

Together we celebrate the work of God's Spirit among us through Christian fellowship and service throughout our community, practicing a welcoming spirit, honoring each person, and challenging one another to seek God's purpose in the world – with the promise of joy, renewal, and spiritual growth.

(Mission Statement, adopted 1996)

HYDE PARK UNION CHURCH

Chartered in 1874 in the Free Church Tradition
American Baptist/United Church of Christ
5600 South Woodlawn Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60637
phone 773.363.6063 • fax 773.324.3874
www.hpuc.org • office@hpuc.org



February 2014

February Church Calendar

Sunday, February 2

Worship with Communion, 10:00 a.m.,
Amanda Guthrie preaching

Annual Financial Meeting, 11:30 a.m.

Thursday, February 6

Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, February 7

Taize Worship Service at Calvert House, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, February 9

Worship with Remembrance of Chicago's
Fallen Children and Youth, 10:00 a.m., Rev.
Susan Johnson preaching

Chili-making, 11:30 a.m.

Congregational Discussion on the State of
Preaching at HPUC, 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, February 12

Young Adult Bible Study, 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 13

Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, February 16

Worship, Rev. Susan Johnson preaching

Thursday, February 20

Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, February 23

Worship, 10:00 a.m., Rev. Susan Johnson

Coffee Hour and Fellowship, 11:30 a.m.

Wednesday, February 26

Young Adult Bible Study, 6:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 27

Senior Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.

From the Senior Minister

Rev. Susan Johnson

February 9: A Conversation about Preaching

On Sunday, February 9th, the Personnel & Pastoral Relations Committee will host a congregational discussion on the state of preaching in our church during the Second Hour. I look forward to this conversation; indeed, I asked for it, in part because my quasi-sabbatical (which continues into 2015) necessitates the use of monthly guest preachers, but also because it should be an engaging conversation about our use of guests in our various Summer Series as well.

Hyde Park Union Church is a demanding pulpit in the best sense. Our pews are filled with committed, engaged, active listeners. Over the years, some of our own members who are ordained, and people on the faculties of various seminaries in the area, have found preaching here daunting – not at all because we are critical or unwelcoming, but because we have the reputation of taking preaching seriously. Our own pastoral staff takes the responsibility of preaching very seriously; accountability to such an attentive congregation reinforces this.

Nevertheless, over the years we have also developed a strong tradition of guest preaching. Such excellent preachers as Rabbi Arnold Wolf (of blessed memory), Professors Richard Rosengarten and Franklin Gamwell (both former deans of the Divinity School), Dean Margaret Mitchell, Rob Warden (Executive Director of the Center on Wrongful Convictions) are examples of guests who have brought messages both powerful and inspiring.

For many years, guest preachers covered only the Sundays when the pastor was unavailable (e.g., during vacations or continuing education). In 1998, when we were able to hire a second minister on the staff, guest preaching opportunities all but disappeared. Then, in 2001, our Lilly Residency began. Our residents needed time in the pulpit, and our responsibilities as a teaching congregation became a priority. The development of the Summer Worship Series allowed us to engage outside voices from time to time. Funding for the Summer Worship Series comes from the "alternative worship" line in our Lilly budget.

In October 2012 I began my quasi-sabbatical. With reduced salary, and reduced preaching and administrative responsibilities, I am spending an additional 30% of my time – beyond my usual community involvement – working with Chicago's Citizens for Change on an anti-violence agenda this congregation has courageously supported. But this has meant that we have at least one guest preacher a month. We have also continued to have guests as part of our Summer Series.

Children's choir looking for volunteer accompanist/s (piano or guitar)

If interested, please contact Jade at
jade@hpuc.org or speak to Jade Maze or
Francy Acosta before or after worship.

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On February 9th the lay and pastoral leadership hope to engender a lively and constructive conversation about the balance between guest preachers and staff preachers, the congregation's standards for guest preachers, and what preaching means to our congregation today. While my sabbatical continues, this is not a referendum on guest preaching, but an opportunity for us to talk together about the pros and cons of guest preachers. Perhaps you like things just as they have been and are. If not, I can imagine at least one alternative to the current arrangement (that we engage a "regular" guest preacher, who agrees to preach monthly or on a bi-monthly basis). In determining the best way to meet our preaching needs, we look forward to a diversity of reflections and ideas about preaching in our church. We are looking forward to your input.

Congregational Notes

Congratulations to Yael Breimer and Matthijs den Dulk on the birth of their baby boy, **Elliot den Dulk**, on January 16, 2014.

We were saddened to learn of the death in December of **Dolores Powell**, mother of Jenise, Janee and Jason Powell, after a long battle with complications from diabetes. Dolores lost her husband James in July 2012. Plans for a memorial service are still pending. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints (Ps. 116:15).

The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles: An Instruction of the Lord Through the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles

Amanda Guthrie

Have you ever wondered about the books that were considered for entry into the Bible but did not make it? Some books were originally part of the canon but later questioned. For Protestants, these books exist as a collection referred to as the Apocrypha. Still other books were left out entirely to survive on their own. We know of some of these texts through references in other material, though they are lost to us now. Others were lost and then discovered again. *The Didache* is one such book. It was last referenced by Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople (758-828 CE) before it was rediscovered in 1873 by Archbishop Philotheos Brynnios at the Jerusalem Monastery of the Most Holy Sepulcher at Istanbul. It was a few years before he paid any attention to his discovery, but once he did, he quickly realized the treasure he had found! The book that Brynnios found was copied in 1056 by "Leon, scribe and sinner" and titled "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles: An Instruction of the Lord Through the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles," or *The Didache*, for short. This was a text quoted and referred to throughout the first millennium CE – in *The Epistles of Barnabas*, among others. We know from Bishop Eusebius (263-340) that it was on the list of books considered for the New Testament Canon.

Scholars debate *The Didache's* date of composition, as well as its author. The author does not appear to be familiar with Paul's letters and has a simpler notion of hierarchy within the church than appears later, which implies an earlier date in the first century CE. Still some scholars believe it was written in the third century, though no later than when St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons (who was martyred in 202 CE) first referenced it. While its title may imply that the apostles wrote it, it likely that its author(s) named it as such in order to give it more credibility. Many books (including some in the Bible!) composed around this time were titled in this way. Rather than written by the apostles, *The Didache* is more likely a summary of their teachings.

The Didache is short - less than half the length of the Gospel of Mark! It contains teachings on The Two Ways (The Way of Life and The Way of Death), Rituals of the Church, Ministry, and the End Times. From the title we know that these teachings were given for the instruction of Gentile converts.

There are close similarities between *The Didache* and the Gospel of Matthew. So why did it not make it into the New Testament? And might it still have something to say to us today? Does it call on us to do anything differently? To rethink any of our assumptions about how we shape ourselves as a Christian community?

Think through this with us during Second Hour on 2/16, 2/23, and 3/2. Justin Howell, PhD Candidate at the University of Chicago Divinity School, will give us some history and background the first week, and we'll read and discuss the following two weeks. We hope to see you there!

Do you have games you no longer play? Donate them to our Children's Program!



He's Done Us Proud!

Jade Maze

Hello all. Don't forget that the first Friday Taizé service will be held at Calvert House, 5735 S. University Ave, Chicago, IL 60637 at 7 pm. Rather than write a news article, I wanted to make sure all of you were aware that our own Willie Pickens was named one of the Chicagoans of the Year in the Arts 2013 by the *Chicago Tribune*. I've included the article below. A big congratulations to Willie!!!

Willie Pickens: The lion in winter

December 25, 2013 | Howard Reich

Anyone who was there will never forget the moment: Willie Pickens, alone on stage at the Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park, making the piano roar in a solo version of John Coltrane's "Giant Steps." Pickens' energy, virtuosity and musicality drew cheers from thousands and gave the 35th annual Chicago Jazz Festival one of its greatest highlights.

Yet this performance was but one of several treasured moments that Pickens offered Chicagoans in venues large and small this year. Whether he was breathing fire alongside visiting alto saxophonist Bobby Watson or duetting ingeniously with vibist Stu Katz at the Jazz Showcase or leading his own, brawny quintet at the Green Mill, Pickens proved that youthful passion is not confined to the young.

At 82, he's playing with all the vigor of earlier years, but also with a mastery born of decades of toil. In essence, he's at a kind of creative peak right now.

"I feel sometimes that you grow in spurts," says Pickens. "Sometimes you kind of level off, and you feel you're not moving anywhere. Other times, you're kind of growing by leaps and bounds, and maybe this is one of those times."



No maybe about it, the inventiveness of Pickens' playing matched by its musical depth, harmonic complexity and improvisational freedom.

But there's something more happening here, as well. For in many ways, Pickens has segued into a role once filled by Chicago jazz giants such as saxophonists Von Freeman and Fred Anderson, emerging as a revered mentor to younger players and a symbol of the music itself. Or perhaps it's more accurate to say that younger generations — in Chicago and beyond — have come to look at him that way, even if Pickens has not sought that status.

When he played at the Chicago Jazz Festival, after all, it was at the invitation of one of New Orleans' most admired saxophonist-bandleaders, Donald Harrison, who simply turned over the stage to an elder he holds in high esteem.

"I've been fortunate that a lot of great, great musicians have taken me under their wing ... and they teach me: Art Blakey, Miles Davis and a lot of great people," Harrison told me earlier this year. "And Willie is one of those people. So if I have a chance to listen to them and play with them and even present them, it's always a great honor for me."

Why does Pickens command that kind of respect? Many reasons, including the high artistic level he has sustained for decades, the restlessly questing nature of his work, the generosity of his spirit on and off the stage and, of course, the technical prowess of his playing. All of these qualities applied to Freeman and Anderson, as well, and these virtues came into sharper view than ever via Pickens' contributions in 2013.

Says his wife, Irma Pickens, when asked about the intensity of her husband's schedule and work this year: "It's amazing to me. I've been with him on the journey for 54 years. I'm so grateful he still can play."

That's putting it mildly.

hreich@tribune.com

Bake with the Children & Youth!

Saturday, February 15, 3-5 p.m.

&

**We're hosting Coffee Hour on Sunday,
February 16.**



Ninth Annual "Taste of Hyde Park"

a dinner and silent auction to benefit the Hyde Park Transitional Housing Project (HPTHP)

Where: St. Paul & the Redeemer Church
4945 S. Dorchester

When: Saturday, April 5, 2014 from 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Donations: \$35 in advance, \$40 at the door, \$25 for students with ID, \$15 for children ages 6-17, children ages 5 and under free (patrons contributing \$100 or more, paid in advance, will be recognized in the program)

Tickets: may be purchased before April 5 at www.hpthp.org or buying a ticket from Ginni Cook or Marlene Vellinga; ticket purchases can also be arranged by emailing hpthp@yahoo.com

HPTHP provides housing and mentoring services to homeless families for up to two years, helping them to achieve independent living. Founded in 2002 by the Hyde Park cluster of Interfaith Open Communities, HPTHP is supported by many Hyde Park and Kenwood congregations, individuals, and businesses and by the Hyde Park and Kenwood Interfaith Council.

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