

# FAITH ZONE HAPPENINGS

MAY 2010

## Thank you, Faith Zone Volunteers

The following definition describes our volunteers perfectly. "Volunteers are individuals or groups who give their time, talent and abilities to a cause they believe in, without pay."

— *United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service*

Volunteers in the Faith Zone take their *cause* seriously. Their cause is a commitment to the Education Ministry of St. John's. The Ministry that seeks to keep alive and retell the stories of God's actions throughout history and today.

Volunteers do this by teaching Bible Stories in the Faith Zone, shepherding the classes every week, engaging 7th grade youth and confirmation students.

Volunteers introduce God to our preschoolers and provide loving arms to toddlers and babies in the nursery.

Volunteers meet to organize and plan the Faith Zone and offer Sunday morning office help.

Volunteers re-do, update and revitalize the Faith Zone workshops during the summer months.

Volunteers bring their children to the Faith Zone and our youngest volunteers are those who come to the Faith Zone to experience what has been prepared for them.

To all who volunteer and give their time, talent and abilities to this ministry of St. John's United Church of Christ, thank you!

**Kay Carter-Heath**  
*Director of Christian Education*

### THE FAITH ZONE

of St. John's United Church of Christ

invites the entire congregation to an

# APPRECIATION BREAKFAST

as a thank you for the countless hours of volunteer time you give to St. John's

# SUNDAY, MAY 23

between services in Fellowship Hall

# MAY'S BIBLE STORY

## PAUL: WHO CAN BE A CHRISTIAN?

Students will explore the ministry of Paul and the spread of the gospel in the context of "Who can be a Christian?" during the final weeks of our Faith Zone year.

In the beginning, the Christian faith grew out of the Jewish faith and the Hebrew scriptures. The earliest Christians were converted from

the Jewish faith. As the fledgling faith spread outside Israel, the message was heard and received by Gentiles.

A Gentile was any person who was not Jewish. Acts 10 begins the narratives of the mission to the Gentiles.

Paul took seriously his call to bring the good news to the non-Jewish world

and began to found churches all over the Roman Empire. There began to be cause for concern among the Jewish Christians who had problems with some of the religious and cultural issues connected with the non-Jewish faith. Among the problems was the Gentile practice of eating foods that were forbidden to Jews.

Some wanted the Gentiles to convert

For in the one Spirit, we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

— 1 Corinthians 12:13

to Judaism as part of becoming Christian. They wanted the Gentiles to observe Jewish law. This made sense to them since Jesus was Jewish and the Messiah was to come to the Jews.

The apostle Paul addressed this issue in his letters to the Romans (Chapter 4) and the Galatians (Chapter 3), directing them back to the witness of Abraham. He asked them to remember Abraham's relationship to God and the covenant God made with Abraham that came long before the Ten Commandments and the Law of Moses. Abraham did not live by the law because it did not yet exist. He lived by faith. Abraham believed and obeyed God, and God established a covenant with him that would extend to all of Abraham's descendants, regardless of the Mosaic Law.

Paul knew that Jesus was the Messiah, the chosen one of God, but Paul did not want the people of the church to exclude others from the faith because of their ethnicity. He calls on the church to include all people. The Jewish core was to be the light for all nations (Isaiah 42:6) and their love for God and relationship to God was to shine out for the world to see. The book of Acts and the epistles are a testimony to those, both Jew and Gentile, who became reflections of God's love and shared the Good News in their communities.

### Things to discuss at home as a family:

Talk about times you have noticed the Church or Christians exclude people due to physical, mental or ethnic characteristics.

Ask your family, how can you go about making people feel welcome in your church? Do you think St. John's is a welcoming community and can the church become more welcoming?

## SUMMER WORSHIP OPTION BEGINS MAY 30

The Summer Worship Option for children will begin on Sunday, May 30. Children will attend the 9 a.m. worship service with their parents and, at a certain point in the service, will be invited to remain in church or proceed to the Faith Zone with Gary for movies, popcorn and games during the remainder of the hour.

Nursery service will be available at the 9 a.m. worship hour.

## HERE'S WHAT WE HAVE PLANNED

Here are the workshops that will be offered on Sunday, May 2, 9 and 16.

During the month of May, a variety of activities are being planned in our look at Paul: Who can be a Christian? They include:

### JANETTE'S TRAVEL

**AGENCY:** The students will explore how mission projects are a reflection of the light of Jesus that we carry within us. They will decorate mirrors to be placed throughout the church so parishioners can see how their image reflects the true light.

### MOVED BY THE SPIRIT:

Students this month will use large body movement, explore how our faith is what defines who we are as Christians.

### BIBLE @ YOUR FINGERTIPS:

Students in the computer lab will use the software "Life of Christ" to learn about Paul's conversion and his travels as he set up new churches around the Eastern Mediterranean.

### SUPER SUNDAY

**CINEMA:** Students will view the film "Ministry of Paul" from Nest Entertainment while enjoying popcorn and juice.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**May 23** Celebration Sunday with choirs singing and Faith Zone-sponsored breakfast. Last day of Faith Zone

**May 26** End-of-year party for Kids Club

**May 30** Summer Worship Option begins

**Sept. 8** Kids Club and choirs begin fall schedule

**Sept. 12** Faith Zone begins

**Sept. 19** Cheese Days, NO Faith Zone

*Registration information for next year will be available mid-summer*