

# November 2008 Soundings

This issue of Soundings includes:

Calendar

Book-signing, concerts, invitation to preach, art auction, new blog and more

## CALENDAR

**November 14**, 1–5 PM: “Kamsisi (New Roots) Rituals for Life’s Journey” with African dance,

drums, chanting, and InterPlay. (See InterPlay story.)

**November 15**–InterPlay special session with an InterPlay leader from Malawi, “Seeding

Cultures of Peace with InterPlay.” (See story.)

**November 15**–Seekers Singalong, 7:30 p.m., Jean Adams’ home, Arlington, VA. Sing songs out of Rise Up Singing and share snacks that we all bring.

**November 16**–Bob Gustafson-Watson’s group plays, New Deal Cafe, Greenbelt, MD, 4–6 p.m.  
(See story.)

**December 6**–Wellspring art auction. (See story.)

**December 13**–The annual Seekers Christmas Singalong at the home of Billy and Kate Amoss in

Silver Spring.

## **PREACHING AT SEEKERS**

Sandra Miller writes, for Celebration Circle, Seekers' worship mission group:

Seekers one and all—As we often say from the lectern, we believe the Word of God comes to all of us, and

some of us are called to bring what we've heard out of our experiences to the community. If

you have never preached before but have been thinking about it, or if you've preached once

before or many times, Celebration Circle invites you to think about signing up to share what

you are holding with the community. Dates available are November 30, December 7, December

28, and any Sunday in January.

Ken Burton is the current moderator of Celebration Circle and keeps our calendar, so please

be in touch with him to sign up. You can, of course, talk to anyone in Celebration Circle.

We hope to hear from you.—CC: Peter Bankson, Ken Burton, Sandra Miller, and Deborah Sokolove

Ken adds: Please feel free to discuss with me (or with any member of Celebration Circle)

your opportunity to share the word with the community. I will

make sure that the Sunday

about which you are interested is not already taken. We currently have two preaching

openings in Advent, and many beyond that in Christmastide and Epiphany. Please consider

letting the community know how the Spirit is moving in your life and in the world. And,

after you preach, please be sure that Deborah gets your text in soft copy to post on the

Seekers web site.

## **SERVANT LEADERSHIP TEAM REVIEW—BRENDA SEAT**

Jane Engle writes—Every three years, in rotating fashion, each member of the Servant

Leadership Team [Seekers ministerial team] has a review, done by a team. The members of this

team reflect on their interactions with the person being reviewed, who this time is Brenda,

and the interactions of this person with the community. This is the one opportunity that

Brenda has to think about her work and her call to the SLT.

The members of Brenda's Review Team are Dave Lloyd, Aeren Martinez, Katie Fisher, and Jane Engle.

If you have had an opportunity to interact in a meaningful way with Brenda or have observed her interaction within Seekers, please feel free to share your views with a member of the Review Team. It is important for the Review Team to hear from as many people as possible.

## **FRED TAYLOR'S BOOK—A NEW EDITION AND A BOOK SIGNING**

The Festival Center and Potter's House Books invite you to a book discussion and signing:

Roll Away the Stone: Saving America's Children (Updated Second Edition) with author Fred Taylor, Friday, November 21, 2008, 6 p.m., at the Festival Center, 1640 Columbia Road, NW, Washington, DC. 3½ blocks from Columbia Heights Metro. (202) 328-0072.

Free and open to the public. There will be a short presentation by the author, followed by

book signing.

For more information, call Joe Deck at (202) 328-0072 or Tom Taylor at (202) 232-5483.

Overview of the book: Roll Away the Stone is an inspiring response to a painful subject—the

escalating number of abused, neglected, and impoverished children and families, and the

mounting severity of their problems. The book demonstrates how a modern exodus from poverty

is morally demanded and humanly possible. It weaves together Biblical metaphor, real

experience of the poor, inspiring stories of community action, and imaginative political

reflection. The author challenges the narrowness of the existing liberal-conservative

political debate as grounded in outdated assumptions, and he describes new, emerging

paradigms capable of ending persistent poverty in the United States.

Fred Taylor led the pioneering, community-based child and family service organization, For

Love of Children (FLOC), for 38 years from its inception in 1965. He remains active as a

member of its board.

Fred was a co-founder of Seekers and its co-minister for many years (with Sonya Dyer).

He is an ordained minister and a graduate of Vanderbilt University, Yale Divinity School,

and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

## **INTERPLAY SPECIAL EVENTS**

Friday, Nov. 14, 1 – 5 PM: “Kamsisi (New Roots) Rituals for Life’s Journey” with African

dance, drums, chanting & InterPlay. Led by Masankho Banda, African shaman, at Seekers (see

his biography below.) Sliding scale \$45–\$75 (cash or check to InterPlay DC, mail to Sue

Johnson).

Saturday, Nov. 15, 9:30 AM – 4 PM (potluck lunch), at Seekers Church: “Seeding Cultures of

Peace with InterPlay,” an InterPlay retreat led by Masankho Banda at Seekers Church.

InterPlay is an active creative way to unlock the wisdom of the body. InterPlay is a system

of ideas and practices that can help you reshape your life and your communities. Get body,

mind, heart and spirit working together again.

Come for a day of learning how to create peace with InterPlay’s passionate, effective

approach to changing the world one play at a time! With this easy, fun, life affirming you

will be amazed at what we will experience. When people of different cultures, ideologies,

and sexual orientations sing, dance and share stories, cultures of peace are created.

Masankho, in addition to being a certified InterPlay Leader. has worked to build peace for

the past 15 years around the world. Come ready to dance, sing, tell stories and be still. We

will laugh, maybe even cry, and at the end of the day we’ll have had a lot of fun and

discovered how to be more peaceful.

Who is this day for? This day is for anyone who is looking for more peace in their life.

InterPlay is being used to create grace and ease in life by pastors, lawyers, doctors,

professors, teachers, parents, grandparents, athletes, actors, dancers, singers, chaplains,

CEO's, writers, and so many more. Come and see that it is right for you too!

Cost: \$50 (cash or check payable to InterPlay DC). Some scholarship help available.

Questions: call Sue, 703-641-5963.

To Register: mail check to 7818 Byrds Nest Pass, Annandale, VA 22003.

Websites: InterPlay – [www.interplay.org](http://www.interplay.org)

Masankho – [www.ucandanc.org](http://www.ucandanc.org)

Brief biography: Masankho is a healer, performing artist, InterPlay Leader, and

peacebuilder, originally from Malawi, Central Africa, and now living in Oakland, California.

From the time he could walk, everything about Masankho's life has groomed him to become the

peace builder he is today. Masankho brings a gentleness and passion to his work that puts

people at ease and allows them to access their deepest healing. In 2001 Masankho was awarded

the Unsung Hero of Compassion Award for his peace and diversity work.

## WELLSPRING ART AUCTION

Kate Cudlipp writes in a November 11 email: I am attaching three items that explain more

about the Wellspring Art Auction to be held Dec. 6, 3-7 p.m., at 2025 Mass. Ave. They are

(1) a letter inviting faith community members to attend the auction and to offer art

donations that can be auctioned; (2) a flier about the event; and (3) a form to fill out if

you have an art object to donate to the auction.

If you don't want to open the attachments but would like further information, here is the

contact info:

The Wellspring office at 301-428-3373 [missionwel@aol.com](mailto:missionwel@aol.com) or Ann Moczydlowski at 301-445-7584 [annwellspring@yahoo.com](mailto:annwellspring@yahoo.com) .

## JOB OPPORTUNITY

Jane Engle forwards this job notice:

It is an exciting time! SMYAL, the Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League, is searching for

an Executive Director to lead our mission-driven organization supporting lesbian, gay,

bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth throughout metropolitan Washington.

Please review the attached PDF, which includes the full position description, along with

information about SMYAL, our programs, key responsibilities, opportunities & challenges for

the new Executive Director, organizational priorities and more.

As a member of the SMYAL Board, I'd like to encourage you to review, and share with folks in

your social or professional networks who may be interested. If this might be the right

opportunity for you right now . . . then take the next step!

To apply, email cover letter, resume, and salary requirements to:

[SMYAL@transitionguides.com](mailto:SMYAL@transitionguides.com) (Email preferred.)

Other inquiries should be addressed to:

SMYAL Search Committee

c/o TransitionGuides

1751 Elton Rd., Suite 204

Silver Spring, MD 20903

Phone: (301) 439-6635

Fax: (301) 439-6638

Closing Date: Resume reviews begin in late November and will continue until the position is

filled.

SMYAL is an equal opportunity employer. We encourage persons from diverse backgrounds to

apply.

## **INTERFAITH CONCERT**

Kate Cudlipp writes—This is to remind you that the InterFaith Conference Concert at the

National Cathedral is Tuesday, November 18, at 7:30 p.m. The flyer says it's a "Celebration

in Song, Dance and Chant" from nine faith traditions ranging from Baha'i to Sikh (in

alphabetical order). For more information, you can go to [www.ifcmw.org](http://www.ifcmw.org)

## **NEW BLOG FROM PAT CONOVER**

Pat writes—Dear Family, Friends, and Colleagues, I have made the first post in my new blog:

<http://blog.patconover.com>. The first post presents a proposal for dealing with a

significant problem in the follow-up to the current financial crisis. Future posts will deal

with a wide variety of political topics: entitlements, health care, public education,

poverty, taxes and budget issues, military and foreign affairs, etc. I will be drawing on my

19 years of public policy advocacy experience for the United Church of Christ. My posts will

reflect my understanding of the Christian gospel because that is how I think. However, with

a few exceptions, most of my posts will address a specific concern and will not be presented

with specific Christian references. I have posted a lot of Christian-focused content on my

website: [www.patconover.com](http://www.patconover.com).

First of all, I invite you to take a look at my initial post. Then, if you are unlikely to

read future posts, please send me an email to [patrish@erols.com](mailto:patrish@erols.com) and I will remove you from

this list of people who will get an email notice of new postings. I will not feel insulted

in the slightest if you want to unsubscribe. I have far more to read every day than I can

get to. On the other hand, if you think some of my posts might be of interest, just stay on

the list and click off the email notice when a topic doesn't sound interesting.

When you offer a comment on my blog it will not post automatically. I will read all comments

before posting them to guard against flaming and other electronic sins. I hope most comments

will offer corrections or substantive extensions.

If you like what you read I encourage you to share the blog with your friends.

## **TRIP TO PEARLINGTON, MS, POSTPONED TO WINTER 2009**

Richard Lawrence writes—Dear Members, The trip to Pearlington, MS, planned for this

November, to rebuild hurricane-damaged homes, has been postponed. The three of us that had

planned to go felt it was better to wait until there were more volunteers. We will probably

schedule a trip for this coming February. More details will be forthcoming. A number of

people have already expressed an interest in a trip later this coming winter. Thanks,

Richard

## **PERFORMANCE BY BOB GUSTAFSON-WATSON'S GROUP**

Bob writes—I've been informed that I should mention, at least occasionally, that the band

I'm in, "Jack Couldn't Make It," plays out sometimes. If anyone asks what style we play, the

answer is "Anything from Hank Williams to Bob Marley."

The next time is Sunday, November 16, at The New Deal Cafe, in Greenbelt, 4:00–6:00.

Here's a link to the Cafe...<http://www.newdealcafe.com/>

And although the calendar says we're there 5:30–8:00, due to a

board meeting, we've been

moved up to 4:00...

I'm not really one to promote much, but Jake keeps nagging at me ☐

## **THANKSGIVING BOXES FROM COVENANT COMMUNITY**

Kate Cudlipp writes for Covenant—Once again this year, Covenant Christian Community is

preparing to distribute at least 200 food baskets (actually, big boxes) to families. They

are enlisting the help of Seekers as well as other faith communities. They need to raise

\$15,000 (!), as the boxes contain not only food for a complete Thanksgiving dinner but for

the whole week, as well. They also need help in filling the boxes on Sunday, Nov. 23,

beginning at 9 a.m. and ending by 11:30, when “hot drinks, homemade soups, and munchies will

be available.”

If you wish to contribute, make your check payable to Covenant Christian Community and

either leave it in the appropriate slot in the mail stack in the office at Carroll St. or

send it to

Covenant Christian Community, c/o Seekers Church  
276 Carroll St. NW  
Washington, DC 20012

## **NEWS OF THE WIDER SEEKERS COMMUNITY**

### **Bruce Helland's news—Brenda Seat writes:**

Dear Seekers, Here is a further update from my Dad. It has been a while since he has written and that I have sent out his updates out, so let me catch you up on what has been happening. First of all the husband of the couple that he had gone to help in Japan, Ralph Cox, got very ill, was diagnosed with cancer and died within a few weeks of his diagnosis. This was of course a big shock to the Cox family and to my Dad as well, since he has been friends with the Coxes since my parents first went to Japan more than 30 years ago.

My Dad began preaching more and picking up the slack that Ralph's death had caused, and

helped out as much as possible while Ralph's wife, Stella, came back to the States to visit family and friends.

Soon after the summer began, Dad began to have some severe swelling in his legs. He went to

the doctor several times and was tested, and they told him that there was nothing wrong

other than that he needed to spend more time with his legs elevated. Luckily, right about

the time his legs started swelling, he was able to move to a new apartment that is on the

first floor and is air conditioned. So he no longer has to climb the five stories (or the

Matterhorn as he called it). and the air conditioning helped his legs quite a bit.

For most of August he was visiting Nagano and went to the mission conference and really

enjoyed seeing people from his past.

After he returned, his laptop just refused to work, and so he is now learning how to use a

Japanese laptop with a Japanese keyboard that was loaned to him by a retired guy who loves

to fix computers for people.

So as you can see—never a dull moment with my Dad... So here is the latest in his words:

To my faithful Friends and Supporters. I can never forget that I am here because you are

partners with me in this venture for God.

As partners, I want to inform you about a few things. First because of your faithfulness, I

haven't had to worry about my support. I am really thankful for partners like you. Second, I

had my 81st. birthday Oct. 3rd. I have received many e-mails and some cards from the USA. My

Japanese friends have also remembered my birthday with several gifts and a recent small

party. Because of their kindness I feel very thankful. Third, the swelling around my ankles

has gone down some. It is not back to normal but it is much better. I am thankful that I

have no pain. Fourth, and this is a very special prayer request, I have just two months here

in Japan. Will you pray with me that the witness that I have given to my students will bear

eternal fruit. One of my students is very close to believing in Jesus. She now believes in

God but hasn't admitted that she needs a Saviour. A high school student is just getting her

feet wet in understanding the ocean of God's grace and forgiveness. One man's family

believes but he hasn't yet because he doesn't want to repent. I haven't had a good chance to

share my Lord with the man who fixes my computer. He has become a good friend but...pray.

Thanks.

What I am going to share with you from this point on is on the lighter side of life in

Japan. It is something that happens with me everyday. I will call it, " Japan's Fascination

With The Toilet Seat." When we first came to Nagano in the 60's our toilet just had a hole

in the floor. Fortunately I could buy a ceramic toilet seat that fitted over the hole. But

of course it wasn't a flush toilet. Ten years later we moved into a house our mission built

for us and this bathroom, built to our design, had a flush toilet.

Well, since this time, Japan has made lots of improvements on the toilet seat. For instance

when I started to have this leg problem I went to Stella's doctor. He had a new office. I

had to use the bathroom. I went in turned around to lock the door and approached the toilet

seat. As I got close to the seat, imagine my surprise when I saw the seat slowly raise so I

could sit. I was looking for the unseen hand that raised the lid but there was no hand, but

an electric eye, that saw me approach and opened the lid. When I left, I forgot to check if

it closed the lid too.

In the house that I am living in now, I have a toilet seat that has a small push button

control panel on the right side of the seat. The seat is always warm and this is a good

thing for the cold weather. When you are through, there is a button to press and a stream of

warm water comes out and washes you! I was skeptical at first but it does clean well.

However, you don't want to leave wet, so you press another button and the fan turns on

blowing nice warm air to dry you off. It works very well. So you turn off the units and you

are clean and ready to face the world. It really saves on toilet paper too.

Well this is part of living in Japan. I thought you would like to hear about the hardships I

am enduring. Ha Ha.

Sat. I was invited to go on an outing to Shodoshima island which is a large island north of

Takamastu. It takes one hour by ferry. The wife of one of the couples is my student and she

wanted to show me where she was born, the schools she went to, and where she lived the first

18 years of her life. This island is well known for a young teacher—this was years ago—who

was asked to go to a remote fishing village and teach twelve children of that village. She

went and from her experience wrote a book, titled “Twenty Four Eyes”. This book became a

best seller in Japan and from this story several movies were made. The same school house has

been preserved and this village has become a tourist attraction. It was interesting to see

the old school house. It reminded me of some of the old Amish school houses.

Pray that as they see the goodness in this teacher that they will want to know about the

Great Teacher, Jesus Christ. We had a great time together.

I tried to pay my way but they wouldn't accept my money. This is a big problem for me. How

do you return the favor??

My cooking is getting better, I can even eat what I cook!

Well, this is what is going on here. God is making this an enjoyable experience.

In Christ we are together forever!

In Him,

Bruce

## **FAIR TRADE COFFEE FROM JUAN ANA AND RECYCLING**

Juan Ana coffee is a fair-trade brand we use for Seekers coffee hour and other events.

Trish Nemore writes— Okay, I'm getting a little compulsive about recycling (after having

just flown 6,000 miles, thus vastly increasing my carbon footprint).

I don't know about you, but I've saved most of the cloth bags that our San Lucas Toliman

Juan Ana coffee comes in, hoping that I could figure out a useful way to recycle them. (Cute

little bean bags was one thought, but since I barely sew buttons on, that seemed unlikely.)

I contacted the Juan Ana folks and they said they could reuse the bags if they are in pretty

good shape. So I plan to send a bunch back to them and am happy to include yours, if you

bring them to church Sunday. Then periodically we can gather a stack and send them off.

Thinking green, Trish

## **SEEKERS SERMONS IN OCTOBER**

The sermons that appear on the Seekers website for the month are listed below, with brief

thoughts on their themes. You can read these sermons, and archived sermons as far back as

1995, at [seekerschurch.org](http://seekerschurch.org). At the home page, find the tab "Worship" near the top. Click on

this tab, and the drop-down menu will list both Sermons and Archived Sermons.

**Oct. 28, "L'Arche," Emmy Lu Daly.** Emmy Lu spoke about her experiences with this community.

L'Arche Greater Washington, DC (L'Arche), is a faith-based organization that creates home-

and family-like community with people who have intellectual disabilities and those who

assist them. The aim of L'Arche is to create communities which welcome people with an

intellectual disability and give them a valid place in

society.

**Oct. 21 [Seekers Recommitment Sunday],** ["Recommitting to Loving Forgiveness," David Lloyd.](#)

So, does Saint Paul's first letter to that little house church in Thessalonica describe us?

A community whose faith has shown itself in action, its love in labor, and its hope of our

Lord Jesus Christ in fortitude? Have we welcomed the Gospel so that it meant grave suffering

for us? In spite of that suffering, do we rejoice in the Holy Spirit? Have we become a model

for all believers outside of our area?

**Oct. 14,** ["Wailing and Gnashing Teeth," Deborah Sokolove.](#) This is a hard Sunday to be

preaching. As the crashing stock market tests our faith, I don't want to preach cheap grace

and easy solutions. Many of us will, indeed, weather this economic storm, with nothing more

than a little inconvenience. But some people will lose their homes, their jobs, their entire

life savings. And many people who already have nothing will continue to bear the cost of an

inequitable system from which I, and many of you, benefit. Jesus knew about that inequitable

system.

**Oct. 7,** ["Faith and Commitment," Jacqie Wallen](#) . A grey squirrel runs down the trunk of an oak

tree and into the road in front of my car. Halfway across the road, he notices my car and

panics. He skids to a stop, then turns back toward the oak tree. Almost immediately, he

seems to question his decision. He stops, turns, and races back across the road. My car is

bearing down on him, but he's still not sure. Maybe he should hurry back to the oak tree,

after all. He hesitates. No, maybe not. . . . Commitment. It can be a problem for squirrels.

Also for humans.