

HARK!

HARAMBEE WEEKEND March 10-12 with Ron Sider



Ron Sider is the keynote speaker for Harambee 2006. Sider is Professor of Theology, Holistic Ministry and Public Policy and Director of the Sider Center on Ministry and Public Policy at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and President of Evangelicals for Social Action. He is a widely known evangelical speaker and writer, has spoken on six continents, published twenty-seven books and scores of articles. His *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* was recognized by *Christianity Today* as one of the one hundred most influential religious books of the twentieth century. His most recent books are *The Scandal of the Evangelical Conscience: Why Are Christians Living Just Like the Rest of the World?*, *Just Generosity: A New Vision for Overcoming Poverty in America and Churches That Make a Difference: Reaching Your Community with Good News and Good Works* (with Phil Olson and Heidi Unruh). Sider is the publisher of *PRISM* magazine and a contributing editor of *Christianity Today* and *Sojourners*. He has lectured at scores of colleges and universities around the world, including Yale, Harvard, Princeton, and Oxford.

Harambee means "coming together." Each year, Park Avenue's Harambee weekend provides an opportunity to come together as God's people to dialogue about what it means to be a community of reconcilers. We are challenged to consider what it means to be reconciled across the various lines that so often divide—race, politics, social/economics issues. It's a special time of celebrating the diverse cultures within the Park Avenue family.

Kidz Choir:

DRAWING CLOSER TO THE LORD By Rose Lanier

As director of the Park Avenue Kidz Choir, I often remind them that they are not putting on a performance for an audience, but rather are singing for the Lord. Technical problems or vocal mishaps do not diminish the value of their offering.

This advice came home to roost around our family Advent wreath last month. One Sunday morning, I awoke with a terrible migraine. Meanwhile, my husband struggled with a persistent head cold. We stayed home from church so that we'd recover in time for the Christmas program that evening.

We finally pulled up to the breakfast table at noon. After lighting the wreath, one of our sons pointed to my great-grandma's pump organ and asked, "Mom, does that thing still work?"

I felt a little guilty as I looked at the intricately carved family heirloom. I'd hardly played it in years, and had allowed it to become a dusty knick-knack.

Hmmmm! If we had attended church, we would have sung, "O Come, O Come,



Kidz Choir members Tony Simmering, Martin Winfield and Luke Riveness sang at the Christmas Eve service.

Emmanuel" while the candles were lit. We could do that at home, couldn't we? Our other son knew what was coming: "Oh, no, now she's

PARK AVENUE ANNUAL MEN'S RETREAT!

Park Avenue men continue their fellowship and growth in the Lord as a result of attending the Men's Retreat in March of 2005.

Will 2006 be your year to attend the Men's Retreat? The 8th annual Men's Retreat will be held at Lake Koronis Assembly Grounds in Paynesville, MN, March 3-5. Learn how Christ can be part of all of your life. What does Jesus

look like in Godly relationships? What does Jesus look like in the workplace and in the family? Come as men who want to know more about Jesus in this friendly get-away weekend.

The cost is \$80 and some scholarships are available. The registration deadline is February 26. For more information, call Paul Frost at 612.824.5508 or Kent Karnick at 612.372.5696.



Tronix Team kids are drilling holes in old plastic lunchboxes, putting in speakers and mp3 players to create their own Lunchbox Boombox. Our goal this school year is for 100 students to complete this project. If you know someone in grade 6 to 8 who wants to build a boombox, please send email to mail@TronixTeam.org or call Steve Birth at 612.824.0895.

ST. MARY'S HEALTH CLINICS CELEBRATES 13 YEARS AT PARK AVENUE by Barbara Dickie, Executive Director, St. Mary's Health Clinics

November 11, 2005 was the thirteenth anniversary of St. Mary's Clinics at Park Avenue! The need for the St. Mary's Health Clinics continues to grow as a result of continued unemployment, budget cutbacks, and fewer resources to go around. Barbara Dickie, Executive Director of St. Mary's recently shared, "We are most grateful to the congregation and the Park Avenue staff for all you contribute to our ministry of healing: the space, the gracious hospitality, the interest, and the support that is given to the patients and volunteers." In her letter to Park, Dickie added that over the years, St Mary's Clinic volunteers recorded 566 patient visits and 52 clinic sessions during fiscal year 2005. That's an average of nearly 11 patients per session!

In a recent patient survey, one clinic patient wrote, "I am grateful for the amiability and courtesy that I'm attended with and grateful of the medicine that is provided for

me." Another wrote, "The staff is wonderful at Park Avenue Methodist." We are proud that we are able to provide the care these men, women and children need, but we are prouder still of the outpouring of support that we receive from our hosting sites, like Park Avenue United Methodist Church!

DEMOGRAPHICS

Over the years, the patient demographics at the Park Avenue Clinic have changed dramatically. In 1993 when the Clinic opened, 45% of patients seen were African-American and nearly 39% were Caucasian. Today the predominant demographic is Hispanic at nearly 84%, with Caucasian at 12% and the remaining 4% divided between African-American, Asian, and multi-racial. Currently, 75% of all patients seen at the Park Avenue Clinic do not speak English and require an interpreter.

All of the St. Mary's Health Clinics are staffed by volunteers (physicians, nurses, drivers, interpreters, and admissions personnel).



Volunteers at the Park Avenue Clinic site have contributed 1,192 hours of service during fiscal year 2005. That is an average of nearly 23 hours per clinic session donated by those staffing the clinic.

St. Mary's Health Clinics are always on the look-out for new volunteers. Currently, there is a great need for licensed nurses, drivers, interpreters, admissions personnel, and family practice physicians at many of the St. Mary's Health Clinics. If you, or anyone you know, is interested in volunteering for St. Mary's Health Clinics, please give us a call at 651.690.7020 for more information.

gonna make us sing!" He was right.

"Watch out for that cloud of dust!" my husband laughed as I pumped the bellows. The old

organ groaned and wheezed. So did our voices. The first time through, we couldn't suppress our laughter, and had to stop a few times. On our second attempt, we made it all the way through, and followed up with "Joy to the World." The quality wasn't

any better, but it didn't matter. Jesus had taken our dusty, pitiful offering, and had drawn us closer... to one another and to Him.

This is just one of many gifts we've received from our involvement with the Kidz Choir. If your children are in First through Sixth grade, please encourage them to join us. We work hard, but we have a lot of fun, too. Choir resumes in the Children's Village on Wednesdays, starting January 11. Games with the 4-Kidz group begin at 6:30 p.m., followed by rehearsal from 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Call 612.721.7724 for more information.

WHO IS SPIRIT OF DAVID? by Michelle Higgins

The Spirit of David youth choir is a group of about 16 amazing young people under the direction of Martial Besombes. I serve as "choir mom."

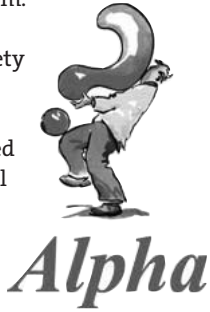
Over the past two years Spirit of David, SOD, has grown slowly in number, but by leaps and bounds spiritually. SOD has also grown by reaching out and taking the ministry "on the road." God's message through music was shared at the Fallout Arts Festival, and at Metro Hope Ministry, a local organization that helps those suffering from drug and alcohol addiction. SOD also shared their worship ministry at Christ Lutheran church in Blaine, and at the JUMP service at Redeemer Lutheran church, where they ministered with the Christian rap group, Agape.

This summer, Spirit of David will travel to Denver to sing at True Light Baptist Church, with former Park Avenue Minister of Music, Benita Edwards. In preparation for this trip, SOD will be holding a number of fundraising activities in the months ahead.

ALPHA & BETA @ PARK AVENUE – FEBRUARY 2006

By Sue Peterson

The next Alpha course at Park Avenue will begin with a "No Obligation Preview" on Sunday evening, February 5 at 5:00 pm. Everyone is welcome to join Alpha. People attend for a wide variety of reasons. Some want to investigate whether God exists and if there is any point to life; others are concerned about what happens after death. Still others may have attended church but feel they have never really understood the basics of the Christian faith.



People come from many different backgrounds, holding many different viewpoints—but all come with the same objective: to establish whether Jesus Christ has any real relevance for their lives. Alpha is a ten-week opportunity to explore the validity and relevance of the Christian faith for our lives today. It is a practical introduction to the basics of Christianity with loads of opportunity for debate and discussion. The style of Alpha is informal, friendly and non-pressured.

Alpha is enjoyed and appreciated as much by those who have never set foot in a church as those who once attended as well as by regular churchgoers. No matter what their background, whether investigating Christianity for the first time or revisiting their faith, participants get a lot out of the Alpha Course.

Each week people meet together for a meal and a talk followed by small group interaction. There is a one day retreat midway through the course, which focuses on the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

There is no charge for the Alpha course. We ask for a small contribution for the meal each evening and for the food during the Alpha retreat.

Still uncertain? To get an idea of what Alpha is about, we invite you to preview a short segment of the first night's Introductory Video at www.alphausa.org/basics/#who

Alpha Alumni

All past Alpha course graduates are invited to join us for one of two Beta follow-up classes. "A Life Worth Living" on the book of Philippians and a course focusing on more questions about the Christian faith. BETA classes will also begin Sunday, February 5. Alpha and Beta groups are together for dinner and then meet separately.

For more information: contact Sue/Tom Peterson 651.690.2338 or Bert/Arlette Hepp 612.822.7197.

Alpha & Beta Schedule – 5PM Sunday Evenings

February 5	No Obligation Preview Night
February 12	Who is Jesus?
February 19	Why Did Jesus Die?
February 26	How Can I Be Sure of My Faith?
March 5	Why & How Should I Read the Bible?
March 12	Why & How Do I Pray?
March 19	How Does God Guide Us?
March 25	Holy Spirit Retreat (Saturday)
March 26	How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life?
April 2	How Can I Resist Evil?
April 9	How & Why Should I Tell Others?
April 16	Does God Heal Today?
April 23	What About The Church?

SOUL LIBERATION 2006 PLANNING TEAM NEEDED

The Soul Liberation Festival is a key event in the life of Park Avenue. For over 32 years, Soul Liberation reflects Park Avenue's commitment to break down the walls that divide us from one another. Thanks to Soul Liberation, music is used to forge a common language of understanding that brings people from various ethnic and social backgrounds together. Soul Liberation's focal point of unity builds community, possibility and hope in folding chairs on the blacktop in the heart of the city.

The 2006 Festival is the weekend of July 8. Now is the time to begin planning. A team of creative, resourceful individuals are needed to organize this event.

Contact Cynthia Williams 612.825.6864 ext 551.



Mother and daughter working together at Cornerstone Christmas Toy Store. Madre e hija trabajando juntas en la tienda de juguetes de Cornerstone.

LIFEKEYS AT PARK!

Have you ever wondered what your life gifts, spiritual gifts, values and personality type are? Have you asked yourself or God how your special and unique gifts can bless the people in your life and church?

LifeKeys is an interactive time course to discover who you are, what you do best and how you can put your God given gifts into action. It has proven to be a successful and effective gifts assessment and self-discovery course used in hundreds of churches and organizations.

So, come be refreshed, celebrate successes, and set out on your next steps!

LifeKeys 3-Session event are held on Harambee Wednesdays this January

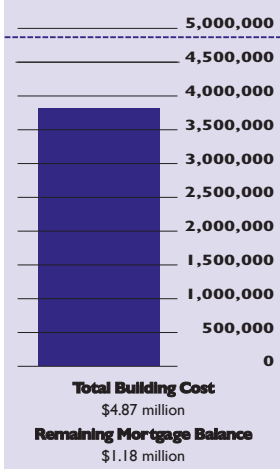
Wednesday, January 11
Reflect and Renew

Wednesday, January 18
Walking Out Your Purpose

Wednesday, January 25
Share the Journey

For further information contact Denise Felder at 952.831.3439 or denisefelder@yahoo.com

BUILDING UPDATE



BOOKS OF THE BIBLE STUDY REVIEW – GOSPEL OF MARK

By Jon Sunde

The Sunday morning study group led by Tom Kittock is held at 10am in the Foundation lower level classroom. The week I attended, there were nine who came together for fellowship and growth. It was a time of sharing and learning more about God's word. When asked, what people thought about the group, someone said, "we had a good discussion." Another person said, "we had a lively, spiritual group discussion. All are invited, so join when you have the opportunity."



Keep up-to-date with all the stuff that is happening at church at www.parkavechurch.org.



3400 Park Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55407
Return Service Requested

PARK Avenue Church



Hark! is published monthly (usually) for members and friends of Park Avenue United Methodist Church. We welcome your input. Please submit all articles to the church office by the second Wednesday of the month.

612.825.6863

www.parkavechurch.org

Sunday Services

8:20am English
10:00am English
11:45am English/Spanish

Pastors

Mark Horst
Yar Gono

HARK!

January 2006

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Thank you Parkites for your generous time and gifts that create joyful times in the lives of families we serve through Cornerstone! Gracias Parkites por su generoso tiempo y por los regalos que crearon mucha alegría en las vidas de las familias que servimos por medio de Cornerstone!

HARAMBEE WEDNESDAYS BEGIN JAN. 11

by Pastor Yar Gono

Join us beginning January 11 through March 29 for Harambee Wednesdays. This year's theme is "Christ-like Living." Harambee Wednesdays bring the Park Avenue Family together to share dinner, worship, pray, serve, build relationships, learn to know one another, and grow together. Last fall we averaged 305 Park Avenue family members and neighbors at Harambee Wednesdays.

The 2006 Harambee Wednesdays Family Ministry Program will give us the opportunity to celebrate and continue the positive aspects of Harambee Weekend 2006, which is March 10-12.

We want to keep the energy and excitement in our church as we grow toward maturity in Christ.

We want to thank God in Christ for what was begun and we want to keep moving forward. With God in Christ on our side, we will press on to win the prize that Christ has for us. With unity, team spirit, focusing on our mission and purpose for Park Avenue, and with God in Christ's help, we will prevail.

Harambee Wednesday Schedule

5:45-6:45 pm Dinner
6:45-7:00 pm Worship & Prayer
7:00-8:15 pm Small Group Break-outs

Please contact the church office or stop by the Welcome Center for book or Bible study topics and small group availability.