

March 2012



**Mt. Auburn Musings...**

- The Reverend Susan Quinn Bryan



Dear Friends,

For many years I have begun my Lenten journey with these thoughts and questions from Frederick Buechner. I would like to share them with you - for your own Lenten reflections, and hoping for you a holy Lent!

*In many cultures there is an ancient custom of giving a tenth of each year's income to some holy use. For Christians to observe the forty days of Lent is to do the same thing with roughly a tenth of each year's days. After being baptized by John in the river Jordan, Jesus went off alone into the wilderness where he spent forty days asking himself the question what it meant to be Jesus. During Lent, Christians are supposed to ask one way or another, what it means to be themselves.*

*If you had to bet everything you have on whether there is a God or whether there isn't, which side would get your money and why?*

*When you look at your face in the mirror, what do you see in it that you most like and what do you see in it that you most deplore?*

*If you had only one last message to leave to the handful of people who are most important to you, what would it be in twenty-five words or less?*

*Of all the things you have done in your life, which is the one you most like to undo? Which is the one that makes you happiest to remember?*

*Is there any person in the world, or any cause, that, if circumstances called for it, you would be willing to die for?*

*To hear yourself try to answer questions like these is to begin to hear something not only of who you are but of both what you are becoming and what you are failing to become. It can be a pretty depressing business all in all, but if sackcloth and ashes are at the start of it, something like Easter may be at the end.*

- Frederick Buechner from Wishful Thinking

Peace and grace,  
Susan

# STOP the PRESSES!



## Stop The Presses!!!!

- Gordon DeVinney

What does that mean??? It means that we are stopping the presses!!!

The Communications Committee has determined that The Beacon needs an overhaul. Having recognized that for well over a year, The Beacon has become merely a digest of the announcements that appear in the bulletin, losing its effectiveness as a communications tool for the church, the committee is going to take the next six months to revamp The Beacon so that it has real purpose once again.

How will The Beacon change? Probably the most radical change you will notice to The Beacon (if that's what we continue to call it) will be the intention behind our newsletter. New Submission Guidelines we are developing for both the bulletin and the newsletter will shift the emphasis of the newsletter to the reporting of events that have taken place, while the bulletin will continue to serve as the main source for announcements of upcoming events. To that end, the newsletter will become a quarterly publication and follow a well-devised "editorial calendar," laid out so as to give all our committees and their corresponding events opportunity to be featured throughout the year.

With this intended goal, we will be looking for cub reporters from among our membership who will write stories about the "happenings" at Mt. Auburn, capturing the newsworthy aspects of what has taken place, as well as giving our readers a "behind the scenes" perspective. We'll also be looking to committees to supply stories about their ongoing work at Mt. Auburn that will give a greater sense of the rewarding work taking place at our church. No doubt, we will probably conduct a survey or two in order to assess the needs and desires of our members and friends, so start thinking about the things you wish you could discover between the pages of a newfangled newsletter.

You may be wondering how you will get the information that you typically rely on The Beacon to provide - for example, Birthday & Anniversary lists, or the monthly lectionary texts. For the time being, these will be provided as an insert in the bulletin toward the end of the preceding month, and mailed to those who are not regular attendees. Copies will also be placed on the table in the Connector to make sure that no one misses the opportunity to have these important lists at home.

Questions? We're talking about a pretty radical change to something that many of you depend on, so there are probably numerous questions. Please direct your thoughts and concerns (as well as praise and well-wishes) to the Communications Committee via email - [commcommittee@mtauburnpresby.org](mailto:commcommittee@mtauburnpresby.org), or on The Table (The Communications Committee is both an "individual" as well as a Group on The Table), or send us a note through the church office.

Perhaps the most immediate response many of you have is "why not leave well enough alone?" Our hope is to create a publication more worthy of the resources we devote to it. "The proof is in the pudding" or as the phrase was originally stated - "the proof of the pudding is in the eating". Given all that we do at our church, all that we are about, our newsletter wants to serve our readers a more mouth-watering spoonful of Mt. Auburn.



## The Conference On The Future - Saturday, March 10, 10am - 2pm

- Susan Ingmire

The Pathway to Purpose Coordinating Team invites your participation in MAPC's ongoing spiritual discernment. So far, the discernment process has included a series of small group Bible studies, MAPC retreats, and the Conferences on the Past and Present to help us to reflect upon where we have been and where we are as a church community. Part of this journey involved the enlistment of a Vision Panel to draft a guiding vision for MAPC. The guiding vision is meant to depict and inspire where we are headed in our spiritual journey as a church. The discernment process also led our church community to develop a list of key result areas that are inspired by the guiding vision and that operationalize those targeted areas that will define MAPC as together we live out God's guiding vision.

Based on the guiding vision, these are the proposed key results areas. That Mt. Auburn is a:

- Worshipping Community
- Justice-Seeking Community
- Progressive Learning Community
- Caring Community
- Welcoming Community

Now that we have completed this portion of the journey, we have the opportunity to focus upon developing goals for the future of MAPC. We hope that you will join us for this important phase of the journey by attending the Conference on the Future, Saturday, March 10 from 10am to approximately 2pm. Please come prepared to creatively express how you foresee our church's future in a way that embodies the vision and accomplishes the key result areas. We promise to make this part of the journey fun and inspiring and hope that you are able to attend!

A light lunch will be served, so please reserve your place by RSVPing to Debbie Ramey by **March 6** via phone or email - 513-281-5945 or [office@mtauburnpresby.org](mailto:office@mtauburnpresby.org).



## TOMA Is Coming!

- Faye Burdick

In Isaiah 43:19 we are told that *God is about to do a new thing; "Now it springs forth,"* and asks... *"Do you not perceive it"?* Earlier in the chapter, God tells us that we are precious in God's sight and honored and God loves us. God says, *"Do not fear, for I am with you."*

We believe that God does new things through us...sometimes the new things are a result of a need, a challenge, or a response to God's love. MAPC is stepping up to do a new thing! We are all precious in God's sight but none are more precious than our children. In the PCUSA all the children in our faith community are OUR children. Our gift and challenge for a new thing is that we presently have eight children (possibly more) that are very close in both age and grade levels. They are engaged in many school, family, and outside activities, and we (as a faith community) want them to feel a sense of belonging to MAPC's community, we want them to be able to have an identity within MAPC's

community, and we want to offer them meaningful and life-nurturing opportunities for leadership in MAPC's community.

**This is what we have so far:**

God's promise of new things.

God's promise that God will help us perceive it.

God's reaffirmation that we all are precious in God's sight.

God's assurance that God is with us, and we should not be afraid to be involved in new things.

**Here are the details that we have:**

1. Presently this new group will be known as TOMA...a temporary name...but an identity
2. We have eight youth who are at this very moment are 10, 11, & 12 years old.
3. Stephanie and Ben Marston will be their leaders (There will be one more adult...not yet confirmed)
4. They will convene each Sunday morning @ 9:45 in the Old Study of former pastors. They will make it their own but in our midst.
5. They will be involved in Program Designs titled *Faith Findings* (published by the PCUSA)
6. We are in contact with two other Presbyterian Churches who have small youth groups to explore the possibility of having a few joint ventures.
7. We are looking into a mission trip this summer to Eastern Ky.
8. It is hoped that we will "grow" a group that will be eligible (age wise) for attending the PCUSA Youth Triennium at Purdue University in two years.
9. It is hoped that we will "grow" a group that will be eligible (age wise) to attend a Youth Conference at Montreat, N.C.
10. We hope to initiate TOMA by the first part of April. Perhaps, sooner.

**This is what is needed:**

1. Your prayers and your ENTHUSIASM!
2. Parent and Caregivers' support and input.
3. Every once in a while an extra hand, an invitation to your home for an overnight, an offer for a progressive dinner, an invite to your pool, transportation, and thoughts about volunteering to accompany TOMA on a mission trip.

Belonging, Identity, opportunities for Leadership these are the bases for growing into a community. Let's encourage TOMA to help expand our inclusive faith community.



**Church Workday - Saturday, March 3**

- Diane Myers

Priorities for this day are to clean out an office for our new space sharers, change light bulbs, move items to storage, etc. All skill levels needed! Join us at 9:00 AM in the kitchen for donuts. At 12:00 noon, the work day will end, with lunch provided. Please consider volunteering once/quarter to help maintain our beautiful and historic building.

# LENT

## Lenten Disciplines

- Margaret Champion

Below are some Lenten disciplines that came my way Saturday. Last year I did the Carbon Fast.

**FROM THE UCC's New England Regional Environmental Ministries:** The 2012 ecumenical Lenten Carbon Fast will begin with daily email messages (newly updated for this year) on Ash Wednesday, February 22, and continue through Easter Sunday, April 8, 2012.

Last year, over 6,000 people the world over welcomed a day-by-day opportunity to fast from carbon as their Lenten discipline. Initiated by the UCC and endorsed by Episcopalians, people of every Christian perspective – and people who were not Christians – benefitted from this opportunity to become more conscious and conscientious in their daily lives.

Sign up for the daily emails at: <http://www.macucc.org/pages/detail/2410>

**FROM THE PC(USA)'S Environmental Ministries:** Tread Lightly for Lent.

As part of the reflective season of Lent, Environmental Ministries is offering a calendar that encourages Presbyterians to learn about eco-justice issues and take action on the issues of waste, energy, water, consumption and food. Each of the 40 days of Lent has a topic to learn about or a suggested action for individuals and congregations.

To download this calendar, go to: <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/tread-lightly-lent/>

**FROM LIVING WATER INTERNATIONAL:** Will you commit to sacrificing so that others won't go without?

February 22 is the beginning of Lent and Living Water International invites you to participate in the H2O Project. We're asking you to give up every beverage but water for up to 40 days, and then give the money you saved towards clean, safe water in Jesus' name. What's great about this challenge is that you can choose the amount of time you'll participate – 10 days, 2 weeks, 40 days and everything in between. It all makes a difference!

The H2O Project can be done year-round, but we believe there is something special about doing it during Lent. From February 22 – April 7, thousands of believers will join together in a communal showing of solidarity with the poor as they sacrifice luxuries so that the thirsty can have something as simple as clean water. We are confident that you will have a better understanding of the thirsty and a deeper passion for God's love and hope for them after you finish Living Water's H2O Project for Lent.

Visit <http://www.water.cc/h2oproject> for more information and resources.



## Church & Society News!

- Lisa Foster

Your Church & Society Committee would like you to know about a Presbytery-sponsored Mission opportunity.

The Presbytery's Storm Relief Mission Team is preparing for mission trip to Johnson City, New York.

If you've been waiting for an opportunity to participate in a mission experience; if you know that you really want to help others, now is your chance! The community built by working shoulder-to-shoulder with other Presbyterians is unique and fulfilling. What in the world are you waiting for?! Volunteer today. Here is the information for the trip:

When: April 15-21

Where: Johnson City, New York

Why: Rebuild from September 2011 flooding

How many: Only 20 spots remain open

How much: \$20 per night room and board

How do I register: Email or call Kevin Murphy; [kevmurph@fuse.net](mailto:kevmurph@fuse.net), 513.385.8973



## New Member Classes

A new member class is scheduled for **Saturday 3 March 2012 from 10 am–4 pm**, with a second session planned for **Saturday 17 March 2012 from 9-3** for those who cannot meet on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. If you are interested in exploring membership in MAPC please let Pastor Susan or Faye Burdick know. New Members will meet with Session on **Sunday 25 March 2012** and be received into membership on **Palm Sunday 1 April 2012**. These classes are an opportunity to explore you own faith journey and learn how Presbyterians express their faith in today's world.



## Open Stacks Book Club

- Nan Costello

The **March 2** book discussion promises to be an invigorating mixture of the comic and the tragic, and a lively discussion of "Love Medicine," by Louise Erdrich.

"In this powerful first novel, Louise Erdrich introduces several generations in the interrelated families living in and around a Chippewa or Ojibwa reservation near the fictional town of Argus, North Dakota. Spanning fifty years, from 1934 through 1984, the novel is told through the voices of a series of vivid characters, mostly Chippewa men and women who are caught up in the emotional tangle of

their families' histories, but who struggle to gain some control over their lives. The novel begins at a family gathering following the death of June Kashpaw, frozen to death in a snowstorm on Easter Sunday, 1981. Relatives exchange stories about June, piecing together the fragments of memories that are the stuff of family histories."

Book Club will meet at **7:30 PM on March 2, Hosts to be announced.** This book is available at Joseph Beth Booksellers, next to the fireplace in the 'Open Stacks Book Club' shelf.



### Calling all writers!

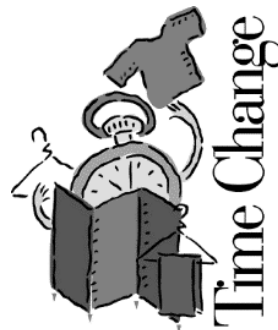
- Thom M. Shuman, Interim Pastor  
Immanuel Presbyterian Church

Over the last few months, several folks have mentioned to me an interest in some sort of writers group being established here in the Presbytery. I know there are folks who are writers, who have been published; there are also folks who would like to explore that gift within them in a safe and supportive place. Most of the groups I am familiar with get together on a regular basis (monthly, every other week, etc.) and simply share what they are working on, what their interests are, informational things like how to get published, and how they write.

I would be willing to host such a group here at Immanuel Presbyterian Church (which I think is fairly central to the churches in the Presbytery. Tuesday or Thursday afternoons are best for me, but flexibility is always the key.

If you are interested, please email me at [tshuman@cinci.rr.com](mailto:tshuman@cinci.rr.com) and give me at least two possible days/times you could meet, and I will work on getting folks together for the first time.

This is a group for both clergy and lay folks.



**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS SUNDAY, MARCH 11**  
Remember to move your clocks ahead 1 hour on Saturday night!