

## LINK 'N' TOWER

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and United Church of Christ  
Rev. Melanie Lawrence-Caldwell, Pastor

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The Seven Deadly Sins are known as the transgressions which are fatal to spiritual progress. During the early centuries of the church, it became important to find a simple yet memorable solution to inspire guilt for the people, thus, the seven deadly sins were a list of offenses and wicked human passions. By the 6<sup>th</sup> century, the list included: pride, envy, anger (wrath), sadness (later replaced as sloth), avarice (covetousness/greed), gluttony and lust. Throughout the Middle Ages the church emphasized teaching all lay people the Deadly Sins AND their opposite Heavenly Virtues: humility, kindness, patience, diligence, charity, temperance, chastity. To practice these virtues was to protect yourself against the temptations of the sins.

Most of the year I remain focused on the seasons of the church year calendar for worship and preaching. I'm leaving that tradition and am opting for something both interesting and challenging this summer. As always, our worship will include relevant scripture. However, my preaching will focus on what have come to be known as **Seven Social Sins**, sometimes called *The Seven Blunders of the World*, a list that Mohandas Karamachand Gandhi published in 1925. They are:

- Wealth without work.
- Pleasure without conscience.
- Knowledge without character.
- Commerce without morality.
- Science without humanity.
- Worship without sacrifice.
- Politics without principle.

Mohandas' grandson, Arun Gandhi, would make

- Rights without responsibilities number 8 on his grandfather's list.

Each week for during July and August I will be focusing on one of these, and exploring what their opposites might look like for us today. Please take a few moments each week to ponder these, and prayerfully listen to how God is still speaking to us today. I do believe that Jesus would have something to say about these. I hope you'll join me in this challenging exploration.

Shalom,

Pastor Melanie

## **CHESTER EASTSIDE MINISTRIES** (JULY MOM)

In 2014, Chester Eastside Ministries encountered the resurrection in a way many had neither expected nor dreamed possible. Located within the crumbling remnants of a recently condemned yet historic Third Presbyterian Church on 9th Street, Chester Eastside refused to let their call die with their building. Rev. Warren, Pastoral Director of Chester Eastside since 1995, grinned with confidence as she reminisced, “[Our goal was] not just to survive but live into the future.” Home, Chester Eastside Ministries transitioned their corporate status into a self-supporting 501(c)3 known as Chester Eastside, Inc. Around the same time, new life came by way of an unforeseen invitation from St. Paul’s Episcopal Church. The neighboring congregation, located only a few blocks down the road, extended an offer for Chester Eastside, Inc. to take up residence within their building. Rev. Warren and the leadership of Eastside responded with a resounding, “yes!”

Chester Eastside was not the only voice of affirmation that echoed throughout the streets of this Chester neighborhood. Members from the surrounding community heard of the relocation and responded by literally lifting and carrying Chester Eastside from old to newness of life a blockaway. In a rolling processional of grace and solidarity, local residents moved furniture, equipment, files, industrial freezers, and computers down the street and into St. Paul’s during the spring, summer, and winter months of 2014. “We thought we had good local partners [before the move],” remarked Rev. Warren. “Our move exposed the need for more intentional local relationships of support and engagement.” Chester Eastside’s renewed emphasis on long-term sustainability through intentional local partnership has fueled and funded their neighborhood ministries ever since. They presently collaborate with Chester Upland School District, ecumenical congregations, synagogues, Widener University students, Boys and Girls Clubs, government leaders, and the Presbytery of Philadelphia. Chester Eastside also partners with local food consortiums and operates as one of the largest food distribution centers in Delaware County, providing monthly groceries and fresh produce to over 600 children and adults and over 112,000 meals annually.

In 2014, Chester Eastside was also the recipient of a grant from the Presbytery of Philadelphia's Covenant Fund. These dollars have benefited Chester Eastside's Whole Child Program, an initiative that recruits, equips, and trains mentors from local congregations to walk alongside and tutor elementary-aged children in their After School programs. Many who participated in these childhood programs have gone on to graduate from high school and college, serve as current board members, and launch new initiatives through Chester Eastside.

About eight years ago, a current PhD candidate who was nurtured as a child by these very After School programs, partnered with Chester Eastside and local leaders to launch a Peace, Leadership, and Cultural Arts Camp. As a part of this now thriving local restorative justice initiative, youth from ages 12-18 gather for five days to engage in the creative arts. Young people develop spoken word pieces, participate in vibrant musical compositions, and explore dance as a means to counter raw feelings of frustration, sadness, and anger. The camp also incorporates annual trips to Broadway and has previously hosted speakers from South Africa who reflected on the power of reconciliation in the wake of apartheid. The Peace, Leadership, and Cultural Arts Camp continues to be an effective means to empower and equip local youth for community transformation. The ministry is now fully funded and coordinated by one of Chester Eastside's partners. Initiatives like the Whole Child Program and the Peace, Leadership, and Cultural arts camp continue to empower young people as they resurrect personal and communal narratives out of despair and towards hope.

“The only thing people know about Chester is the bad news reported on the news,” remarked the Chair of the Board of Directors, William Henderson. “But there are a lot of positive things happening here, too.”

The witness and work of Chester Eastside's staff, leaders, and community partners is one such good news story worthy of report. They have indeed been a vital part of the Spirit's resurrection of both their ministry and an entire neighborhood. As Rev. Warren affirmed, “Chester Eastside is a spirit not a place...I know what happens here is nothing but the work of God.”

*Rev. Greg Klimovitz, Associate Presbyter, reprinted from Chester Eastside April 2016 newsletter*



On Sunday, June 12, 2016 I marched proudly with Collenbrook United Church in the Philadelphia Gay Pride Parade. As we marched people saw our banner and cheered! We even got quite a number of email sign ups at our booth at Penn's Landing. What a glorious day!

The person who had the most fun was Helen! Secured in the back of a pickup truck wearing a rainbow colored cowboy hat carefully driven by Len Hodges-Goett Helen waved and smiled at the crowd! They LOVED her!

Marching in Pride was a big step for me. I was a little nervous. But my fears melted away when I saw the joy on everyone's faces as I shouted "Happy Pride Day!!!" and "We Love You"!!!

Now for the really hard part. On the display we have (or had if it's been taken down) in Fellowship Hall you may have noticed a submission titled 'Submitted Anonymously'. Well, that's ME. I identify as Bisexual – the Invisible member of the Family. Some Gays and Lesbians don't like us because they think we're in denial (that we're really Gay or Lesbian); confused; on the fence. And some think we're 'swingers' or promiscuous. NONE of these apply to me. I am simply someone who is attracted to the beauty and sexuality of male and female. Nothing more!

I'm still the same Dottie you've know all these years. I just felt it was time to open the closet door and step out. I don't plan to start a revolution or shout it from the roof tops. I can still be denied or fired from a job; denied housing and medical care and a host of other services because of my sexual orientation so when I'm employed I don't share too much of my life. The most sensible way to handle this is simply to LIVE my life day by day and see what God has for me.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dottie Jones

### **New Fundraiser: Ebay for Collenbrook**

Do you have treasure in your drawers and closets? We have a way to turn them into cash that can benefit both you and Collenbrook. Recently Nancy and Pat had an electric log splitter that was relatively new but they no longer wanted. They tried to sell it at the yard sales, but it went unsold. So they donated it to Collenbrook and asked Tom Gambino to list it on Ebay. It was viewed by people all over the country. Three weeks later a man from Tabernacle NJ paid \$175 for it. Nancy and Pat directed the proceeds to Collenbrook. Nancy and Pat get a tax deduction. Tom Gambino recently sold a Mont Blanc pen that was sitting in a drawer for \$217 on Ebay. He donated \$160 of the proceeds to Collenbrook.

So how does this become a fundraiser for Collenbrook? Tom Gambino is setting up an Ebay

account for Collenbrook. All you have to do is identify items for sale and bring them to church. If you have original boxes and/or instructions they improve the value. Tom will take a bunch of picture and list the items on Collenbrook's Ebay account. When your item sells, you donate 50% or all to Collenbrook.

When the item is listed you will receive a copy of the listing. When it is sold you will receive a copy of the sale. Then, 7 to 10 days later the cash becomes available. Anything not sold after 2 months will be returned or, if you wish, become part of our next yard sale. Note, most Ebay items are shipped to the buyer using the US Postal Service. So weight and size are important. Generally Ebay is not for furniture.

So let's see if together we can turn some of your unwanted junk or those gifts which the giver was sure you wanted but in fact you did not, into cash benefitting you and Collenbrook.

### **CHURCH INFORMATION - NEW**

Pastor Melanie has changed her days off to Mondays and Fridays, at least for now. She was finding herself working many Tuesdays due to various meetings, etc. Therefore, Melanie will be in the office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Please call the church or drop in during those days if you would like to speak with her. It is always a good idea to call ahead just to make sure she is available. Please remember there are times when she is out of the office during these days working on church or denominational business.

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[www.collenbrook.org](http://www.collenbrook.org)

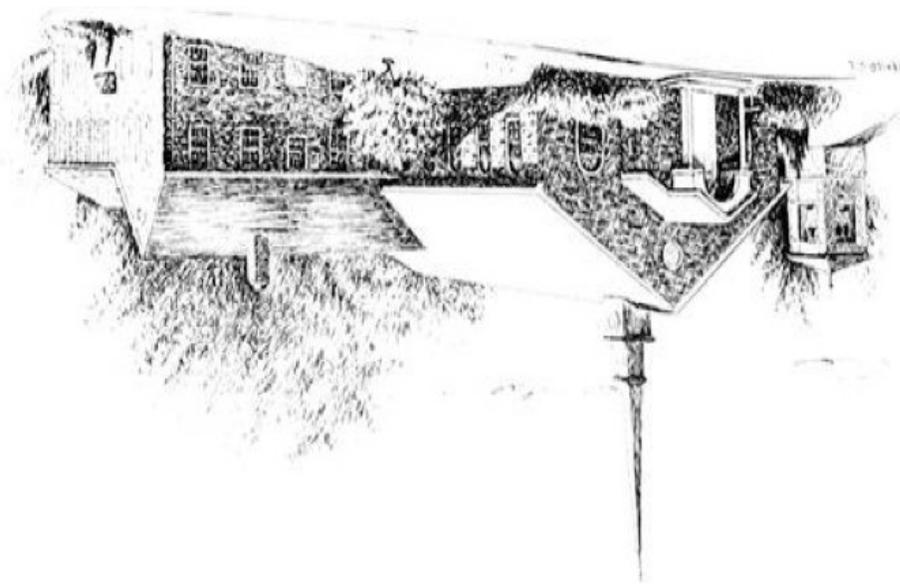
[info@collenbrook.org](mailto:info@collenbrook.org)

### **IMPORTANT JUNE DATES**

12<sup>th</sup> – Council

28<sup>th</sup> – Community Dinner

31<sup>st</sup> – Guest Preacher



[www.collbrook.org](http://www.collbrook.org); [info@collbrook.org](mailto:info@collbrook.org)

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