

Voice of the Spire

The Newsletter of Arch Street United Methodist Church
A Reconciling Congregation



Summer 2016

Arch Street United Methodist Church

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Voice of the Spire

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The Poverty Summit: “Black Work Matters”

Betsy Connor

On May 19th, I attended the day-long, standing-room-only poverty summit at Community College titled “Black Work Matters: Race, Poverty and the Future of Work in Philadelphia.”

Much of the morning session included a history lesson and graphs—often in map form—of poverty, race, unemployment, incarceration, and related issues. Sounds like it could have been dry and maybe even boring? It was a surprisingly emotional experience that, if I had to sum up in the shorthand of the emoji, would look like this:



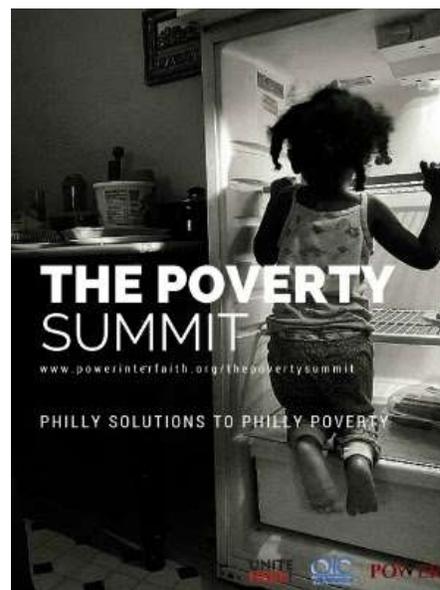
Despair and sadness trending to serious attention and ending with a sense of empowerment and a glimmer of hope

The hope is that with the same kind of focus that went into the Poverty Summit Report, our city—America’s first “World Heritage City,” a city universally regarded as a first-class historical and cultural destination—can rise out of poverty.

POWER (Philadelphians Organized to Witness, Empower and Rebuild) and OIC of America, Inc., two Philadelphia-based organizations that are heavily involved in the fight for economic dignity and racial justice, held town-hall style meetings and undertook a serious study of the seemingly intractable problem of poverty here. The event on May 19th was the presentation of the report that resulted.

The “Presentation of the Report” portion of the agenda began with a carefully researched summary of the current state of our city. Next was the history of how, because of loss of manufacturing jobs that paid decent wages, we got to be the poorest big city in the United States.

The impact of this decline was shown in PowerPoint slides and made real by speakers living and working “closest to the pain” who told us of their struggles as undervalued employees.



And finally, a reality-based solution was presented. In very brief form it is this:

- *Although we have lost hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs that once made Philadelphia the “Workshop of the World,” almost the same number of service-sector jobs, in the hospitality industry, have recently been created.*
- *While currently these jobs are paying low wages while the profits of the hotel industry are breaking records, supporting service workers’ efforts to unionize their workplaces, ending racial disparities in the service-sector workforce, and providing job training in Philly’s poorest communities can be the “engine to eliminate poverty and rebuild the middle class.”*

To a cynical person who has lived through decades of promises from politicians to end poverty, this second bullet point reads as if Pollyanna herself typed it out. But as presented in the Poverty Summit Report, it seems not only possible, but essential.

(Continued on page 3)

News & People

The Philadelphia Pride Parade, Sunday, June 12, 2016

Arch Street is a member of the Reconciling United Methodists of Eastern Pennsylvania. The movement is growing fast, with three new congregations added over the past year and 14 more that attended an information session at the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference in June.



(Photos courtesy of Rev. Dave Krueger)

Thanks to Some Special Volunteers

Pat Taylor

Editor's Note: "Our welcome knows no boundaries..." That phrase from Arch Street's mission statement plays out in many ways across our life as a church, perhaps nowhere as clearly as when we enjoy refreshments or a meal together. Arch Street is blessed in the leaders and volunteers who take this mission so strongly to heart. Get Acquainted Time (GAT) celebrates special events throughout the year. Here, Pat Taylor thanks the volunteers who faithfully step up whenever needed.

These events require planning and commitment, they don't just happen. Let

us add our own thanks to these wonderful folks who contribute their time and talent to keeping Arch Street a welcoming presence in our city.

My focus here is on the angels at Arch Street who helped us and continue to help us do Get Acquainted Time, Grace Café, and any special event. They help prepare food, set up, provide friendship, and contribute whatever is asked. In February, for Black History Month, we celebrated African Heritage Month where you could come and hear great guest speakers, followed by coffee and pastries after the 8:30 service and lunch after the

11:00 service. On May 29, Memorial Day Sunday, the agents of love arranged to feed 296 homeless friends at Grace Café.

At these Get Acquainted Time hours, our church feeds anyone that comes hungry and wants friendship.

We can't do this without help from nice, caring people. So come whenever you can and please keep us in your prayers. God bless.

Ms. Pat

Senior volunteer, ASUMC, MANNA, Project Home, and care person

The Poverty Summit *(continued from page 1)*

I get hope from this sentence near the end of the report:

"We have all the elements necessary for success; we just need to put them in motion."

The report is easily readable in an hour or less. Arch Street UMC has a number of copies available in the church office. It can also be accessed online at the POWER website:

<http://powerinterfaith.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Black-Work-Matters-Report.pdf>

Please make this report your summer reading/homework. And, of course, stay tuned for opportunities through POWER to move our great city from a pocket of poverty back to the peace and justice of economic security for all Philadelphians.



(Photo courtesy of POWER)

Update from the Trustees

Jack McGrath

2016 has been a busy year for the Trustees. This spring, the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference conveyed the deed for Serenity House to Arch Street. Now that we fully own the property, we can move ahead with plans for Serenity Soular. A new roof has been installed in preparation for the solar panels, and Pastor Robin and I met with the principals involved with the project: "O", Laura Rigell, and others from Swarthmore College and the neighborhood. The young interns who will help install the solar panels were present and we were impressed with their zeal and energy. They were anxious to begin the project and thankful for the skills they would develop. On Saturday, June 25th, a cookout took place at

Serenity House with lights and music powered by the solar panel mounted on the garage roof. The event celebrated Serenity Soular and the new People's Garden that Rachel Ternes is leading for the neighborhood.

The flooring project in Nichols Hall is moving along. The labyrinth design has been approved and the flooring is ready for installation—the project will probably be finished by the time you read this.

There are four more primary projects we are addressing: audiovisual improvements, including a large-screen TV for the sanctuary; security system upgrade and improvements; repairs to the organ; and final inspection (part of the roof repair).

The sanctuary roof repairs were completed with considerable savings from initial estimates, but the roof still needs to be completely replaced in the near future. The Trustees focused on recommendations to examine and repair areas of concern with the three roof finials. After lengthy examination of alternatives, we agreed to do a hands-on inspection of the finials in coordination with a city mandated facade inspection, which was overdue. The cost of the combined inspections will be about \$20,000. Any finial repairs found to be necessary will be deferred until after the closer inspection.

Our work continues. Stay tuned!

Native American Activities This Summer

A small group from the Native American/Indian Awareness group will be traveling to North Carolina at the end of July for a three-day seminar on Cherokee Nation, sponsored by Road Scholar/Elder Hostel. We will visit the Cherokee reservation and learn about their language, culture, and heritage in the beautiful natural setting of the Great Smoky Mountains. We will also be holding our regular monthly meetings at 2:00 PM on the third Sunday of July, August, and September. In addition, we plan to visit local powwows as dates become available. Contact Dale Shillito for more information (267-273-4690, daleshillito@yahoo.com).

Columns

Minister's Message



Rev. Robin Hynicka,
Senior Pastor

On Saturday, July 23, from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM, Arch Street United Methodist Church will hold space for the first in what may become a series of a gatherings we are calling the DNC Freedom School. Those preparing to protest, along with protest supporters and trainers, will come together in the spirit and truth of the 1964 Mississippi Freedom Schools.

The Summer of Freedom produced grass-roots community education collectives that taught, among other things, the “art and spirit of resistance and the strategies of peaceful, non-violent protest.” Freedom Schools articulated that quality education for black and brown

children was not just having the right to sit next to a white student, but was a matter of confronting and restructuring the entire racist system of education. In addition, Freedom Schools were clearly tied to the woefully inadequate form in which institutional democracy existed. Voter registration, civic engagement, and political and social activism were key components of the Summer of Freedom.

Revisiting the courage, commitment, conviction, and cause of the Summer of Freedom and the Freedom Schools has the potential to shape the current context in incredible ways. The DNC Freedom School will include “Know Your Rights” training, other peaceful, nonviolent protest training, support services, and more.

Civil Rights era veteran and still relevant voice for justice the Reverend Gil Caldwell, who participated in the Summer of Freedom’s Freedom Schools, the March on Washington, the march from Selma to Montgomery, and the Poor People’s Campaign, will screen a key portion of his documentary film entitled “From Selma to Stonewall—Are We There Yet?” Rev. Caldwell and his son Dale, who

is active in creating an economic justice movement for the 21st century that builds on the aims of both the March on Washington and the Poor People’s Campaign, will convene a conversation on justice–movement intersectionality in the context of their experience in the Civil Rights movement.

Mark Miller and Lydia Munoz, nationally known sacred and social justice musicians, will share music from Mark’s most recent book, *Roll Down Justice: Sacred Songs and Social Justice*.

Seeking justice through peaceful, purposeful protest and right-hearted resistance is sacred work and those persons so engaged are persons of sacred worth. Our vision for the DNC Freedom School is that the various movements—racial justice, economic justice, environmental justice, immigrant justice, gender justice, LGBTQI justice, *etc.*—will intersect in an intimate way and provide a special spiritual synergy and the opportunity to inspire each soul to participate in creating a moment in time that once again illustrates the beloved community.

Lupus Education Conference and Luncheon

On Saturday, September 17 from 10:00 AM–2:00 PM, Arch Street will host a Lupus Education Conference and luncheon, honoring the memory of Weslia Hynicka and Robin Whaley. State Representative James Roebuck will serve as Honorary Chairperson and the invited guests include Governor Tom Wolf, Bishop Peggy Johnson, and Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell. The program will include presentations from guest speakers Drs. Sally Pullman Mooar and David Verbofsky of Lankenau Hospital and Ms. Cheri M. Perron of the Lupus Foundation. For reservations and tickets, contact Virginia Brown at 215-240-1148 (conference and luncheon, \$20; conference only, \$10).

Philly Pride and the UMC Witness for LGBTQI Justice

Rev. Dave Krueger

Again this year, it was a privilege to march with the Reconciling United Methodists in the Philadelphia Pride parade. We have been a presence of love and prophetic witness at this event for many years. I'm always struck by how loudly the crowd cheers when they see our wooden cross with a rainbow stole and our signs that proclaim God's unconditional love, and when they hear us sing "Jesus Loves Me" in front of the judging stand. I think our presence this year was more meaningful in light of the horrific shooting at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, just a few hours before.

As we gathered for worship on Sunday morning at Arch Street, reports were just coming in about the overnight shooting which took the lives of 49 persons. The massacre was quickly identified as an act

of terrorism. Gay nightclubs are experienced by many LGBTQI persons as places of safety and refuge. Sadly, that sense of safety has now been destroyed for many.

Persons who experience marginalization from families and faith communities as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identity will certainly feel more at risk in the aftermath of Orlando. This is why it is more important than ever for Christians of conscience to challenge church policies that discriminate and relegate some members to a second-class status. LGBTQI persons for too long have felt unsafe in our churches. Please visit the website of the Reconciling United Methodists of Eastern Pennsylvania at www.reconcilingepa.org and consider joining our work.



(Photo courtesy of Rev. Dave Krueger)

Our History: Arch Street's Chapel of Prayer, Part 1

Dale Shillito, Arch Street Historian

On Sunday, November 9, 1952, our pastor Dr. John McElroy spoke on the occasion of Arch Street's 90th anniversary. He began by stating, "We ought to have a chapel." He visualized a place that lifts hearts to God in prayer, where recorded soft music or passages of scripture are read to reassure those in their troubled hour. This was to be a chapel of love where small weddings could be held, where babies and adults could be baptized. This was to be a chapel of redemption, where the Lord's Supper is served at night for those who could not be present on Sunday morning. He saw prayer meetings being held there on Wednesday nights where strangers coming off the street would feel welcome. Most of all, Dr. McElroy thought it was important to have a place for

people to come in and pray when they felt the need during the work week.

Dr. McElroy admitted he had no drawings or plans for his proposal. It was only a dream and a conviction "that in all of the cities of America there is no other downtown church better placed" for a chapel of prayer than here 'Where Cross the Crowded Ways' of life.

Plans were now drawn up for a new chapel on the first floor. An altar railing was to be placed where those seeking God could kneel and face the cross and an open Bible. A painting of Christ praying was to be hung at the side of the altar. A moveable pulpit and a lectern were to be placed behind the altar railing. A small electric organ and grand piano would provide music. Three stained glass win-

dows would provide light and inspiration to the chapel setting. These windows would depict, on the left, St. John; center, Jesus the Christ; and on the right, St. Paul.

The narthex entrance had four translucent leaded glass windows enclosing the chapel and creating a quiet place inside. Lantern lamps were proposed for the ceiling in the narthex. Two pews were placed for those waiting to enter the Chapel. The pastor and the church secretary, who originally had their offices in the present nursery and receptionist rooms, were to be relocated upstairs. Coming in from Broad Street, a new doorway entrance was built inside the original stone archway.

The plans were presented to the congregation for approval.

Events

Regular Sunday Activities

8:00 AM - Nursery, 1st floor (open till 12:30 PM)
 8:30 AM - Worship, Chapel
 9:45 AM - Adult Sunday School, Chapel
 9:45 AM - Youth Bible Study, 2nd floor Office
 9:45 AM - Children's Sunday School, Nichols Hall
 11:00 AM - Worship, Sanctuary
 12:30 PM - Get Acquainted Time
 2:00 PM - Unity Fellowship Church Service, Chapel
Grace Café will resume in September.

Weekly Activities

Monday 1:00 PM - Tea and Talk, Chapel
 5:30 PM - AA Meeting, Nichols Hall
 7:00 PM - Freedom Band Rehearsal, Chapel
 Tuesday 12:00 PM - Bible Study with Rev. Waller, Sanctuary
 Wednesday 6:00 PM - AA Meeting, Nichols Hall
 Thursday 5:00 PM - Diversity Group, Chapel
 5:30 PM - AA Meeting, Nichols Hall
Please check the "Events" tab on our website (www.archstreetumc.org) for the latest calendar activities.

Committee Meetings, Special Events and Activities

United Methodist Men meet the first Saturday of the month at 10:00 AM; United Methodist Women meet the second Sunday of the month immediately after the 11:00 AM service; the Native American Indian Awareness Group meets the third Sunday of the month at 2:00 PM. Refer to the weekly "What's Happening" bulletin for exceptions to these dates.

July 2016

July 4: Independence Day (*office closed*) – AA will meet
 July 22–23: UMW's Mission U, Reading, PA

August 2016

Aug 7–13: Youth Mission Trip

September 2016

Sept 5: Labor Day (*office closed*) – AA will meet

Submit calendar events to Nancy Megley (nmegley@msn.com).
 Listings for Autumn 2016 issue due September 1.

Birthdays

July

1 - Aaron Bonfante
 4 - Marge Donnelly
 5 - James Lane
 6 - Juan Dakota
 7 - Dr. Patrick Kim
 9 - Myrna Brown, Jacob McNeill, Dottie Wells
 10 - Bryan Sieber
 14 - Norris Broadway
 15 - Darlene DiDomineck
 18 - Baki Tucker
 20 - Roberto Bonfante
 21 - James Abel
 23 - Rev. James Pittman
 26 - Heidi Bowen, Varsay Lewis, David Dunah Kpakolo
 29 - Margaret Harris
 30 - Parasram Gobin
 31 - Patrick Ledlum

August

1 - Randall Cronin, Ototta Kolo, Daniel Lee, Irene Meyer
 3 - Linda Berry
 4 - April Evans
 5 - Kirby Brislin, Thomas Cooper, Denise Whaley
 6 - Jay Newlin
 7 - Rev. Herb Snyder
 8 - Kim McKonly Cooper
 9 - Rebecca Patterson
 14 - Dale Shillito
 15 - Tremir Ford
 16 - Eugene Minus
 19 - Helen Purtel
 22 - Molly Dang
 23 - Souda Dunlap, Darlene Evans, Oladumi Farmer, Cathy Johnson, Steven Whaley
 24 - Trent Ford
 26 - Beth Leonberg
 27 - Sarah Burger, Henry Geiger
 30 - Loide Ann Santos
 31 - Vivian Liu, Max Manuel

September

3 - Pavi Jaisankar
 4 - Rev. Robin Hynicka
 7 - Rev. Susan Cole, Raymond Wilson
 8 - Thomas Brislin, Laura Jones
 9 - Jim Bibber
 10 - Anna Jackson, Bryan Shay
 11 - Evelyn Tinsley
 15 - Barbara Bailey, Warren Cederholm, Nelson Servano
 16 - Ginger Doubt
 21 - Nikki Kelley Kleinberg
 22 - Rob Schell
 24 - Ida Morris
 25 - Harold Glass
 26 - Guy McNeill, Mandi Rollerson
 27 - Beverly Faunce, Joel William Robeson
 28 - MuiMui Kolo, Dustin Long
 29 - Barbara Kelly
 30 - Leon Rollerson

The Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference

Rachel Ternes

From June 16–18, I attended the Annual Conference of the UMC'S Eastern Pennsylvania Conference as a voting delegate. Every year around this time, each conference convenes with lay and clergy delegates from churches across the conference to share reports, learn stuff, worship together, and debate and vote on legislation. A highlight of Annual Conference is the ordination ceremony for new elders and deacons. This year, it was held at the historical First United Methodist Church of Lancaster and we celebrated one of our own, Nikki Kelley Kleinberg, who was ordained a deacon.

Many resolutions presented at our annual conference concerned social justice issues important to Arch Street. Below is a summary of the results (punctuated by my opinions on several resolutions), based on my sparse notes, my memory, and the memories of other folks I asked. A full report is available on my blog (<http://wp.me/p6urtZ-cR>).

EPA is a conservative conference with an ugly history of discriminating against LGBTQI people and punishing those who support equality. The debate on the LGBTQI-related resolutions reflected that, with opponents doing all they could to shove conversation and the possibility of change aside through bundling/referring/ tabling/committing the resolutions, and whenever that failed, bringing up the homophobic arguments. Members of Arch Street's delegation spoke movingly and persuasively on many of these issues. I will start with the LGBTQI resolutions, then move on to some happier outcomes.

Two resolutions supported the right of LGBTQI persons to marry a life partner in civil and religious ceremonies and to be considered for ordination regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. These were tabled pending the results of the Bishops Commission established at the 2016 UMC General Conference.

Another resolution denounced legislation that allows discrimination against



(Photo courtesy of Rachel Ternes)

LGBTQI people under the guise of “religious freedom.” A special EPA committee was commissioned to study this and report back in the fall of 2017.

A resolution on Radical Welcome encouraged all churches to hold a Coming Out Day event on Sunday, October 9, 2016, and to have a welcoming presence at Philadelphia OutFest 2016. This was presented as a measure that all Methodists who profess to love and welcome LGBTQ people could participate in, regardless of their stance on marriage and ordination. It passed after some work on the wording and after opponents were assured that it was an encouragement, not a mandate. I am excited that this passed, but in some ways it feels like a hollow victory. Instead of representing a movement of our conference toward justice and welcome, it seems like a way for “love the sinner” types to pat themselves on the back. I also fear that encouraging churches to be halfway welcoming but not fully just and inclusive (“You can sit in our pews, listen to our sermons, volunteer, cook, clean, tithe, even sing in the choir—but you are not welcome to preach, teach, marry, advocate, or fully celebrate your God-given sexuality”) may be dangerous. I fear that

it may be safer for queer people to be in no church at all than to be in one that advertises tolerance to get people in the door, but still lives a harmful theology.

Several resolutions concerned legislation that is pending in Harrisburg. One supported HB1510/SB974, freedom from discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodation based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression. This passed! It was stalled for awhile by a discussion of whether “public accommodation” includes bathrooms, spurred by delegates who seemed to oppose the right of trans folks to use the bathroom that fits their gender identity.

Resolutions supporting HB 1450, which would allow undocumented Pennsylvanians access to driver's licenses, and to be listed as an endorser of the Dream Care Campaign to Cover ALL Kids, which calls for every child in our state to qualify for public health insurance, passed with strong support.

Finally, the “Advance Specials,” an umbrella proposal covering EPA grants to missions and ministries, passed unanimously and includes \$12,000 in support for Arch Street's ministry and work at Serenity House.



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July – Sept 2016

Voice of the Spire, the newsletter of Arch Street United Methodist Church, is published 4 times per year and distributed free to members and friends of the congregation. To be added to our mailing list, please notify: Secretary, Arch Street United Methodist Church, 55 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107.

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Voice of the Spire

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55 North Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107

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Future Dates

World Communion
Sunday
October 2

All Saints Sunday
November 6

UM Student Day
November 27

World AIDS Day
December 1

See page 6 for full
calendar of events.

Read past issues of
Voice of the Spire
and follow events at
our website:

www.archstreetumc.org

Arch Street United Methodist Church



On June 5, we celebrated our 2016 graduates:
Janis Moore Campbell earned her PhD from
Temple University and Aaron Bonfante graduated
from Central High School. Congratulations!
(Photos courtesy of Rhonda Moore)

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