



## CMCL opens doors to neighborhood kids

*Before school enrichment program begins Monday morning, October 8*

On Monday October 8, at 7 a.m., CMCL's Concord Alley doors will swing open to welcome a group of children from Fulton Elementary School whose parents have enrolled them in our new Before School Enrichment Program. Each school morning, the children will enjoy a nutritious snack, planned activities and circle-talk time before they are rounded up to walk to Fulton for breakfast at 8:00.

The Before School Program has been developing quietly since early spring, when Monte Garber, at the request of the Justice and Spirituality Committee, contacted Fulton Elementary principal Matt Stem to inquire how CMCL might be helpful to the school. At the top of Stem's wish list was a safe place for children to be before school after their parents leave for work. Stem had special concern for families which did not have extended family support and could not afford private care or child care provided by city agencies. Between 93 and 96% of Fulton families live below the poverty line.

### ***Covenant U M initiates program in 2006***

Stem told Monte that Covenant United Methodist Church (our big neighbor on the corner of Orange and Mulberry) had risen to that urgent need in January last year, and suggested that CMCLers talk with them. JAS Committee members Cynthia Nolt and Louise Ranck visited Covenant's program in May, and then met with Sarah Morehouse, Covenant's youth director, and Carol Brower, who had organized Covenant volunteers to provide morning care for a group of 15-25 children.

Cynthia and Louise learned that the Covenant folks wanted their program to continue in the next school year, but that they were scratching for volunteers, and wanted to hire a program director to give the morning hour more structure. Julia Schrock-Rosenfeld and newly-arrived pastor Chad Martin and Covenant's senior pastor Larry Leister joined the conversation, which began to turn toward the idea of a collaboration between Covenant and CMCL.

### ***Louise Ranck to be interim program director***

And so it has developed. Louise Ranck has agreed to act as 1/4 time interim program director, organizing volunteers, overseeing planning, establishing contact with families who enroll their children in the program, and keeping an open communication flow to the councils and congregations of both churches. Covenant members Georgeanna and Dick Galen, Louise Kulp,

Karen Todd, and B.J. and Tom Wolfgang will join Carol Brower and Sarah Morehouse as regular volunteers, with another handful of folks as willing substitutes.

### ***19 CMCL volunteers will support program***

Response from CMCL has been astounding—19 people signed on as regular volunteers and 2 as substitutes. These folks are Julia Schrock-Rosenfeld, Cynthia Stayrook, Cynthia Nolt, Becci Leatherman, Beky Weidner (who will be art director), Sarah Myers, Linda Berger, Beth Graybill, Mary Gattis-Schell, Sylvia Yoder, Michael and Carol Eby-Good, Mary Friesen Seitz, Suzanne Mundok, Gwen Peachey, Ruth and Jay Martin, Beth Oberholtzer and Jeff Hawkes, and Chris Longenecker and Marichelle Roque-Lutz. Corey Franz-Eby and José Borrero have graciously translated parent letters and enrollment forms into Spanish for families who may need that.

Chad and Pam have been stretching hours and energy to work at laying the foundations of collaboration with Covenant pastor Larry Leister and the councils of both churches, as well as guiding process in this first-ever neighborhood outreach program for CMCL.

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### ***The program's beginning will be supported with funds from Covenant United Methodist and JAS Committee.***

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The program's beginning will be supported with funds from Covenant United Methodist and JAS Committee. Beyond the beginning, for this year the program will depend on support from the congregations and grant funding. Proceeding in this way is certainly a leap of faith, but the sense of call is powerful among the team, and as Larry Leister reminds us, "where God guides, God provides."

CMCLers are invited to contribute to the Before School Program's support. Checks should be written to CMCL, and designated to the "Before School Program." The Covenant/CMCL team also invites your prayer support for them and for the Fulton children and parents who are soon to become part of our extended family.

*by Louise Ranck*