

Brothers and Sisters,

This has been a grand and glorious summer, even with July being as hot as it was. Many of you have welcomed me into your homes and I look forward to more visits as the fall unfolds. Summer worship has been a joy with all of you. Our children and youth have been with us for what we were calling the children's moment. Now we've named it "message for children and youth." Our youth have been great sports about coming forward so the little ones won't be in the center all by themselves. Sunday school for the little ones and the middlers begins on September 11. We're looking forward to some new aspects to our program. Perhaps the most exciting experiment will be our intern program. Youth from our congregation will be strategically involved in mentoring and teaching the younger ones.

This summer, I've learned of things you've done in the past, upon which you would like to build, so for adults we have three opportunities, trial balloons to see if groups will form, or reform around them. Becky Perkins gave us a wonderful title for a book group. "Open Prairie Reads" will begin with a book discussion at 7:00pm on Monday, October 3. We're beginning w/ a "YA" book, as I've learned from Ron McCutchan to call it. We'll have copies of Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli available for you to borrow or to purchase @ church. Our Princeton library has a copy along with other of Spinelli's books. What is the starboy or stargirl inside you wanting to do, waiting to say?

A couple of years ago Hal Edwards, my wild man spiritual director started me with Centering Prayer. While something akin to centering prayer has been in the church for thousands of years, and exists in the practices of our sisters and brothers in Buddhism and other religious paths, Centering Prayer has been taking form for about the past 27 years. A group has met at Open Prairie, and some have expressed a desire to reenter this practice as a group. This opportunity will be on alternate Wednesdays at 5:00pm, beginning September 14. The time

will involved twenty minutes of centering prayer, ten or fifteen minutes of a video, and then a brief time for check in. Our plan is to see how 45 minutes works for this.

Our Bible study will meet on Thursdays, first as a six week course called "Which God is still speaking?" We'll explore some of the portraits of God we find in the Bible, some of the difficult texts. Some of you have said you'd like to explore what the Bible says about some of the tougher topics of our time. So we'll look at what skill sets would help you get at that information, not always clear and present.

We want to thank Pam Gonigam, Charlie Gebeck, Molly Blogg and Barb Madsen for playing for worship this summer. Join us in praying for a keyboardist to play for Sunday services and for choir rehearsals. And keep your eyes and ears open. Someone just might be looking for a ministry such as this!

Thank you to Ron and the Worship team for planning a great outdoor worship service with our Sheffield brothers and sisters on August 21. Fern Webber, Goldy Mortensen, Rich Hornbaker and I met Saturday evening beforehand to rehearse with guitars. Jason Thompson joined us on Sunday morning. Ron led songs and all provided good cheer and great food. Best of all, the weather was perfect!

God bless you as we go into a great September with joys and sorrows. We'll join our town for Homestead festival, this year the 200th anniversary of Rev. Lovejoy's birth. We will find compassionate ways to mark the tenth anniversary of 9/11/01, this year on a Sunday. It is a privilege to share the faith journey with you.

With joy,

*Pastor Mary Gay*

# September CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY To YOU!!!

|    |          |   |
|----|----------|---|
| 1  |          | Office Closed                                     |
| 2  |          | MG Back from Vacation                             |
| 4  | 10:30 AM | Worship<br>Church Council Meeting<br>Building Use |
| 5  |          | Office Closed-Labor Day                           |
| 7  | 5:00 PM  | Interns Meet, Train, & Dine                       |
|    | 7:00 PM  | Choir Rehearsal                                   |
| 10 | 8:00 AM  | Men's Lumberjack Work<br>Weekend                  |
| 11 | 9:30 AM  | Sunday School Resumes                             |
|    | 10:30 AM | Worship   |
| 14 | 5:00 PM  | Centering Prayer                                  |
|    | 6:30 PM  | Choir Rehearsal                                   |
| 15 | 7:00 PM  | Bible Study                                       |
| 18 | 9:30 AM  | Sunday School                                     |
|    | 10:30 AM | Worship   |
|    | 6:00 PM  | Mission Movie Night                               |
| 21 | 6:30 PM  | Choir Rehearsal                                   |
| 24 | 7:30 PM  | Coffeehouse                                       |
| 25 | 9:30 AM  | Sunday School                                     |
|    | 10:30 AM | Worship   |
| 26 | 4:00 PM  | Christian Ed Meeting                              |
|    | 7:00 PM  | Church Council Meeting                            |
| 28 | 6:30 PM  | Choir Rehearsal                                   |

|         |                     |
|---------|---------------------|
| Sept 1  | Michelle Feigenbaum |
| Sept 3  | Olivia Bettasso     |
| Sept 4  | Dawn Nissen         |
| Sept 5  | Ray Kuhnert         |
| Sept 6  | Sara Tracey         |
| Sept 7  | Karen Martin        |
| Sept 8  | Fox Webber          |
| Sept 8  | Dani Genandt        |
| Sept 11 | Rod Jagers          |
| Sept 13 | Hal Autrey          |
| Sept 16 | Beth Bickerman      |
| Sept 17 | Lark Fisher         |
| Sept 17 | Tyler McCombs       |
| Sept 20 | Jim Heider          |
| Sept 24 | Goldy Mortensen     |
| Sept 24 | Molly Blogg         |
| Sept 24 | Sallee Zearing      |

### *Church Council News*

The next Church Council Meeting will be Monday, September 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM.

# LABOR DAY

**Keep sending those directory photographs in! The 2012 directory will be here before you know it! A special thanks to Meagan Johnson who has been helping me take and edit photos!**

## Sunday School News

Sunday School resumes with a totally different look on September 11, 2011. We've expanded and added a class for preschoolers which will be held at 9:30 a.m. on the second and fourth Sunday of each month through November. The class will meet on the second Sunday only in December. Exciting, fun filled lessons are being planned, and a special visit from Open Prairie's own church mouse is expected. Parents, mark your calendars and plan to have your preschoolers join the fun.

Sunday School for the older children will meet weekly at 9:30 a.m. There will be no class on the fourth Sunday of December, which is Christmas Day. With the help of guest presenters we'll expand our boarders to include time spent outdoors and in places other than the Sunday School classroom. Our focus this year is to help our youth make connections between what they learn and what they live.

One of the most exciting parts of our Sunday School expansion is the addition of an intern program. Our post-confirmation students Danielle, Fern, and Katrina will, under the leadership of adult teachers, assume an active role in the Sunday School classrooms. These young women will meet twice monthly with teachers and guest presenters to learn, plan, and prepare for their teaching duties on the second and fourth Sundays of each month. The interns will serve in one or both classrooms depending on their interests and the needs in each classroom. This is a big commitment on the part of these busy, busy girls. Please take time to welcome our interns and let them know they are appreciated!

### **Calling All Cooks**

Interns, teachers, and guest presenters will meet on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month from 5:00-6:30 p.m. for a learning/planning session and supper. We are looking for folks who are willing to provide a simple supper for our group of 6-8 people. Suppers can be homemade or purchased. We are not a fussy group! If you would like to provide supper for us on one or more weeks, please contact Dani in the church office to reserve a date.

### **Centering Prayer Group to Resume**

The centering prayer group will resume on Wednesday, September 14, 5:00 p.m. the church. All are welcome. The group will gather on the first and third Wednesday of each month.

### **Bible Study**

Pastor Mary Gay will lead a Bible study at the church beginning on Thursday, September 15, at 7 p.m. This will be a wonderful opportunity to grow in faith in a small group setting. Please contact Dani if you'd like to be part of this group.

### **Open Prairie Reads**

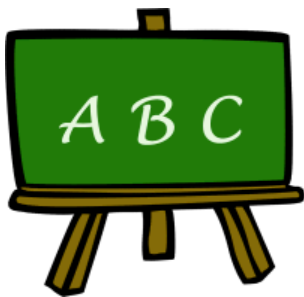
*Stargirl*, a novel by Jerry Spinelli, has been chosen as the first Open Prairie Reads book. It is described by *The New York Times* as "...a poetic allegorical tale about the magnificence and rarity of true nonconformity." A *New York Times* bestseller and a *Publishers Weekly* Best Book of the Year, this novel is not to be missed. Although written for teens, *Stargirl* has a compelling message for adults as well. You will definitely want to get to know her. Join a group of fellow readers at the church on Monday, October 3, at 7:00 p.m. to discuss this amazing novel. Those in attendance will select the next Open Prairie Reads book.



Don't forget about the box in the church office to collect printer inkjet cartridges for recycling. We earn up to \$4 per cartridge and keep them out of the landfills!

During worship, childcare is available for young children from infancy through kindergarten. The children

will be able to leave the sanctuary and go to the preschool room after the "Children's Moment" with Pastor Mary Gay



### Mission: 1 is coming to OPUCC

What is **Mission: 1** ?? **Mission: 1** is a campaign by the United Church of Christ that I was first introduced to at General Synod. **That they may all be 1.**

**ONE UNITED CHURCH** on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food – related injustice. The first 11 days of November, UCC congregations, colleges, seminaries and health and human service agencies, will join together in a collective mission campaign to address food and hunger related issues. I am very excited that the Mission team has agreed to join me in bringing the campaign to Open Prairie. More information will be coming in the near future as to what we will be doing to participate in the campaign. Again thank you to the Mission team for their help. I believe it will be a wonderful opportunity for us to join with the wider church in a national campaign while also addressing issues locally.

Blessings and Peace,  
Mimi

September  
FOOD BANK:



CEREAL

Labor Day



*Community Coffee*



**When:**

Saturday, September 3rd, 2011

**Where:** UCC Parish Hall

**Time:** 7:00am-10:00am

*Featuring their Famous Fresh Baked  
Cinnamon Rolls*

# CHRISTKINDL MARKT

Saturday, November 19, 2011



*Thank you to everyone who brought my family meals. We are truly grateful for your meals and visits!*



**Save the date, Saturday, Nov. 19,  
9:00 am – 3:00 pm**

**Open Prairie's budget will appreciate any way you can help make this year's Christ Child Market a big success.**

It's not too soon to start baking cookies for Christkindl Markt's International Cookie Shop. The cookies can be baked now and frozen. If you haven't been assigned a cookie recipe to bake for the market, please see June Harmon or Carol Kuhnert.

In addition to our vendors from last year, we have a new vendor from Normal who wants to participate in this year's event. She makes baskets. It seems the word about this event is spreading!

Open Prairie knitters are busy making baby sweaters, hats, scarves, dish cloths, baby blankets—you name it for our Open Prairie knit shop. If you are a knitter, please contact Barb Schiff.

Goldy Mortensen is working up a new children's art project involving tiles which we will offer in addition to our ever popular gingerbread house activity. With the return of Open Prairie's famous cookies, our expanded restaurant menu, hand knit items, homemade frozen entrees, exotic poinsettias from Hornbakers, and free children's activities, this year's Christkindl Markt should be our most successful yet. Stay tuned. . .

## **OUTDOOR MINISTRIES MEN'S LUMBERJACK WORK WEEKEND**



**Saturday September 10, 2011  
8:00 AM**

**Registration forms due no later than  
September 1<sup>st</sup>**

**\*\*Sign-up sheets can be found in the  
Church Office.**

## Mission News:

The mission team has a lot in the works. Mimi shared "Mission 1" from General Synod. It is a National Project through the UCC – 11 days to "Fight World Hunger and Food-Related Justice". It begins November 1 and runs through November 11. Stay tuned for ways using the number 11, we as a church can participate in this National Project.

Thank all who donated money or school supplies for our area schools. We have quite a generous collection. You still have time if you want to participate. We will sort and deliver the supplies in September.

Our monthly collection of food pantry items continues. This month the pantry is collecting cereal.

The Mission Team movie for the upcoming month will be September 18, "The Visitor" sponsored by Jessica Gray. In the 2007 movie, a lonely widower Professor Walter Vale, played by Richard Jenkins has a boring life in Connecticut. Walter is assigned to attend a conference about Global Policy and Development at New York University, where he is to give a lecture. When he arrives at his apartment in New York, to his surprise and anger, he finds Tarek Khalil, a Syrian musician and his wife, Zainab, a Senegalase street vendor. Things go awry. Join us at 6:00 at the church for popcorn and the viewing of this PG-13 show.

A big thank you to Ray and Carol Kuhnert for continuing to handle the aluminum cans recycling. Remember, proceeds benefit the Heifer Project.

If you are interested in joining the Mission Team or have ideas for projects, please step forward to one of the members. Mission is at the heart of all of Jesus teachings.

Mission Team

**The September 24th Princeton Coffeehouse show will feature Malcolm Holcombe.**



Visit his website at:

[www.malcolmholcombe.com](http://www.malcolmholcombe.com)

*"Not quite country, somewhere beyond folk, Holcombe's music is a kind of blues in motion, mapping backwoods corners of the heart."  
~David Fricke- Rolling Stone Magazine*

**Saturday September 24th  
at 7:30 PM**

**\$10.00 at the door**

[www.theprincetoncoffeehouse.com](http://www.theprincetoncoffeehouse.com)





**UPCOMING MISSION TEAM MOVIE DATES:**

**September 18th**  
**"The Visitor"**

**October 16<sup>th</sup>**  
**"The Bible Tells Me So"**

**January 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**"Spitfire Grill"**

**\*\*All movies begin at 6:00 PM at the church.  
Members of the mission team will provide  
popcorn!**

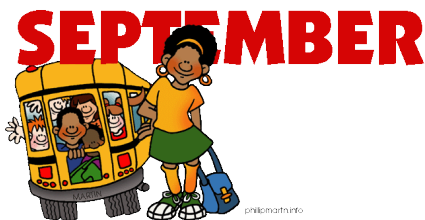
**ILLINOIS CONFERENCE WOMEN'S  
RETREAT**

**October 7-8, 2011**

**Pilgrim Park Camp, Princeton, IL**

**Details about costs, program and the fun  
opportunities will be available at all the Spring  
Association Meetings and through the Outdoor  
Ministries Office in April. You may also contact  
Reverend Carol Currier-Frighetto at  
[ambsnana@aol.com](mailto:ambsnana@aol.com)**

**Reserve the date and help spread the word!**



**Volunteer Opportunity:**

**"Our Table"**

Located at The First United Methodist Church  
of Princeton, every Monday night.

*"Our hope is to offer help to families and  
individuals who are struggling to make ends  
meet, and to offer fellowship around the table  
for those who find themselves alone at meal  
time."*

**UPCOMING COFFEEHOUSE EVENTS,  
18 Years and counting:**

**Nov. 19th – Andrew Calhoun**  
[www.andrewcalhoun.com](http://www.andrewcalhoun.com)

**Dec. 10th – Kris Delmhorst**  
[www.krisdelmhorst.com](http://www.krisdelmhorst.com)

**Jan. 28th – Peter Mulvey** [www.petermulvey.com](http://www.petermulvey.com)

**Feb. 23rd – Stacey Earle & Mark Stuart**  
[www.staceyandmark.com](http://www.staceyandmark.com)

**Mar. 24th – Dana & Susan Robinson**  
[www.robinsongs.com](http://www.robinsongs.com)

**Apr. 28th – Rita Hosking** [ritahosking.com](http://ritahosking.com)

**May 26th – Nels Andrews** [nelsandrews.com](http://nelsandrews.com)

All shows begin at 7:30 PM. There are no  
advance ticket sales. All seating is general  
admission, and the recession-proof ticket price  
remains a modest \$10.00. Door open at 7:00  
PM. The Princeton Coffeehouse is located at  
Open Prairie UCC Church, 25 E. Marion Street  
in Downtown Princeton. We still serve Open  
Prairie's fair trade coffee, as well as assorted  
teas and homemade desserts. For further  
information, check our website at

[www.theprincetoncoffeehouse.com](http://www.theprincetoncoffeehouse.com)

40<sup>th</sup> Annual  
**Homestead  
Festival**  
September 8-11, 2011

Check out [www.homesteadfestival.com](http://www.homesteadfestival.com) for  
a full listing of all events each day of  
Homestead!

# FESTIVAL 56

ILLINOIS' LARGEST SUMMER THEATRE FESTIVAL

**September 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>**....Festival 56 to  
present: **The Guys**

On the 10th anniversary of 9/11, Festival 56  
will present this play, based on actual events,  
about an FDNY captain who, in the weeks  
following the attack, had to write eulogies for  
the men he lost, and the writer who helped him  
through it. \*not included in subscription  
packages.



*“Departing summer hath assumed  
An aspect tenderly illumed,  
The gentlest look of spring;  
That calls from yonder leafy shade  
Unfaded, yet  
prepared to fade,  
A timely  
carolling.”*



- William Wordsworth, *September*

In honor of school starting and getting back in the  
teaching mode; here are some September facts:

\*Labor Day is the only legal holiday in September,  
and is celebrated in both the United States and  
Canada.

\*The morning glory is the flower for the month of  
September.

\*Jane Addams, founder of Hull House, born  
September 6, 1860.

\*F. Scott Fitzgerald, American writer, born  
September 24, 1896.

\*According to the Georgian calendar, September is  
the ninth month. But, on the Roman calendar, it  
was the seventh month. September has had 29  
days, and 31 days; but, since the time of the  
emperor Augustus, it has had only 30 days.

**Open Prairie UCC**  
25 E. Marion Street  
Princeton, IL 61356  
(815)872-5150  
Email: [mail@openprairie.org](mailto:mail@openprairie.org)



Office Open Mon-Thurs 8 am – 12 pm  
Church Web Site: [www.openprairie.org](http://www.openprairie.org)