

Adult Education & Discipleship Ministry Team

As part of the vision for establishing Ministry Teams rather than committees, Adult Education and Discipleship was spun off from the former Worship & Nurture Committee. Though few in number (Linda Schmidt, Ed and Lee Ann Weinberg have been involved so far) the Ministry Team is privileged to have oversight of the adult Sunday classes and mid-week small groups as well as for the arrangement of occasional seminars during the year. ***Please consider getting involved in this vital ministry on the next Ministry Team meeting night ... Wednesday, February 7 at 7:30pm in the Pastors' Study. (Dinner is provided at 6:30.)***

At "visioning" meetings in April, a few goals were initially established:

1. to annually offer two or three seminars or special, short educational series
2. to annually offer (in conjunction with the Community Outreach Ministry Team) at least one study series or seminar that might be attractive to non-believers
3. our Big Hairy Audacious Goal ... to ultimately have half of the adults in the church regularly attending *either* a Sunday class or mid-week small group

Special events and weekends: March: twenty-some SPC ladies laughed and cried their way through a weekend away in the Poconos arranged by Laurie Mouacdie. "Heart Spa" was the theme led by Pastor Debbie in which an extended study of the story Jesus and the woman at the well was intermixed with "spa" treatments the ladies provided for each other. April: Kristin Johnson, Executive Director of OneByOne Ministries, provided a half-day seminar attended by SPC members and people from other churches highlighting God's intention for sexual wholeness with a discussion of sexual conflict, the transformation process, preventing homosexuality in children, sexual addiction and abuse and reaching out to adult children in the gay lifestyle. Ms. Johnson shared her personal testimony and offered a message of encouragement to the Church during the Sunday morning worship service. May: SPC hosted the final PRMI Dunamis Project workshop for churches in the northeast region, "Evangelism in the Local Church". In a series of messages over the course of the weekend, the Rev. Dr. Tom Swieringa challenged the assembled group to cooperate with the Holy Spirit and draw on the example Jesus set in reaching out with the love of God to those people placed in our path every day. September: our Wednesday night program kicked off with a two-night personal financial management seminar based on biblical principles led by Christian financial planner, Ms. Kerry Kirk.

New for 2007: interest has been expressed in developing a **women's discussion group** similar to the men's group that meets on the first and third Saturday mornings of each month. ***Please get in touch with Linda Sukenik if you might be interested as they look for a workable meeting day/night, time and frequency.***

Rick Shaffstall led the **Sunday morning adult class** the first half of the year in a study and discussion begun in fall '05, "The Divine Humanity of Christ: how Jesus was like us; how like Him we need to be". In the fall the Sunday class took a new direction for the 06-07 school year with the discussion series, "S.A.L.T.: Seven Areas of Life Training", helping participants learn how to live victoriously in seven areas of life. With discussions led by Ed Weinberg and Rick Shaffstall, each topic is covered in four or five sessions so that no one has to make a long-term commitment to be involved. ***Give the class a try beginning February 4 with the new topic, "Social: enjoying dynamic relationships that once seemed impossible" dealing with rejection, judging others, forgiveness and loving others.***

There were two **Wednesday evening small groups** in the spring. A number of adults completed Francis Frangipane's 26 week course, "In Christ's Image" begun in fall '05. The small group Bible study tackled three 8-week studies. January: "Why We Believe What We Believe" as Christians in a world that has come to question and re-examine many beliefs and attitudes that were once taken for granted. March: "Ignite: Refining and Purifying Your Faith" ... God doesn't want us sitting on the sidelines when it comes to our faith, but wants us to have a passion to serve Him completely. May: "Fatal Distractions" examining the areas of sin that often still plague us as Christ-followers and how God can strengthen and mature us to become more sin-resistant and be overcomers. October: *Just Walk Across the Room* ... a study that coincided with the pastors' Sunday messages based on Bill Hybels' book. The challenge: to realize that pointing people to the God who created them, loves them and has a purpose for their lives is something *all of us* can do. ***Consider joining the group meeting on Wednesdays from 7:30-9:00pm through Easter as Pastor Allen teaches a fascinating course on Revelation in the Memorial Chapel.***

Children's Ministry

Many of the following activities represent the goals set by the Children's & Youth Ministry Team at the beginning of the year. Most efforts were successful and where there needs to be improvement or development, the Ministry Team continues to work and pray to that end.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY TRAINING A training session was offered (on two separate dates to accommodate people's schedules) to review SPC's child protection policies. Attendance was mandatory for all those in leadership in addition to those working with our children and youth. Linda Gattuso and Pastor Debbie were presenters for these sessions.

RALLY SUNDAY 2006 The new school year began with a Saturday afternoon at the movies. SPC kids and their friends went to see the baseball-themed animated movie "Everyone's Hero." The baseball theme continued to the following day's events — Rally Sunday 2006. It was a fun-filled morning of crafts and activities that was held in conjunction with the church's first outdoor service. Rally Sunday was an incredible success and generated much enthusiasm for the Children's & Youth Ministry and particularly Sunday School. The children seem excited about attending Sunday School and attendance has been strong so far this year.

SUNDAY SCHOOL 2006-2007 The momentum generated from Rally Sunday continued to propel the Sunday School classes and has been maintained by other activities for the children including an afternoon hayride and picking pumpkins in October and ornament painting in December.

The teachers from last year continued their commitment to Sunday School: Candice Heller and Linda Sukenik are teachers of the 4 year old to second grade class, and Micah Kemp and I (Kerry Callender) teach the third through fifth graders. Additionally, two teaching assistants have been added to provide coverage when any of the teachers are absent. Isabelle Brunache and Sinciane Forde have graciously consented to fill this role. Coordinated lessons from the Faith Weavers curriculum are still being used in both Sunday School and Junior Church. The curriculum includes Bible memory verses, to which the children continue to respond very well. In fact, an even more intentional system of rewarding kids for remembering their verses has been implemented and has really spurred the children to faithfulness.

JUNIOR CHURCH Alison Cox continues in her role as Junior Church Coordinator overseeing about 15 volunteer teachers. Jenifer Reinauer, assisted by her husband John, led rehearsals for the children's Christmas musical during Junior Church time from October-December. The children were wonderful in their presentation of "The Twelve Days of Christmas."

In an effort to help fourth graders adjust to sitting through the morning worship service when not attending Junior Church, activity pages — coordinated with that day's Sunday School lesson — are provided on the table in the back of the sanctuary each Sunday.

As per parents' requests, efforts have been made in both Sunday School and Junior Church to provide healthier snack options [we don't think the children have noticed ☺].

FIRST COMMUNION & CONFIRMATION CLASSES Several children marked their first communion this past year after attending a class/meal with their parents (taught/hosted by Pastor Debbie) about the significance of receiving communion. The children celebrating this milestone received special recognition during the service, which was attended by several relatives and friends. Also, Pastor Debbie initiated a school year-long confirmation class, which has record enrollment.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DISCOVERY CLUB Due to diminished interest and sporadic attendance, Cheryl Gomes decided to discontinue the Wednesday night Discovery Club. However, some parents still desire a Bible-based activity for their children on Wednesday nights during Ministry Team meetings and the adult Bible studies, so a volunteer is being sought to provide a Wednesday evening children's program.

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT Following the gracious donation of a terrific climbing gym with swings, Pastor Debbie and Linda Gattuso reviewed and decided upon additional equipment for the playground. Now there is age-appropriate equipment for toddlers and older children alike.

I know I speak for all the workers in Children's & Youth Ministry when I say it has been a joy to serve in this capacity, that is, teaching children to love Jesus Christ.

Kerry Callender, Children's & Youth Ministry Team Leader

Youth Ministry

As I look back at the last six months it seems as though July was just yesterday, and yet so much has happened since then. Reflecting on all that has happened, my heart is filled with gratefulness at the Lord's grace and protection during this time of transition. I know that when I came on board this past July, we prayed that the Lord would be in the center of this change and I can attest that He truly has! I want to thank Jenny Whitlatch and Pastors Allen and Debbie for the support and encouragement they have been for me and the youth during this time. Ultimately, I would like to praise God for the foundation that has been laid and for the work that He has done here!

It has been quite a busy six months! We have been everywhere from Rockbridge, VA to the Bronx. This past summer, my focus was to build relationships with the teens. We spent a few Wednesday nights in July and August getting to know each other and digging into God's word at our Swim & Study meetings. I think all the youth would agree that the summer's highlight was our summer camp trip. In August, Pastor Allen and I led twelve middle school students to Young Life's camp in Rockbridge, Virginia. It was an action-packed five days with plenty of outdoor sports and water activities and high energy fun each night at club. All of the kids had a great time and left with a full understanding of who Jesus Christ is and how to start a relationship with Him.

As the school year approached, the youth did a fantastic job helping out with Rally Sunday. They all showed great leadership and service. Many of the girls also added a nice touch to that outdoor service with an upbeat worship dance to a song called *Shackles* by Mary Mary. In October, the youth and some of their families enjoyed a night out at Stony Hill Garden's gigantic outdoor corn maze. It was a crazy adventure getting there and wandering around in the dark trying to make sense of the maze, but it made for quite a memorable evening. In November, a few of the youth attended a worship concert at Nyack College and were able to experience different forms of worship. Putting our October Bill Hybels evangelism study into action, we also hosted our first youth group "Bring-a-Friend Game Night". Most recently, SPC youth joined about 400 other youth from Rockland County at an All-Night Youth Event hosted by New City Gospel Fellowship. It was a fun-filled night of indoor sports, a concert and Gospel message, all-you-can-eat pizza and unlimited arcade games! All in all, throughout these past several months, we have grown together as a group and in our understanding of who Christ is.

This past fall we focused our time on developing a closer walk with our Savior. We got started by learning how to share our faith and the importance of Christian fellowship and friends. Some of our Sunday School meetings focused on learning how to use our talents for God's glory. With the start of the New Year, we have begun a new devotional-based curriculum from YouthWalk.org (part of Walk Thru the Bible Ministries). This curriculum provides daily devotions in monthly magazines with follow-up lessons for the leaders to use for Sunday School and/or a midweek meeting. Each month has a different theme ... January's theme is Worship. It is my hope that throughout this year the teens will develop a closer relationship with Christ through developing a habit of doing personal devotions on their own every day. Having daily personal quiet time is so important. A youth ministry won't always be there for them, but a good habit of spending time with Jesus Christ each day will!

With 2007 now upon us, we step forward into this new year with great excitement and anticipation of what the Lord is going to do! We have a **Middle School WinterCamp Weekend** coming up March 2-4 at Lake Champion. ***(I would encourage all middle school students who are able, to attend. It is sure to be a great weekend of faith and relationship-building.)*** We will begin fund raising and preparations for this summer's mission trip to Africa. The youth have adopted a project to send backpacks filled with school supplies to at least one school in Uganda. We have called this project, "Backpacks for Africa". Thanks to the generosity of the congregation in the Sunday pocket change offering, we have nearly met our goal. In the coming weeks and months, we're looking forward to a fun night with another local youth group, the Rockland All-Night Youth Party, Christian concerts, and game nights at my apartment!

Finally, I would like to say a special thanks to all of you for the overwhelming support and encouragement you have been to me personally and to the youth ministry during this transition period. Thank you for your dedication and excitement in seeing God's work in the hearts of our young people. I would like to extend a special thank you to Tracy Heller and everyone else who has been so generous with their time and has worked so hard getting the manse basement ready so that I could feel a little more at home here! Even though I feel like I have only been here a short time, I truly feel welcomed into a new family here at SPC. Please continue to keep SPC's youth in your prayers!

In His name,
Beĕah Siau, Youth Minister

Hospitality Ministry Team

The Hospitality Ministry Team was formed after the Session adopted SPC's new mission/vision statement in the spring of 2006. Our main responsibility is to welcome visitors, assimilate new members, and plan for fellowship opportunities that would encourage participation by visitors and the congregation. Ministry Team members include: Yvonne Osborne, Anne Williams, June and Marty Simmons, Anthony Marsalisi, Edwine Sainvil, George Cox, and myself as Team Leader.

During each of our meetings in 2006, the Ministry Team spent most of its time discussing: 1) the process of greeting and welcoming visitors to the church and how to become "master greeters;" 2) setting a schedule for follow-up phone calls, emails, and handwritten notes to new visitors; 3) new ways to encourage visitors to stay for coffee hour and participate in fellowship activities; 4) reviewing and revising the visitor packet that is given out to new visitors; 5) looking for meaningful ways to encourage inactive members to once again become actively involved in the life of the church; and 6) praying for our visitors and those potential new people who the Lord is calling to join us for Sunday worship.

The highlight of our fall activities was hosting a Bring-a-Friend Sunday on November 11, followed by an all-church luncheon. In addition, on recommendation from the Adult Discipleship Ministry Team, we began to host a coffee bar every Sunday morning prior to the start of adult Sunday School.

Our prayer for 2007 is that we will be able to be a warm and encouraging face to everyone who comes through the doors of the SPC, and that God will bless us with a multitude of visitors and repeat visitors. However, in all our planning, we know it is God who does the calling; we just desire to be obedient and to do all of His work here at SPC in a spirit of excellence and hospitality.

Joan Cox, Team Leader

Property Ministry Team

It has been a productive and busy year starting with a large turn out for our spring work day which went very well. I can't remember the property looking so good afterwards. Sadly, with John and Faye McDonnell's move to North Carolina, an important member of "the team" is now missing. We were always able to count on John to do a lot of the little things around the church.

We converted the basement of the manse into an apartment for our new youth pastor. Though work went slowly due to lack of laborers, we were still able to make the place livable by the holidays. For those few that did show up to work (you know who you are), I am very grateful. By doing the work ourselves, the church was able to save a considerable amount of money.

The playground was also updated with new play equipment and mulch provided free of charge by Wickes Arborists.

The year ended with roof repairs completed by Jerry Gattuso and contractors he brought in.

I want to give a special thanks to Israel Rivera for the great job he continues to do and to Lee Ann Weinberg for keeping us updated on work that needs to be done.

Other highlights of 2006:

- Anthony Marsalisi, Israel Rivera and I removing snow from the church sidewalks prior to a special service.
- Two dead trees removed by the Village of Suffern and one "removed" possibly by a truck backing over it.
- Ceiling and walls repaired and painted in the Wissler Room.
- Many smaller jobs that were done throughout the year.

My hope and prayer for 2007 is for more helpers participating in projects to help get this church updated and more beautiful than it already is.

Tracy Heller, Property Team Leader

Missions Ministry Team

In mid-2006, with the move away from committees to Ministry Teams, many of the responsibilities of the old Missions & Outreach Committee were reallocated to two new Ministry Teams: Missions and Community Outreach. Community Outreach deals with outreach concerns that are geographically local to the Suffern/Rockland community in which our church body is located. Missions has an extended outlook, from local all the way to the ends of the earth.

Along with the change in title, the team membership has changed as some members have moved away from the area and others have refocused on other ministry efforts within the church. The new team is led by Tom Rice and Peggy DeKramer. ***The team is small, feeling its way forward, and would welcome participation from others with a vision for mission.***

The overall goals of the Missions team continue to be:

1. To provide financial and other support to domestic and overseas missionaries and missions organizations and projects
2. To provide updates to for the congregation on ministries we support
3. To provide opportunities for the SPC family to reach beyond the walls of this church to share the love of Jesus

Efforts in the second half of 2006 were focused on coordinating two events:

- Hosting two tables at **CareNet Pregnancy Center of Rockland's** annual October fund raising banquet
- Participation in the outpouring of shoebox gifts through Samaritan's Purse **Operation Christmas Child** program in which these boxes are delivered to needy kids all over the globe.

Special offerings and gifts were received from the congregation throughout 2006 totaling \$10,272:

Chosen People Ministries (\$260); CareNet of Rockland (\$500 through the Baby Bottle Boomerang pocket change campaign); Walter Hoving Home (\$850); World Vision (\$2689 through the Planned Famine conducted by our youth); funds for a new classroom for a school in Uganda (\$3000); PRMI's Dunamis Project (\$923); Young Life (\$550); and \$1500 for other designated benevolences.

The congregation also gave \$1803 designated to general Missions which is now being allocated. An initial distribution of \$500 each has been sent to Young Life Ramapo Valley, CareNet Pregnancy Center of Rockland and the Northeast Wee Kirk program (helping equip pastors and lay leaders of small Presbyterian Church congregations in the our region).

In 2007 we seek guidance from the Lord on the direction that Missions involvement should take going forward.

In the name of Him who will gather His church from every tribe, nation and tongue,
Tom Rice – Team Leader

Community Outreach Ministry Team

Although initiated prior to the Ministry Team's inception, a lecture for the community concerning *The DaVinci Code* was sponsored by SPC at the Suffern Library. Dr. Steve Notley presented a well-crafted lecture challenging and refuting errors put forth as fact in the book. All who attended were impressed with the depth of the presentation.

For Halloween, the Ministry Team purchased and distributed stickers to the congregation in an effort to help church members proclaim the Gospel on that day. The various brightly colored stickers included: 'What would Jesus do?', 'Jesus the light of the world', etc. The intent was for the stickers to be given out either by participating host families or by our children as they participated in the trick or treat process. This tied into the *Just Walk Across the Room* outreach program discussed throughout October.

The team assigned various volunteers to contact, as needed, five SPC members who are shut-ins. Cards were sent around Thanksgiving and Christmas to extend the love of Jesus to these members.

Team meetings with Young Life Area Director Carl Whitlatch and his wife Jenny took place in the fall to identify how best we could assist the ministry in achieving its goal of financial stability. The Outreach Team agreed to support YL's fund raising golf outing in any capacity.

With the arrival of 2007, the Outreach Team is reviewing and extending its goal of identifying areas in which we can have an impact. Contact is to be made with the Suffern mayor and Chief of Police to assist in identifying areas and/or people in need. By employing Young Life's slogan of 'earning the right to be heard', we can impact our community for the glory of God.

Harry Roselle, Team Leader

Worship & Prayer Ministry Team

Team Members: Pastors Allen & Debbie Kemp (overseers), Patience Green, Janet Marsalisi, Betty Ann Hearn, Laurie Mouacdie, Joan Raiani, Susan Rice (secretary), and Victoria Shaw

2006 saw several changes at Suffern Presbyterian Church. After much prayer, the pastors were inspired by the Holy Spirit to change the focus of our service to the Lord by changing our committees to Ministry Teams. The general consensus seems to be that this move has breathed new life into our congregation.

Much of the spring was spent brainstorming and planning, but there were still several special events: the Cumberland Quartet concert, the seminar by Kristin Johnson from One-to-One Ministries, an Easter/Passover celebration at the Palisades Mall, and the final Dunamis workshop weekend.

Our fall programming kick-off was a huge success! Rally Sunday was an unforgettable event; the energy generated that sunny day in September continues today. The activities and theme were designed with our kids in mind, but it was a day that was enjoyed by young and old alike. Worshipping God outside, surrounded by the beauty of His creation, was an experience that will not be forgotten anytime soon! (And our Suffern neighbors *did* take notice.)

November was notable for some special services: Bring A Friend Sunday and Pastor Appreciation Day. God coordinated the gifts He gave to so many of our brothers and sisters (of all ages) for two very memorable Sundays.

Another exciting development is that SPC now has a Drama Team! The emphasis that our pastors placed on serving God where our passions are was right on target. The Drama Team members are not only talented, but eager to bring this special form of worship into our Sunday services. The 2006-2007 members are: Lindsay, Lauren, and Tracy Heller, Rachael Kemp, Anthony, Janet and Gabriella Marsalisi, Amy and Lucy Rice, Rick Shaffstall, and Bekah Siau. Anyone who wishes to join us will be warmly welcomed.

Christmas is always a beautiful time at Suffern Presbyterian Church. We offered both adult and children's music presentations, extra fellowship times, and creativity in our worship services. We received a beautiful brass Advent wreath stand as a memorial gift, and new congregants shared testimonies of God's grace during the wreath candle lightings. Laurie Mouacdie did some research and explained the significance of various wreath components to bring extra understanding for the family Advent wreath-making night.

The things God does in our midst continue to amaze us and fill us with awe and gratitude: people giving their lives to Jesus, little children receiving Communion for the first time, teenagers examining and confirming their faith in Jesus, couples sealing their love in the covenant of marriage, babies/grandbabies being born, and even God calling people home. Our times are truly in His hands.

As always we wish to thank all of our volunteers for their efforts to make our worship experience at Suffern Presbyterian Church something that edifies the Body and glorifies our Father in Heaven. There is a lot of work to be done, but we do all things "heartily, as to the Lord and not to men" and in so doing, grow closer to one another. "As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend."

It is our sincere pleasure and privilege to serve God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ with you. We eagerly look forward to 2007 to see what mighty things God will do.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Marsalisi & Patience Green, Co-Team Leaders