



Northeast Wisconsin Association United Church of Christ

NEA Reporter

5765 W. Grande Market Drive, Suite B. Appleton, WI 54913

Volume 46, Issue 8

August 2011

ALL CHURCH LEADERSHIP BANQUET

FALLING IN LOVE AGAIN WITH THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Dr. Clyde J. Steckel, Guest Speaker

Dr. Steckel taught theology for 25 years at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities in New Brighton, Minnesota.

Dr. Steckel authored *New Ecclesiology and Polity* in 2009, in which he explores the present and the future of the UCC's organization, traditions and governance and the effectiveness of its future ministries.

Come and learn from his deep knowledge of the United Church of Christ (and his dry sense of humor).



October 9, 2011

**David and Valerie Black Room
Lakeland College Student Center**

3:00-6:30 P.M.

(yes, you *can* listen to the Packers' game on the way home!)

Please sign up by Monday, September 26

\$12.00 per person

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Send your registrations and fees to:

Wisconsin Conference of the UCC
P.O. Box 435
DeForest, WI 5353

Sign up slip on Page 6 If you prefer



August 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
			Art Wille on Vacation August 3-7			
7	8	9 10:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M. Committee on Place- ment and Transition, St. John UCC, Appleton	10	11	12	13
14	15 9:00 A.M. Division on Wider Church Ministries, St. John UCC, Appleton	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 10:00 A.M.—Noon Periodic Support and Consultation Cmte, St. John UCC, Appleton	26	27
28	29	30	31	Art Wille, Associate Conference Minister 920-585-0185 Bill Clyma, Ministries Coordinator 715-735-6483		

NEA Pastor Visits Churches and Pastors in England

By Bill Clyma

She wore a hard hat and climbed up the fire escape to take a good look at the new items that filled the people of the church with pride. When she, Pastor Burnett and Pastor Lewis got to the roof, they viewed the 48 solar panels that the church had recently installed. The Redland Park United Reformed Church in Bristol, England now generates all the electricity it uses for its own work—and sells the extra back into the electrical grid. The church and its pastor, Rev. Dougie Burnett grow excited when they talk about the congregation's new venture in making the world a better place.

From May 2 through May 31, the Reverend Marty Black of Peace United Church of Christ in Shawano visited churches and pastors in the Southwest Synod of the United Reformed Church of Britain. The Wisconsin Conference of the UCC has a long-standing relationship with these British Christians. Rev. Black went to England as the Conference's annual visitor to the Synod. One of their pastors comes to Wisconsin every October. Last fall, the Rev. Stephen Lewis, who went with Rev. Black on that hard hat trip to the roof, visited the Wisconsin Conference.

Rev. Black preached in URC churches on three Sundays, attended the dedication of a beautifully refurbished Methodist Church, visited a program for inner city girls in Bristol, attended a five day pastor's conference, and ate a real Cornish pasty (somewhat less meaty than the pasties sold on this side of the pond). She stayed in pastors' homes, visited with their families, and enjoyed many conversations about life in the twenty-first century church.

Marty's eyes still glow with joy when she talks about the warm welcome these English Christians extended to her. She also witnessed the ministry of a church culture that generates an amazing number of innovative ministries—in spite of the fact that its members are, on balance, older than those of the UCC. Sometimes, the Synod keeps very small congregations open if those churches host some vibrant ministries.

Every Friday night, an eight member church in Bristol hosts *Girl's Brigade*. To American eyes, Girl's Brigade looks like a combination of Sunday School and Girl Scouts. For the girls from low-income families near the church, it's the only extra program of learning and recreation they have. Marty had a chance to talk with the girls and told them of her church's puppet ministry back in Wisconsin. Next Christmas, the Girl's Brigade will put on a Christmas puppet show using the ideas Marty taught them.

A URC pastor in Calne invited her to join him at a celebration at St. Andrew's Methodist Church in Devizes as the congregation dedicated its refurbished building. The preacher for the occasion was a woman from Virginia, who had been a student intern there some eight years previously. In a wonderful sermon, she complimented them on the good job they did in updating their building and restoring the beautiful ceiling that had been hidden for years. "But," she told them, "every penny you spent and all the work you did is worthless unless you use this building as a means to introduce people to Jesus." It was the best sermon Marty heard on her trip to England—and it was offered by a woman from the American south!

The congregation's lay leader astonished her once more with a warm ministry of welcome. "We have lots of food in the church hall," she told the guests, "but not many chairs. Feel free to come on back in here to sit down and eat if you want to." The sanctuary in which she invited them to eat had a brand new carpet and brand new chairs!

The dedication of both pastors and lay leaders in these churches impressed Rev. Black a great deal. She came home with wonderful memories of church life so different from that in America, yet sharing many of the same challenges and joys.



Rev. Stephen Lewis and Rev. Marty Black don their hard hats and inspect the solar panels on top of Redland Park United Reformed Church in Bristol, England.

NEA-NWA Clergy Retreat Planned for October 2-4

Abundant Ministry in an Age of Scarcity shapes the learning and conversation for this year's Northeast-Northwest Association UCC Clergy Retreat. The retreat will be held at Moon Beach Camp in St. Germain, beginning at 4:00 P.M. on Sunday, October 2 and lunchtime on Tuesday, October 4. The fee is \$135.00 and registrations (with a \$50.00 deposit) are due at Moon Beach (7250 Birchwood Drive, St. Germain, WI, 54558-9178) by September 15.

Dr. Bruce Epperly, a teacher, spiritual guide, reiki teacher, UCC pastor and author of seventeen books will lead the retreat. Epperly will help participants reflect on the current state of ministry and congregational life. Further con-



Bruce Epperly

versation will explore spiritual resources for vocational and personal transformation in ministry. Scriptural reflection from I Kings 17:8-16 and Luke 5:1-11 will study the interplay of abundance and scarcity in ministry.

The retreat schedule will include worship and time for rest and renewal. Retired clergy are invited to attend as guests of the Association. Scholarship assistance for clergy in need is available; call Sue Taylor at the Wisconsin Conference Office (608-846-7880).

More information on the retreat, complete with a brochure and registration form, can be found by clicking the retreat links at the

NEA website (www.neaucc.org).

Stewardship Moments

Vibrant, fruitful, growing congregations practice **Extravagant Generosity**. These churches teach, preach and practice proportionate giving with a goal toward tithing. They encourage their members to grow in the grace of giving as an essential practice of Christian discipleship.

Bishop Robert Schnase



Churches In Transition

First Congregational UCC—Appleton: Rev. Nicholas Hatch begins serving as Interim Pastor on September 1

St. John UCC—Black Creek: Rev. L. Gail Irwin Interim Pastor.

Ebenezer UCC—Chilton: Rev. Kathy Rust, Interim Pastor.

St. John's UCC—Elkhart Lake: Rev. Virginia Pych, Interim Pastor.

Our Shepherd UCC—Howards Grove: Rev. Ernie Huntzinger, Interim. Search committee reading profiles.

Immanuel UCC—Plymouth: Rev. Margaret Richardson Zedan (Presbyterian), Interim Pastor

First Congregational UCC—Ripon: Rev. Jack Kraaz retired on July 3, 2011. Rev. Greg Smith, Interim Pastor

Church Anniversaries



45 Years

Bethany UCC, Oshkosh

115 Years

St. Paul's UCC, Oshkosh
Salem UCC, Plymouth

120 Years

St. John UCC, Manitowoc
Emmanuel UCC, Oshkosh

125 Years

Bethel UCC, Fond du Lac

130 Years

Hope UCC, Sturgeon Bay

140 Years

St. John's UCC, Black Creek
Hancock UCC, Hancock

145 Years

First Congregational UCC, DePere

155 Years

St. Mark's UCC, Cleveland

160 Years

Congregational UCC, Neenah
Grace Congregational UCC, Two Rivers

165 Years

St. Paul UCC, Malone

175 Years

Union Congregational UCC, Green Bay



Around the NEA

By Arlan and Sharon Schlundt

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, New London. Pastor: Greg Watling. WE HAVE STARTED OUR STEPHEN MINISTRY TRAINING! Six people have been accepted into our training program. We will be meeting Wednesday evenings and some Sunday afternoons for 20 training sessions which will be a total of 50 hours. Stephen Ministers are caring Christian friends who listen, understand, accept, and pray for and with care receivers who are working through a crisis or a tough time. Stephen Ministers are not counselors; they are trained lay caregivers. Their role is to listen and care—not to give advice or counsel.

(Good News)

ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Manitowoc, WI. Pastor: James Klein. ST. JOHN'S PLAYERS PRESENTS "THE WAVERLY GALLERY" This play by Pulitzer Prize winning playwright, Kenneth Lonagan, was presented on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, July 29-31. The performance portrayed the final years of a generous, chatty, and feisty grandmother's battle against Alzheimer's disease. "The Waverly Gallery" is a powerfully poignant and often hilarious play.

(The Word)

FEDERATED CHURCH OF GREEN LAKE, Green Lake. Pastor: Karen Gygax Rodriguez. GOSPEL CHOIR TOUR TO GERMANY. Do you want to sing gospel music? Travel to Germany? Enjoy choir fellowship? Then join the Wisconsin Conference Gospel Choir Tour to Germany in August of 2012. The Gospellers, a gospel choir made up of singers from UCC churches across Wisconsin, will travel to the Berlin-Brandenburg area of Germany for a tour. For information, click on "German Gospel Tour" under "Events" on the homepage of the Wisconsin Conference website (wcucc.org) or contact Fritz West.

(The Anchor)

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Sheboygan. Pastors: Jim and Julie Hollister. THE YOUTH HEAD OFF ON THEIR MISSION TRIPS IN JULY. On Sunday, July 10, twenty middle school youth and four adult leaders traveled by two vans to a Group Work-camp in East Moline, Illinois. Then on Saturday, July 23rd, nineteen high school youth and four adult leaders traveled by AMTRAK to New York City to spend four days working with a Quaker organization, YSOP (Youth Service Opportunities Project) The youth will be working at soup kitchens and homeless shelters in NYC.

(The Pilgrim Voice)

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Oshkosh. Pastor: RaeAnn Beebe. FROM THE PASTOR: This summer during worship we are going to go back to that tradition of telling stories around the campfire, and of passing along the stories of our faith. The lectionary this summer contains all of those stories of how the Hebrew people struggle with their call to be the people of God. Join us around the campfire this summer (there will be one in the sanctuary—not lit of course) to hear the stories of faith, maybe for the first time or maybe for the hundredth time.

(Tidings)

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Ripon. Interim Pastor: Greg Smith. FROM THE PASTOR: Greetings! It is my pleasure to have been hired by the Cabinet as your Interim Pastor beginning July 5, 2011. (Also approved by the Northeast Association.) So as we begin our ministry together, I'm sure we'll all have questions to consider, thoughts to ponder, and prayers to offer. As we pray for our church, I'd offer this simple suggestion: " Please God, continue to watch over, strengthen and guide our church. "

"(The Spire)"



Ordination Anniversaries

James Martin.....31 Years August 24
 Chuck Mize.....31 Years August 3
 Jill Meyer.....6 Years August 28

Stewardship Moments

In Revelation we read of a book which no one could open. Some believe that was the pocketbook.

Anonymous

NEA Tailgate Party Held July 30

About 125 people enjoyed the food, activities, fellowship, (and rainstorm) at this year's NEA Tailgate Party, which was held at Fox Cities Stadium on July 30. Partiers also brought hundreds of items of School Supply items for Orion Family Services in Madison and Monroe, a residential treatment center for children and adolescents in need of help.



Associate Conference Minister Art Wille confers with a Fang, the mascot for the Wisconsin TimberRattlers, at the July 30 Tailgate Party.

Teri Davis (right), director of Group Homes at Orion Family Services, receives gifts of school supplies from the NEA on August 15. Presenting them are Ashley Nolte, (left), chairperson of the Division on Wider Church Ministries, and Peter Nolte, distinguished ex-officio member of the Division.



Sign-up Form for October 9 All Church Leadership Banquet

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Church: _____

Make your checks payable to
Northeast Wisconsin Association UCC
 and mail them to:

The Northeast Association no longer has an office on West Grande Market Drive in Appleton.

All telephone and mail inquiries, fees for NEA ents and NEA dues should be sent to the office of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ at P.O. Box 435, DeForest, WI 53532-0435

Sue Taylor at the Conference Office will be doing much of the administrative work for Art Wille and Association events. She can be reached at 608-846-7880.

Most small group meetings in the NEA's life will be held at St. John UCC in Appleton, where the Association has a meeting and storage room. Ministries Coordinator Bill Clyma will also do much of his work out of that room. Please do not send NEA mail to St. John or call them, except in an emergency.

Interfaith Gathering in Appleton on September 11

The twelfth annual Interfaith Gathering hosted by the Fox Valley Islamic Society will be on Sunday, September 11. The Gathering of an expected 200 people of faith under the tent will begin at 3:00 PM and conclude with a feast. Mohammed Isa Sadion, former Executive Director of the Milwaukee Art Museum, will be the featured speaker. Area religious leaders will offer their reflections. The Fox Valley Islamic Society, 103 Kappell Drive in Neenah, is on County Road "G", one mile east of Highway 41. Access "G" from County Road "A" or Highway 76. In the case of inclement weather, the Gathering will be moved to St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 140 S. Green Bay Road, Neenah.

Please sign up by September 26.

_____ \$12.00/ person = \$_____

TOTAL: \$_____

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