



THE LAKEVIEWER

JUNE - JULY - AUGUST

2009

Greetings, Friends!

I had hoped this newsletter would reach you by the end of May so that you would be aware of upcoming events well in advance. I am not there yet, obviously! I will work on more timely delivery.

I have to say, though, that the activity level of the church has reached a constant hum. In this issue, you have a report on the REACH Initiative undertaken by Lakeview in partnership with the Presbytery of Tampa Bay, some photos of Vacation Bible School, an update on the achievements of FAST (Faith and Action for Strength Together), a brief about Operation Attack and a photo of an earlier activity at the Ronald McDonald House on 4th St.

As stated in our last issue, our goal with this publication is to improve communication between the church and its parishioners and friends. We want you to know what's happening so you are better able to participate in Lakeview life. Please tell me what you would like to see in the newsletter in the future. Feel free to make suggestions or even to submit stories. This is a partnership!

Peace,

Kitty Pelster Rawson

Email: eandk@tampabay.rr.com

The REACH Initiative — An Update

By Pastor Todd Sutton

20 months ago I was in a funk. I knew the world was changing for the church, I knew we needed to grow in our discipleship and I knew things needed to change, but I didn't know how to go about it. Of course, that's when Kitty Rawson and I found out about the Presbytery's new REACH Initiative. A program crafted in the best tradition of our connectional system, it offered structure, disciplined study and discernment and ongoing support in helping churches discover their true calling in the world.

18 months ago, our Session was the first in the Presbytery to welcome Gerry Tyer to one our meetings and hear more about the REACH Initiative in depth. 17 months ago, we signed the program's covenant of participation.

12 months ago (last summer), many of us (over 30 to be exact) completed the first task in the program, a REACH Initiative survey. Not that it was easy. Because some of you weren't too keen on

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filling out online surveys and some thought you were too new to have anything to add, but we did it. With a few sermons, a whole bunch of announcements and even some cajoling, we were moving forward.

9 months ago, Session put together our REACH Initiative team (comprised of Diane Klamer, Shavon Louis, Alan McBride and Kitty Rawson). Together with a few alternates when schedules required it, the five of us started attending quarterly meetings with the likes of Paul Nixon (*I Refuse to Lead a Dying Church*), Paul Borden (a church executive in California who has turned the American Baptist churches completely around there) and Jeff Krebiehl (a Presbyterian who has used community organizing to reach people in DC). All along the way, the REACH team has received wise and inspirational instruction.

7 months ago, Session completed a self-study for our church. We did this by dividing the study up into parts and each taking a role in completing our assigned task.

3 months ago, all members of the Lakeview staff were interviewed by REACH Initiative staff. Also, 3 months ago, over 30 Lakeview members and friends (but no staff members or Session members) gathered for lunch after worship and a focus group meeting with Presbytery staff.

1 month ago, members of the Lakeview Session (excluding Todd and Ceska) joined our Executive Presbyter for a Session focus group. After that time, Todd and Ceska joined the group and we had an extended 4 hour workshop.

And now, this month, we received the results of all of this hard work—a report prepared especially for Lakeview using all of the information that has been gathered to date, and that will include: 1) five areas of strength, 2) five areas where we need a little work and 3) five recommendations about how our church can move into the future with the goal and purpose of reaching new disciples for our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ here at church. Pray for the Session as it considers this report.

This is an exciting time for the church. Soon, we will have an opportunity to discuss and decide upon a vision for the future of our church. I hope you will be deep in prayer and open to the Spirit's leading as the Session determines how we are called to follow Jesus Christ into the world here at Lakeview Presbyterian Church. As always, stay tuned . . .



Lakeview Volunteers at Ronald McDonald House

Last month, Shavon Starling-Louis organized a group of volunteers to prepare a meal at Ronald McDonald House. Lakeview volunteers were encouraged to bring a non-Lakeview person along. A group about ten strong prepared a simple spaghetti dinner with a salad. Afterwards, the group toured the facility which houses families of seriously ill or injured children being treated at All-Children's Hospital. Shavon has organized another opportunity, this time to

Group that fixed dinner for prepare lunch on Saturday, June 27. Contact Shavon at *Ronald McDonald House last* 727.458.5500 if you would like to join the group. *month.*

Lakeview Hosts Vacation Bible School

Yasamina McBride and Deb Rogers, both fairly new members of Lakeview and new to the Session this year, have ambitiously and enthusiastically undertaken the first Vacation Bible School at Lakeview in many years. Some of you may wonder why bother when Lakeview's family includes no more than ten occasional children. Oh, you of little faith! The first night, more than 40 children arrived, and the next two weeks more than 30 children enjoyed supper, a Bible story, arts and crafts and, most importantly, dance! Volunteers are welcome for the last two Wednesdays, June 24 and July 1, starting at 6:00pm and running until 8:30pm.



Diane Klammer greets VBS children as they arrive.

(Right) Children and adults rehearse their dance moves.



(Left) children listen to music and rest briefly before the next activity.

Nehemiah 5: "...and I held a great Assembly."

THANK YOU, LAKEVIEW! On April 20, an amazing group of 65 Lakeview members, about the size of our average worship attendance, along with over 2600 other Episcopalians, Catholics, Methodists, Lutheran, Baptists, other Protestants and Jews assembled in answer to God's command to "do Justice" at the FAST Nehemiah Assembly.

Because of YOUR PRESENCE, FAST was able to obtain several commitments from our elected officials in the areas of education, housing and crime and drugs. Pinellas County Schools has agreed to evaluate the effectiveness of discipline programs previously implemented at several schools at FAST's request and hold groups accountable for properly continuing these programs. Regarding housing, officials from Pinellas County, the City of Largo and the City of St. Petersburg agreed to fulfill their previous commitments to develop specific numbers of affordable housing units. Housing officials further agreed to gather housing managers of St. Pete, Largo, Clearwater and the County to come up with a plan for a countywide phone system to provide better access to affordable housing. Regarding crime and drugs, attendees celebrated St. Petersburg's success in clearing up anonymously reports of drug activity. Pinellas County's sheriff has developed a policy against racial profiling, particularly Hispanics. Sheriff Coats further agreed to develop a better re-entry process for offenders transitioning back to the community.

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR SOCIAL JUSTICE EFFORTS!



Pathfinder executive director Betsy McFarland holds Chase at the tree climbing event at Lakeview Church in June. Note the bottle of water held by Devin (left). Two months in a row, Lakeview members offered refreshments of water and grapes to tree climbing participants.

Report from Pathfinder

(Pathfinder is a nonprofit organization that shares space with Lakeview).

Summer is typically is slow(er) time for Pathfinder. This summer, however, Pathfinder is offering several unique camp opportunities. One is an overnight camp with an Ecology/Nature Arts theme. From June 29th – July 3rd, campers aged 8 – 13 can enjoy a week of camp activities at Day Spring. Pathfinder staff will supervise many of Pathfinder's traditional programs in addition to adventure activities such as canoeing, tree climbing and high ropes. The accommodations at Day Spring are very nice and the natural environment is perfect for the ecology and nature arts activities planned for the week. Registration information is available on our website at www.pathfinder-ed.org or please contact Amy Durand in the Pathfinder Office (328-0300, x221).

A grant from the City of St. Petersburg Weed & Seed program will allow Pathfinder to offer a week of summer camp for middle school students from the Childs Park area. The theme of the camp is Leadership/Adventure – Dialogue & Action and is scheduled for June 22-26th.

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And, for the 2nd year in a row, Pathfinder will provide tree-climbing during several camp sessions at Cedarkirk. For many years we have had a partnership with Cedarkirk as one of the primary sites for Pathfinder programs during the school year.

For questions about these or other Pathfinder programs, please feel free to contact Amy Durand (event coordinator) or Betsey McFarland (executive director).

Lakeview member Ed Rawson participates in tree-climbing in May. Ed is also a member of Pathfinder's board.

Operation Attack Summer News

O.A. is open Tuesdays only over the summer and provides food only. On August 11, O.A. reopens on Tuesdays and Thursdays and will distribute kids clothing and food. As a result of a letter sent to Pinellas County Schools, O.A. received donations of Lost & Found clothing from several schools. All the clothing has been picked up. Lakeview members have washed many, many loads.

APSCO has donated a washer and a dryer for the newly renovated O.A. space in the basement of Old Fellowship Hall. Thank you, Al Greco.



In June, Lakeview fans attended a Rays game at Tropicana Field. Rays won, making for many smiles!

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