

# THE SUNDIAL

Volume XIX No. 4

December 2008/January 2009

## LOOKING AHEAD TO 2009

<u>Celebration</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Location</u>
World Day of Prayer	March	Bethany Presbyterian
E.I.A. (Education)	April	Covenant UM
May Friendship Day & E.I.A. (Initiative)	May	United Church/Pittsford
Picnic & E.I.A. (Action)	June	Brighton Town Park
Day of Reflection	October	First Baptist
World Community Day	November	Christ the Good Shepherd
Advent	December	Baptist Temple

**Details and updates will be printed each month in The Sundial.**

### **From the President**

The month of November has been filled with wonderful excitement! History was made with the election of the first African American United States President, Barack Obama. This historical election has generated a journey of high aspirations, hope, and tranquility.

Appreciation and thanks to Eloise Mulligan and her committee, for the wonderfully-planned execution of the World Community Day Celebration. The theme, "God's Wisdom Sets Us Free," explored how we can claim God's wisdom and love by reaching out to those behind bars, whether made of steel or of our own self-imposed limitations.

Church Women United in Rochester's participation in the Bon Ton Community Day Sale Event was a great success. Appreciation and thanks to everyone who took part in this endeavor.

In this season of thanks and showing gratitude, many people may wonder why they should be thankful during this time of economic recession and the stock market instability. Let us be reminded that God is still in control, and one can still find that glimpse of hope, which leads to the light. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." If you live in that light, share it with someone who does not. Have a very Merry Christmas, and the most Happiest of Happy New Year.

.....Peace and Blessings, *Audrey J. Davidson*

**This is the December 2008-January 2009 Issue of the Sundial. The next issue of the newsletter will be published the first week of February 2009.**

**Note: There are no Board of Directors' Meetings in December 2008 or January, 2009.** The next Board meeting will be on Friday, February 20, 2009, at 9:30. The Executive Committee will continue to meet every month.

**World Community Day Report**

On Friday, November 7, between 9:30 and 10 am, 37 women gathered for hot coffee or tea. The tables set up for lunch were beautifully decorated with dark green table clothes, Thanksgiving napkins and lovely floral arrangements.

We followed the program from National, with representatives from the Baha'i Faith, Confucianism, Islam, Christianity, Native American Spirituality and Judaism. Our speaker, Ann Abraham, of Step-by-Step, told of her work with women in prison.

She spoke of the prisoners' need for Women's Health Kits, which is a CWU project. The women usually have nothing except the clothes they are wearing when arrested. It was interesting to learn that many babies are born in prison. So there is a great need for diapers and clothes for new-borns. Providing clothing, Health Kits and baby items make their life a little easier.

We then broke up into smaller groups for discussions about how we, as Church Women United, can better understand and be helpful to these persons. Some discussion groups were very lively.

We moved to the adjacent room for lunch and more conversation. Several people said it was a Good Day.  
- Eloise Mulligan, Chair WCD

**Women's Health Kits**

120 Health Kits were delivered to the Monroe County Facility in 2008. It is time to plan for 2009. The Health Kits consist of:

- |            |             |                       |             |
|------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Shampoo    | Tooth Paste | Sturdy Comb**         | <b>Bar</b>  |
| Wash Cloth | Deodorant   | Tissues (small packs) | <b>Soap</b> |
|            |             |                       | Socks       |

Please pack in a 1-gallon plastic bag. Please remove soap, toothpaste, etc. from any cardboard boxes or hard plastic wrapping. Please bring donations to the celebrations or to the CWU office. Items can be any size, though full size preferred. \*Combs without handles. Please Note Change: Tooth brushes are no longer needed; they are supplied at the jail. Thanks.

**This is a good on-going project for a group to work on.**

**Also Needed**

Some winter coats were also donated this fall for women being discharged. Gloves were also received and are welcome. Women at Monroe County Facility have only the clothing they come in with and some who came in the summer months have no winter clothes. This coat project continues into 2009. Winter coats, jackets, caps, mittens or gloves of all sizes are needed.

To make a clothing donation, please call the CWU office 342-2790 or Betty Allinger at 663-0862.

**CWU SHORT SUBJECTS**

**The office will be closed for the Christmas Holiday from Tuesday, December 23 to Monday, January 5, 2009.**

**Thank You  
Joan Palmer, Gloria Klink and Lifetime Assistance: Gerry Schultz, Stacy VanHerreweghe, Lynn Grace & Tracy Joy Buriew for assembling the November Newsletter**

**The office will be closed on Monday, January 19, 2009, for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.**

## CWU Op-Ed

### **Fairness for All**

*by Mardi Crawford, Staff Member,*

*Campaign for an Independent Public Defense Commission/New York State Defenders Justice Fund*

To provide "Fairness for All," New York States needs an Independent Public Defense Commission. Before locking someone up or taking away parents' rights to raise their children as they see fit, the State should provide a fair process. For the process to be fair, individuals facing court action that could take away their liberty or their kids should have a lawyer, even if they can't afford to hire one. That lawyer should have the time, resources, and skill to represent the client well. And this should be true in every city and county. But, that isn't always the case. Excessive caseloads and lack of resources, prevent even the best lawyers from meeting their clients' needs. Political interference with public defense offices threatens fairness to client communities in many locations.

New York State was once a leader in seeking to provide legal services in criminal cases and certain other matters. Now, county after county suffers an ongoing public defense crisis. A group appointed by Chief Judge Kaye, [who is no stranger to the Rochester CWU Unit], called in 2006 for creating an Independent Public Defense Commission heading a statewide, fully and adequately state-funded public defense system.

Organizations and officials know for reform must come [to the table and work on this matter]. People and institutions across the state recognize the problem. A number of newspapers have called for public defense reform. Governor Paterson has said that an Independent Public Defense Commission is a good idea. A bill to implement the Kaye Commission recommendations was introduced in the [New York] State Legislature last year. The Campaign for an Independent Public Defense Commission works for fairness; many organizations and individuals [from across New York] endorse its goals. [Church Women United in Rochester and Vicinity, Inc. along with its Task Force on Courts program, are but [two] Rochester-based group [that have] joined The Campaign; others include: Compeer, Downtown United Presbyterian Church, Farm-workers Legal Services of New York, Greater Rochester Community of Churches, League of Women Voters - Rochester Metro Area, Judicial Process Commission, Montgomery Neighborhood Center.

If you have a passion to see "Fairness for All" and/or would like general information and endorsement information regarding The Campaign for an Independent Public Defense Commission, please see the following web-site: [www.newyorkjusticefund/campaign.htm](http://www.newyorkjusticefund/campaign.htm). Write to: Campaign for an Independent Public Defense Commission, 194 Washington Avenue, Suite 500, Albany, New York 12210. Or call Katie Blackburn, Community Organizer Upstate New York, Campaign for an Independent Public Defense Commission at (518) 465-0519.

## COMMUNITY NEWS

### **Free Pasta Dinner**

Thursday, January 1, 2009, New Year's Day, at Covenant United Methodist Church, 1124 Culver Road. Serving time is 2-5 pm. All are welcome. No reservations are needed.

Happy 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Foodlink!

Brother/Sister - Can you spare some time?

**CASA** (Court Appointed Special Advocates) is looking for volunteers to serve as advocates for the best interests of abused and/or neglected children. Responsible adults who are interested in making a difference in the life of a child are encouraged to join CASA's team of volunteers.

CASA will hold a training course for prospective volunteers on January 21, January 28 and February 4 from 9:30 am to 4P30 pm each day. Prior to attending the 3-day training course, prospective volunteers must submit a completed application packet and be interviewed.

To learn more, please call (585) 428-5297 or visit the CASA website at [www.casarochester.org](http://www.casarochester.org).

## CWU ALERT

“Building a World Fit for All God’s Children”.....Promote the ways that make for Peace  
Report from CWU Legislative Office

PRAY FOR IRAQI CHRISTIANS ! I (Patricia Burkhardt) was privileged to hear from Elder Yousif al-Saka, the General Secretary of the Evangelical Presbyterian Churches of Iraq. Elder Al-Saka is also an elder of the Church Council of his Presbyterian Church in Baghdad. In honor of his visit, the Presbyterian Church Washington Office and the United Church of Christ Washington office held a meeting for faith groups.

Christians have lived in Iraq since the first century Christianity believed to have been brought by the apostle Thomas. Evangelical Christians first came in 1840. The Presbyterian Church in Baghdad was built around 1930.

During the years of sanctions while Saddam Hussein was in power, the Iraqi Christians, along with all Iraqis suffered. But since 2003 when the occupation began, their suffering increased mightily. He explained that the three main ways they have suffered has been in the total loss of security, the infrastructure of the country being demolished (electricity, water, etc), and the economy in shambles such that no one has jobs.

Elder Al-Saka made clear that one of their greatest needs is for security in the country, especially at the borders. He emphasized that Iraqis have always had peaceful relationships between all groups. He believes that the main source of the violence is from outside the country. The violence at this time seems to go up and down, get better and then worse. The threats and killings of Christians seem to come without any identifiable reason. Many, many Iraqi Christians have left the country. The Evangelical Presbyterian Church in Baghdad congregation has been decreased in size by more than half since the occupation. Other churches have closed up entirely.

Though the numbers have decreased greatly, Elder Al-Saka's church continues to hold services, run a small clinic and offer whatever resources it can to ease the suffering of their neighbors. In the last few weeks serious threats against many families and killings of more than 20 Christians have taken place in Mosul. They need prayer now.

The Iraqi Christians feel very much alone. They are pleading for our prayers and encouragement.  
Send an Email to: [yousif\\_alsaka@hotmail.com](mailto:yousif_alsaka@hotmail.com)

You are encouraged to tell about your unit and your work and assure them of your prayer support.

Patricia Burkhardt, Church Women United, Legislative Office, 100 Maryland Ave NE Rm 100  
Washington DC 20002, (202) 544 8747, fax (202) 544 9133

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE NEWS

CWS Looks forward to working with CHURCH WOMEN UNITED on your 2008 National Action Project- "Building a World Fit for Children"

by: Amy L. Bobbette, Community Outreach Coordinator, Church World Service, Upstate New York Regional Office

We applaud Church Women United for undertaking such an important initiative and look forward to working with Church Women United to build a world fit for children.

How can Church Women United work with Church World Service to serve children? One very important way CWU can help children is by raising funds to provide safe drinking water for those living in Kenya. This initiative was introduced at the June 2008 Ecumenical Women's Gathering sponsored by Church Women United. Speaking in one of the worship celebrations, Dr. Glory Dharmaraj, Women's Division of the General Board of Global Missions of the United Methodist Church, talked about our calling to be stewards of the earth.

She set this calling in the context of women's experience, noting that "South African women walk the distance to the moon and back sixteen times a day to fetch water for household needs." To this end, the Gathering envisioned, equipped, empowered and engaged women to support the 2008 National Action Project, "A World Fit for Children." This project, the first of its kind in CWU's 66-year history, includes a partnership with Church World Service (CWS) to raise funds to provide safe drinking water in Kenya. Over half of Kenyans live below the poverty line and two out of three cannot access clean drinking water. Working in partnership with the Yang' at program in the western, semi-arid Pokot district, CWS funds the construction of sub-surface dams and wells.

Through the work Church World Service has done already in Kenya, 300 children, mostly girls, from six villages now attend school rather than walking miles a day to fetch water for their families. Building a well and related structures costs about \$5,000. Working to provide water for children is an important way Church Women United can build a world fit for children. Another way you can help is to put together School, Baby and Hygiene Kits. These kits make a world of difference in the lives of refugees, displaced people, victims of natural disasters, and those living in poverty. If each of you reached out to your units and invited them to join together to build a world fit for children imagine the number of children's lives we could touch! Get the word out there and prepare kits for our April collection. Contact the Upstate New York Office for a Kits Brochure and the spring 2009 drop-off locations. Church World Service welcomes the support of Church Women United. Set a goal, spread the word and together we can build a world fit for children. Let us know what your local CWU unit's or Church Group's goal is for kits and/or the Water for All project and we will track each unit's or Church's progress as well as the overall success of the Church Women United 2008 National Action Project. Tell us what your plans are!

Name of Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Plans: # Baby Kits: \_\_\_\_\_ # School Kits: \_\_\_\_\_ # Hygiene Kits: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount you hope to raise for Water for All: \$\_\_\_\_\_

You can contact the Church World Service Upstate New York Office by calling 315.458.8535 or toll free at 1.888.297.2767. We can be reached by email at [abobbette@churchworldservice.org](mailto:abobbette@churchworldservice.org).

Correspondence and checks can be sent to Church World Service, 200 C Gateway Park Drive, North Syracuse NY 13212.

**Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year**