

The Visitor

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September, 2007



A note from Rev. Richard Rose...

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I am excited to kickoff the new church year with you. We have many roads to walk together over the course of the next several months. One challenge I see which lies before us is to further define who we are as a church. What do we mean to the local community as FBC Ithaca? What is our role and responsibility with Cornell and IC students? How will we more effectively engage issues of social justice in the community? These are just a few of the questions I hope that we will address in the coming months. Please feel free to let me know if you have ideas or thoughts about these questions.

Furthermore, I hope that you will join me in reading Marcus Borg's book *The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith*. In anticipation of Borg's visit to Ithaca in October, I plan to read his book and to use it in Bible study, participate in adult education classes, and to incorporate some of Borg's ideas into my sermons to assist us in better defining ourselves as Christians. Having heard Borg last year, I was once again firmly reminded that as liberal Christians we truly can be passionate about our faith and theology!

Peace,
Rich

Bible Study Back on Monday Nights

This fall evening Bible study will resume beginning September 17th at 7:00 pm. For the first month we will be reading and discussing Marcus Borg's book *The Heart of Christianity*. In anticipation of Borg's arrival in Ithaca for three days, October 12th – 14th, we will endeavor to immerse ourselves in his seminal work. If you would like to obtain a discounted copy of the book, please see Debbie Allen. We hope to see you Monday's at 7pm.



"Religion without humanity is very poor human stuff."

~Sojourner Truth~

Emancipated Slave, Abolitionist, Preacher



Farmworker Rights Are Human Rights

by Seth Lyons, Alex Acerra, and Zeke Rediker

In 1970, a wealthy industrialist named Herman Cohn donated three farms located in Wayne County, New York to Cornell University. The land had previously been the summer home for Cohn, who had employed about forty-five migrant laborers on his land, which worked seasonally picking mostly apples, peaches and cherries. Cornell decided to use this land for agricultural research, and continued to employ the migrant laborers who had worked the land under Cohn. These workers, however, lived and worked under wretched conditions, such as sub-par housing.

Cornell's collusion in this matter soon became public news, and spawned an outcry from students and community activists alike. After deliberating different options for the labor camp, the dean of the School of Agriculture and Life Sciences decided to bulldoze the camp and displace the workers in 1971. This caused additional outcry from students and faculty, further pressuring Cornell to respond. The ultimate result was the creation of the Cornell Migrant Program, a project designed to improve the lives of farmworkers. Herb Engman, senior extension associate, joined the program in 1972 and became director in 1979.

We recently had the chance to sit down with Professor Engman, who spoke with us about the history of the Cornell Migrant Program and farmworkers in upstate New York. We touched on a variety of issues, including the challenges faced by farmworkers today as well as recent advances that have been made to ease their plight.

One of the largest issues facing farmworkers today is that they are unable to organize. Unlike workers in other industries, migrant farmworkers in New York State do not have protected collective bargaining rights. Many farmworkers who are undocumented live in a constant state of fear – deportation and exploitation are constant concerns in the lives of many of these workers. Unlike many other professions, farmworkers neither receive mandatory overtime pay nor a day of rest.

Throughout the 1990s, the Cornell Migrant Program fought tirelessly to gain equality for farmworkers under New York state law by training farmworkers and their allies in the public policy process. Their efforts resulted in tangible gains for the farmworker community. In 1996, the New York state legislature passed a bill mandating that farm-owners provide clean drinking water in the fields. In 1998, a law was passed stating that latrines must be provided for workers in the fields. In 2000, the progress of the farmworker allies accelerated, culminating in the passing of a minimum wage law for farmworkers.

It is important to note, however, that these statutes are not without certain stipulations. A farm-owner employs less than ten workers in a particular work zone, he does not have to provide restrooms for his workers. Similarly, if a farm-owner employs less than four workers in one location, he does not have to provide clean drinking water for his employees. To this day, farmworkers struggle for basic human rights within our society, especially equality under the law.

Contrary to popular belief, individuals can influence public policy. According to Engman, "one of the most effective things an individual can do is contact your state legislators, regardless of your home location in the state, to tell them you support equal status under law for farmworkers. Legislators pay attention when they start getting communications about any one topic." In recent years, farmworker advocates have focused on passing legislation through the New York State legislature. Both Barbara Lifton, the Assembly Person for Tompkins and parts of Cortland County, and Sheldon Silver, the leader of the NYS Assembly, have shown strong support for farmworkers' rights. In particular, they have supported a bill nicknamed the "Omnibus bill," which would remove most of the exclusions from equal protection of law for farmworkers.

Seth, Alex, and Zeke are students in the Cornell University class, "Farmworkers". Emphasis in the class is on migrant farmworkers in the United States, mostly from the Caribbean and mainland Latin America, with an increasing focus as the semester progresses on farmworkers in central and upstate New York. This article is part of their "service learning" project for the class.



~~Peace Camp~~

A very big thank you to Kris Scott for the many hours of preparation and facilitation of peace camp this year! According to both the participants and their parents, it was a wonderful week of learning, sharing and making new friends. Special thanks to Cameron Younger, Bill Abeles, Janet Cotraccia and Jennifer Lawrence, for helping Kris throughout the week.

Marcus J. Borg will be in Ithaca the weekend of October 12 to 14. Marcus Borg retired this Spring from the Philosophy Department at Oregon State University, where he held the Hundere Chair in Religion and Culture. Internationally known in both academic and church circles as a biblical and Jesus scholar, he is the author of fourteen books, including the best sellers *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* (1994) and *The Heart of Christianity* (2003). Saturday, October 13 the First Presbyterian Church will sponsor a seminar with 3 lectures by Borg from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The titles are "A Tale of Two Christianities: American Christianity Today," "Telling the Story of Jesus Today," and "God's Passion and Ours." The cost is \$25 if postmarked to the Presbyterian Church by October 6.

In coordination with this event, the first four adult education classes of the fall (Sept 16 to Oct 7) will consist of discussions prompted by Borg's book *The Heart of Christianity*. Copies of the book should be available through the church. Borg has written a companion book with guidelines and thought-provoking questions for discussions about our individual beliefs. Debbie Allen and Bill Abeles will facilitate these classes. Adult education will be at 11:30 a.m. following the service.



Request For Prayer...

The folks in the Enfield Fellowship Baptist Church (who have been meeting in members houses), are contemplating purchasing the building and property of the local United Methodist Congregation. They are asking that we pray that they know the mind of God in deciding whether or not to pursue this opportunity, and if they do pursue it, that the financing fall quickly into place. Thanks for your prayers. ~George Norton, Area Minister Living Waters Association ABC/NYS

"Southern Tier Gender Alliance" is a non-profit organization formed to provide support for people who are transgendered and those who care about them. We strive to promote a more positive image of transgendered persons through outreach and education. Each month, a topic is presented on issues concerning the transgendered community ranging from legal name changes, laser hair removal or simply, how to apply makeup. Everyone at First Baptist is welcome to attend our meetings which are on the second Wednesday of each month at First Baptists Church from 7:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m. For more information, please contact Elyssa Kingsbury.

**Choir will begin
Thursday, September 13th, 7-8:30 PM.
New Members Welcome!
Contact Jennifer at 277-SONG (7664).**



The New Creation Singers is a small worship band that strives to provide meaningful acoustic music in the folk and contemporary genres for services at First Baptist. The group provides music about once a month for the Sunday morning worship services at First Baptist. We draw our music from the varied musical experiences of members of the group, contemporary Christian music, the more traditional folk idiom- wherever we find meaningful music that interprets to us and, we hope, to the congregation, God's unconditional love and his working in our lives. On occasion we also have provided music for various community programs, including during registration activities for local Crop Walks and, more recently, performed an evening concert at the Norton Chapel of Keuka College as part of the 75th annual summer retreat of the American Baptist Men of New York State.

We usually rehearse about twice monthly, on Monday evenings. If you are interested in participating, either vocally or on the instrument of your choice, please contact Dave Caughey (dac5@cornell.edu or 273-7864); we'd love to have you join us!

Garage sale a big success!

Thanks to the hard work of many, the annual FBC garage sale was a social and financial success. To paraphrase a commercial:
Proceeds from garage sale, bake sale and café: approximately \$3000
Number of items sold: well over 1000
Hours spent: over 40 people sorting, pricing, setting up and cleaning up for over 300 person-hours
Sense of camaraderie and community spirit: priceless!

Thanks to all who helped make this annual event happen:

Sue Hemsath
Dick Fielding
Paul Charles
Judy Kennison and Marlene Sack
Joan Anderson
Martinez Family
Amanda and Curt Ufford
Cottraccia Family
Cameron Younger
Linda Nicholson
Sue Eymann and Tony Lister
Angela Scheuerer
Naomi Hollister
Betty Brown
Pam Talbott
David and Linda Caughey
Liz Wilkinson
The Visitor

Jan Butler
Tina Hilsdorf
Amy Aittama
Andrea and Bill Staffeld
Frank, Louise and Lars Mudrak
Rich and Renee Rose
Helen Freeman
Josie Zanfordino
Elyssa Kingsbury
Sarah Zipfel
Shella Chace and Mary Wimsatt
Kate Miller
Mary and Norm Rollins
Julie Costie
Martha Holden
Tae Hemsath
Eric Evans

September 2007

Zambian Children's Fund – Big News & Good News

From Louise Mudrak, Sue Eymann and Tony Lister

Thankyou to everyone who contributed to drip irrigation equipment and to the Chishawasha Kids With Cameras project!! And to everyone who bought Julie Costie's bread with proceeds going to the ZCF Ambuya Project!

Our ZCF Working Group has been busy and is again swinging into full action this fall. We work hard on behalf of the Chishawasha Children's Home of Zambia (CCHZ), laugh a lot, feel good about what we do, and stay very humble as we learn a lot together. We meet at least once a month in homes or churches (First Baptist and Unitarian Churches are the anchors) and include anyone in the area who wants to work with us. Call Louise Mudrak if you want to discuss joining (273-3825).

Sustainable Agriculture –

We worked with Chapin Living Waters (www.chapinlivingwaters.org) and sent a Super Bucket Drip Irrigation kit to Chishawasha. The gardens are prospering and help contribute to the food supply at the orphanage. Chapin has shipped a container of Bucket Kits to Malawi. This fall we will be working to get kits shipped from Malawi to CCHZ and to see if we can support two house mothers and possibly an older student or two to go to Malawi for training.

Kids With Cameras – This was sent by Klaus Schoenwiese, the photographer we helped support to conduct a photo workshop with Chishawasha students :

Both **Smithsonian Magazine {November Issue}** and the Kids with Cameras have chosen to feature our Chishawasha Photo Workshop nationwide in print and online. Our own online Students' Gallery will go live in November 2007 to compliment these nationwide publications. The student's photographs will then also be available to a general public as high quality photo art via secure online purchase. Until then they are to remain unpublished. If you can help promoting our project or are professionally interested in a private viewing, please don't hesitate to contact me... we have an exhibition proposal package ready for presentation and are interested in establishing contact to exhibition venues.

Meanwhile - You can already get to know my students and see a project trailer with my own photography on our new project website address below. Starting November 1 it will also host the Students' Gallery.


Please visit our project web site at: <http://www.tribeofman.com/zambia> and www.kidswithcameras.org <http://www.kidswithcameras.org/>

Our Working Group will assist Klaus in seeking upscale photo venues nationwide (let us know if you have contacts & ideas) and in developing and producing print materials to accompany the exhibition.

September 2007 Calendar

The following weekly events are not listed in the calendar. If new to these gatherings, please call to confirm dates & times. For New Creation Singers rehearsals (David 273-7864)~Morning Meditation (Wednesday at 8:15 a.m. (Tony 277-1158)~Bible Study Beginning Monday, Sept.17th at 7:00 p.m.~Choir Rehearsals, Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. and Sundays at 9:30 a.m. (Jennifer 277-7664).

Sunday, Sept. 2	10:30	Worship with Communion- Gil Rosenberg Officiating
	11:30	Doorstep Reception
Monday, Sept. 3	Labor Day- Building is closed	
Tuesday, Sept. 4	5:30	12 Step Program
Thursday, Sept. 6	7:00	Choir Rehearsal
Saturday, Sept. 8	10:00	YFOFFI Practice
Sunday, Sept. 9	9:30	Board Meeting
	10:30	Worship- Tony Lister Officiating
		Cake and Punch for Linday Caughey
Tuesday, Sept. 11	5:30	12 Step Program
Saturday Sept. 15	10:00	YFOFFI Practice
Sunday, Sept. 16	10:00	Worship- NOTICE TIME CHANGE!! Rev. Rose Presiding
	11:15	Coffee/Fellowship
	11:30	Church Classes
	2:00	Sacred Harp Singers
Tuesday, Sept. 18	5:30	12 Step Program
Thursday, Sept. 20	7:00	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, Sept. 16	10:00	Worship
	11:15	Coffee/Fellowship
	11:30	Church Classes
Monday, Sept. 17	7:00	Bible Study
Tuesday, Sept. 25	5:30	12 Step Program
Thursday, Sept. 27	7:00	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, Sept. 30	10:00	Worship-
	11:15	Coffee/Fellowship
	11:30	Church Classes
Monday, Oct. 17	7:00	Bible Study
Tuesday Oct. 2	5:30	12 Step Program
Thursday, Oct. 4	7:00	Choir Rehearsal
Sunday, Oct. 7	10:00	Worship- Communion
	11:15	Coffee/Fellowship
	11:30	Church Classes



**Please make note
of the changes to our
Sunday morning schedule.**

**10:00- Worship
11:15- Coffee/Fellowship
11:30- Church Classes**

Parents of youth:

Please join Pastor Rich and Tony Cotraccia on
September 17th at 5:00 pm for a discussion on youth education and
programming at First Baptist. Pizza will be provided so please RSVP
to fbdewitt@verizon.net or 273-5800.

Thank you for supporting the spiritual enrichment of our youth!

From Linda Nicholson:

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September 2007

I am participating in a work trip to New Orleans to help rebuild on October 5-11, and I am asking for your help. This trip is a collaboration between the Ithaca-based group Love Knows No Bounds, St. John's #5 Church in New Orleans and the First Baptist Church here in Ithaca. We have assembled a group of volunteers from Ithaca, and we will be doing all that we can in one week to help rebuild the homes of low-income St. John's #5 families still living in FEMA trailers.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

There is a tremendous need for funds to purchase building supplies for the houses we will be working on. During a recent trip in May, an Ithaca team of volunteers was able to make considerable headway on the home of 90 yr old Ameilia Phillips, who lives with 4 other family members in a FEMA trailer in her front yard in the 7th Ward. Ruined flooring was torn out, 2 new doors were installed, stud walls were reinforced and then insulated, new plumbing was installed, and a back room that had suffered considerable structural damage was rebuilt. A different group from elsewhere has recently installed drywall on the walls. This home now needs new flooring, ceiling insulation and drywall, and installation of bathroom and kitchen fixtures and counters. All monetary donations are tax-deductible! If you want a record of your donation please write a check to First Baptist Church (a 501 (C)(3) organization), which stands ready to turn all donations (100%) directly into building supplies to be purchased (tax exempt) in New Orleans. For the May trip, St. Johns #5 opened a tax-exempt account at Lowes in New Orleans, into which all of our donations were deposited. Therefore, not a penny of these donations were taxed, and every cent went toward building supplies! We will do the same for this upcoming trip. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation:

Make check out to: First Baptist Church
On notation line: For Katrina Rebuilding Supplies
Where to bring/send: First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 254, Ithaca, NY 14851
Best if received by: October 3rd, 2007

Thanks so much for any assistance you might offer, and I am looking forward to a very unique "vacation"!



Thank You

A Big THANK YOU to all who helped enhance our worship experience during the Summer months! To all who provided flowers, ushering, special music, children's table coverage and Door Step Reception items and clean up, your kindness is greatly appreciated.

The Visitor

First Baptist Church
Box 254
Ithaca, New York 14851

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage

PAID

Permit No. 373

Ithaca, N. Y. 14851

{ Return Service Requested }

~WORSHIP TIME AT 10:00 BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 16th! INFORMATION INSIDE~

Springbrook, a not-for-profit organization once known as Upstate Homes for Children & Adults, is making the difference for more than 550 people with developmental disabilities from across New York State and beyond. A place where learning never ends, challenges are conquered, and dependence is transformed into independence. (*was Upstate Homes for Children & Adults*) For more information visit www.springbrookny.org. FBC collects Campbells labels and Box Tops for Education to assist Springbrook in their mission. There is a new list of items carrying the Box Tops coupons and acceptable Campbell's labels on the south hall bulletin board. Watch for these coupons, cut them out, and drop them at church to help earn cash for our ABC upstate school. Thank you to all who have contributed to Springbrook in this way!

The Ithaca Sacred Harp singers are a local group who carry on a uniquely American singing tradition dating back to before the American Revolution. Sacred Harp or "shape note" singing is four-part harmony music. The "sacred harp" refers to the human voice, and the music is sung "a capella". The written music looks like traditional music except that the note heads have different shapes to indicate their position on the scale (sort of like do-re-mi with shapes). This system helps with sight reading, and was meant to assist the congregation in singing, since there were no organs and no separate choirs when the music was being developed. The music is sung full-voiced, and resonates with strong melodies and clear harmonies. Sacred Harp singing was featured in the movie *Cold Mountain*, and in several PBS specials in recent years.

The Ithaca Sacred Harp Singers meet on the "odd" Sundays of the month (first, third, and any fifth Sundays) from 2-4 p.m at the First Baptist Church. It is helpful if a person can read music, but no special music background is required and all are welcome (tune books are available to use). The music is primarily sung for the joy of it, rather than as a performance music, although some members of the group will sing publicly at times. We welcome all singers in a spirit of sharing regardless of musical experience or background. The motto of Sacred Harp music is that if you can breathe, you can sing. For more information, please contact Ginny Huszagh at vhuszagh@corlandregional.org, or leave a message at: 607-738-1815.