



# The Justice & Witness Insider

Issue 46

November 2011

## Monthly Snapshot

The JWM Insider offers a monthly glimpse into the world of Justice and Witness Ministries. Learn more about our mission, staff, exciting projects, upcoming events and more. Get to know our ministry on a more personal level.

### Inside this issue:

*Come, Meet Your Neighbors!*

*“Expecting the Word” An Advent Daily Devotional Guide. Now Available!*

*Environmental Justice Center Celebrates*

*Missed Our Webinars? Check Out the Archive!*

*Keystone XL Pipeline Update*



### November Birthdays:

- Mike Neuroth 11/22

## Come, Meet Your Neighbors!



by Mary Mikkelson

Why is it, I wondered, that strategic planning meetings – intense, internally-directed, and, most of all, indoors – tend to be convened when the beach beckons and the view outside the window features Mother Nature at her finest? Being in southern California, of course, explains a lot, sunshine and swaying palms being the environmental norm. But what of those attending, what pulls them inside for a day or a weekend?

I know how I got there. But what of the others? What was their imperative? Of the essence, I learned, was a compelling need to let others in on a “go to the

mountain top” experience – and to share their glimpse of “the promised land” beyond. Centro Romero (more formally the Daniel F. Romero Center for Border Ministries) is a ministry of the UCC. Its mission is the further understanding of migratory realities, primarily by providing education and “immersion experiences” in which day to day life in Mexico is experienced and the voices of those living it are heard – and in doing so transforming lives on both sides of the border. Political, socio-economic and cultural forces are emphasized and participants reflect theologically on all they see and learn. So, okay, how were we going to spread the word? That was the question of the day, make that of the weekend. So how were we to become the change we wanted to see in the world? Ideas flowed fast and furious. The next task loomed large – narrowing the multitude of possibilities down to a workable first four

goals. The identified goals are “tell the story, build and maintain financial sustainability, build and maintain organizational sustainability and develop transforming programs to seek migratory and border justice”.

Telling the story was singled out as key to the success for Centro Romero. One recent student’s “graduation” statement encapsulates the experience poignantly: “I am very grateful to God for the experience at Centro Romero. It challenged and transformed me. I travelled home with a heart broken open with hope.”

(Excerpted from One Border. Two Countries. Many People. Come, Meet Your Neighbors!) Read full story at <http://www.scncucc.org/voices/2011/10/ucc-conference-our-diverse-community/one-border-two-countries-many-people-come-meet-your-neighbors>.

## “EXPECTING THE WORD”

### AN ADVENT DAILY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE. NOW AVAILABLE!



by Loey Powell

The words we use - and hear - do matter. As Advent approaches, we turn our attention to the scriptural texts of this special season in the life of the church. This devotional includes daily reflections from an ecumenical and diverse group of women and

men which focus on the images and language of the Advent season. Enhanced by original photography and art, these offerings will deepen your experience during the weeks leading up to Christmas. Join the journey everyday by downloading a copy of “Expecting the Word” [www.wordsmatter.org/](http://www.wordsmatter.org/).

The Words Matter project is one of the gifts of the Justice for Women Working Group of the

National Council of Churches to broaden our understanding of the significance of inclusive and expansive language and metaphor in the context of our faith. Your church group can engage in this process by using the “Start a Conversation” guide available online: <http://wordsmatter.org/start-a-conversation/>

For more info, contact Loey Powell at [powell@ucc.org](mailto:powell@ucc.org)

## Environmental Justice Center Celebrates



Labyrinth at Pilgrim Firs

by Jim Deming

More than 100 people shared in a celebration service Sept. 24 at Plymouth UCC in Seattle to launch the new UCC Environmental Justice Center at Pilgrim Firs in Port Orchard, WA. The Pacific Northwest Conference and JWM have partnered in forming the Center, and Plymouth UCC hosted three Brower Award-winning young adult speakers who challenged the gathering with their own stories of action and witness. At the gathering, Linda Jaramillo, Executive Minister for the national UCC Justice and Witness Ministries, said, "It's our responsibility to God to care for creation." Training events for the Center have been set for February 10-12, April 20-22, and October 16-18. Each will immerse participants in core values, current environmental issues, a hands-on restoration project, and advocacy. Participants will be trained and required to hold at least two workshops in their communities within a year. For more information on the workshops, contact Rev. Jim Deming at [demingj@ucc.org](mailto:demingj@ucc.org).

## "Healthy Connections" Certified Lay Minister of Health Training Program

The Healthy Connections Training Program identifies and trains lay leaders as lay ministers of health with the specific goal of establishing or enhancing health ministries in their churches. The training is linked to GS 21 Resolution "Reclaiming the Church's Ministry of Health and Healing." For more information, please contact Barbara Baylor, MPH Minister for Health Care Justice – [baylorb@ucc.org](mailto:baylorb@ucc.org) – (216) 736-3708

## The Best Me is A Fit Me – UCC Walking Challenge!



### ONLY 2 1/2 WEEKS LEFT TO WALK AND SEND IN YOUR MILES!

The First Lady's three million miles across America is almost over!

The UCC Faithfully Walking Challenge is still going on! We need 400,000 more miles to reach our goal! The UCC has already sent over 100,000 walking miles to the White House! Let's keep up the good work. Click here to register and for more information <http://www.ucc.org/justice/health/lets-move/faithfully-walking-challenge.html>

Please keep walking and send your miles to Ferne Clements [clementf@ucc.org](mailto:clementf@ucc.org) by November 15, 2011.

## Missed Our Webinars? Check Out The Archive!



by Loey Powell

In collaboration with the FaithTrust institute <http://www.faithtrustinstitute.org/about-us>, JWM has conducted 15 one-hour webinars on various aspects of sexual and domestic violence. The webinars have covered topics such as ministry with survivors of domestic violence, teen dating violence, what pastors and congregations need to know, how various communities deal with these issues, violence in LGBT relationships, and what to

## Keystone XL Pipeline Update



by Mari Castellanos

Native American and First Nation tribal leaders recently met with private land owners from both sides of the border at the Redbud Lakota reservation and signed a "Mother Earth Accord" opposing Keystone XL pipeline.

In Ottawa, First Nations protesters said their communities near the tar sands are plagued by health problems. "Our indigenous way of life is being threatened by the tar sands. You destroy our land, you destroy us," protesters said.

Keystone is seeking federal approval to build a pipeline that would carry the bitumen sludge from Alberta to refineries in Houston. A massive action at the White House is planned for Sunday November 6<sup>th</sup> as anti-pipeline activists will attempt to circle the White House.

They seek for President Obama to deny the permit for the pipeline.

do when a registered sex offender attends your church. These sessions have been archived for anyone interested in "attending" a session missed. <http://www.ucc.org/justice/womens-issues/webinar-archive.html>

The last two webinars for 2011 are scheduled for November 16 at 2 pm eastern (**What to do if a Registered Sex Offender Comes to Your Church**) and December 6 at 2 pm eastern (**Pulling Back the Veil – Intimate Partner Violence in LGBT Relationships**). The webinars are free but you must register for them at <http://www.ucc.org/justice/womens-issues/webinar-archive.html>

