



Northeast Wisconsin Association United Church of Christ

NEA Reporter

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

Volume 46, Issue 3

March 2011

Dear Friends,

Many of you know that when I was pastor of the Congregational United Church of Christ of Neenah-Menasha, I used sabbatical time to study dispute resolution at the Marquette University Graduate School. One of the classes focused on case studies highlighting times when conflict resolution skills worked well.

One of my professors was contacted by the developer of the Midwest Airlines Convention Center in Milwaukee (now called the Frontier Airlines Center) when it was in the planning stages. We all know how difficult and frustrating it can be to build a building, which often takes longer to be completed and costs more than expected. The invitation was for my professor to design a process and procedure that would avoid these pitfalls.

My professor invited all of the “stakeholders” to “the table.” In attendance were representatives of the labor unions, materials suppliers, the architects, project managers, city and county representatives, the utilities, fire and police departments, and anyone else who would have a role in the building of the convention center. The process began with lifting up the vision of building a massive building in a harmonious way, and then welcoming each participant to say what he or she needed to play a positive role with this huge team of people. Ahead of time, sub-groups imagined what could go wrong, and then how the disputes could be resolved. Potential “turf

battles” between unions and management were honestly explored, coordination between public and private interests were discussed. With all of the parties involved in acknowledging and honoring one another’s needs, they felt heard and were committed to working together. That project came in ahead of schedule and under budget.

We are living in a time of unrest, prompted by people’s yearning to be heard, and having their needs met. Often there are competing interests and the assumption that when one party gets his/her way, somehow the other will lose what he/she has. The Bible is full of stories of people in conflict with one another and with God as circumstances changed. The proclamation of the scriptures is that God is with us (Emmanuel) and that God is generous (Jesus’ parable of the feeding of the 5000 among so many others). Jesus taught his disciples how to pray, asking God to, “Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.” This is an acknowledgment that God will give us what we need today, as we acknowledge our own mistakes that may block the goodness that God intends for all.

All of God’s children should be able to articulate what they need, and then have the freedom and security to negotiate ways to meet the needs of all parties. That is true in the Middle East Countries as well as the halls of government in Madison and Washington D.C., and the church.

In this Issue:

- Suicide Prevention Training for Pastors..... pg. 4
- Project Kenya would like to share its story with you pg. 5
- Ostermiller to speak about Faith Practices April 2 pg. 6

Shalom,

Art Wille,
Association Minister



March 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 9:00-1:30 Clergy Day, Church of Peace, Fond du Lac 1:30 Planning Meeting for C & M Event	4 12:00 Noon , Church Planters' Team, Ware Residence, Appleton	5
6 11:30 Installation of Rev. Robin Reed as Pastor of Immanuel UCC; Luncheon to follow	7 9:30 C-TEN, NEA Office	8	9	10	11	12
13 10:30 Recognition of Cheryl LePak as Licensed Lay Minister of Salem Plankroad UCC, Plymouth	14	15 9:30-11:30 A.M. Clergy Cluster III, Bethel UCC, Elkhart Lake	16 9:30-11:30 A.M. Clergy Cluster I, St. John UCC, Appleton 9:00-11:00 A.M. Clergy Cluster II Church of Peace, FDL	17 9:00 A.M. Executive Committee,	18	19 9:30-4:00 Wisconsin Conf. UCC Training for Interim Ministry, Pilgrim UCC Fond du Lac
20 3:00 P.M. Ecclesiastical Council for Stephen Stepp, Church of Peace UCC, Fond du Lac	21 8:30 A.M. Division on Wider Church Ministries 10:30 A.M. Division on Local Church Ministries	22 9:15 A.M. , Church Renewal Team, Samaritan Counseling Center, Menasha	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
Art Wille on vacation from Sunday afternoon, March 27 through Sunday, April 3. In case of an emergency, contact Moderator Moira Finley (715-851-3080), Vice-Moderator Dan Krueger (920-733-2287) or the Wisconsin Conference Office (608-846-7880)						

NEA Office
 Association Minister
 Secretary
 Ministries Coordinator

Phone: 920-731-4781
 Art Wille
 Georgan Durkee
 Bill Clyma

Fax: 920-731-4255
 art@neaucc.org
 office@neaucc.org
 bill@neaucc.org



NEA Office Hours

Art Wille— **M-TH 9:30-4:00**
 Georgan Durkee **M, W & F-F 9:00-12:00**
 Bill Clyma— **TH: 9:00-5:00**



Around the NEA

By Arlan and Sharon Schlundt

TRI-JO PARISH UCC: TRINITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Shiocton, and ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Cecil. Pastor: Moira Finley.

CECIL COMMUNITY CLOSET. "When I was naked, you clothed me." Matthew 25:36. A Ministry of St. John's United Church of Christ. Clothes are given away to those in need at no cost. Distribution will be on Tuesday, March 22 from noon to 4 PM and Saturday, March 26th from 10 AM to 2 PM. We need your help to replenish our supply of linens (sheets, towels, pillows, and blankets). These are always in demand and we have run out. Also, we are just about out of socks and underwear needs. Help us replenish our stock. (From *The Living Word*)

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Oshkosh. Pastor: RaeAnn Beebe.

CRAFT COMMITTEE. One of several ministries of St. Paul's that occurs behind the scenes is the Craft Committee. The Craft Committee makes center pieces each month and takes them to area nursing homes to brighten the common areas and rooms of the residents. Residents of these facilities look forward to seeing and perhaps visiting with those who deliver the center pieces. If you are interested in being a part of the Craft Committee, please contact Sue or Marie. (From St. Paul's *Tidings*)

ST. MARK'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Cleveland. Pastor: William Kesting.

SOMETHING NEW—PRAYER BASKET. Acting upon a request placed in the church suggestion box, the Consistory has placed a "Prayer Basket" on the counter in the back of the church. If you have a special need for a prayer for a sick friend or family member, a special crisis in life, or a huge challenge that needs to be addressed in your life, you are welcome to place a written request in the basket. Pastor Kesting will make every effort to address your request during the worship service. Place your request in the basket and it will be shared through prayer with the congregation. (From *The Country Church Herald*)

FIRST REFORMED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Manitowoc. Pastor: Richard Runge.

GREAT GOSPEL GATHERING. Since Easter is

so late this year, the 2011 "Great Gospel Gathering" will be early. We hope many will join us for our fifth year on Sunday, March 27, at 3:00 PM at the Roncalli High School. This is a major fund raiser for Hope House of Manitowoc County. The program will include a large ecumenical choir composed of anyone who enjoys singing. (From *The Newsletter*)

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Ripon.

Pastor: Jack Kraaz.

FROM THE PASTOR. "I am, as you know, retiring from ministry at First Congregational Church in 2011, and I'm contemplating what this means. A part of my contemplation revolves around unfinished business. There are things I really want to finish before I leave you as pastor. I realize, through talking with my colleagues who have finished their ministries, that there are always things that remain unfinished and to be determined by others or by God. Through the years you have often heard me say when asked how I am, "I am living in hope." (From *The Spire*)

ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Black Creek. Pastor: Donald Baumann

PASTOR'S REPORT 2010. I have yet to discover the "magic formula" that will draw folks to a largely traditional 140 year old congregation in a rural village in northeast Wisconsin. Perhaps, as some claim, we are on one end of a pendulum swing when it comes to interest in the church, and we just need to wait it out. Others say that we have seen the end of doing church as it has been done in the past and we must reinvent ourselves. (From *The Newsletter* of St. John's UCC)

PEACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Marinette. Pastor: William Clyma.

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY. We tried various ways to reduce our expenses over the last few years. Our lay leaders have approached this task with a spirit of hope and adventure that I have appreciated very much. Instead of saving on a certain expense as a grim exercise in survival, we've approached it in a way that asks, "How can we do ministry more effectively with the resources God has given us?"

(From *Tidings of Peace*)

Samaritan Offers Basic Suicide Prevention Training for Clergy

Samaritan Counseling Center in Menasha and the American Foundation of Counseling Services have joined forces to offer QPR Training (Question, Persuade, and Respond) to clergy in Northeast Wisconsin. They will offer two sessions—a breakfast session on March 17 and a lunch hour session on April 7.

Wisconsin has seen a steady increase in suicidal behavior, and many pastors know someone who has died by suicide. This brief training session is designed to help pastors build confidence and competence to assist someone who may believe that suicide is the only option. Training as a QPR gatekeeper will provide one with the fundamentals of suicide and depression as well as teach a person three simple tools needed to identify and assist those at risk for suicide.

The \$10.00 sessions include both teaching materials and the meal:

March 17, 2011	April 7, 2011
Harmony Café	Harmony Café
233 East College Avenue	1660 West Mason Street
Appleton, Wisconsin	Green Bay, Wisconsin
7:30-9:30 A.M.	12:00-2:00 P.M.
RSVP by March 11	RSVP by March 18

To register, send your name and the fee to Samaritan Counseling Center, 14778 Kenwood Drive, Menasha, WI 54952.



Churches in Transition

First Congregational UCC—Appleton: Associate Pastor search committee reading profiles.

St. John UCC—Black Creek: Rev. Don Baumann retires on May 31, 2011.

St. John's UCC—Elkhart Lake: Interim Pastor.

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

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

First Congregational UCC—Ripon: Rev. Jack Kraaz retires on July 3, 2011

Rosendale UCC—Rosendale: Rev. Harvey Kandler, pulpit supply. Search committee reading profiles.

Geoffrey Black Visits NEA Church

The Rev. Geoffrey Black, General Minister and President of the Uni-ted Church of Christ visited Union Congregational UCC in Green Bay the weekend of January 22 and 23. Black helped the Green Bay congregation celebrate its 175th



Rev. Geoffrey Black

Anniversary, preaching at the festival worship service that Sunday, joining in informal conversations, enjoying the celebration dinner, and even wearing Green Bay Packers colors!



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

UCC People Strengthen Education through Project Kenya

By Bill Clyma

“Can we come too?” the members of her church asked her.

When Brydie Hill asked her church for help to make a return visit to Kenya, her brothers and sisters in Christ at New Hope UCC in Jackson wanted to come with her. When she asked them why, they told the daughter of their longtime pastor and young mother, “because we trust you.”

Brydie Hill was a student at Carroll College in Waukesha, she took part in a month-long immersion trip to Kenya that her college organized one summer. She stayed in touch with several people she met on that trip. Six years ago, they sent word to her that Kenya was suffering from drought, so she decided to make a return trip. When she asked her church to help, Hill discovered how much they respected her leadership.

The January 2007 trip became a great success. The group from New Hope church and two neighboring UCC congregations taught gardening skills and composting, and installed a simple water pump in the village of Mauta on Mfangano Island in Lake Victoria.

The trip gave birth to *Project Kenya*, an organization dedicated to encouraging positive and healthy change in people’s lives. A partnership with villagers guides the creation of programs that will bring a higher quality of life. Four years and eleven mission service trips with seventy participants have touched the lives of Kenyan villagers and Wisconsinite alike.

Most of the funds for *Project Kenya* come from United Church of Christ congregations, with half of those funds coming from Southeast Wisconsin Association churches. Two mission trips every year draw adults (mostly UCC) and college students (mostly from the Milwaukee School of Engineering) to install computers in schools, train teachers, and empower girls and women. Project Kenya also builds schools, classrooms, and computer labs, with the mission travelers completing the buildings using very effective East African construction methods.

From July 7-21, 2010, eighteen people traveled to Nyamome, a small village in southwestern Kenya near the Tanzanian border. They finished constructing a new preschool room for the elementary school. Engineering students installed a new computer lab for the whole school. Several school teachers were among the mission service travelers, and they offered some continuing education for Nyamome’s teachers.

Nyamome, a very isolated village, has many subsistence farmers and few opportunities for jobs in the cash economy. The residents hold to traditional cultural values, and change comes very slowly. One of the teacher training sessions the Wisconsinites offered centered on alternatives to caning and corporal punishment. A student from Colorado State University, then in the “student teacher” stage of earning her education degree, taught at the village school and came home with memories of the differences in teaching between the United States and East Africa.

Hill will complete her winter mission service trip early this month. This journey will focus on empowerment for women in a culture where tradition values women as wives and mothers but does not value educating females. The group plans to teach about strong women from both Africa and America, sex education, and the self-esteem of girls and women. For a variety of reasons, very few women graduate from high school. Last year’s graduating class consisted of 118 boys and six girls. The group will also teach boys about issues important to women to help prepare them for supportive relationships with newly empowered women.

Project Kenya would like to make more friends in the Northeast Association. They seek donations of funds, building materials, teaching materials, and other items to strengthen their ministry. Hill and other Project Kenya leaders would be glad to visit NEA churches to do mission presentations for adults or children on Sunday morning. You can learn more about their work at www.project-kenya.org.

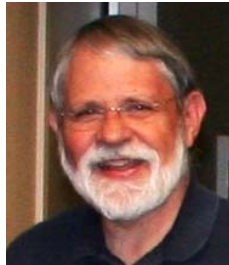


Ned Dorff of Green Bay, George Opiyo of Nyamome, Kenya, and Evan Crayford of Milwaukee School of Engineering make desks for Nyamome’s Primary School

Ostermiller to Keynote *Spring Training* CE Event April 2

A new resource focusing on at least 24 *Faith Practices* shapes the day's activities at this year's *Spring Training* Event for Christian Educators, pastors and other leaders who care about nurturing faith in Christ's followers. The Christian Education Commission of the Wisconsin Conference UCC invites Christian Educators and all other church leaders who care about Faith Formation to this year's event, which will be held on Saturday, April 2 at Saron United Church of Christ in Sheboygan Falls. The 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. costs \$25.00 per person with a maximum of \$75.00 per church team, and the fee includes lunch. Send your registrations to the Conference Office (P.O. Box 435, DeForest, Wisconsin 53532).

Ken Ostermiller, Minister for Curriculum Development for the UCC's Congregational Vitality and Discipleship Ministry Team, will offer the keynote address. His morning presentation will center on the ways in which *Faith Practices* can help people of all ages talk about their faith and practice it in daily life. He will help his listeners know how to use the easily accessible resources available on the *Faith Practices* website.



Ken Ostermiller

Afternoon sessions will help participants explore the four areas of *Faith Practices* for which resources will be published soon. Leading these workshops are:

- **Becky Johnson**, on Giving and Receiving Hospitality;
- **Jan Davis**, on Stewardship and Living Creatively;
- **Gail O'Neal**, on Joy and Playfulness; and
- **Debbie Payden**, on Keeping Sabbath.

Stewardship Moments

There cannot be a surer rule, nor a stronger exhortation to the observance of it, than when we are taught that all the endowments which we possess are divine deposits entrusted to us for the very purpose of being distributed for the good of our neighbour."

John Calvin (1509-64)



Ordination Anniversaries

March Anniversaries

Vernon Jaberg 64 Years March 16
 Margaret Feyen 32 Years March 18

Sterner to Speak at March 3 Clergy Day

"Does anyone know where the Church is?" Questions of the church's future will shape the keynote presentation offered by Rev. **Stephen Sterner** at this year's Clergy Day. NEA's Clergy Day is planned for Thursday, March 3 at Church of Peace (UCC) in Fond du Lac, located at 158 Military Road. The day begins at 9:00 A.M. and concludes at 1:45 P.M.

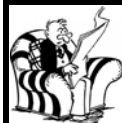


Stephen Sterner

Sterner, the Executive Minister for the UCC's Local Church Ministries Division, will invite NEA clergy to examine the current setting of the church and some trends that are revealing themselves. These reflections will lead to a discussion about the future of the United Church of Christ and the Church in the United States.

Organizers invite NEA clergy to bring some theological or biblical studies books now gathering dust for the book exchange table with their colleagues. Books unclaimed at Clergy Day will be sent to Lakeland College for its fund-raising book sale.

The lunch sign up deadline has passed, but NEA clergy are invited to come hear Sterner's ideas.



Want Ads

Choir Robes: 37 Blue and White choir robes with stoles free to good home, plus one director's robe (for a man) and one organist's robe (for a woman). 19 robes for men and 18 robes for women in a variety of sizes. Robes washable with a few showing some wear around the neck. Several of the stoles show some wear. Contact Rev. Jim Hollister at First Congregational UCC of Sheboygan (jim@fccsheboygan.org or 920-457-4818).

