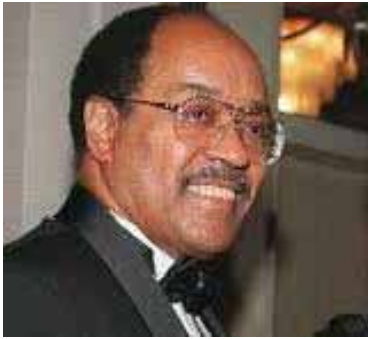




tidings

First United Methodist Church of Germantown
January, 2012 • No. 1
www.fumcog.org



Bill Gray to preach on MLK Sunday

Former U.S. Congressman William H. Gray III will be the speaker at the annual observation of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday on Sunday, January 15 at the 11 am worship service at the First United Methodist Church of Germantown. There will be special music by wonderful young jazz saxophonist Dahi Divine and FUMCOG's beloved vocalist M'B Singley. FUMCOG has observed Dr. King's birthday for many years, including years prior to the establishment of the national holiday. As a part of this celebration, the church announces the recipient of its annual Social and Racial Justice Award. Following the service, there will be a reception in honor of Rev. Gray.

Prior to his 1978 election to Congress, Rev. Gray, as both his father and grandfather before him, was pastor of Bright Hope Baptist Church in Philadelphia, where he developed a politically active ministry and continued his interest in housing and mortgage issues. He retired in 2007, after 35 years.

While in Congress, Rev. Gray rose to the position of chair of the House Budget Committee. He also was elected chairman of the Democratic caucus. In 1998, he was elected Majority Whip of the House of Representatives. Thus he was the first African American to chair a finance committee, the first to head the majority caucus, and the first to achieve the number three position in the leadership in the US House of Representatives. His most notable legislative accomplishment was the passage of the Anti-Apartheid acts of 1985 and 1986, overriding presidential vetoes. President Bill Clinton appointed him as Special Advisor to the President and the Secretary of State for Haitian Affairs.

In 1991, he resigned from the Congress and became President and CEO of the United Negro College Fund. UNCF provides financial assistance to minority students to attend college and supports 39 historically black colleges and universities. When he went to the UNCF there were fewer than 100 programs under its purview. At the time of his retirement eight years later, there were 450 programs under its leadership. He was successful in garnering the largest gift ever received for higher education in America, a one-billion-dollar grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Mr. Gray is currently chairman of Gray Global Strategies, Inc., a business advisory firm. He served as chairman of the Amani Group for five years.

Holiday Church School Schedule

- Jan 8:** New Year's Breakfast.
No 9:45 church school.
11:15 church school resumes.
- Jan 15:** All church school classes will be in session.

THIS SUNDAY! FUMCOG's Annual New Year's Breakfast

Everyone is invited to the **Annual New Year's Breakfast at 9:45 a.m. on Sunday, January 8 in the dining room.** This is a great opportunity to welcome the new year as a church community. Children will have the chance to meet with their Sunday school teachers, and adults can learn about Adult Academy plans for the winter.

What food to bring:

alphabetical by last name:

A-F: cold cereals; **G-L:** Fruit; **M-R:** Milk & juice; **S-Z:** muffins, donuts, bagels

Planning ahead? Put this on your calendar!

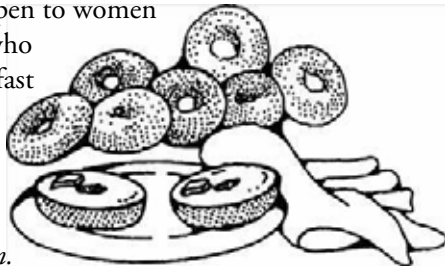
The next Administrative Council Meeting will be Monday, January 30, at 7:30 pm, in Pilling Hall.

New Date: Jan. 21 for Pat Squire's Book Review and Breakfast

Rescheduled: on Saturday morning, January 21*, Pat Squire will offer her annual review of selected new books in time for Valentine's Day gift giving. Once again, Pat has graciously offered her home for the occasion. Come for a pot luck breakfast at 10:00 a.m. and stay to enjoy Pat's perennially popular presentation. Open to women and men, i.e. everyone who enjoys a congenial breakfast and a good book!

[*Back-up date in case of snow: February 4.]

Sponsored by the
United Methodist Women.



Congratulations!

Daniel Benjamin Giron Toensmeier was born on November 21, 2011, to Marikler and Eric Toensmeier of Holyoke, MA. Daniel is the grandson of **Anne Toensmeier**.

Lydia Jean (Zetick) Pawlikowski and **Andy Pawlikowski** announce the birth of **Lila Annette Pawlikowski**, their first child, the 7th grandchild of **Bonni and Ed Zetick**

Happy 75th Birthday Fred Clark! January 8, 2012

Come join us in Pilling Hall after worship this Sunday to celebrate Fred's birthday with a piece of birthday cake.

Meeting Alert!

The next Administrative Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 30th at 7:30 pm. This date has been on the Church calendar and checked against the NFL playoff schedule. The meeting will in part focus on important business including a report from the Renovations Committee and the Church Budget for 2012. The meeting agenda is forthcoming. If you have items that you would like to have on the agenda please forward to Johnhchapman@comcast.net. Hope to see you on the 30th.

B-I-N-G-O and More!

Mark your calendars for FUMCOG (& friends) Family Fun Night, February 4, 5-8 pm. Please join us for a family (that means everyone!) fun night of bingo and food on Saturday, February 4.

Activities begin at 5 pm in Pilling Hall. In addition to Bingo, there will be a puzzle exchange table and a home-made soup contest. For those who have a puzzle at home and want to exchange it for another puzzle, there will be a special table set up for exchanging puzzles. For all you chefs, novice or experienced, enter the home-made soup contest by bringing a pot of your favorite soup. Contest categories will be the following: Most Heartwarming, Most Unusual Flavor, Best Vegetarian, and Best Non-Vegetarian. Salad, bread, beverages and paper supplies will be provided. We ask everyone to help share in the fun by bringing a newspaper-wrapped or paper-bag wrapped prize of \$2 or less that will be part of the mystery surprises. If you have any questions or wish to help with the event, please feel free to contact Marilyn Moyer (gtown73@hotmail.com) or Rosey Nissley (nissley@comcast.net)



Book Discussion Thursday, January 19

The next book discussion is on *Cutting for Stone* by Abraham Verghese. Dr. Verghese is a prolific medical writer, but this fictional departure is absorbing, engrossing, endearing, and many other adjectives for a very richly written book. Twin brothers are born under extraordinary circumstances in Ethiopia on the brink of revolution. Join us for a lively discussion on Thursday, Jan. 19, at 7:30 pm at the home of Ruth & Barbara, 51 West Walnut Lane, a block from the church. Call 215-280-2686 for questions or directions.

Tax-Assisted Giving To FUMCOG

If you have a traditional IRA and are over 70½ years old, the Federal government requires you to withdraw a specified percentage from your IRA before the end of the year, and you will have to pay tax on that amount unless you direct your custodian to disburse it to a charitable organization.

You have the option to roll over up to \$100,000 from your traditional IRA to FUMCOG without increasing your taxable income or paying any additional tax. These tax-free rollover gifts could be any amount up to \$100,000 this year, and the gift satisfies your required minimum distribution for the year. However, these provisions allowing tax-free gifts are set to expire on Dec. 31, 2011. You must complete your transaction before then. Just direct your IRA custodian to write a check to FUMCOG for at least the amount you are required to withdraw. (NOTE: because you will pay no tax on the withdrawal, you cannot take a charitable deduction for the gift.)

Whatever your age, if you have stock that has appreciated in value, you may give that stock to FUMCOG and take a full charitable deduction for the present value of the stock without paying capital gains tax on the appreciation. Just contact one of the following for instructions:

- **Larry Pethick,**
larrypethick@verizon.net 610-296-3667
- **Julie Conover,**
jcon.snite@verizon.net, 215-848-2497,
- **Dan Ross,**
dross@rossmccrae.com, 215-247-3550.

Finally, many employers will match any charitable donation you make, even to a church. Check whether your employer is one of them. Do not make any assumptions.

The Debra Symonette Memorial Prayer Shawl Ministry

Meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month between 7 and 9 pm at the home of Mariana Eckardt. Any questions, please call Mariana Eckardt at 215-843-5422.

Caring Connection

The Caring Connection is a group of FUMCOGers who are willing to provide short term support (up to several days) to church members who are dealing with surgery, illness, personal emergencies, etc. We have provided meals, transportation to doctor's appointments, help with essential errands and companionship. Assistance for yourself or a fellow church member can be obtained either through notifying the pastor or calling the new contact person, Bill Tkacs at 215 983-6768. New members to the group are always welcome. Please let Bill Tkacs know if you are interested.

FUMCOG Quilters

FUMCOG Quilters will meet Tuesday, January 24 at 1 pm in Pilling Hall. Please call Mariana Eckardt at 215-843-5422 for more information.

PENNY FUND

There is a fishbowl on the coffee counter, in Pilling Hall on Sundays, for the Methodist Home for Children Penny Fund. Your donations of pennies is given the Methodist Home to help them with their children and family programs. All donations are greatly appreciated.

Stamps/Postcards/ Campbell's labels

The stamps and postcards go to the Methodist Hospital Auxiliary in South Philadelphia to help them serve their patients. The Campbell's labels go to the Methodist Children's Home at 4300 Monument Road, Philadelphia. There is a box on the window sill in Pilling Hall by the books for these donations.

Altar Flowers

Now that we are back into our fall routines, it's time to think about the flowers that adorn our altar every Sunday. Donating altar flowers is a beautiful way to remember a loved one or to honor someone special in our lives. We can also donate flowers to commemorate a special event - birthday, anniversary, graduation - and share it with our FUMCOG family. If flowers have already been donated for the date you prefer, we can arrange for bouquets to be placed in front of the lectern or the pulpit. **Please call Jeanne Bustard at 215-247-2248 or email her at jeanne2216@comcast.net to order your altar flowers.**

Food Cupboard

Remember to bring in food for toddlers, cans and dry packaged foods for the food cupboard. Put it in the baskets in the vestibules and we will deliver it to Journey of Faith. They are a part of the Share program for the City of Philadelphia and they distribute it to local people.

Hymn-a-thon Fundraiser • Sunday, February 5, 2012

1 pm - 5 pm in the FUMCOG Sanctuary

The music program at FUMCOG is pleased to announce its annual fundraiser coming up in October. Building on successes from previous years, we will be singing hymns for much of the afternoon, following church services and Linger Lunch. There will also be some exciting new twists which will be announced in our next Tidings in October.

Although the event is a month away, the important work begins now. As to the important details, please read below:

What exactly is a hymn-a-thon?

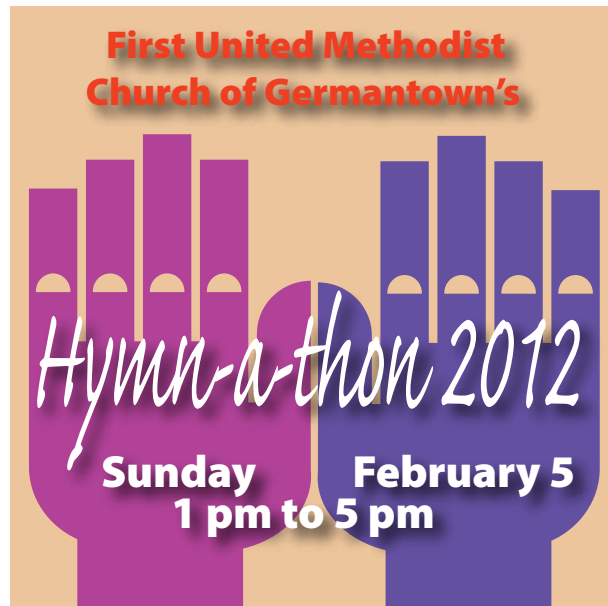
A hymn-a-thon is a fun fundraiser where we all get to sing hymns, listen to organ improvisation based on our favorite hymn tunes and earn some funds for the music program at FUMCOG.

Why is this event especially important this year?

Do you remember all the legwork we needed to balance the budget? It was a challenge, and we did it! But these funds only serve our day-to-day needs for the church music program itself (Director of Music salary, cantors/soloists, organ maintenance, etc.) The funds that we are raising through the hymn-a-thon are 1) from outside sponsors (who will give based on your recruitment!) and 2) are allotted for special music needs – consider it the “icing on the cake” if you will. See below for an explanation of how the funds raised from hymn-a-thons have been used in the past and how we expect to use this year’s proceeds.

How can I help/pledge?

1) *By “purchasing a hymn” to be sing and/or improvised upon.* A minimum \$10 gets you a hymn sung, all verses. A minimum \$20 gets you a personal



organ improvisation. These hymns can be requested in memorial or honor of a loved one or relative.

2) *By recruiting pledges.* Please bring this article to your place of employment, your child’s school or give it to a friend. This outside support is very important.

Who to contact?

Kevin O’Malia and Barbara Mitchell will have forms and will be accepting pledges every Sunday from January 8 until February 5 following church services in Pilling Hall. You may also e-mail your requests to omalial@fumcog.org.

How have we used funds in the past?

The funds raised have been used to purchase the robes for the children’s choir, purchase materials for the chancel and children’s choirs, used for a high-profile concert series (including Bright Hope Baptist Church Celestial Choir, Rutgers University Collegium Musicum and our own choirs performing the Fauré Requiem, the Fairmount Chamber Orchestra, among others)

How do we expect to use the proceeds of Hymn-a-thon 2012?

Our concerts enrich the lives of our congregants through beautiful and diverse music, as well as serving as outreach to the greater Philadelphia community. Our concert season this year includes Britten’s Ceremony of Carols, the Keystone State Boychoir, the Fairmount Chamber Orchestra will again augment our Easter worship, and Mainline Brass will be performing for next year’s Candlelight. We are also implementing two additional Higher Ground services with full band!

In addition to concerts and worship, our annual spring concert event, we are looking to incorporate the Cosline/Conners memorial concert series into our annual series. The next concert will be May 20, 2012, featuring Leonard Bernstein’s exuberant cycle Chichester Psalms.

And as a gift to a dedicated high school student, funds from the Edwin Heilakka memorial are now being implemented again for an annual choral scholarship. For pertinent information to this program, please take a brochure from the church office, or contact Kevin O’Malia for details.

Funds raised from the hymn-a-thon will further all of these endeavors and more!

Please give thoughtfully and prayerfully of your time in these endeavors. See Barbara Mitchell or Kevin O’Malia for forms and to learn how you may be needed to contribute. Also check the website for updates and January Tidings for further information. Let’s help keep the music ministry vibrant and growing, which enables our other ministries at FUMCOG to shine their lights of justice and peace!

Upcoming Concerts at Fumcog

Just 4 weeks until the Hymnathon!

Sunday, February 5, 2012 • 1-5 pm

Hymn-a-thon Fundraiser

Hymn, hymn and more hymns! That's what we do in this annual fundraiser. We invite your pledges to hear and sing your favorite hymns. More information will be available, along with pledge sheets, in January. Proceeds benefit FUMCOG's dynamic music program, for giving concerts, for supplies and equipment, and to further the Edwin Heilakka memorial choral scholar fund. Organist Kevin O'Malia plays and improvises.

Sunday, March 4, 2012 • 4 pm

Keystone State Boychoir

One of the regions most prominent choral ensembles comes to FUMCOG in giving a concert in celebration of African-American History month (OK, it's a few days after...). The ensemble has toured all seven continents. Stephen Fisher and Joseph Fitzmartin lead over 100 boys and teens in a premier performance highlighting the history of the Johnson House and its part in the Underground Railroad.

Sunday, April 8, 2012 • 11 am

Easter Worship

Join the adult and children's choirs fo FUMCOG in celebrating the resurrection of our Lord! The Fairmount Chamber Orchestra again joins us to augment our worship. Trumpets will be accompanying the festive hymn-singing. Choral works featured include composers George Frederick Handel and Joseph Haydn.

Sunday, May 20, 2012

Cosline/Connors Memorial Concert

This annual series, begin in 2010, will feature the combined choirs of FUMCOG singing masterpieces of the 20th Century. Included in this program will be Leonard Bernstein's immortal Chichester Psalms, Sir John Tavener's Funeral Ikos (performed at the funeral of Lady Diana Spencer) and choral settings of the African-American spiritual by Moses Hogan.

On the twelfth day
of Christmas,

FUMCOG
gave to me...

Twelve kids in choir

Eleven pot luck dinners

Ten recorders

Nine meet and mingles

Eight trustees meetings

Seven spirit singers

Six linger lunches

Five thousand cranes

Four soloists

Three boyscouts

Two hymnathons

And a tower that's
strong and crack free

Go ahead, just try
singing it. It works!
Hint: sing it with your
friends, its better!

Caringbridge: A wonderful way to stay in touch.

by Wayne Snover (Editor's note: Wayne submitted the article, but I decided to add selections from his journal. I tried not to invade Wayne and Jan's privacy. The entire journal is touching, hilarious and deeply caring. Read it. Thanks, Wayne

On Saturday night, October 29, my wife, Jan Tebbel, fell from a ladder suffering a concussion, skull fracture, and bleeding on the brain. She was rushed to the trauma unit at Temple University Hospital. For two days she was in intensive care and remained in the hospital for six days. By Monday following the accident it was clear to me from the number of people who were contacting me that word was out and that keeping people informed could be a monumental, time consuming task. As I was lamenting the lack of time to

"She is able to move all her body parts, wiggling her toes and holding people's hands. When asked by the nurse she was able to name the president, governor, and mayor and as we know there are a lot of people without concussions who can't name the governor."

keep everyone informed a friend of mine suggested caringbridge.org. Caringbridge is a website where you can enumerate the condition of the injured person, make updates to that person's condition, and where people can leave messages. This has turned out to be a godsend. The home page of the site is a welcome page where you get a sense of the site as well as various

"There are ways you can tell Jan is getting better. For one when she's in pain now she thinks she shouldn't ask for pain medication."

summary information, Secondly there is a "My Story" page where you can enumerate the initial details or summarize the events that initiated created the site. But the real essence of the website is the Journal and

"I've learned that a physical therapist helps you to move your body parts correctly while an occupational therapist works on your doing things like flipping pancakes."

Guestbook pages. The Journal page is where the creator of the site puts updates

"I said she should talk to our daughter, Melinda, who is in New Orleans. Now I'm here to tell you that that phone call did more for Jan than anything Andy or I did. Not that he and I are worthless but Jan just got stronger and better. Nothing works like a mother daughter conversation."

on the ensuing events and condition of the patient. For the first month or so I was doing daily updates. This might seem like a lot but to only have to write one

"She had a good lunch, eating more than ever before. Had one hard boiled egg, mashed potatoes, jello, and ice tea."

journal entry which then can be read by any number of people is much more time effective than calling family members one by one or answering the same question from multiple callers. Another advantage

"I decided I'd wash the clothes she was wearing when she went to the hospital. As it turns out I found out that when the trauma unit gets you from the ambulance they cut off all your clothes."

is that when you hear from someone after two weeks who has just heard about the event you can refer them to the journal entries to bring them up to speed rather

"Jan is home. Walk from car to house went well despite all the steps. She's now resting."

than spend a considerable amount of time completely informing them. Besides there may be interesting or important things in the journals that you forget to tell someone when recounting the story. For the person about whom the site was created the real value of caringbridge.

"Signs your wife is getting better.1. She says "I had a dish of YOUR Ben and Jerry's Phish Food ice cream today while you were gone."

"Yesterday Jan decided she was well enough to read this entire website. She very much appreciates all of you who have taken the time to write something."

org is the "Guestbook" page. This is where people who visit the site can leave messages.

Jan's first entry. "Hello, my friends, Your wonderful messages have been such a help! It's been 3 weeks, and the improvement has been slow, but with such an injury, there's no place for impatience."

Cards that come in the mail are great and flowers are nice but a daily dose of caring messages is really meaningful and helpful to the recovery process. To date Jan's Caringbridge site has had over 3500 visits. This includes multiple visits by individuals but still gives an indication of the advantage of this method of communication. People have mentioned to me how much they appreciated the updates and yet perhaps many of these people wouldn't have been kept informed if I'd tried to do it by calls or word of mouth. All in all the experience has been positive for everyone. If you haven't seen the site and would like to take a look at Jan's you can go to www.caringbridge.org/visit/jtebbel. I would strongly recommend it as a way to keep people informed.

"Jan writing here because I want to shout it from the rooftops. We went to the neurologist today and he gave me clearance to do anything I want to. I am incredibly heartened. I can't thank you all enough for all your support during this (almost) 6 weeks of recuperation. I'm filled with joy to think about entering all the different parts of my life again, to see friends and go out on errands or to a restaurant. I look forward to doing things without being worried about my health: playing music, taking a walk alone, or maybe someday with the dog, working around the house and sending out our Christmas cards!"



Mayor Michael Nutter noticed the results, and he lauded the students before, and during, an assembly at Germantown High. "I hope you all understand that you did something very special and very important," Nutter said of their contributions to a Morris Jeff Community School which almost closed permanently due to hurricane damage. "I'm here today because I'm very proud of you. The stained glass will help with the healing process."

The Stained Glass Project: Windows that Open Doors

(<http://www.facebook.com/>)

By Paula Mandel

The Stained Glass Project) just completed its 5th year bringing art and creativity to inner city youngsters who are part of the After School Program of the First United Methodist Church of Germantown. My partner and fellow artist, Joan Myerson Shrager and I had the dream of doing more than make our own art for exhibition.

We founded this project because we wanted to spread our love of the creative process to kids less fortunate, many who never even had art in school, so we founded a stained glass class in an old church in Germantown. Our students come from a school labeled in the Philadelphia Inquirer as "persistently dangerous." Each semester we all enjoy the

collaboration, creativity and community of our diverse group of Muslims, Christians, Jews, old, young, well off and poor, artists and students working together to make windows for children throughout the United States and the world. I have found this involvement to be absolutely life changing for the kids and for me.

Last year a set of 18 windows made by our kids went to a school for AIDS Orphans in South Africa. This year they made windows for students at the Morris Jeff Community School in New Orleans, a school that had been destroyed by Katrina. In its new iteration it is now the first International Baccalaureate school in the city.

Principal Pat Perkins wrote, When we were first contacted by the After School Program of First United Methodist Church of Germantown to be the recipients of student designed and crafted stained glass windows for our school, "I was amazed at the offer. Now that this gift has become a reality, I am beyond words. The love and generosity

that were poured into this project are symbolic of the spirit and values that we work each day to instill in our students. We will forever be grateful for and value these crafted works of art and will display them with pride in our school. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts." During the year, we have sent messages from our students along with images and videos to Morris Jeff, keeping them apprised of the work that was done.

Miracle in Germantown: Windows to a new world

Joan Myerson Shrager

I've been a professional artist for more than 40 years, with a résumé filled with small group and solo exhibitions of my art. From about 1993 to 2004 I was director of and partner with other artists in a successful art gallery in Philadelphia. But I retired from the gallery in 2004 when my husband grew too ill for me to work. He died in 2005 after our battling

Continued next page

Continued from previous page

his cancer for almost 12 years. After my husband's death my life felt bleak.

In the middle of my despair four years ago, one of my artist friends from the gallery approached me to help start an after-school art program at a neighborhood church in Germantown. I hesitated but thought I needed the distraction. The glass artist Paula Mandel persuaded me to be her sidekick in a stained glass class at the First United Methodist Church of Germantown.

I'm a painter and digital artist with no background in stained glass, so I wondered whether I was suited for such an undertaking. Besides, quite frankly, as a senior citizen I felt uneasy about driving to a community where violence is in the news almost daily, and where the high school for which the program



is designed is often described as one of Philadelphia's most troubled.

Despite my misgivings, I decided to try it.

The first day I arrived at First United, a venerable old church with a history of activism, I walked down a long flight of stairs to a dingy basement area with poor lighting and no equipment or supplies. The kids looked at me warily, and so did I at them. These black teens engaged in quite a lot of posturing, roughhousing and back talking.



Frankly, I felt a little uneasy. What was I doing in these dreary surroundings, a white Jewish grandmother whose peers are retired?

Grandmother whistles

Toward the back of the noisy and cavernous room sat a short, silver-haired white woman at a long table piled high with boxes of snacks. This was the wonderful Dr. Barbara Mitchell, a retired Edison High vice-principal and former Peace Corps volunteer who now voluntarily heads the church's Afterschool Program for Germantown High students.

This little woman stuck two fingers in her mouth, and out came a whistle that could have started the Kentucky Derby. Suddenly, all eyes were upon her and the kids went silent. She announced the start of a stained glass class and invited kids to sign up for it.

The kids, I subsequently discovered, look to her for love, discipline and support. Some who came from Africa call her "Grandmother" as a sign of respect.

Several women artists who, like me, lacked previous experience with stained glass joined Paula and me and we started The Stained Glass Project in the After School Program. Initially we relied on Paula to help us cut the glass properly or solder the lead until we learned to do it ourselves.

When adults ask for help

A side benefit of this collaboration is that we artists all recognize our inadequacies and don't hesitate to ask for help, even from the kids themselves. Consequently, this project might be the first time these kids have worked with adults who are not authority figures.

At first our goal was to have the students make personal wall hangings and wearable art. But then Sharon Katz, a South African singer, songwriter and storyteller, entered the picture. Sharon had founded The Peace Train, originally a group of racially mixed children that Nelson Mandela compared to the Rainbow Nation he envisioned for South Africa.

Her dream was to build a school in Ngcolosi near Durban, South Africa, so AIDS orphans and other children wouldn't have to walk three hours each way to get there. That school is well on its way to completion, with a little help from friends like Pete Seeger, who performed with Sharon in a benefit concert. With Sharon's arrival our Stained Glass Project took on a higher purpose: We decided to collaborate with her and make stained glass windows for her school.

No gadgets in Africa

At first, the kids weren't very enthusiastic. Some preferred to make only glass pendants. Others wanted to make glass





but we trusted them to work with sharp instruments, glass shards and hot soldering irons, and that trust paid off, because the kids were protective of themselves and others.

Over the course of the year, when some students had to leave for other activities, others stepped in to complete started windows. In a neighborhood where protecting one's "turf" is usually paramount, kids helped each other.



designs suitable only for video- and TV-watching American kids. But they learned from Sharon that their South African counterparts lacked TVs, computers, video games and cell phones, so American pop icons are meaningless to them.

Soon our kids began to envision beautiful images for South African children to look at as they gazed out the windows during class. They began designing glass windows with birds, the South African flag, the American flag, animals and a park with a bench and a soccer ball.

The windows were crafted using gorgeous colored glass that the students selected from glass donated by other glass artists. The choice of color, design and shape was strictly their own.

The only input from the adults concerned whether the glass could be cut and shaped according to their design. Sometimes, they learned, we had to alter a design to fit the limitations of the material. Sometimes the glass broke or a shape couldn't work.

But they also learned to improvise and to ask for help. They also learned that even when a piece of glass broke or something didn't work as planned, they were not failures: They learned they could change direction and still achieve success.

Dangerous instruments

Now, not only were students working hard on their own windows, they were helping fellow students with some of the toughest skills, like glass cutting and soldering. It was a dangerous pursuit,

In the end, most windows were made by more than one student artist. Instead of the customary friction and suspicion between Africans and African-Americans kids, these kids laughed, teased, applauded, hugged and congratulated each other. Kids who had thought themselves failures rose to the challenge and became leaders. The best part of creating her window, one young artist said, was having "the team" work with her.

Gleaming display

As for me: During a personally trying time, I met wonderful kids I might never have known. My focus shifted from my own troubles to the inspiration I felt just

from being in their company.

By the end of the season we had completed 18 windows. On our last day together for the season Paula and I lined these windows up along a ledge—the first time we'd seen all 18 on display together. All of us gasped at the profusion of brilliant, gleaming glass works of art that this group had created. Next year we expect to begin making windows for another worthy prospect.

There's no better antidote for low self-esteem than having your teachers and peers look up to you because you perform so well. That was a regular occurrence in our class. I think it's the magic we need to heal our society



Deadline Information

Submissions made simple: just email bulletin announcements and Tidings articles to publications@fumcog.org by the following deadlines:

Wednesdays, 5:00 pm: Deadline for the next Sunday's Bulletin, and "This week at FUMCOG." Please limit bulletin announcements to 9 or 10 lines. Send to publications@fumcog.org

Each Month under Tidings Schedule is the deadline for the next month's issue of Tidings. Tidings will be published once a month. Send to publications@fumcog.org

Items may be submitted via e-mail, either as a WORD or TEXT document, to the address above or mailed to **TIDINGS, c/o FUMCOG, 6001 Germantown Ave. Philadelphia, PA 19144**; or even hand-delivered to the Church Office. However, emailed articles are preferred.

Got Late-breaking News? Post up-to-date FUMCOG event info on the FUMCOG website by emailing wsnover@fumcog.org.

To whom do I send my announcements?

We have several avenues of "getting the word out" to FUMCOGers. If you have an announcement for the website please email Wayne at wsnover@fumcog.org, for Hot Topics email office@fumcog.org, for all hard copy publications email Bruce McNeel at publications@fumcog.org. For calendar updates and room reserves please contact the office.

Tidings Schedule:

**Tidings is on a monthly schedule.
The next issue will be published by February 3
The deadline for submissions is Jan 30.
Earlier is always appreciated.**

Contact Us

To reach the church office from Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4:30 pm, call 215-438-3677. You may leave a voicemail after hours. Visit our web site at www.fumcog.org. In case of emergency or after hours need for pastoral care, the staff may be reached through the Church Office voicemail. **To schedule use of the church building, contact the office during regular business hours.**

Our Mission

The First United Methodist Church of Germantown (FUMCOG) is a diverse, urban community of faith that seeks to experience and worship God through Jesus' message of love and inclusion and the mystery of grace expressed through his life. We affirm our commitment by working together, taking risks for social justice and peace in our community, our city, our nation and our world.

E-mail

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Lorelei Toombs: | toombs@fumcog.org |
| Kevin O'Malia: | omaliam@fumcog.org |
| Bruce McNeel: | publications@fumcog.org |
| Andy Snover: | snover@fumcog.org |
| Church Office: | office@fumcog.org |
| Tidings: | publications@fumcog.org |
| After School Program: | asp@fumcog.org |
| Webmaster: | wsnover@fumcog.org |



FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
OF GERMANTOWN

6001 Germantown Ave. Philadelphia, PA 19144