



OVERTURE

The (Almost-Fortnightly) Newsletter of Old Orchard Church

✙ February 15, 2009 ✙

Welcome!

We welcome you to our worship. If you would like to find out more about Old Orchard and what we are about, please fill out one of our visitor forms in the pew racks. We also invite you to use our child care services for infants through children in kindergarten.

Nursery is offered for infants & children through kindergarten age. Our nurseries are in the church building's basement.

Infant nursery for babies, crawlers, & 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. Offered for children grades 1-5 and are usually dismissed at 10:50 a.m.

Old Orchard Church

Church Office/Milligan House: 314.962.3795

Fax: 314.962.8285

640 Amelia/Church Building: 314.961.6932

Ron Lutjens' (home) Study: 314.962.6196

Mark Tucker's Office: 314.680.3670

Ron's E-mail: see print copy.

Mark's E-mail: see print copy.

Church Office E-mail: office@oldorchardchurch.org

Web Site: www.oldorchardchurch.org

● OVERTURE

The next *Overture* will be out Sunday, March 1. Deadline is Sunday, February 22. You are invited to write for it! We welcome submissions of articles, art, short essays, poetry, etc. All submissions should be signed by the person submitting them. You can submit articles to office@oldorchardchurch.org or you can place your signed articles in the *Overture* box (in the coat room). We have a rotating crew of *Overture* editors; editor for the next issue is Melissa Nelson.

● CALENDAR NOTES

- **Adult Choir. Adult Choir.** Rehearsals Mondays at 7:15 pm. See Greg Roig for questions.
- **Men's Bible Study.** Next one is Saturday, February 21, 2009, 7:15 a.m. at Milligan House. See Hal Pendergrass. (meets on the first and third Saturdays of the month).
- **Women's Bible Study.** Thursdays, 6:45-8:45 pm. See Melissa Nelson or Megan Philip if you have questions.
- **Sunday School News:** 9:00 a.m. Sunday Mornings (for both children & adults)

Classes For Adults:

"HELP! I'm a Parent" led by Pastor Mark. Last class is today, February 15.

Book of James: study will begin on February 22, led by Jason Bartlett and Hurvey Woodson. No childcare for infants and toddlers unless someone would like to organize it. See Mark Tucker.

New Members led by Pastor Ron.

Childcare for the parenting class for children that are below Sunday School age is available in the Toddler nursery in the church basement.

● CHURCH BUSINESS

✓ **Dates in February**

Sunday, February 15. *Deadline!* Sign up for Women's Retreat and "OOC Idol."

Tues., February 17: Stated Session Meeting, 6:30 p.m. at Milligan House

Sun., February 22: Old Orchard Idol, 6:00 p.m. *Deadline* for signing up for the Mission Trip to Dominican Republic. *Deadline* for bringing back your filled Sunshine Sack. And *deadline* for the next *Overture* (published on March 1).

Tues., February 24: Leaders' Meeting, 7:00 p.m. at Milligan House. Please let Ron or Durinda know if you can't make it!

Fri. & Sat., February 27 & 28: Women's Retreat.

Sat., April 4: 9am to 5pm OOC Work Day. Lunch provided; let Matt Philip know if you can help with lunch (our chef, Jim Lowe, isn't available this time!).

✓ **Nominations for Church Officers Wanted**

The Session is seeking nominations for the offices of elder, deacon or deaconess. Members, please see *the posted sheet* on how to nominate someone. The Session is accepting nominations during through the end of February. See any elder for questions.

✓ **OOC Directory Update**

We are updating the OOC Directory. Members of the Directory Team are contacting you to update your listing. For those who are new to the fellowship and want to be listed, please fill out a form and turn it in to Durinda Hood or place it in her mailbox **today February 15**.

✓ **Sunshine Sacks for Sunshine Ministries**

You are invited to contribute items needed by Sunshine Ministries, working in north City of St. Louis. You will hear more from them next Sunday. Gather any of the suggested items listed on the sacks (you don't have to collect them all!) and bring it back by **Sunday, February 22**. Questions? See Durinda Hood. (And you won't hear from us again for collecting items until time for the Easter Baskets!) --*The Mercy Ministry*

✓ **"OOC Idol" --Otherwise known as OOC's Talent Show --**

Sunday, February 22 @ 6 p.m.

Audience, plan to attend! Refreshments!

If you would like to be a "contestant," contact Mark Tucker today! **All acts** (song, dance, drama, etc) **are welcome** but spots are limited.

Refreshments! Please sign up to bring treats on sheets circulating.

✓ **Women's Retreat! Register -- Deadline Today!**

WOMEN - Are you looking forward to our Women's Retreat on February 27 & 28?!

Keep in mind these things: no cooking, no dishes, no laundry, no interruptions, no one yelling, "MOM!", no bills, no TV, no email, AND no bed that has to be made. Instead you will have: time with friends, time with your Lord, meals prepared for you, fun & laughter, heart-to-hearts, and encouraging teaching as we learn from others.

The theme for the 2009 Old Orchard Women's Retreat is "**Faith In Real Life**". It will be held at Todd Hall Retreat & Conference Center in Columbia, IL. The cost is \$60. (If you desire a private room, your cost will be \$83). Check-in begins on Friday at 6:30 p.m. & we can stay until 4 p.m. on Saturday. **The deadline for registration is Sunday, February 15th**. Registration forms are available. A toy mailbox labeled "Women's Retreat" is in the coatroom. Please place your forms and money in there. If you are interested in car-pooling, note that on your registration form.

Questions? Please see or call Dot Branson (see print copy) or Ann Stuber (see print copy).

✓ **Narnia in the Dominican Republic**

Old Orchard Church is sending a team to the Dominican Republic June 20-27 to put on our Narnia Summer Children's Program with Orphanage Outreach. This is the ministry that Emily Roig is currently serving with. We are praying that the Lord would draw in the right folks for this team. Please consider joining the team for this week-long mission trip. Deadline for committing yourself to the team is February 22. Pick up a brochure in the parlor and contact Mark Tucker to sign up or if you have questions.

● **ADVERTISEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

✓ **Hosts Wanted for Good Friday Meals**

As is our custom, we will gather in homes on Good Friday (April 10 this year) at 5:45 p.m. for a simple meal of soup and bread with water as the beverage. There will also be a children's meal offered at Milligan House while the adults, teens and older children share in these meals.

There are two types of meals, *sharing meals* and *reciting meals*. In a sharing meal there is open sharing with each other how Christ's finished work on the cross is having its effect on us, right where we live. In a reciting meal we read to each other the dramatic story (highlighted from Genesis to Revelation) of our rebellion and God's redemption. We need hosts who provide the soup and place for these meals, especially those living within Webster or 10-15 minutes of Old Orchard where we will be having our joint Good Friday worship with Cornerstone Evangelical Church. Call or e-mail (office@oldorchardchurch.org) the church office or sign up on the list circulating today by **Sunday, March 15** if you can host one of these meals.

✓ **Women Looking for a Daytime Bible Study?**

It's a privilege to have Jerram Barrs teaching the Thursday night Women's Bible Study here. But some of our women would rather be involved in a daytime Bible study. There's one I can highly recommend. Here are the details.

It meets on Thursday mornings, and is led by Betty McCracken, a good friend of mine, a former FirstLight board member, and longtime Bible teacher to women in the St. Louis metro area. While Betty is a PCA person, women from different churches come to this Bible study. Here is what she sent me:

We would love to have any interested women join us at any time. We meet Thursday mornings at 9:30 a.m. at the Geyer Rd. Baptist Church in Kirkwood on the corner of Geyer and Woodbine. It is from 9:30-11:30 and we are studying James. There is no child care at this time. For further information, call Betty McCracken (see print copy).

--Ron Lutjens

✓ International Theological Education

On Saturday morning, February 21, 10:00 AM @ Twin Oaks Presbyterian Church, Missouri Presbytery is sponsoring a forum on International Theological Education. Several representatives of organizations involved in international theological education (including ITEM, PMI, and MTW) will be present. The primary purpose of the forum is to help local churches (like Old Orchard) be better informed about their involvements in international theological education, financial and otherwise. No admission fee, all are welcome.

✓ Zumba Class Offered

Carine Barrs is offering a Zumba class in the parlor of Old Orchard Church on Saturday mornings beginning at 9:15 a.m. The class is an aerobic Latin dance. Price: \$5/class or a punch card for 10 classes for \$50 per person. Anyone over the age of 6 years old can participate. Contact Carine Barrs if you have questions or want to attend.

✓ Spring Cleaning?!?!?

Valerie Barclay (with additional help from OOC'ers Mark Tucker, Ron Nelson, Anne Woodard, and Katie Mohler) is gathering old clothing, cloth material, and shoes for a South City Community School fundraiser. SCCS will be hosting a Remains, Inc. trailer during the week of March 2nd through 6th. Remains, Inc. is a local (South City) textile recycling company that will pay the school by the pound for all clothing, cloth materials, and shoes donated. Remains either reuses the items (it is either resold or sent to developing countries) or recycles them (such as reducing cloth to fiber for the upholstery or paper industry). Please let me (or Mark, Ron, Anne or Katie) know if you are looking to get rid of anything and we would be happy to take it off of your hands!

For more information about SCCS, please see any of the folks above or visit our website at www.sccommunityschool.org.

--Submitted by Valerie Barclay / See print copy for e-mail. / 314-832-4417

● STORIES AND SUNDRIES

Anne Reitsema Leaving Darfur

Last fall, in November, we received a letter from Anne telling about her decision to "take a break" from her work with Medair, the relief organization she has been working with since 2004. She has worked in several African countries and had been in Darfur for a year. She has directed the teams she has been with and recently was asked by all of the non-government relief agencies in Darfur to be their representative to the government. To fully appreciate this letter, it is necessary to realize what an amazing, courageous job she has been doing since 2004.

Anne attended OOC for four years while she was studying at Covenant Seminary. Her family is in Holland. Let's continue to pray for her.

The letter from Anne:

Anne's June-November 2008 Prayer/Newsletter

Dear Friends and Family

First of all I want to say how much I have appreciated all your prayers this year. Although I have not been so faithful in writing prayer/newsletters, I have heard from many of you that you have been praying, and I am grateful. It has been a year of feeling particularly close to the Lord. Writing has been difficult in an environment where we are constantly monitored and have to be very careful to protect the welcome we have. At the moment I am in the Netherlands for two weeks, enjoying my family and catching up on rest.

As many of you know, I plan to take a break from Medair at the end of this year. It has been good, but very intense and also hard on my digestive system. Someone recently asked me what I would miss the most about Darfur when I left, and I knew without a doubt what it would be. I will miss the depth and beauty of daily sharing my faith with a team that experiences life and death, suffering, pain and grief so intimately. Being truly honest and real before each other as we live to glorify our God, is such a privilege.

What I have found the hardest about this work is the fact that we see so much human effort and finances being invested in Darfur and yet we see so little impact, as things continue to deteriorate and evil seems to have the upper hand. The UN reports that in Darfur by the 20th of October, 234 humanitarian vehicles had been hijacked this year alone, 183 humanitarians were abducted, 153 humanitarian premises assaulted and/or destroyed, and 11 humanitarian workers had been killed.

When you pray for the protection of those you love and have weekly Christian fellowship with, and then they are not protected but get attacked, beaten and severely traumatized, it raises big questions. How do you make sense of that? God promises in Psalm 121:7 that he will protect us from all harm and yet we know that we are not immune to harm. So what is his definition of harm? I think Romans 8:35-39 gives the secret. Nothing can separate us from his love! Neither life nor death, nothing! So that is the great promise of scripture, not that we will prosper or never suffer, but that we will always be linked to God's love. This has prompted many of our team discussions this year. What does it mean then to be experiencing God's love? How do we maximize this great promise? Does he want us still to pray for protection? Absolutely, he cares for the details of our lives, and the most important detail of our life is being connected to him. When you live in a war zone, the daily gun shots and the frequent, distant sound of bombs, help your thoughts focus on our great Father who loves us immeasurably more than we could imagine. Even more, when things are intense, work is piling high, insecurity is constant, and then team tensions top it off, it's great to know our God is a God of relationships. He is eager to give us wisdom, guide conversations and heal our hurts. Praise the Lord for that!

One of our core values as an organization is hope. To be honest, some days I struggle to see hope in what is going on around us. What hope is there for these Muslim communities that are suffering so much. When we as an expatriate Christian team recently had a day of prayer together, praying for our programme and what God's purpose is for us in this difficult context, we concluded after much prayer, listening and reading His Word, that there can be hope in our one on one relationships with our staff on a daily basis. It's hard though, to imagine how our life style or that which we do could be a witness for Jesus Christ as many of our devout Muslim Sudanese staff put us to shame by their discipline, compassion, servant heartedness and so much

more. We pray everyday that the people of Darfur would know the true hope we know and we ask for a miracle, because it seems impossible. But hey, that's the definition of a miracle - God makes the impossible, possible!

The bottom line is that it is a privilege to come alongside people in their suffering and to reach out to them with Christ's love. Maybe by now though you're wondering what on earth it is we are practically doing in Darfur. We want to be Christ's hands and feet in the provision of healthcare and clean drinking water. Here are some pictures of what that looks like in action:



*Borehole repair
Clinic waiting room*



vehicles the rebel groups may want to carjack.



*Contrasts of technology – avoiding using
Discussing the damage to our water
supplies after a community was
attacked.*

Do you remember when I asked for prayer for joy at the beginning of the year? I think I phrased it as "divine silliness". Here are some pictures of us as a team being blessed with just that:



Developing relationships with our staff, spending time with them, going to weddings, celebrations and visiting them in their homes:



Amidst the suffering and evil it is so important to enjoy the beauty of God's creation. A few weeks ago, 13 of us Medair staff working in Sudan drove two hours North of Khartoum and

camped out in the desert. We spent six hours lying in a circle on grass mats watching falling stars. I believe I saw 26. Those hours of us lying in the vast desert staring at the beauty of a dark sky so full of stars was such an amazing confirmation of God's Glory and Majesty, I wished everyone I loved could have been there with me.

To Him be the Glory

Anne



The Poison Tree

William Blake

I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe;
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I water'd it in fears,
Night & morning with my tears;
And I sunned it with my smiles
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright;
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine,

And into my garden stole
When the night had veil'd the pole:
In the morning glad I see
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree

- submitted by Tamara and Prisca Rice