



A summer letter to friends and colleagues:

There is a great relief that comes over me this time of year. It's the time when things wind down around agency work, and I get to think about resting up a little before I go back into the swing of work! The GRCC office will be closed during the month of July for the director to regain her wits.

As I look over the first half of the year I am grateful to our members and friends that have joined us in the many events we sponsored and produced. I am hopeful that these opportunities have touched the hearts of some people and perhaps even made a difference in their spiritual and/or physical lives. I'm thinking of those events we helped sponsor with the Jewish Community Federation; one in February, "***Out In the Cold,***" and one in April, "***Earth-Sunday's Recycle ReUse.***" (Many shoes and boots were delivered to the Brockport Migrant Ministries and many were delivered to the Haitian Relief Program.)

I'm thinking of the ***2nd Annual Stations of the Cross Walk*** on Good Friday where hundreds of people walked through the Beechwood neighborhood praying at places of violence and places of hope. I'm think about the ongoing work of ***The Beloved Community Coalition*** and how they struggle to build-bridges of understanding and new relationships in our neighborhoods; the work of the ***Interfaith Health Care Coalition*** that helps to educate us on health care reform and holds our "toes to the fire" by reminding us that many people go without health care for a variety of reasons, but mostly because it's not affordable. I'm thinking about the many people who helped assist the "***Walkers for a Nuclear-Free Future***" by finding them overnight accommodations, meals, and listening to their stories. I'm thinking about the ***Summit on Urban Ministry*** where our denominational leaders gathered to talk about ways to support and help one another to do urban ministry. And wow... how about that ***Faith In Action Celebration Dinner*** where nearly 500 people came to acknowledge the faithful work of our honorees, and our key-awardees, Thomas Warfield, Jean Bartlett, and RAIHN!

And that's just a half year!

I am starting my summer vacation with a spiritual retreat at a Benedictine monastery in Erie, PA. I bring with me many prayers and promises. ***I pray for the many people who continue to support GRCC and I am thankful for their generosity, including the board of directors.*** I promise to keep our members and donors apprised of the work of the agency through newsletters, email, Facebook and all the other creative ways of communication (even the telephone). ***I pray that the agency continues to move forward in its ministry and draw in new faces... younger ones... who find enthusiasm in doing spiritual work in the world.*** I promise to listen to the voices of the unheard even when they are not speaking. ***I pray for an end of the violence, fighting and killing in our community.*** I promise to rest over the summer and not come into the office even when our VP for Organization is pulling out his hair. I pray no emergencies happen that cause me to break that promise!

One more thing I want to pray for and hope you join with me; ***I pray for a solution to the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico and the many people who have been harmed from it.*** This is something that affects not just the people in that immediate area, but it affects us all. We have been given the stewardship of this earth and we seem to be failing in our caretaking. I promise to keep these things in my heart and in my prayers this summer. I do believe in the power of prayer, or if you will... the power of compassionate thoughts. For it does make a difference.

Faithfully,
Marie