

Overture

The Pretty Much Fortnightly Newsletter of

Old Orchard Church

September 21, 2008

Welcome to Old Orchard Church!

If you would like to find out more about Old Orchard & what we are about, please fill out one of our visitor forms.

Sundays @ Old Orchard Church

9:00 a.m. **Sunday School** for adults and children

10:15 a.m. Worship

6-8 p.m. Youth Group/Teen Fellowship

Children's Ministries

NURSERY is offered for infants & children through Kindergarten age. Our nurseries are in the church building's basement. **Infant nursery** for babies, crawlers, and very early walkers.

Toddler nursery for children who are walking up to three years of age. Children who turn three from January-August are invited to attend preschool worship starting September 1. Children who turn three from September-December are invited to attend preschool worship starting January 1.

Preschool worship for age 3 through Kindergarten. Three-year-olds (see above) and four-year-olds are welcome during the whole service. Five-year-olds remain upstairs in the worship service until dismissed at 10:50.

Children's Worship: For children grades 1 through 5 at Milligan House. Dismissed from worship at 10:50 a.m.

OOC Teens

Sunday, September 21

Teen Leadership Team (TLT) meets at 4 p.m. 5:30 p.m. "Loving People" Sunshine Mission

Sunday, September 28

OOC Anniversary Picnic after worship at Larson Park. No Teen Fellowship.

Friday, October 10-12.

Fifth annual Fall Retreat. 7-12 graders. CampDay Spring. Sign up by October 1.

Saturday, October 18.

Work day: rehab the Teen Room. Starts at 9 a.m.

Calendar Notes

(An asterisk [*] indicates that more information can be found later in this issue.)

September 28: Old Orchard Church's 27th Anniversary Celebration. Special worship followed by picnic at Larsen Park.

*October 3-4, Friday & Saturday: Men's Retreat

*October 11, Saturday: Post-Wedding Shower for ladies in honor of Carol Welborn at 10 a.m.

October 12, Sunday: Parlor Fellowship after church

October 18, Saturday:

Next Men's Bible Study (N.B.: no Men's Bible Study on October 4)

*Work Day at Old Orchard Church, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

October 26, Sunday: Lunch at Milligan House after church

*Three Nights Together

October 29, Wednesday: House Church

November 5, Wednesday: Hans Bayer's talk at church November 12, Wednesday: Community Groups

November 19, Wednesday: Congregational meeting for officer elections.

November 27, Thursday: Thanksgiving Day Worship, 10 a.m.

November 30, Sunday: No Sunday School

ΚΗΡΥΓΜΑΤΑ ΤΗΙ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΙ

(Announcements for the Church)

OOC 27th Anniversary—Next Sunday! September 28, 2008

We shall have a picnic after worship at Larson Park, with the Deacons as our hosts. Meat is provided; please bring food according to the first letter of your last name:

A-H: Dessert

I-P: Favorite side dish

Q-Z: Salad

Men's Retreat

Friday evening October 3 through Saturday afternoon October 4 (by 5:30 pm) Theme: God's Challenge to Men

Location: Camp Trinity, New Haven, Missouri (75 minutes away, near Washington, MO)

Cost: \$50 (includes 3 meals) \$25 deposit due at registration. Checks payable to Old Orchard Church, with "Men's Retreat" in memo line.

Transportation: meet at church at 5 pm or 5:30 pm Friday to carpool.

Register online at www.oldorchardchurch.org or fill out one of the forms available today and turn the form in to Ron Lutjens, Mark Tucker, Greg Kern or Hal Pendergrass.

Three Nights Together

It's time again for "3 Nights Together"! This year we've asked Covenant Seminary professor, Hans Bayer, to give the talk he gave at the L'Abri Conference on the growing preoccupation in our culture with a kind of generic spirituality. More will come later, but here's the schedule in brief:

- ❖ Wednesday, October 1. Community groups will meet.
- ❖ Wednesday, October 29*: *House Church* to introduce the topic − 6 p.m. Meal (bring a dish to share); 7:00 p.m. meeting
- ❖ Wednesday, November 5*: *Hans Bayer's Talk* at the church (7:00 p.m.)
- ❖ Wednesday, November 12: Community groups meet to debrief Hans' talk and pray for friends and relatives, and the many in our culture who are spiritually searching.

*Child Care Provided for both House Church and Hans' talk. Please let us know if you are bringing your child. We will circulate a sign-up sheet or you can call Hannah Nelson (See print copy for phone #/) and let her know you plan to bring your child.

Staff Opportunities at Grace & Peace Winter Shelter

The Grace & Peace Winter Shelter, a hospitality ministry of Grace & Peace Fellowship Church which operates each winter to shelter women in the name of Jesus Christ, has three available Staff positions for weeknight overnights. Qualified candidates will be adult Christians with leadership potential or experience who have zeal for caring for the poor while recognizing their dignity and value as persons made in the image of God, are available the same night each week from 6 p.m. to 6:15 a.m., and who have a strong command of verbal and written English. This ministry position pays \$60 per night. Sleeping is permitted as circumstances allow. Work can be counted toward seminary and/or other school Field Education and Community Service requirements. Grace & Peace is located at 5574 Delmar Blvd. near the Loop Area of the Central West End in St. Louis City. Shelter season is November 9, 2008 through March 15, 2009. Required training Sat., November 1, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Please contact Melody Burke Perkins, 314-367-8959, x21 or graceandpeace1@sbcglobal.net to inquire. We'd love to have you join our ministry team!

--Submitted by Melody Burke Perkins, Team Leader

FSI Lectures: "Taking Citizenship Seriously" Christian Responsibility in Today's Political Context

October 3-4, 2008 (same as Men's Retreat)

Friday, 7-9 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Rayburn Chapel Covenant Theological Seminary

→ For those <u>not</u> going to the Men's Retreat, here is an opportunity to think through current politics. ←

Annually, the Francis A. Schaeffer Institute brings together noted Christian thinkers and speakers to discuss critical issues facing the Church and society. With 18 months of unprecedented media coverage, a barrage of TV advertisements, and a couple of surprise decisions, the upcoming Presidential election has been the most talked about Presidential process in American History. Yet, as questions emerge about the policies of the candidates, the conversation dwindles concerning Christians' role in politics. This special program is **free to all** as part of our Lifetime of Ministry series of ministry enrichment courses. You can register online at www.covenantseminary.edu (registration is not required, however).

Keynote Speaker:	Also Featuring:
Dr. Jim Skillen	Mr. John Hancock
President, Center for Public Justice, Annapolis, MD	President, John Hancock & Associates
Dr. Skillen will speak to the issue of Christian faithfulness and	Mr. Hancock is a former executive director of the Missouri
responsibility in the realm of politics—a timely and lively	Republican Party.
topic as we head into the 2008 presidential elections.	

Lecture Schedule

(all lectures to be held in Rayburn Chapel)

	Friday, October 3	
10:00 a.m.	Opening Discussion: "Presidential Politics in a Post- Everything America"	Dr. Skillen & Mr. Hancock
7:00 p.m.	Lecture #1 "Obama vs. McCain: Christian Electoral Tensions"	Dr. Skillen
	Saturday, October 4	
9:00 a.m.	Lecture #2 "Cynicism and Idealism: Redeeming Political Structures"	Dr. Skillen
10:30 a.m.	Lecture #3 "God Bless America' and Global	Dr. Skillen

Politics: Where Is Jesus?"	

Overture Submissions Wanted

We encourage you to write for our newsletter, the *Overture*! We welcome submissions of articles, art, short essays, poetry, etc. All submissions need to be signed. You can send your submissions via e-mail to the church office (office@oldorcahrdchurch.org) or you can place your articles in the *Overture box* (located in the coat closet). Electronic submissions welcomed, but not required. Next issue will be out on October 5 with deadline next Sunday, September 28. Susan O'Neal, one of our rotating editors, will be the editor.

Wedding Bells are Ringing!

All OOC women are invited to a post-wedding shower for Carol Welborn, who will marry Graham Markway on September 27.

WHERE: Milligan House

WHEN: Saturday, October 11 at 10 a.m. **HOSTESSES**: Kathy Jennings and Dot Branson

Carol and Graham are registered at Kohl's, Target and Dillards. If your budget is tight you can contribute to a group gift. Please give your contribution to Kathy or Dot by Sunday, October 5. It would be appreciated if you could bring something for the refreshment table. Please join your sisters-in-Christ as we celebrate Carol and Graham's marriage.

Women's Retreat - February 27 & 28, 2009

Please reserve February 27 & 28, 2009 for our Women's Retreat. We will be staying at Todd Hall in Columbia, IL for Friday night through the afternoon of Saturday. (http://www.toddhallrc.org)

Cost for this event (one night stay in a double room with Sat. breakfast and lunch provided) will be \$60.

Sign-up with \$10 to hold your spot. This also goes towards our deposit in reserving the date with Todd Hall. You can place your registrations in the box labeled "Women's Ministry" which is in the coat room.

Private rooms are available for an additional fee. Anyone holding back because of financial or other issues is encouraged to talk to Dot Branson or Ann Stuber.

-- Dot Branson for the Women's Ministry

Food & Diapers Drive Sponsored by OOC Mercy Ministry Team to benefit

Grace and Peace Food Pantry (St. Louis City)
Sunshine Ministries (St. Louis City)
Webster-Rock Hill Ministries
Bethany Christian Services
Refuge of Nations

When: September 2008

What Food to Bring: nonperishable items, in individual or family sizes. No glass please (easier and safer to transport). Suggested list is posted.

Which Diapers & Baby Wipes to Bring:

For *Bethany Christian Services*, **newborn size diapers** *only*. (Debbie Pendergrass, OOC representative to Bethany, reports that often birthmoms will decide to parent, with counseling and other help from Bethany; it is a blessing to start them off with gift baskets of necessary supplies.

For <u>Refuge of Nations</u>: **Diapers, sizes 3, 4, 5** for children of immigrants and refugees with whom Refuge of Nations works. Emily Zdenek, South City Church member (formerly at OOC) reports: "Given the state of the economy...immigrants and refugees are having an even more difficult time finding work and maintaining jobs...so the need for diapers is great! This is such a tangible way to show God's love and care to new families at Refuge of Nations."

Checks Welcome: if you wish to contribute funds for this collection, please write a check to Old Orchard Church and designate it for Food and Diaper Drive.

PMI Missionaries in Europe

(submitted by Nelson Jennings)

I was privileged to visit recently four PMI Missionary families serving in Europe. Old Orchard supports two of those families, the Rinns in Italy and the Futos in Hungary. All four of the families' passion, vision, gifts, connections, and cultural embeddedness impressed me afresh.

You can always keep up with PMI Missionaries by visiting www.pmiweb.org. Here is a brief report on the Rinns and Futos, followed by some brief thoughts on ministry in Europe.

Rinns in Italy



A "non-tourist" street in Verona being considered for outreach

Joel, Jessica, and their children Nicolas, Emeline, Anaelle, and Etienne moved two years ago to a third-floor (in American terms; second-floor in Italy) apartment in Vigasio, a town on the outskirts of the fascinating and historic city of Verona. Joel is well-prepared to give visitors an instructive tour of Verona, as he did for me. I was also able to see those parts of the city that Joel is targeting for ministry to university students and others. Jessica's translation work with Alfa e Omega, the kids' school involvements, various church connections (including those within the International Presbyterian Church, in which Joel is ordained), an open home, counseling relationships, bible studies, and other relationships give the Rinns a wide network of friends and contacts among whom to share the gospel.

Futos in Hungary



The Hungarian Parliament building in Budapest, on the banks of the

Rob, Tunde, Hajnal and Csenge have recently moved after many years living in the hustle, bustle, and stress of downtown Budapest to a more stable and family-friendly – and still strategic for ministry – setting on the southwest side of the city. Their multifaceted involvements in the community and church continue to enhance the sharing of their faith with others. Tunde's leadership in local church choir ministry is much appreciated and inspiring to many. The girls' school and neighborhood friendships are significant and meaningful.

Rob's widespread ministries extend through film club ministry (www.christianfilmclub.org), family-life seminars, translations-publications, and bible-theology teaching. His leadership and initiatives cross many lines of ministry and denominational affiliations. As was the case when I visited Budapest several years ago, I was struck with Rob's positive influences on many lives and groups throughout Hungary.

Contemporary Europe

From a U.S.-evangelical perspective, Christianity's status in Europe looks uniformly weak – and only worsening. Church attendance is low, genuine interest in the gospel seems hard to cultivate, and in many cities Islam's growth and influence is on the rise. My trip and further reading shows that the situation is more nuanced and complex than such a bleak picture. First, Europe is not religiously uniform: Poland, Ukraine, Holland, and England, for example, are quite different from each other on a number of fronts. Second, immigrants are bringing not only Islam but Christianity as well. East Asian, African, and Latin American Christian groups – many quite sizeable and growing – dot the landscape of most cities. Third, while many "traditional Europeans" are nonchalant toward organized Christianity (whether Protestant, Anglican, Orthodox, or Roman Catholic), spiritual interest, including in the Christian gospel, is very much alive. PMI Missionaries are among

those cultivating that interest, and while progress may sometimes seem slow, the Spirit of God is most definitely at work in religiously pluralistic Europe.

OOC Fall Work Day

Saturday, October 18, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sign up to come for the morning or the afternoon—or both; lunch is provided. Tons of work to be done—but it will be fun! Lunch host wanted--see Deacon Matt Philip.

English Conversations

We meet 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. on Fridays at Milligan House. See Hurvey or Dorothy Woodson for more information.

"Homeless Man on a Bike"

A former elder and member of Old Orchard Church visited Old Orchard Church during my vacation and left his card in my mailbox, asking me to "post this info for the church." Here it is:

Homeless Man on a Bike

The very unusual 18 month journey and ministry of Kevin Myers Flickr.com\photos\mypsychling myerspsychling@live.com

See print copy for phone #.

Several years ago, Kevin left St. Louis & Old Orchard to move to Michigan to care for his ill mother. Kevin's mother died about a month ago or so. Kevin plans now to bike across the United States for the next 18 months. I'll post the business card he left on a bulletin board which has Kevin's photo on it.

--Durinda Hood for Kevin Myers

Women's Bible Study

"Your hands made me and formed me; give me understanding to learn your commands." Psalm 119:73

Ladies, please join us Thursday evenings for a Bible study, "The Good Life: Law and Grace," taught by Jerram Barrs, Covenant Seminary Professor of Christian Studies and Contemporary Culture, and Resident Scholar of the Francis Schaeffer Institute. We will be exploring God's law in its many facets, including the relationship of Law to grace, to the work of Christ and to the power of the Spirit. Come grow with your sisters in Christ and learn why the psalmist says, "The law from your mouth is more precious to me than thousands of pieces of silver and gold." We meet from 6:45 -8:45 p.m. (our first meeting was on Thursday, September 11). It's not too late to join us, and visitors are welcome!

--Megan Philip for the Women's Ministry at OOC

Sons & Daughters

From a journal entry this spring...

Saturday night

April 19, 2008

Tomorrow, Quentin will be 7 months and he will be baptized.

I watched my adorably stout, cuddly bundle eagerly grab at the colorful blanket he was sitting on. For sure, he was not composing his testimony in his head to tell everyone tomorrow. He wasn't gearing up to become a more devout, resolute follower of Christ. He hasn't become "on fire for Christ" and now is convinced he must be baptized. He won't even remember his baptism. He may cry. He may babble. He may wave his arms and smile. But he won't have any inkling what's happening to him.

I forced his pudgy arms into his daddy's and grandma's too tight christening gown earlier this evening. He tolerated it well enough without any comprehension of its significance.

Quentin offers You nothing at his baptism. He brings nothing. No pledges of a regular quiet time or greater boldness in witnessing. In fact, he's being brought. By me. By Dennis. His chubby, dimpled baby hands are empty. He has never even held the name of his Savior on his lips. But, Your seal of ownership is placed on him.

I watched Quentin excitedly bat at his toys while his baby drool escaped from his little mouth. I thought how he will one day sing praises to You, his Savior. He was intently studying his toes this evening and I thought how he'll know You some day, his Creator Who made those fine feet.

I'm not sure what you call the edge of a cusp. This is where I am. I lie in the remotest green pastures of comprehending grace. Being brought rather than bringing myself, resting rather than striving, and enjoying God rather than toiling for His approval, are new concepts.

Resting in grace demands that God be good in a way that striving for God does not. Laboring zealously accommodates many views of God, and not necessarily a biblical one. But, faith does demand that God be, well, God. For me, it is frightening as well as thrilling to grow in trusting a good, kind and sovereign God.

I am the fourth of six children born to Hungarian parents in Cleveland, OH. My parents raised my two sisters, three brothers, and me in the Baptist tradition. We predominantly attended an American-speaking, General Association of Regular Baptist church in a nearby Cleveland suburb, although my father remained active in a Hungarian Baptist church where we would also attend on occasion with him. He and my mother are now active members of the Hungarian Baptist church and attend there almost exclusively.

At the age of five years old, I prayed with my mother to receive Christ as Savior. I recognized that I was a sinner in need of Christ's forgiveness through His death on the cross. Early on, I had a wonderful and positive view of God. Jesus was something of an invisible friend to me as a young child and I felt confident of His love.

However, this feeling of confidence gave way to a striving to please an implacable God which plagued me into adulthood. As I grew, I came to view God as continuously disappointed in me and perpetually expecting more than I could deliver. I grew up very involved in church, attending Sunday morning, evening and Wednesday night and would generally be described as a pretty good kid.

The teaching I received in my youth group greatly emphasized a legalistic refrain from anything considered worldly while promoting evangelism and personal quiet time with the Lord. To give a flavor of the legalism, I was taught that music with a beat was of the devil. Dancing of any kind was forbidden, even classical ballet. At camp, I was told that if I really loved God I would make a pledge of purity and never hold hands with a boy before marriage. The camp forbade co-ed swimming and wearing shorts. Thankfully, the camp was located in the cool woods of upstate Michigan!

As for evangelism, I harbored intense responsibility for my unsaved friends' salvation. I feared one might die while I passed an opportunity to share the Gospel. I recall being hit with a wave of sickening panic over this when I returned home from school and then immense relief when I saw my friends safe and sound in school the following day. My mother unwittingly played into this fear with her standard question of whether I shared the Gospel with anyone that day at my public high school. A camp speaker, with a red Bible to match his zeal, told of distributing tracts while on amusement park rides, boldly preaching to unsuspecting park guests. For an extremely shy girl, evangelism, or whatever that was, presented a high hurdle. Unable to attain this level of boldness, I believed I was taking up space on God's earth. Nevertheless, I attended a Bible school with the goal of smuggling Bibles behind the Iron Curtain. I believed the only option for one who loves God wholeheartedly is missions.

Quiet times were a duty to be performed unfailingly and a fight with a sibling, or other similar problem, was a sure indicator of a missing a quiet time. There was a superstitious quality to this, as if something bad would happen if they were skipped. Championing my mom's cause, the camp I went to promoted a slogan, "No Bible, No Breakfast".

Another feature of my upbringing was a complete dismissal of the Holy Spirit. There was no teaching on the certain work of the Holy Spirit in my sanctification. I have lost count of the number of times I rededicated my life to Christ. My idea of faith necessitated a self-generated, manic zeal. I continuously tried to reach a point of total surrender to Christ. However, I hopelessly missed the standard I believed God asked of me. This was made only the more profoundly discouraging by being told by my mother that depression was from the devil. My youth pastor called depression supremely selfish.

To fast forward, by my mid-twenties, my best efforts to be totally surrendered to Christ caught up with me. I developed a gnawing and overwhelming fear that God would allow some terrible sin within me to overtake me and I would be swept away in hopeless shame. I recall envying an elderly woman I saw at the mega church I attended and wishing I could guarantee that I would be living a Christian life in my old age.

I desperately needed to know that Christ had taken hold of me, not the other way around, and that moment by moment He equips me with every grace I need to live the Christian life. I never heard of my union with Christ or understood that I was now dead to sin because of what He accomplished for me, His ransomed child.

God has used various numerous means since then to bring me the Gospel, no strings attached. Books by Jerry Bridges have been singularly helpful, as was teaching at our former church, Wallace Presbyterian in College Park, MD. I have much to learn and I look forward enjoying God more and more in this new church home.

Open Letter to the Congregation

(Heather Sparkman recently sent this to supporters regarding her Reformed University Fellowship work at the University of Arkansas.)

September 3, 2008

Dear Friends,

It has been raining now for two days and will likely continue on into the weekend - I had invest in a pair of rain boots today to stay dry. We had a lovely and hot Labor Day - some of our students went to a Northwest Arkansas Naturals game - this link (http://www.4029tv.com/news/17362408/detail.html) is to a story that a local TV station featured on Monday's broadcast. Don't be fooled by the misspelling: Ted Weager is in fact our RUF campus minister Ted Wenger. It was great to see several of our students hang out together, across all four classes, and to have a chance to get to know them better.

As the rain continues to fall, I have pondered the coming weeks and months. I am still struggling with the many ups and downs that come both with moving and with ministry. It has been such a blessing to have Amy (my roommate) and the Wenger family to bless me with their friendship. I enjoyed a nice evening last Friday getting to know my neighbors and I had my friends Alisa and Caleb over for lunch on Sunday. These have been good moments of fellowship and rest. I am thankful for these moments to feel "normal".

I have spent a lot of time pursuing freshman girls -- mostly phone calls and Facebook. But this week has seen several one on one's. Though my meeting this morning with a freshman, Andrea, was incredibly awkward, most of my meetings and interactions with students have been lovely. I am so excited to see God at work in the lives of these students. This afternoon is was my privilege to pray with Georgia, a Junior who is part of our student leadership team, for RUF at the UofA, for our lives to reflect Christ as we reach out to the students here, and for you all as you have been so gracious to support and love me. Please pray for Georgia and I as we plan on studying prayer together this semester and to meet weekly to pray for RUF at the U of A. Pray for Andrea, Emily, Lindsay and Leeanne, four freshman girls who came to Large Group last week. Pray also as I call the freshman girls we met at Razorbash last week again tomorrow to incite them back to our Large Group meeting (we'll be outside - pray for students to come even if it is still raining). I was blessed greatly by Ted's sermon last week from Philippians 1:1-2, which was about finding our identity outside of ourselves -- that is, in Jesus Christ. I have carried this truth with me through the last week, pray for this truth to be engraved on our students hearts.

I miss you all so much, I miss St. Louis and Old Orchard and RCF at Webster, Covenant Seminary and my home and my family. But I am enjoying Fayetteville, living with Amy and J.D. (her pet rabbit), and am even beginning to settle into Covenant Church. I am learning my way around town and have not gotten lost in a while, which is a BIG feat for me! It is hard to live between two sets of emotions, but God is sustaining me and as my sweet friend Dorothy reminded me, God has already been at work long before I arrived here and invited me to join him here. He will see his work done - what a privilege to be a part of this wonderful ministry and part of God's greater work on the U of A campus. Our leadership team is reading Jerram Barrs' "The Heart of Evangelism" this semester. As Ted reminded us yesterday, God uses people to reach people. Thank you for being a part of that - it is not too much to say that God is using you to reach the students at the U of A. I'm just in the middle. I love you all and pray for you, like Paul for the Philippians, with thanksgiving to God.

In His Grace, Heather R. Sparkman Reformed University Fellowship, The University of Arkansas www.arkansas.ruf.org See print copy for phone # See print copy for e-mail.

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