

THE CHURCH YEAR, NEW AND IMPROVED

# 'Where I'm At Sunday'

by Lillian Daniel

**T**REASURING THE freedom that allows us to honor our unique traditions and keep up with the times, we propose these special Sundays in the church year and offer accompanying liturgical resources:

**Where I'm At Sunday, May 8**  
(formerly Confirmation Sunday)

The youth of the church will reflect upon the hypocrisy of organized religion. They will show no interest in the Christian faith, but they will be invited to share their feelings and subsequently be received into full membership.

**Denominational Apology Sunday, May 15** (formerly Pentecost)

Time will be reserved for the denomination to apologize for one or more of the following: a) historical wrongs; b) hurt feelings; c) stands taken which may turn out to be wrong; d) stands now believed to be wrong which may turn out to be right.

**Bad Preaching Sunday, June 5**

Pastors will swap pulpits and preach extremely poor sermons at one another's churches, thus increasing each congregation's esteem for its own pastor. (Note: The official name of this Sunday is not to be shared with the congregations.)

**Festival of the Christian Garage, June 19** (formerly Father's Day)

An opportunity to decorate the sanctuary creatively with symbols such as beer cans and copies of *TV Guide*. The preacher may open worship with words such as "Can you keep it down? I'm trying to watch the game in here" and then proceed to ignore the congregation for the next hour.

*Lillian Daniel is senior minister at First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, in Glen Ellyn, Illinois.*

**Large Church Pastor Sunday, August 7**

On this day the denomination prays for the special needs of large churches, which must recruit top-flight associates and well-paid staff, manage large endowments and feel underappreciated and misunderstood by pastors of smaller churches.

**Small Church Pastor Sunday, September 18**

The beauties of small church ministry will be celebrated, followed by an all-church pot-luck dinner. Those whose last name starts with A-G should bring cupcakes; H-M, green bean casserole; N-P, baked beans; O-Z, ham with pineapple. Recipes will be posted. Please call the church office if you have allergies or questions.

**Human Sexuality Sunday, Date, subject and content, TBA**

**Cute Things Kids Say About God Sunday, January 30; February 13, 20; March 27** (formerly Easter); **May 22** (formerly Trinity Sunday); **June 19; September 4, 11, 18; October 2; December 18 and December 24** (formerly Christmas Eve.)

On these popular Sundays, pastors should quote heavily from stories making the rounds on the Internet, which the congregation will enjoy hearing again. Stories need not have a point as long as they are cute. Don't overlook stories about your own children, which are a source of delight to others.

**Not in My Backyard Sunday, November 13**

Bulletin inserts will

make it clear that life-changing mission work takes place overseas, where the people are really grateful. Church members who have taken mission trips abroad will wear ponchos and speak on how they received even more than they gave. Youth will feel a call to ministry, which should dissipate by the fourth hymn. Local poverty within driving distance of the church, drug-related crime and union organizing drives are not to be mentioned.

**Jesus, My Buddy, Sunday, November 20** (formerly Christ the King Sunday)

Images will be chosen to emphasize the ordinariness of Jesus and to boost members' self-esteem. As a pastoral service, members will be given the opportunity to unpack their lingering feelings of inadequacy resulting from previous presentations of a transcendent ruler God. This service should offer the comforting message that God is really no better than we are.

**Hymnal Desensitization Sunday, November 27** (formerly First Sunday of Advent)

Congregations that have recently purchased new denominational hymnals will sing from the old hymnal while receiving painful electric shocks. If militaristic hymns are included, wattage should be increased. ■

## Now we see . . . darkly

Sometimes, at end of day, but not of care,  
Mozart or Beethoven our aural food,  
Her hand reaches into empty air,  
A tactile search for something understood:  
This is a nurse's hand, a hand that heals,  
And yet, the reaching gives no hint of sense,  
No hint revealing what it is she feels,  
But still, incarnate eloquence,  
Perhaps it is within these vacancies  
That meaning lies. Or in the mystery  
Surrounding us in health, and in disease,  
Perhaps Alzheimer's gives epiphany,  
She reaches her hand into the empty air:  
Who dares to say that there was nothing there?

G. Wayne Glick