



# The Justice & Witness Insider

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Justice & Witness Ministries  
United Church of Christ

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## Monthly Snapshot

The JWM Insider offers a monthly snapshot of what's going on within Justice and Witness Ministries. A number of the issues will highlight a program ministry so that our readership might expand their knowledge of a particular ministry. We hope that you enjoy reading this online circular and learning more about the many justice concerns to which we are called to bear witness. May the grace and peace of God be with you always.

## June Birthdays:

- \* Bentley de Bardelaben 6/5
- \* Elizabeth Farias 6/6
- \* Helga Mingione 6/8

by Bentley de Bardelaben

We live in a world that is in need of peace, justice, and love. As people of faith, we continually look for tools to engage the work of the Gospels throughout our communities. On Friday and Saturday, May 8 & 9, JWM piloted Justice LED (Leaders Engaging and Developing) curriculum in Cleveland. Understanding that we need to be connected to others of similar values as we look for ways to make a difference in the world, Justice LED is intended to provide tools and connections to strengthen and expand our collective efforts to make *Another World Possible*.

The Justice LED model was sanctioned and approved by JWM's Board of Directors in 2007 to be a vehicle assisting UCC members develop their leadership while also implementing JWM's vision and mission. May's testing included eight people who are doing justice work within

## New JWM Curriculum Tested

their communities or who have knowledge about curriculum development. Among those facilitating were six staff from JWM, who helped to design the program, along with curriculum consultant Stacy Cusulos, who filled in the formulaic gaps, formatted processes and finalized the work of this course.

Four guiding principles within the Justice LED curriculum:

- We have been called to **provoke** our theological understanding of justice so that we might be better equipped to interpret it.
- We must **think** beyond our existing approaches and beliefs about justice by grounding ourselves at the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ, where we are both humbled and glorified.
- We **respond** to the challenge by moving from the foot of the cross into the world

together, valuing ourselves and one another as much as God values us.

- We also **come** here as members of community, yearning for relationships and accompaniment in the struggle.

Justice LED hopes to enlarge the pool of justice leaders through training and collegiality. We believe that one/two can train 20-30; those 20-30 can train 250-300, and the circle grows continually. A multi-day training will be held in October 2009. We hope many of you will consider signing up for this monumental event.

## Take Action! ! !

Join the UCC JPANet to receive regular e-mail messages on important public policy matters.



## Sunday Morning at Synod

by Karen Georgia Thompson

Sunday morning delegates and visitors are invited to participate in Sacred Conversations on Race. Many churches engaged in sacred

conversations over the last year, and the conversations at General Synod will be an opportunity to expand these sacred conversations beyond our internal and personal experiences to institutional and societal issues related to race. Race intersects our lives in many ways. These conversations offer the opportunity to explore race through the thirteen sessions being offered on Sunday June 28, from 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. The morning begins with devotions, followed by the conversations with an expert and facilitator.

Please visit <http://www.ucc.org/synod/pdfs/sacredconversations.pdf> for information on the wide array of topical areas where conversations will focus, and register to attend at: <https://www.conference.com/eventmanager/OnlineRegistration.asp?eventcode=260>

Due to General Synod 27, we will not be publishing a July edition of *The Justice & Witness Insider*.

## Spring Has Burst Forth at FCAB

by Hudson Barksdale

Spring has burst forth at Franklinton Center. There is new life and hope is abundant. Programming is increasing dramatically. Opportunities for hosting conferences, retreats and family gatherings are numerous. We host them when possible and always tell the FCAB story and the JWM connection.

The need for justice work is varied and comes in many forms - *sacred conversations, youth meetings, retreats for women and men, empowering members of the local community, workers and working with local schools*. Our programming is crafted to meet various aspects of these needs. It includes *racial dialogues, a football camp, evaluation and referral of grants to local schools, establishing and holding alternative spring and fall breaks for colleges, supporting union workers, sharing our history and more*. We witness for justice in every available setting.

Through all of this, one dynamic that is clear is the fact that this is indeed “sacred space” that touches the human spirit in different ways. Almost invariably, if a group is here a day or two, someone comments on the “feel” of FCAB. Some talk about feeling peaceful, others speak of feeling the pain of those who were slaves. Still others just feel closer to God. These are all comments from recent guests. They all want to come back. We will be glad to host them one and all. We are after all, “*sacred space*.”



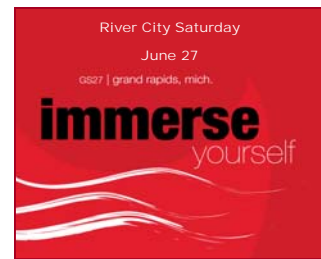
## STILL TIME TO REGISTER!

by Wally Ryan  
Kuroiwa

Justice and Witness Ministries has planned an exciting and inspiring event that will help kick off General Synod 27 for justice advocates. As the immigration debate continues to heat up, we need everyone to help us discern what the church needs to be about. On Thursday, June 25, 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m., a consultation on immigration will be held at the Grand Rapids Convention Center. Our keynote presenter will be Norma Chavez-Peterson from San Diego. A community organizer and fierce advocate for immigrant rights, Chavez-Peterson will be but one of many leaders of the day. Worship led by Rev. Loren McGrail from Minnesota Conference, reflections by David Ostendorf from Center for New Community, Delle McKormick from Borderlinks, Pastor Art Cribbs from Los Angeles, and Baldemar Velasquez from Farm Labor Organizing Committee, music from Aguila Negra, and inspiring, informative workshops will provide a day you don't want to miss. A \$35 registration fee will cover all materials, lunch, and fees. You can register online at: <http://act.ucc.org/site/Calendar/1474803387?view=Detail&id=100401> or by contacting Helga Mingione at [mingionh@ucc.org](mailto:mingionh@ucc.org).

We're on the WEB!

Visit our new homepage:  
at: [ucc.org/justice](http://ucc.org/justice)



## Synod Workshops on Economic Justice

by Edie Rasell

Saturday at General Synod (June 27) is **River City Saturday**, a daylong event featuring great speakers, musical performances, and interesting workshops. There will be three workshops that focus on issues of economic justice: *Congregation-based Community Organizing: Energizing Congregations and Renewing Communities* (11 am – 12:30 pm); *Social Security and Medicare: Examining Proposed “Reforms”* (1:30-3:00 pm); and *The U.S. Economy: What's Happening and What We Should Do About It* (3:30 – 5 pm). All three will be held at the DeVos Convention Center in the River Overlook Room A. Please join Edie Rasell, Minister for Workplace Justice, and other panelists and participants to explore these vitally important issues. (Link to <http://www.ucc.org/synod/pdfs/rivercity.pdf>)

## Ignorance is Not Bliss

by Ann Hanson

The key to preventing unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV-Aids, is access to age-appropriate and medically-accurate information, birth control and condoms. Starting at an age early enough to make a difference, children and youth can develop the confidence and ability to make well-informed decisions about their sexuality. Amy Johnson, Federal Way Mirror.com columnist outside of Seattle, WA, member at Wayside UCC in Federal Way, WA, and experienced Our Whole Lives facilitator, in her article, *Our Righteousness is Killing Us*, [http://www.pnwlocalnews.com/south\\_king/fwmlifestyle/42367487.html](http://www.pnwlocalnews.com/south_king/fwmlifestyle/42367487.html) lifts up in very real ways, the importance of providing sexuality education. For more info on the UCC's sexuality resources, go to: <http://www.ucc.org/justice/sexuality-education/>



## Environmental Racism workshop on Saturday, June 27 at General Synod

by Catherine Rolling

Harry Holt died 2 years ago from drinking water from his own well. The rest of his family who lived at the homestead are also diseased. His daughter, Sheila Holt-Orsted will tell their story at a Synod workshop to be held at DeVos Convention Center, River Overlook F at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 27. This is a powerful story, still playing out in Tennessee. JWM has honored Harry Holt

by naming their grass-roots organizing award after him. This award will be presented at the JWM banquet Friday evening.

The Holt family's story can be found in **Toxic Wastes and Race at 20**. Chapter 7 contains the groundbreaking information on Dickson County, TN written by Dr. Robert D. Bullard, one of the authors of the book, who calls this story the “poster child” for environmental racism.

Saturday workshop info: <http://www.ucc.org/synod/pdfs/gs27-workshops.pdf>

**Toxic Waste and Race at 20** downloads: <http://www.ucc.org/environmental-ministries/environment/toxic-waste-20.html>