

Global Mission Moment

This Kairos Moment

For I am sure that nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Romans 8:38, 39

The Palestinian Christian community, with roots dating back to earliest Christianity, now numbers less than two percent of the population in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. But the community prominently offers a non-violent witness for justice and peace. Last December in Bethlehem, Palestinian Christians launched "A Moment of Truth." They called it a "Kairos" document, the word in early Greek meaning "opportunity" or critical moment in time, and meant to allude to the crucial South African Kairos document which in 1985 prompted debate about Apartheid worldwide. The Kairos document states that "... Love is seeing the face of God in every human being. Every person is my brother or my sister. However, seeing the face of God in everyone does not mean accepting evil or aggression on their part. Rather, this love seeks to correct the evil and stop the aggression."

The believer in nonviolence has deep faith in the future. Palestinian Christians write, "Our hope remains strong" based on the expectation in faith of a better future. "In the absence of hope, we cry out our cry of hope... We believe in God, good and just [and that God's goodness] will finally triumph.... We will see here 'a new land' and 'a new human being', capable of rising up in the spirit to love each one of his or her brothers and sisters."

We pray, for hope, patience, and steadfastness and a time for repentance. Though their numbers are few, their message is great and important, in a land in urgent need of love.

Peter Makari is Global Ministries Area Executive for the Middle East and Europe.

You will find the Kairos document, action resources and updates at:
<http://globalministries.org/mee/kairos/>

Through your continued support of Our Church's Wider Mission the Calendar of Prayer for the Mission of the United Church of Christ is made possible; thank you!



Mission Moment—Your Life is More than a Checklist!

**September 5, 2010
Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time (Proper 18)**

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
2 Corinthians 3:17

At this busy back-to-school time of year, it can sometimes feel like life is just a series of things to get done before you collapse, exhausted, into bed at night. Sure, you're fulfilling your responsibilities as parent, community member, church member, son, or daughter. But it's easy to lose touch with the Spirit that inspires your sense of responsibility—the Spirit that makes duty not just an obligation you can't get out of, but a source of meaning and purpose.

And that's part of what church is for . . . to get you back in touch with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit that helps you do what you need to do, and not exhaust yourself doing it!

Exhaustion takes many forms, only one of which is physical. Re-charge your batteries at church. Take a deep breath and draw in some hope and enough energy to get you through this next week. You can do it. Especially if you remember that at the end of all your "to do" lists, God is still speaking.

Series 1

Jeremiah 18:1-11
Philemon 1-21
Luke 14:25-33
Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18

Series 2

Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Luke 14:25-33
Philemon 1-21
Psalms 1

September 6, 2010 — Labor Day

Through our generous gifts to Neighbors In Need, the United Church of Christ is offering hope to millions of people; we are transforming lives, the nation, and our world. Through the Massachusetts Conference a Neighbors in Need grant recipient is The City Mission Society; the oldest multi-service agency in New England.

The City Mission Society has been offering assistance to low-income and marginalized men, women, and children in Boston since 1816. Their services reach over 4,500 people each year, including: Homelessness Prevention for families and individuals; Positive activities for teens and elementary school-aged youth; Reducing youth violence; Volunteer opportunities for congregations and individuals .

Series 1

Jeremiah 18:12-23
I Timothy 3:14 – 4:5
Psalms 2

Series 2

II Kings 17:24-41
I Timothy 3:14 – 4:5
Psalms 101

September 7, 2010

The kind of change that Donna Dudley sees in Angola combines two phrases: *'change we can believe in' and 'be the change you wish to see in the world'*. Dudley, who serves the Evangelical Congregational Church of Angola (IECA) in the Department of Social Assistance, Studies and Projects (DASEP), sees her organization addressing issues that impact the quality of people's lives in Angola – health care, education, gender equity, development projects and peace and reconciliation. DASEP does this through programs such as Integrated Programs for Rural Development – helping reverse the exodus of people and facilitating the resettlement of those who left during the civil war – and through support of IECA's first national forum on education, an effort which has seen nearly 21,000 students enrolled in grades 2 through 9 with the Angolan government paying the majority of the 591 teachers' salaries. Dudley is humbled to be a part of positive change that benefits God's children in Angola.

Series 1

Jeremiah 19:1-15
I Timothy 4:6-16
Psalms 2

Series 2

II Kings 18:9-18
I Timothy 4:6-16
Psalms 101

September 8, 2010

Carrie Prestwood-Taylor served as a short-term volunteer at the Shalom Center in Chile. Carrie helped with preparations for the retreats at the Center, but she also contributed with some suggestions for retreat attendees as they returned home. "The encounters you have in Chile will enable you to transform your life. These transformations are not forced or imposed. After your cross-cultural experience, you have been given new tools with which to evaluate your daily choices. Your decisions affected by your trip could be simple decisions, such as deciding to go to church more often, or waste less food. These smaller decisions are equally as transforming and important as a seemingly larger decision might be (such as deciding to take a semester off school to become a volunteer abroad). In God's community, every step in the right direction is an appreciated step."

Series 1

Jeremiah 20:1-18
Luke 18:18-30
Psalms 2

Series 2

II Kings 18:19-25; 19:1-7
Luke 18:18-30
Psalms 101

A Calendar of Prayer for the Mission of the United Church of Christ

September 9, 2010

Through our generous gifts to Neighbors In Need, the UCC is offering hope to millions of people; we are transforming lives, the nation, and our world. Through the Michigan Conference a Neighbors in Need grant recipient is ISAAC. "We are Black and White. We are suburban, inner-city and rural. We are haves, have-nots, and have-a-little-want-mores. We are bold, tenacious, and we don't back down. We are ISAAC!" As congregations and organizations, ISAAC commits itself to the pursuit of a just community. Even now, they are seeking to build a world where hope triumphs over fear, where God's abundance meets the needs of all, where all live in sacred and beloved community instead of dehumanizing isolation, where the sun of equality has risen, in a land where love endures. They are united across and organizing so that common values are reflected in the world. (Continued on September 10)

Series 1

Jeremiah 13:20-27
I Timothy 1:1-11
Psalms 14

Series 2

Genesis 6:1-6
I Timothy 1:1-11
Psalms 51:1-10

September 10, 2010

(Continued from September 9)

ISAAC is Unique: It is the largest faith-based organizing group in Southwest Michigan, 19 members strong! ISSAC is the most racially and religiously diverse organizing group in Kalamazoo. It is connected to a state-wide network, Gamaliel of Michigan, an organization with members in Detroit, Saginaw, Battle Creek, Grand Rapids, and Lansing. It is the only organizing group in Kalamazoo connected to a national organization. ISAAC is an affiliate of Gamaliel Foundation, the fastest growing organizing network in the nation. ISAAC is supported by foundations, membership dues, grass-roots fundraisers, and individual contributors. It is a faith-based community organizing group made up of congregations and organizations. Together, they focus their collective people-power on the most pressing issues of injustice in Kalamazoo County. (Continued on September 11)

Series 1

Jeremiah 4:1-10
II Peter 2:1-10a
Psalms 14

Series 2

Genesis 7:6-10; 8:1-5
II Peter 2:1-10a
Psalms 51:1-10

September 11, 2010

(Continued from September 10)

Every two years, hundreds of members from the congregations assemble to vote on the most pressing issues of injustice in Kalamazoo County. They form task forces that identify the root cause of and possible solutions for those injustices. The leaders engage in direct actions that call for public officials "elected and appointed" to commit to use their powers to remedy the situation. Then, they hold the officials accountable to their commitments.

Current Task Forces include: Early Childhood Education Task Force: With an eye towards investing in the future, they are working to end cuts to education in Michigan!

Series 1

Jeremiah 4:13-21, 29-31
John 10:11-21
Psalms 14

Series 2

Genesis 8:20 – 9:7
John 10:11-21
Psalms 51:1-10

A Calendar of Prayer for the Mission of the United Church of Christ

September 17, 2010

Lydia's House is a locally-run, long-term (up to 24 months) shelter for abused women and their children. Over the past 12 years, their needs have grown, thereby presenting an opportunity for local faith communities to assist in providing support. As part of their mission and outreach to the local community, the members of Prince of Peace UCC, St. Louis, MO, in the spirit of "giving back," have found a number of ways to support Lydia's House.

Members volunteer giving of their time and talents in various ways. The children of Lydia's House have birthday parties because of several dedicated Prince of Peace members. The congregation supports Lydia's House by providing "community meals" twice a year, with food being prepared by members and delivered to the residents by the volunteers. When everyday necessities are in short supply and the "wish list" becomes more of a "need list", they hold "showers" and send baskets of donated items to the residents.

(continued on September 18, 2010)

Series 1

Jeremiah 8:1-13
Romans 8:31-39
Psalms 79:1-9

Series 2

Ezekiel 22:17-31
Romans 8:31-39
Psalms 113

September 18, 2010

(Continued from September 17)

Also, twice a year, pin sales are held to raise money, which goes directly back to Lydia's House. The pins are unique, one-of-a-kind pieces of wearable art which, when worn in the general community, help to raise awareness of Lydia's House and the work being done there. During October, which is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Chaplain from Lydia's House usually visits the congregation with a message about the ongoing efforts to educate, counsel, and improve the lives of the women and children being cared for at Lydia's House. The ultimate goal, of course, is to help the women achieve independence; they are proud to say "our congregation is also committed to helping them do so."

Series 1

Jeremiah 8:14-17; 9:2-11
Mark 12:41-44
Psalms 79:1-9

Series 2

Isaiah 5:8-23
Mark 12:41-44
Psalms 113

Weekly Prayer

*When joy is gone and hearts are sick, O God,
you give us Christ as our healing balm.
He came in human flesh
that he might give himself as a ransom for our salvation
and anoint us with the Spirit of consolation and joy.
Hear the cry of your people,
that we may rejoice in the richness of your love
and be faithful stewards of your many gifts. Amen.*

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for the Mission of the United Church of Christ is made possible; thank you!*



Mission Moment—The UCC in American History

September 12, 2010

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Proper 19)

How much do you know about the role the United Church of Christ has played in American history?

Today's United Church of Christ is the result of a 1957 merger between American Protestant denominations with rich histories of their own: the Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church. In the month of September, we can look back and celebrate these notable events—several of them historic "firsts" in the history of our country:

--A young member of Boston's Old South congregation, Phillis Wheatley, becomes the first published African American author in 1773. "Poems on Various Subjects" is a sensation, and Wheatley gains her freedom from slavery soon after. Modern African American poet Alice Walker says of her: "[She] kept alive, in so many of our ancestors, the notion of song."

--Antoinette Brown is the first woman since New Testament times ordained as a Christian minister, and perhaps the first woman in history elected to serve a Christian congregation as pastor. At her ordination a friend, Methodist minister Luther Lee, defends "a woman's right to preach the Gospel." He quotes the New Testament: "There is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (First Congregational Church, Butler, NY, 1853)

--1959: Southern television stations impose a news blackout on the growing civil rights movement, and Martin Luther King Jr. asks the UCC to intervene. Everett Parker of the UCC's Office of Communication organizes churches and wins in Federal court a ruling that the airwaves are public, not private property. The decision leads to a proliferation of people of color in television studios and newsrooms

--On September 3, 1846, the American Missionary Association is incorporated: the first integrated anti-slavery society in America.

Series 1

Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28
I Timothy 1:12-17
Luke 15: 1-10
Psalms 14

Series 2

Exodus 32:7-14
I Timothy 1:12-17
Luke 15: 1-10
Psalms 51:1-10

September 13, 2010

Contemporary philosopher Eckhart Tolle wrote, "True salvation is to know yourself as an inseparable part of the timeless and formless One Life from which all that exists derives its being." For Patrick and Kimberly Bentrout who serve the National Spiritual Council of Churches in Haiti (CONASPEH), that connectedness is profoundly apparent in the slums of Cite Soleil in Port-au-Prince. From the balcony of a school in Cite Soleil, Patrick could see the boundless blue ocean outlining one of the poorest, filthiest slums on earth. The juxtaposition of the two was so moving that it caused him to physically see the interconnectivity of which Tolle speaks. In a place of such poverty and limitedness, here was also the epitome of liberation. The Bentrouts would like to see "our collected consciousness evolve into a more loving and compassionate way of being in the world that more fully reflects our divine nature." In order for that to happen, we must explore our divine connection to people the world over.

Series 1

Jeremiah 5:1-17
I Timothy 1:18-20
Psalm 94

Series 2

Amos 7:1-6
I Timothy 1:18-20
Psalm 73

September 14, 2010

Is this the last story someone writes about a gay pastor in Minnesota?

Obadiah Ballinger hopes so. He has just been hired by a church in St. Paul Park, Minnesota, and would much rather talk about preaching than about his sexual orientation. Gay clergy have become less of a novelty, with many churches hiring homosexual pastors. But Ballinger's hiring — and the long process the church went through to hire him — is still a sign of a widening rift among churches over the issue of homosexuality. While some churches want to ban gay clergy, the Community United Church of Christ is going the other direction — hiring a male pastor who is married to another man. "The congregation welcomed me with open arms," said Ballinger, 27, who was installed as pastor Jan. 23. It's his first job as a pastor. He graduated from Yale Divinity School, where he met his future husband. They were legally married in Connecticut in May. Ballinger is winning over the few skeptics left in the church. The first sign was a classic symbol of Minnesota-style repentance — home-baked cookies.

"A woman who said she originally voted against me brought me them," Ballinger said.

Series 1

Jeremiah 5:18-31
II Peter 3:8-13
Psalm 94

Series 2

Jonah 3:1-10
II Peter 3:8-13
Psalm 73

A Calendar of Prayer for the Mission of the United Church of Christ

September 15, 2010

Changing Lives: St. Paul's Community Church, Chicora, PA, is in the process of building a structure for Sammy (his name has been changed). Sammy looks like a stereotypical mountain man. He lives by himself. He's a diagnosed paranoid-schizophrenic. His previous dwelling has housed goats, dogs, cats, mice, ducks, raccoons, and many other creatures—all sharing space with Sammy in an old farmhouse on the verge of collapse. Sammy has no desire to live with families or to be too close to anyone else, so he enjoys his current location. He has permission to live on the rural property by the owners who are from Kuwait. Some concerned people from St. Paul's Church and other local congregations banded together to give Sammy a place to live that is simple, clean and meets his modest needs. Through this experience, Sammy has learned that he is loved by the community and loved by God. He has a renewed belief in the goodness possible in his fellow human beings as well as remembering that God is good. Continue to pray for Sammy, his new-found home, and his newfound family.

Series 1

Jeremiah 14:1-10, 17-22
Luke 22:31-33, 54-62
Psalm 94

Series 2

Job 40:6-14; 42:1-6
Luke 22:31-33, 54-62
Psalm 73

September 16, 2010

The Rev. Dr. Valerie Bridgeman, associate professor of Hebrew bible/homiletics and worship at Lancaster (Pa.) Theological Seminary, was inducted April 1, 2010 into the Martin Luther King, Jr. International Collegium of Scholars at Morehouse College in Atlanta. Along with the Board of Preachers and Board of Sponsors, the Collegium of Scholars forms the Martin Luther King, Jr. College of Ministers and Laity. This Collegium, which strives to sustain the non-violent civil and human movement in the public consciousness, is sanctioned by Coretta Scott King as a way to keep her husband's philosophical legacy alive. Members are charged with providing ethical and spiritual leadership to society at large, as well as serving as moral and intellectual role models for students.

The proclamation cites Bridgeman, in part, for her "life's mission, the relevance and the universality of your scholarship for the 21st century, and work with the teachings and activism of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Mohandas Karamchand 'Mahatma' Gandhi and Dr. Daisaku Ikeda."

Series 1

Jeremiah 12:14 – 13:11
Romans 3:1-8
Psalm 79:1-9

Series 2

Exodus 23:1-9
Romans 3:1-8
Psalm 113

A Calendar of Prayer for the Mission of the United Church of Christ

September 24, 2010

In this year's difficult economy, the leadership at Medfield United Church of Christ, Medfield, Mass. decided it was time to let go of a longstanding annual retreat over a winter weekend. Instead, church members opted for spending the better part of a Saturday rolling up their sleeves and helping out closer to home. "Mission: Possible", a day-long event focused on family-friendly ways to participate in mission, kicked off with a brief worship service. The 321 people participating then spent the day helping eight organizations in the greater Boston area. The Rev. Phil Bauman, senior pastor, was thrilled with the huge turnout. "It was very intergenerational," said Bauman, with participants from age five to 80. "Because several of the work sites were child friendly, it allowed parents and children to work together."

(Continued on September 25, 2010)

Series 1

Jeremiah 23:23-32
Ephesians 2:1-10
Psalms 91:1-6, 14-16

Series 2

Proverbs 28:3-10
Ephesians 2:1-10
Psalms 146

September 25, 2010

(Continued from September 24, 2010)

Medfield UCC also wanted to add a civic angle to the day, so the church contacted the town administrator for a suggestion. As it turned out, the Medfield Public Library had been planning a major moving project, one that would have been costly. "Mission: Possible" workers moved shelves and books at no charge to facilitate a re-laying of the children's and teen section of the library. "The librarian told me, 'We want teens to feel comfortable here as a hangout,'" said Schaub. "We [helped] create a place for teens to hang out after school and on weekends. That[']s a pretty big deal." Schaub also mentioned that it was fun to see parents working beside their children. "So often, we drop our kids off somewhere and go do our own thing," said Schaub. But parents could show what giving back is all about by working with their children, he added.

Series 1

Jeremiah 24:1-10
Luke 9:43b-48
Psalms 91:1-6, 14-16

Series 2

Proverbs 28:11-28
Luke 9:43b-48
Psalms 146

Weekly Prayer

*God Eternal,
you inspired Jeremiah to buy a piece of land
when no one could see a future in it.
Grant us such commitment to the future of your people,
that you will always have workers for your vineyard
and harvesters for your fields. Amen.*

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Mission Moment—Prayerful Living

September 19, 2010

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Proper 20)

It's back to school time. Who's helping the teacher?

A "practice" is often something you do every day—getting better and better at it. Is it possible to become a more generous person by "practicing"?

That's a frequent question asked by visitors and newcomers to our United Church of Christ congregations, and churches really want to be able to answer, "Yes!" Through its Partners in Education ministry, the United Church of Christ helps church school teachers in congregations all across the country with resources, books, curricula, and workshops to assist them in planning, preparing, and presenting educational programs that enliven and inspire the children and the adults in their churches.

These "partners" are members of UCC congregations, working within our Conferences and with the support of national staff on the Congregational Vitality Team of Local Church Ministries. In addition to their work with curricula and lesson planning, they offer confirmation programs, help make our language more inclusive, and support youth ministry. Our churches are blessed with committed teachers in our local congregations and with the Conference and national staff to support, encourage, and equip them in their ministry. We're at the beginning of another school year, and our teachers all across the church are ready to teach a new generation about the marvelous things God has done and is still doing today. Let's ask God's blessings upon them, teachers and students alike!

The work of our Conferences and national setting are supported by your generous gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission. Thank you!

Series 1

Jeremiah 8:18 – 9:1
I Timothy 2:1-7
Luke 16:1-13
Psalms 79:1-9

Series 2

Amos 8:4-7
I Timothy 2:1-7
Luke 16:1-13
Psalms 113

September 20, 2010

Through our generous gifts to Neighbors In Need, the UCC is offering hope to millions of people; we are transforming lives, the nation, and our world. Through the Rocky Mountain Conference a Neighbors in Need grant recipient is the Weld Food Bank (WFB). WFB is an affiliate of Feeding America, the largest hunger relief organization in the United States. WFB collects, stores, and processes food to distribute it to low-income people. They glean food from manufacturers, farmers, distributors, grocers and community food drives in order to make it available to hungry people in our community. From the site in Greeley, and 3 other sub-distribution sites across the county, the food is distributed directly to hungry people as well as to 115 local non-profit agencies. Weld Food bank distributed 8.1 million pounds of food between the 2008 – 2009 fiscal year. In addition to these directly food-related activities, WFB is the primary intake and referral for Emergency Food Service in Weld County. Low-income persons seeking services come to WFB to receive information about services available to them.

(Continued on September 21, 2010)

Series 1

Jeremiah 9:12-26
Acts 4:1-12
Psalms 106:41-48

Series 2

Proverbs 14:12-31
Acts 4:1-12
Psalms 12

September 21, 2010

(Continued from September 20, 2010)

Weld Food Bank currently has 115 affiliate agencies in Weld County. In order to obtain food from Weld Food Bank, their programs must serve the underprivileged, homeless, ill, children, or senior citizens. These affiliates, ranging from The Salvation Army to Highland Day Care Center in Ault, extend Weld Food Bank's ability to serve Weld County. Through affiliate agencies and WFB programs. Another program is their "Emergency Food Boxes."

These are nutritious food boxes, following a set menu, of basic food staples. It is given to families who are referred from agencies or who are interviewed by their certification staff. Their staff determines that the family is in a crisis situation and is in need of food. During 2008 – 2009 fiscal year, Weld Food Bank distributed 25,211 food boxes to 58,041 Weld County residents.

(Continued on September 22, 2010)

Series 1

Jeremiah 10:1-16
1 Chronicles 9:19-23
Psalms 106:41-48

Series 2

Proverbs 17:1-5
1 Chronicles 9:19-23
Psalms 12

A Calendar of Prayer for the Mission of the United Church of Christ

September 22, 2010

(Continued from September 21)

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) is a nutrition program for persons at a vulnerable time in their life. A USDA food package is distributed monthly to children under the age of 6, pregnant, postpartum and breast-feeding women and elderly over the age of 60. In FY 08-09, WFB distributed 53,047 packages to children, mothers and the elderly. The Kids Cafe is a trademarked program that provides children at risk of food insecurity with a complete hot meal in a setting where they also receive other supportive services (after school tutoring, physical activity, nutrition education, social skills, etc.). 23,700 meals were served at 3 Kids Cafe sites in FY 08-09.

The Backpack Program provides school children who are at risk of food insecurity over the weekends with a discrete package of nutritious, easy-to-open food for Saturday and Sunday - when free or reduced school lunches are inaccessible. Backpacks filled with food are distributed at school on Friday afternoons and children return them on Monday to be refilled for the next week.

Series 1

Jeremiah 10:17-25
Luke 20:45 – 21:4
Psalms 106:41-48

Series 2

Proverbs 21:10-16
Luke 20:45 – 21:4
Psalms 12

September 23, 2010

The UCC Mental Illness Network (MIN) and UCC Disabilities Ministries (DM) is hosting a national gathering called Widening the Welcome: Inclusion for All, from today September 23 through the 26th, in St. Louis. This gathering is for clergy, consumers, laity, families and mental health professionals, and includes these speakers: Dr. Nancy Kehoe, a sister and clinician at Harvard Medical School, author of Wrestling with our Inner Angels: Faith, Mental Illness, and the Journey to Wholeness;" Dr. David Greenhaw, President of Eden Theological Seminary; Rev. Jan Fidler-Hoffman and Rev. Bob Molsberry, UCC Conference Ministers; Mr. Jeffrey Pollack Esq., Attorney in Cleveland; Dr. Craig Rennebohm, author of Souls in the Hands of a Tender God; and Rev. Alan Johnson, author of Encounters at the Counter: What Congregations can learn about Hospitality from Business. Our prayer today is that we all might be "Widening the Welcome: Inclusion for All."

Series 1

Jeremiah 23:9-22
2 Chronicles 8:8-15
Psalms 91:1-6, 14-16

Series 2

Proverbs 22:2-16
2 Chronicles 8:8-15
Psalms 146

A Calendar of Prayer for the Mission of the United Church of Christ

October 1, 2010

Soup Kitchen News! Barrington Congregational Church UCC, Barrington, Rhode Island along with 8 other churches, sponsor the Christian Community Soup Kitchen every Saturday all year round at Park Place Congregational Church in Pawtucket. A full meal is served in a pleasant dining area for 60-90 needy people, including young families and seniors, from the area. All are welcome. Each church brings in food, serves and cleans up on designated Saturdays on a rotational schedule. Their Justice and Witness team also donates \$200/year to help pay for coffee and supplies. In the past year more than 5,200 hot meals have been served! All food preparation and serving is done by volunteers.

Series 1

Jeremiah 52:12-30
Revelation 2:12-29
Lamentations 3:19-26

Series 2

II Kings 19:8-20, 35-37
Revelation 2:12-29
Psalms 37:1-9

October 2, 2010

The Resource Center for Churches (Nebraska Conference) provides quality contemporary resources for educational programs in the local church through an ecumenical partnership. The Center was founded in 1975 as a cooperative resource center for sharing audiovisual materials. Sponsoring denominations are the United Methodist Church, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

There are over 2,500 video resources available for Bible study, small groups, men's groups, retreats, counseling, women's groups, confirmation, youth groups or Sunday School classes.

Series 1

Lamentations 1:7-15
Matthew 20:29-34
Lamentations 3:19-26

Series 2

Isaiah 7:1-9
Matthew 20:29-34
Psalms 37:1-9

Weekly Prayer

*God Eternal,
you inspired Jeremiah to buy a piece of land
when no one could see a future in it.
Grant us such commitment to the future of your people,
that you will always have workers for your vineyard
and harvesters for your fields. Amen.*

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Mission Moment—Surprising Investment

September 26, 2010

Twenty– sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (Proper 21)

Celebrate UCC American Indian Congregations

“Christianity doesn’t come in clean,” said Dr. Martin Brokenleg, professor of Native American Studies at Augustana College in Sioux Falls, S.D. Christianity was not Good News for most of the world’s indigenous peoples because it entered their lives accompanied by government policies, military oppression, and education efforts to alter native beliefs and practices. Yet, God was still speaking.

In the United Church of Christ the mission stance transformed into “mission with” rather than “mission to” American Indian people. Ferment for self-determination bore fruit in the formation of the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM), in 1970. CAIM is self-governing through a Board of Directors composed of American Indian leaders in the UCC. One-third of all our contributions to the Neighbors in Need offering support ministries carried out by CAIM.

Today, American Indian Ministry Sunday celebrates the historic United Church of Christ ministry with and among native communities. United Church of Christ individuals and congregations are invited to intentionally remember and pray for the nineteen UCC congregations located on American Indian reservations, dating back to the 1870’s, and one multi-tribe UCC congregation founded in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1980.

On the Standing Rock, Rosebud, Cheyenne River, Santee Sioux, and Fort Berthold Reservations, in the Ho Cak community near Black River Falls, Wisconsin, and in the urban Indian community in Minneapolis, these congregations and CAIM provide spiritual, community and personal nurture, engage in leadership development, work for American Indian justice, and serve the wider church. Thanks be to the still speaking God...

Series 1

Jeremiah 32: 1-3a, 6-15
Luke 16:19-31
I Timothy 6:6-19
Psalms 91:1-6, 14-16

Series 2

Amos 6:1a, 4-7
Luke 16:19-31
I Timothy 6:6-19
Psalms 146

September 27, 2010

Faithful Advocates Serving Together (F.A.S.T.) is a joint mission program of the UCC and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It provides service each summer in the Appalachian region. Groups have an opportunity to serve, to learn more about the causes of poverty, and to covenant to stay involved upon their return home. F.A.S.T. is one of many opportunities offered by the UCC's Volunteer Ministries. Through its Partners in Service Program, Volunteer Ministries partners with local agencies to place individual volunteers with agencies that match the skills of the volunteers with the needs of the agencies. For the UCC's Companion Communities: Young Adult Service Communities, volunteers between 21 and 30 serve in the local communities of UCC host congregations. Mission Trips, Immersion Mission Trips and Service Learning Mission Trips provide settings of ministry in the world for groups of many different skills and commitments.

Series 1

Jeremiah 32: 16-35
Revelation 3:14-22
Psalms 119:49-56

Series 2

Amos 6:8-14
Revelation 3:14-22
Psalms 62

September 28, 2010

Anyone who has ever received grant money knows the saying "strings attached" will have a familiar feel. Grant monies are helpful, but the guidelines for using them can be restricting. The Southeast Association Haiti Partnership Team of the Wisconsin Conference has solved that problem for CONASPEH – the National Spiritual Council of Haitian Churches – a group with whom Wisconsin UCC churches are partnered. Co-chair of the team Julie Johnson reports that the team voted in favor of giving 70% of future funds raised for Haiti directly to CONASPEH as undesignated funds – no restrictions. The remaining 30% will be kept in an account and used by volunteers who want to go to Haiti but can't afford it, and to buy supplies for distribution in Haiti once the volunteers get there. Not only were members of CONASPEH liberated by the news, the Haiti Partnership team were freed by the decision as well. Johnson says, "We have realized that shackles are shackles and that giving freely means freely giving."

Series 1

Jeremiah 32:36-44
James 5:1-6
Psalms 119:49-56

Series 2

Hosea 10:9-15
James 5:1-6
Psalms 62

A Calendar of Prayer for the Mission of the United Church of Christ

September 29, 2010

Through our generous gifts to Neighbors In Need, the United Church of Christ is offering hope to millions of people; we are transforming lives, the nation, and our world. Through the Kansas Oklahoma Conference a Neighbors in Needs grant recipient is the United Campus Ministry (UMC).

In cooperation with area congregations, the United Campus Ministry awakens an ecumenical voice for peace and justice on the University of Tulsa campus by fostering a benevolent and inclusive environment, which nurtures both spiritual and academic growth within the university community. Who is the UCM? UCM is comprised of University of Tulsa students of all faiths and backgrounds — including those who are not sure if they have a faith. UCM is a "ministry of inclusion," meaning that they believe everyone is a child of God and that all are welcome — regardless of faith tradition, race, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, ability or background. They are located in the "Little Blue House" across from Chapman Hall on the TU campus).

(Continued on September 30, 2010)

Series 1

Jeremiah 33:1-13
Matthew 19:16-22
Psalms 119:49-56

Series 2

Hosea 10:9-15
Matthew 19:16-22
Psalms 62

September 30, 2010

(Continued from September 29, 2010)

What does UCM do? They are student-led, so they do what students feel called to do. In the past that has included film discussion groups, speakers, community service projects, bible studies, worship services, social activism, concerts for peace, and more. UCM is also committed to issues of justice and seeks to foster caring community in which students can discuss spiritual, social and political issues of mutual concern in a non-threatening friendly environment.

The Little Blue House serves as a meeting space for several campus organizations, all of whom have individual goals and objectives, but also work together to help realize the common goals of tolerance and justice. They are supported by several local churches from a multitude of denominations, including Presbyterian, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalian, Congregational (United Church of Christ), Unitarian Universalist, and Lutheran.

Series 1

Jeremiah 52:1-11
Revelation 2:8-11
Lamentations 3:19-26

Series 2

II Kings 18:1-8, 28-36
Revelation 2:8-11
Psalms 37:1-9

A Calendar of Prayer for the Mission of the United Church of Christ