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

## **Address Changes**

Silas Dauji  
4061 Bethel Dr. #28  
St. Paul, MN

William Reese & Heidi Knutson-Reese  
2428 Vera Ave.  
Cincinnati, OH 45237

Rev. Amanda Merlin-Molstad  
N6281 Jason Str.  
Onalaska, WI 54650

Jonathan Bates  
2824 Dean Pkwy  
Minneapolis, MN. 55416

Dan Bolz  
8264 173<sup>rd</sup> Ave.  
Becker, MN. 55308

Kaye Brandt  
Box 266, Lake  
Crystal, MN 56055

## Sunday Volunteers-July

### Liturgists

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 15 Patrick McNulty
- 22 \_\_\_\_\_
- 29 \_\_\_\_\_

### Social/Coffee Hour

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 15 \_\_\_\_\_
- 22 United Methodist Women
- 29 \_\_\_\_\_

### Greeters

- 1 Ruth Quistgard & Patrick McNulty
- 8 Peggy Ramstad & Judy Reynolds
- 15 Vera Engle & \_\_\_\_\_
- 22 Mabel Ferguson & \_\_\_\_\_
- 29 \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

### Flowers

- 1 Harold Anderson
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 15 Lindners
- 22 \_\_\_\_\_
- 29 Emily Engle

## Birthdays

### July

- 1 Ronald Wilson
- 1 Bill Childs
- 2 Diana Klein
- 2 Harold Anderson
- 9 Stephanie Hill
- 11 Grace Lindner
- 15 Clare Gravon
- 21 Garmai Quioh
- 21 Sandy Kasma
- 22 Elizabeth Voge
- 22 Bob Black
- 24 Eric Smith
- 29 Jeanne Jones
- 30 Lisa Joy Christman
- 31 Kristi Bergland

### August

- 1 Joan LeDoux
- 1 Vera Engle
- 4 Lois Sodergren
- 4 Mark Sobotka
- 8 Rich Wayman
- 10 Mary Strasma