

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



April 2015

April Church Calendar

Regular Weekly Events:

Mondays - Yoga & Centering Prayer, 7:00 p.m.

Wednesdays - Bible Study, 1:00 p.m.

Thursdays - Senior Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 1

Healing the Beloved Community, 5:00 p.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 2

Agape Dinner with Communion, 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 3

Good Friday Candelight Service, 6:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 5

Early Easter Worship with Communion, 7:30 a.m.

Easter Breakfast, 8:30 a.m.

Easter Worship, Rev. Dr. Douglas Sharp preaching, 10:00 a.m.

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

Monday, April 6

Church Office Closed

Saturday, April 11

All Church Potluck, 12:00 p.m.

Healing the Beloved Community, 1:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 12

Worship with Remembrance of Chicago's Fallen Children and Youth, 10:00 a.m., Amanda Guthrie preaching

Chili-making, 11:30 a.m.

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

Second Hour: Conversations on *Hidden Wholeness*, 11:30 a.m.

Saturday, April 18

Theology on Tap at Jimmy's, 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 19

Worship, Rev. Dr. Douglas R. Sharp preaching

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

Second Hour: Conversations on *Hidden Wholeness*, 11:30 a.m.

Sunday, April 26

Worship, 10:00 a.m., Rev. Dr. Douglas Sharp preaching

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

Second Hour: Conversations on *Hidden Wholeness*, 11:30 a.m.

From the Interim Minister
Douglas R. Sharp

Non-Random Thoughts

After being away from seminary teaching for a few years, I found myself back in a classroom with an array of young students before me. I had accepted an assignment as an adjunct professor in a junior college on the far south side teaching a course on comparative religion. This was a *required* course for all students, regardless of the educational program they intended to complete. It was the first time I had ever taught a course on religion to thirty-plus 18-20 year old young people, and it turned out to be something of a challenge because it was a required course.

I remember the required courses I took in college. No, now that I think about it, that's not entirely true; I vaguely remember them *because* they were required and many of them just didn't interest me. So I suppose my own experience prepared me for teaching a course that, for the students, might just be of little interest simply because it was a necessary hoop to jump through on the way to bigger and more important things. But I would be ready for them, and I would find a way to make "religion" and the study of it come alive!

I wish I could tell you that it turned out that way, but it didn't. Perhaps thirty-five years of teaching seminary students at the graduate level did not prepare me after all to teach undergraduates a subject they didn't really care about. Knowing that students in that age range have little interest in "religion" but a modest interest in "spiritual experiences" did not help me teach with a textbook I did not select or a set of course goals that were unrealistic. After one semester, I decided that teaching this particular course in this particular junior college was not for me.

Perhaps it's because of the increasing religious diversity characteristic of our local communities that I have an interest in the study of religion from both a theological and a sociological perspective. There is little doubt that "religion" itself and the particular forms of religious traditions are undergoing a sea-change as a result of global social, economic, and political forces. It is precisely as one who identifies with the Christian tradition that I have an interest in and sensitivity toward the adherents and practices of other religious traditions.

Outside the walls of Hyde Park Union Church there are many who claim that they are "spiritual" but not "religious." So true is this that it has become a prime category for sociologists of religion who investigate religious sensibility and practices. It would not surprise me at all to learn that there are some among us who blend a variety of practices and disciplines from the historic

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religions of human history alongside others who remain within a more commonly recognized version of the Christian tradition.

My interest in holding conversation with the adherents of other religions is the result of my curiosity regarding how people identify, appropriate and embody their religious tradition both as an individual and in a community of like-minded persons. My interest in this area is exceeded only by my interest in reaching out to and conversing with those who do not identify with *any* religious tradition. And as it happens, the number of persons who do *not* identify with any religious tradition is growing rapidly.

What we are facing, in Hyde Park and elsewhere, is a profoundly shifting American religious landscape. Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to research at the intersection of religion, values, and public life. Their mission is to conduct high quality public opinion surveys and qualitative research in order to assist journalists, opinion leaders, scholars, clergy, and the general public to better understand debates on public policy issues and the role of religion and values in American public life.

According to PRRI, even though the religious landscape in our country is quite diverse, there exists new data from the [American Values Atlas](#) to indicate that the population of most states is dominated by three religious groups: Catholics, white evangelical Protestants, and the religiously unaffiliated. (Click [here](#) for a detailed chart showing the top three religious groups in each state.)

Niraj Chokshi at the *Washington Post* took PRRI's data and [created 21 maps](#) of America's religious landscape. The religiously unaffiliated are the largest religious group in 15 states, including Oregon ([37 percent](#)), New Hampshire ([35 percent](#)), and Washington ([33 percent](#)). In **Illinois**, the unaffiliated number is [22 percent](#), the *largest* of all religious groups in the state.

Furthermore, using data from PRRI's American Values Surveys and the recently released American Values Atlas, the Huffington Post outlines [nine facts](#) on the shifting American religious landscape.

Altogether, these data provide perspective on the circumstances and challenges we face at HPUC as a congregation in transition. At the time of this writing, the congregation has selected the members of the Call Committee, and the task given to them is to search for and find the minister who will lead this congregation into its future. There are many potential members and friends of HPUC, but at this point, they remain only *potential*. Whether they ever become *actual* depends on many factors, and most of them revolve around how we who are here form ourselves by God's grace and mercy into being and living as a spiritual community with focus and vitality, and how we take the

initiative to reach out and invite those not yet members and friends to come experience our community for themselves.

So, perhaps in this period of liminality we are being called to be a somewhat unconventional congregation. If people are not interested in religion, then maybe we should not be conventionally religious. If people are interested in spirituality, then maybe we should rethink what it means to be conventionally spiritual. If non-religious people are interested in human connections and working collaboratively for the well-being of others, than maybe, just maybe, we need to reexamine, reclaim, and renew our commitment to community and the cause of social and economic justice, and not to "religion." Just maybe....

From the Moderator: Church Board Update

Sophie Behlen

The church membership gathered briefly on March 22, after the worship service to elect a call committee to conduct our search for a new minister. From among 12 excellent nominees, a committee of 7 was elected: Caroline Anderson, Jon Art, Fred Behlen, Diane Howard, Al Sharp, Ingrid Wallace, and Joe Witte. We are grateful to everyone for their participation in this selection process.

The Church Board will be meeting on April 12th after the Worship service to prepare the slate of nominees for the Annual Program Meeting.

On May 3rd the church will hold its Annual Program Meeting. At this time the membership considers and votes on the slate of nominees presented by the Board for open positions on the Board and the 6 standing committees (e.g. Christian Education, Fellowship, Missions, etc.) .

Appreciation Day for the Gilead Auxiliary

Rev. Erma Y. Croom, Director of Gilead Ministry

*"It's not enough to have lived.
We should be determined to live for something.
May I suggest that it be creating joy for others,
sharing what we have for the betterment of personkind,
bringing hope to the lost and love to the lonely."*

— [Leo Buscaglia](#)

April promises to be an exciting month, marked by the celebration of the resurrection, the renewal of creation as well as changes and transitions at Jackson Park Hospital. This month, in keeping with the theme of celebration, Gilead Ministry will recognize and celebrate the members of the Gilead Auxiliary of Hyde Park Union Church for their dedicated service. On Sunday, April 19th, during the 10 o'clock morning worship service Gilead Ministry will honor

the Gilead Auxiliary for their continued support of Gilead Ministry at Jackson Park Hospital. The Gilead Auxiliary has been an indispensable presence at Jackson Park Hospital since 2011. Working quietly behind the scenes, the members of the auxiliary have provided on-going support to the patients, family, and staff at the hospital through their generous donations of clothing, layettes for new born babies, and memory boxes for stillborn infants. This past winter, several patients arrived at the hospital with little or nothing in the way of clothing, but when they left the hospital, they left with coats, hats, scarfs and other clothing items because of the tireless efforts of the members of the Gilead Auxiliary. In addition to their contribution of layettes, memory boxes, and clothing the auxiliary also donated magazines for the hospital's waiting areas. I appreciate the thoughtful acts of kindness performed by this wonderful group of people. The celebration in their honor on Sunday, April 19th is not only because of their generosity to Jackson Park Hospital but also because they have been and continue to be a consistent, supportive presence to me and to the spiritual care team.

Children's Sermons

Amanda Guthrie

Lillian Daniel is a UCC pastor who serves at First Congregational Church of Glen Ellyn. In 2014, she wrote a book called *When "Spiritual but Not Religious" Is Not Enough: Seeing God in Surprising Places, Even the Church*. In an interview about her book, she said anyone "can find God alone in the sunset. It takes a certain maturity to find God in the person sitting next to you who not only voted for the wrong political party but has a baby who is crying while you're trying to listen to the sermon. Community is where the religious rubber meets the road. People challenge us, ask hard questions, disagree, need things from us, require our forgiveness. It's where we get to practice all the things we preach." We need each other, she insists. "We weren't meant to read these sacred texts alone. From the beginning people read them out loud in groups, early on in the first centuries of the church, in people's living rooms, where presumably they talked about them afterwards, debated them, argued about what difference they made." In other words, worship isn't worship unless we do it together. We can pray to God, give thanks to God, and experience God on our own. *But we need each other to see God outside of ourselves and to check our understandings about God, and we need to do this again and again.*

Worship looks different in every community, and we are drawn to communities where the worship makes sense to us – where it feels right. Here at Hyde Park Union Church, we worship God with a wide variety of music. We learn about how God works in the world by hearing the joys and concerns of our brothers and sisters and by listening to a sermon. We offer our thanks for God's goodness in our lives by sharing our time, talents, and resources, and we recommit to do so each week through the offering and prayer. We may

not love every aspect of worship each week. But if we each created our own perfect worship service every week to do on our own, that wouldn't be worship! Worship isn't worship unless we do it together, and that means that sometimes we'll be stretched to see or hear God in a new way – maybe in a way we disagree with or we don't like. But that's alright because the conversation continues. As a community, we will continue to pray and discern and make adjustments together as we determine how the Spirit is calling us to do and be church together.

All this to say that we bring our children into an incredibly interesting space on Sunday mornings. It is a space composed of a group of people trying to determine how to worship God in a way that makes sense and feels right. It is a space where we do not always agree with one another and yet try together to transform into the community God has called us to be. And we want our children to become *invested* in this space. We want them to see why belonging to a community of faith *matters*. We want them to see that we need each other in our quests for God – that we must find people who will disagree with us and challenge us so that we can see a fuller picture of God. And we want them to see that belonging to this community makes a difference in the lives of each member as well as the larger communities of which this church is a part – Hyde Park, Chicago, American Baptist Churches, the United Church of Christ, etc. Belonging to this community allows us to see God in each other and so to become filled with compassion and energy to bring glimpses of the kingdom to earth.

I think this is, at least in part, why we have a Children's Sermon every week. Every week we invite the children forward to hear a message tailored just for them. A message that assumes each child has a robust spiritual life that requires nourishing, just as an adult's spiritual life does. *This message invites the children to worship*. The experience of worship is complicated and interesting – sometimes finding its community in complete harmony and sometimes not. But we cannot do it without each other; each member brings a unique perspective and helps us see God anew. *Every member does this, including (if not especially – see Matthew 19:13-14) our children*. Our adult members know that our participation matters in song, prayer, listening to scripture and the sermon, the offering, and communion, and even the planning process, and we want our children to know that feeling, too. We want them to know that this experience of worship is only worship if we do it together – if we each have a part in it. We must come just as we are, ready to learn and be transformed by the people we encounter and the experience created by our being together in the presence of God.

Over the next couple of months, I will be looking for people to help deliver Children's Sermons. Whether you think this might be something you're interested in or you simply want to know and think more about this important time in worship, please join me at a Children's Sermon Workshop on Sunday, April 26th at 9am. We'll discuss how to prepare

and deliver these messages in a way that honors the faith lives and spiritual journeys of each of our students.

LEAP of Faith *Jade Maze*

Did you know that April is Jazz Appreciation Month (JAM)? And that April 30th is International Jazz Day? This month is set aside to:

- raise the profile of jazz in the media, especially local media
- reach out to people who aren't already part of the jazz audience and share the music and its history
- strengthen local, national and international jazz networks

Well, we at Hyde Park Union are definitely doing our part. I am happy to tell you we received a \$10,000 dollar LEEAP grant to support our Sacred Jazz here at HPUC! Furthermore, if we keep building on what we started, the grant has the potential to be reloaded for two more cycles.

Many thank to the United Church of Christ for this opportunity and the vote of confidence. LEEAP is an acronym for Local Evangelism, Envisioning and Planting board. May the Lord bless our revitalization efforts.

I mentioned to the Ravinia Festival that we received this grant and in response they will sponsor our first concert here on Thursday, May 14th at 7pm featuring the Chicago born trumpeter Marquis Hill. What an honor!



Marquis Hill is widely recognized as one of the preeminent voices on the instrument of his generation. Raised in the Chatham neighborhood on Chicago's South Side, he has been an active participant in the programs offered at Ravinia including the Ravinia Jazz Scholars and the Ravinia Steans Music Institute, the former of which brought him into contact with mentors Bobby Broom, Tito Carillo, and Willie Pickens (that's right, our very own). His musical prowess began to garner more recognition after winning such competitions as the International Trumpet Guild jazz competition (2012) and

most recently the Thelonious Monk International Jazz Trumpet Competition (2014), widely regarded as the most prestigious in its field. Marquis currently resides in New York City and has four albums to his credit: New Gospel (Skiptone 2011), Sounds of the City (Skiptone 2012), The Poet (Skiptone 2013), and Modern Flows vol. 1 (Skiptone 2014).

The blessings are already abundant. The future looks bright!

TASTE OF HYDE PARK **Sat., April 18, 6-9 pm**



The 10th year fundraiser of Hyde Park Transitional Housing Project again features **Willie Pickens'** jazz piano, along with a **buffet of the finest Hyde Park restaurants**. You can't miss with the **silent auction** for gift certificates, items and services from wonderful HP vendors, all in service of *continuing ministry to homeless families* as they are housed, mentored, and trained in skills necessary to live independently. **HPUC is a founding church of this mission project.**

Tickets available from Board President Al Sharp and Ginni Cook are \$35 in advance, \$40 at the door, \$25 for students, \$15 for children 6-17, and free for ages 5 and under.



HOLY WEEK

Maundy Thursday, April 2

Agape Meal with Communion, 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 3

Service, 6:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday, April 5

Early Easter Service, 7:30 a.m.

Easter Breakfast, 8:30 a.m.

Easter Service, 10:00 a.m.

Second Hour in April: A Hidden Wholeness

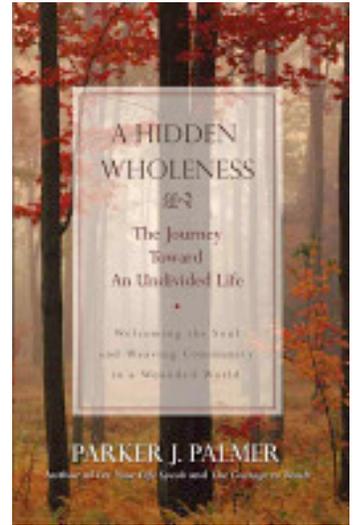
The liminal period of transition in a church is a mixture of continuity and flux seasoned with a bit of uncertainty. The same is true of individual lives in transition; it is not unusual for persons to feel fragmented and conflicted, isolated in their uncertainty, and uprooted or off-center in their innermost core. For the Second Hour program during the spring, Douglas will lead dialogues revolving around themes and issues that impinge upon the quality of life for a “church in transition.”

The program will focus on explorations of individual and communal spirituality, facilitated by conversations inspired by readings in *A Hidden Wholeness* by Parker Palmer.

In this book, Palmer articulates a view of spirituality that plays with the metaphor of a journey toward an undivided life, away from a life fragmented by compartmentalization, interpersonal conflict, pride, and fear. The communal corrective to a divided life is made possible through what Palmer calls “circles of trust,” interpersonal relationships that “welcome the soul and weave community in a wounded world.”

Palmer is a writer, teacher, poet, and activist. His work focuses on issues in education, community, leadership, spirituality, and social change. He is a graduate of Carleton College with a Ph.D. from UC Berkeley. He has also studied at Union Theological Seminary.

The sessions will meet on April 12, April 19, and conclude on April 26. The first session will explore insights and implications of Palmer’s discussion in the first four chapters. The book is available online without charge at <http://books.google.com>.



INTRODUCTION TO HYDE PARK UNION CHURCH

If you are interested in learning about Hyde Park Union Church, you might want to attend the *Union Inquiry Series*. This series is held several times each year in the Pastor’s office before the worship service, from 8:45 – 9:30 a.m. Each series consists of three forty-five minute sessions, one each Sunday for three weeks. You need only attend one of the three-session series, facilitated by the minister and one or more of our Deacons. Upon completion of the three sessions, you are invited to join the church and become a voting member of the congregation. The next series will be offered April 12, 19, and 26. If you would like to participate, please let Hes Campaňano know in the Church Office or indicate your interest on a visitor’s card.



ALL-CHURCH POTLUCK

Join us for a church-wide potluck in the Social Hall on Saturday, April 11 at 12:00 p.m., before the third Healing the Beloved Community discussion.



Please RSVP to Gunes Henderson at gunes.basdas@gmail.com. Please indicate the number in your party (adults & children) and whether you are bringing a main dish, a side dish or salad, or a desert.

Annual Spring Meeting of the CMA-UCC

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



The spring meeting of the Chicago Metropolitan Association of the Illinois Conference, United Church of Christ will be held May 2 from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Congregational Church of Park Manor. The theme this year is *Changing Lives: Continuing Testament—Embracing the Vision with Stewardship*, featuring Association Conference Minister Rev. Dr. Melbalenia Evans and Rev. Dr. Terrill Murff. The registration fee is \$25 (\$30 on site). Those interested in attending the meeting should complete a registration form available from Douglas or Hes in the Church Office.



**CHURCH
DIRECTORY**

We're Updating Our Directory!

Entries are due April 30.

Please fill out the contact information form by clicking [here](#).

The link is also available on the right sidebar on the front page of the church website and in the "This Week/This Weekend @ HPUC" emails.

One form per household will suffice. Even if your information has not changed, please **do** fill out the form as confirmation to the church office.

If you would rather not be included in the new edition of the church directory, please send an email to the church office saying so.

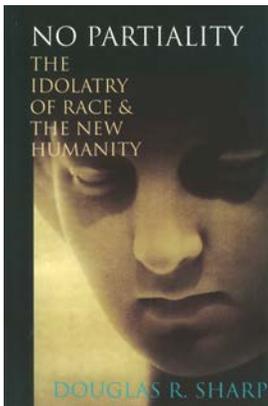
Want to offer a program at HPUC?

If you would like to take some initiative and plan for a program event at HPUC, please feel free to do so. Available from the Church Office is a *Program/Event Offering Information Form*, an easy way for program committees and others to register and schedule church social and educational events. The steps in the process are simple:

1. Get an idea, then match it to an urge to make it happen.
2. Discuss the idea with others – other members, maybe the chairperson of a committee related to your idea, or a member of the staff.
3. Pick up a *Program Offering Information Form* in the Church Office. Fill it out and turn it in to the office *at least three weeks prior to your event*.
4. Staff will review your form at a staff meeting and ask for additional information if necessary. They will consider your event in relation to the overall scheduling of events at HPUC and identify space for you if your event is to occur at the church.
5. Prepare a plan to promote your event by using the various communications at HPUC (newsletter, *This Week at HPUC*, *This Weekend @ HPUC*, Sunday bulletin announcements, oral announcements). Staff members can answer any questions you might have in this area.
6. When the time comes, have a wonderful experience and enjoy the fruit of your hard work!



Congregational Announcements



Douglas is donating copies of his book, *No Partiality: The Idolatry of Race and the New Humanity* (IVP 2002) to members and friends of Hyde Park Union Church.

Please stop by the church office to pick up a copy if you would like one.

Amanda will begin a CPE Residency at Providence Portland Medical Center in mid-September and will be moving to Portland, OR sometime this summer.

HEALING THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

In this period of ministerial transition, members and friends of Hyde Park Union Church are experiencing a range of



thoughts and emotions about the status of our spiritual community, the discomfort of grief and uncertainty, and the dissonance that accompanies disagreements and competing expectations.

Douglas will moderate three conversational events in the weeks ahead to help us express ourselves and share our experiences in order to enhance our interpersonal relationships and strengthen our commitment to deal with conflict and build community. One such conversation has been held, and the second & third conversations will be on Wednesday, April 1 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. and on Saturday, April 11 from 1:00-3:00 p.m.



Please don't forget to pick up your lilies after the 10:00 a.m. Easter service!

Have a blessed Easter!



Members and friends of HPUC are invited to donate flowers for the Communion Table in the chancel for worship on non-Communion Sundays.

Flowers may be given to memorialize a friend or loved one or to commemorate a special occasion. The cost of flowers is a minimum of \$35 for a small bouquet. Requests for flowers for the chancel may be made to the Church Office or to the Worship & Music Committee (worshipmusic@hpuc.org). Sign-up sheets will also be available in the Social Hall during coffee hour.

Thank you for enhancing our Sunday worship with the gift of flowers!

Hyde Park Union Church
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