

## HUMAN TOLL OF WAR

The Unitarian Church in Summit celebrated Memorial Day weekend by installing a wall of ribbons, called the Human Toll of War, on the columns in front of the church. The exhibit is designed to honor the 4,000-plus members of the U.S. military who have died since March 20, 2003, when the Iraq war began.

The congregation mounted the exhibit as a visual statement of its Moving Towards Peace initiative. Last October, members voted overwhelmingly to take a public stand and approve a Moving Towards Peace Statement and Resolution, which call for an end to the war in Iraq. Every week during worship services, a gong and chime are sounded to honor the American and Iraqi lives lost.

The Human Toll of War display was designed by church members Glen Pritchard, Helen Kaar and Pat Obst. Members and friends of the congregation, including children in Religious Education classes, worked together to cut the ribbons into two-foot lengths and write the names onto the ribbons. The ribbons were then attached to grid-like frames and fastened to the columns.

Ribbons of different colors represent losses in each year of the war. Green ribbons signify armed forces from New Jersey. Red ribbons are interspersed throughout the display to represent symbolically the number of Iraqis civilians and security forces killed. A banner at the top of the exhibit proclaims "Human Toll of War."

Each week ribbons are added to the Human Toll of War exhibit for military who have died during the preceding week. The exhibit will remain in place until the conflict ceases and American military forces are withdrawn.

Information regarding the exhibit is posted on the doors at the front of the church.

