



NEA Reporter

Northeast Wisconsin Association of the United Church of Christ

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November 2011

From the Division on Wider Church Ministries

Grace and peace to you,

As with many of our colleagues and congregations across the Conference, the Division on Wider Church Ministries has begun a process of reimagining our purpose and identity. We have begun the introspective process of building upon our strengths and fostering the power of our hopes so that we might serve the Northeast Association better. This is coupled with an overwhelming understanding of the need for mission in this Association. With our brothers and sisters in Merrill in our hearts and prayers we humbly acknowledge that many of our churches live one natural disaster away from our greatest fear, physical destruction. So we stand face to face with our own vulnerabilities, trying our hardest to keep them at arms length, and beginning to understand the covenant that we have with one another- a covenant of support and grace.

We have been drawn in by the ever-increasing need in our communities, while realizing the steady decline in giving and church membership and the difficulty that places for our church's mission. These things make our connection to one another in the Northeast Wisconsin Association and the work of our brothers and sisters across the Conference highly valuable. In our imagining, we hope that we can be a point of connection to mission for our local congregations, equipping congregations to do mission in

their local communities, throughout Wisconsin, and across the country. But we have not forgotten that we are also called to mission within our own congregations and the Division on Wider Church Ministries takes this vocation seriously. In the midst of steady decline, church renewal and revitalization is vital for many congregations. Many of our churches are longing for identity and purpose, and it is one of our hopes that the Division can be a resource for congregations searching for help and consultation when approaching the tasks of renewal and revitalization. It is our hope that the Division on Wider Church Ministries might help foster healthier congregations which will allow us to do the work to which we are called, to be the Body of Christ in this time and place.

“Go and do likewise” is our most sacred task. It is a trust given to us by God, a promise that our hands might touch the most vulnerable parts of the world, a hope that love will cast out even the deepest darkness in this world, and that the grace of God will surely trump the destruction that abounds around us. With these things in mind, the Division on Wider Church Ministries moves into a new chapter, stirred by the Holy Spirit, to assist the Association in the task of mission and renewal so that we might be the Church God is calling us to be.

Shalom,

Ashley Nolte
Chairperson
Division on Wider
Church Ministries

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November 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5 11:00 A.M. Installation of Rev. Nicholas Hatch as Associate Pastor of First Congregational UCC, Appleton
6	7 9:30 A.M. C-TEN, First Congregational Church, Oshkosh	8	9 9:30-11:30 A.M. Clergy Cluster I, Peace UCC, Marinette	10	11	12
13 2:00 P.M. Installation of Rev. RaeAnn Beebe as Pastor of St. Paul's UCC, Oshkosh	14	15 9:00 A.M. Clergy Cluster III First Congregational UCC, Plymouth	16	17 9:00 A.M. Executive Committee, St. John UCC, Appleton	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 1:00 P.M. Ordination of Stephen Stepp to Christian Ministry; Church of Peace Fond du Lac
27	28 9:00 A.M. Division on Wider Church Ministries, 1:30 P.M. Division on Local Church Ministries BOTH AT St. John, UCC, Appleton	29	30	Art Wille, Associate Conference Minister 608-630-3134 Bill Clyma, Ministries Coordinator 715-735-6483		

Church Planters' Team Suspends Work on Darboy New Church Start

By Gail Irwin

After four years, the Northeast Association Church Planter's Team has decided to suspend its search for a new church development pastor and disband the team. The Executive Committee approved this decision at its September meeting.

The Planter's group researched various techniques for doing new church starts and sought locations where a new UCC ministry might flourish. We worked with Joanne Thompson at the Wisconsin Conference to seek and screen interested candidates. We also sought guidance from church consultant Jim Griffith.

Our biggest challenge was the lack of qualified clergy applying for the position. We also puzzled over whether to entrust a new venture to a group of churches in cooperation, or a single congregation as a "mother church".

Although the group will no longer meet, funds have been set aside in the Northeast Association and Wisconsin Conference budgets for future new church ventures, and they will remain in reserve for this purpose. We continue to pray that the spirit and creativity needed to begin a new ministry venture in Northeast Wisconsin will surface and the right leader will be called.

Members of the team in 2011 included: Rev. Melinda Feller, Steve Hirby, Steve Ware, Rick Reid, Rev. Gail Irwin and Rev. Art Wille.



Want Ads

Journeys of Apostle Paul Trip coordinated by Milt and Trudy Staskal. Depart April 30, 2012 for 12 day trip to places including Istanbul, Cappadocia, Colossae, Ephesus, Athens and Corinth. Approximately \$3,500; includes Airfare, bus travel, local guides, hotels, and two meals daily. \$300 deposit; roster needs to be complete by Christmas. Call Milt and Trudy at 920-982-7695.

Stewardship Moments: Christ has no hands on earth now—but yours.
Teresa of Avila



Special Events in NEA Churches

Spaghetti Supper and Raffle on Tuesday, November 8. Full Salad Bar with Spaghetti, Meatballs, and Garlic Bread. Dinner (served 3:30 to 6:30) \$6.00 for adults, \$2.00 for children 11 and under. Raffle First Prize—2 tickets to the Packers-Raiders game on December 11. About three dozen raffle prizes. Overall Raffle—\$1.00 for single ticket, \$5.00 for six tickets. Dinner and Raffle tickets both available at the door—

Peace United Church of Christ

Corner of Tenth and Elizabeth Avenues
Marinette, Wisconsin

Holiday Fair on Saturday, November 12, 8:00 A.M. until 1:00 P.M. Candy and Baked Items, Rummage Room, Raffles, Crafts, Gifts, and Quilts. Lunch Available—

Immanuel United Church of Christ

Corner of Doty and Oak Streets
Neenah, Wisconsin



Churches In Transition

First Congregational UCC—Appleton: Rev. Nicholas Hatch began serving as Associate Pastor on August 29 and will be installed on November 5

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: **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. Greg Smith, Interim Pastor

Stewardship Moments

If you don't think you can make a difference, just think what one mosquito makes when it is with you in bed.
Unknown



Around the NEA

By Arlan and Sharon Schlundt

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Oshkosh. Pastors: Ralph DiBiasio-Snyder and Carol DiBiasio-Snyder. HOUSE MEETINGS IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER. Each member has received an invitation to a house meeting; a gathering of about a dozen people to learn about the opportunities we have as a church with regard to our finances. Attendees will learn about our operating expenses, and our assets, and will be invited to ask questions and share ideas about how we can go forward. We want to involve the whole congregation in knowing about and helping solve the financial challenges all churches are facing these days. (From *Tidings*)

ROSENDALE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Rosendale. Pastor: Wes Wassell. 2011/2012 CHILDREN OF THE MONTH. We like to "hi-light" our children throughout the year and give them a chance to participate during worship as they feel comfortable. This could be reading an easy Call to Worship, Prayer, singing or playing a song for special music or during the offering, a special poem or reading of their choosing, collect offering or whatever they feel comfortable doing. (From *The Church Mouse*)

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Malone. Pastor: Keith Weiland. TRIAL TALK. (Editor's Note: The members of St. Paul's have developed a beautiful nature trail around the wetlands across the road from the church.) The emphasis this month is butterflies. The photographer was able to capture a picture of a butterfly and then identify it as an Eastern Tiger Swallowtail. Other butterflies are bountiful, especially the common yellow ones seen all over. There are even a few Monarchs. (From *Friendly Visitor*)

ST. PETER'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Kiel. Pastor: Judine Duerwaechter. LITTLE DRESSES FOR AFRICA. Many thanks to all who have sewn "LITTLE DRESSES FOR AFRICA". 110 dresses were recently delivered to Nancy's Notions in Beaver Dam and will be sent to Africa for distribution. When the dresses were taken

to the shop, it was noted that they also have a need for shorts for the African boys. Once more items have been completed, they will be delivered for distribution. Patterns are available. (From *The Lamplighter*)

FIRST REFORMED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Manitowoc. Pastor: Richard Runge. THERE IS A PLACE FOR YOU AS A HOSPICE VOLUNTEER. The Aurora Visiting Nurse Association Hospice Program has a great need for hospice volunteers. There are many ways to serve individuals who have a life-limiting illness . . . provide companionship to patients and families, visit patients in their home, provide assistance with meals or shopping and other errands, and much more. Training is provided. You can make a difference! (From *the Newsletter*)

ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, Sheboygan. Pastor: Greg Whelton. DO YOU KNOW YOU HAVE AN EXERCISE CLASS IN YOUR CHURCH? **CARDIOTONE** meets Monday and Wednesday at 5:00 PM. **CARDIOTONE** is an all-inclusive energetic exercise class for people of all fitness levels. It is 30 minutes of cardiovascular exercise coupled with strength training and core conditioning. It offers a positive environment for both beginners and to those who need a challenge. **CARDIOTONE** has it all! (From *The Beacon*)



Ordination Anniversaries

Gerry Bertsch	41 Years	November 15
John McFadden.....	37 Years	November 17
Mark West.....	27 Years	November 24
William Clyma	26 Years	November 24
James Hollister	23 Years	November 13
Kevin Mundell	14 Years	November 16

Stewardship Moments

Bread for me is a material problem. Bread for my neighbor is a spiritual problem. Nikolai Berdyaev

Small Town Wisconsin Folks Serve and Learn in Chicago

By Bill Clyma

A Chicago non-profit organization takes abandoned city lots, removes the foundations and other remains of the houses, and turns them into one part of a large community garden. On a hot day in August, some teenagers and adults from First Congregational United Church in New London came to help Mrs. Watson take care of her garden. After the spring planting time, Mrs. Watson had fallen ill, and her garden had become overgrown. They spent most of a day pulling out the weeds, cutting overgrown bushes, laying down mulch, and picking up trash—trash which included beer bottles. Just before they finished, they had a chance to meet Mrs. Watson, who thanked them warmly. Still, they had to leave the garden as the afternoon drew on, because the drug dealers would be coming soon to ply their trade.

From August 14 through 19, thirteen people from First Congregational UCC in New London visited Chicago and spent a week serving others in a wide variety of ministries. The three junior high students and ten adults found a willing host in DOOR (Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection), an urban service and learning program which finds mission in helping visitors “see the face of God in the city.” The mixed-age group (middle school to early seventies) slept in part of an old city church and rode buses and elevated trains to their assignments when public transportation was available. A DOOR staff member also spent three evenings with the group helping the Wisconsin travelers understand the people they met and the things they experienced.

DOOR split the thirteen mission travelers into two teams which took part in different mission work each day. On different days, both teams made lunch for 150-200 people at a Soup Kitchen. At another Soup Kitchen, they bagged non-perishable foods to be given to clients. They did similar work at an agency that works with people “infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.”

On two evenings, *Mama Brenda Matthews*, a youth minister in a Baptist Church visited with the New London group. She calls one of her Ministries “Colored Girls are Cover Girls,” which teaches creative writing for African-American teenage girls. The first evening, three of Mama Brenda’s students came and read their poetry describing life in Chicago.

Thursday night was “dollar night,” in which each group member was given \$1.00, and the group pooled its funds to get supper for themselves. One group walked to an area supermarket, bought some peanut butter, bread and beverages, and shared a few cups of ice cream for dessert (the wooden paddles came in handy for making sandwiches). The other group had made friends with Sam, who sold Polish sausage from a card table outside his home, to ask him for some suggestions. Sam offered them some sausage, and his mother, so impressed by these Wisconsinites come to serve and

learn, brought them some of her famous pound cake.

Last summer, an organization named Teen Service came to New London. A few New London UCC teenagers participated in their work. Others decided they wanted to try mission service trips. Some research (including information on the United Church of Christ website) led them to DOOR. Organizer Kaylene Kloehn reports that the group wanted an experience in which they would deliberately allow themselves to be uncomfortable.

Group members saw all kinds of things that challenged them. They prepared bags of food for homeless people, some of whom asked for food that did not need to be cooked. They met one person who had helped give food to clients at one agency, and was now in the line to receive food after losing her job. They met clients who were openly grateful for the help and clients so angry at their circumstances that they resented having to ask for help. They met children who had absolutely no choice in what they had to eat every day.



Top Row: Alex Sudbrink, Karen Laedtke, Amy Jordan, Craig Jordan, Trudi Staskal
Middle Left: Sam Eithun, Sam Porath, Robbie Watling, Missy Porath, Maggie Cuff, Rita Thiel, Kaylene Kloehn, Ryan Watling
Bottom Row: DOOR Staff Members Halo, Alyssa, Austin, and Anna

NEA Celebrates One Ordination and Two Installations in November

In November, three celebrations grace the life and work of ministry in the Northeast Wisconsin Association of the United Church of Christ.



Stephen Stepp

Stephen Stepp grew up in faith at Church of Peace UCC in Fond du Lac, and he will be ordained to the Christian Ministry at Church of Peace on Saturday, November 26. Rev. Michael Bausch of Summit Congregational UCC in Dubuque, Iowa will preach at the 1:00 P.M. ceremony. A reception in the Church Hall will follow the service. Clergy are invited to bring vestments (red stoles) and process.

Steve graduated from the University of Wisconsin Stout in 1982, and the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary in 2010. He married Jean Chappelow in 1983 and they are the parents of four children. He spent much of his adult life working in the restaurant and food service industry, and also worked as a stay-at-home parent for several years.

On October 23, Steve accepted a call to serve as the Pastor of Zion United Church of Christ in Lowden, Iowa. He will begin serving that congregation on November 27. (Yes, you read it right. That's the day after his ordination.)



Rev. Nicholas Hatch

Rev. Nicholas Hatch will be installed as Pastor for Youth and Spiritual Outreach at First Congregational United Church of Christ in Appleton on Saturday, November 5. Rev. Dianne Hatch of First Presbyterian Church in Champaign, Illinois, will preach at the 11:00 A.M. ceremony. A brunch will follow in the church hall. First Church encourages all of its Northeast Association neighbors to come for the celebration but asks that you RSVP to the office (920-733-7393) if you plan to attend. Clergy are invited to bring vestments (red stoles) and process.

Nick comes to Appleton from Great Falls, Montana, where he served as Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree at Eastern Illinois University in Charleston, Illinois in 2002. He completed his Master of Divinity degree from McCormick Theological seminary in Chicago, and was ordained in 2009.. He and Amanda, his wife, are the parents of a one year old daughter.

Nick began his ministry at First Congregational UCC on August 29.



Rev. RaeAnn Beebe

Rev. RaeAnn Beebe will be installed as Pastor of St. Paul's United Church of Christ in Oshkosh on Sunday, November 13. Rev. Roger Mealiff of Ebenezer United Church of Christ in Sheboygan will preach at the 2:00 P.M. service. A reception will follow in the church hall. Clergy are invited to bring vestments (red stoles) and process.

RaeAnn earned her Bachelor of Arts degree from Lakeland College in 1982, and her Master of Divinity degree from Garret-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Chicago in 2010. Before entering seminary, she spent many years as a Social Worker with developmentally disabled people. She and her husband Rory, a nurse, are the parents of two young adult children.

RaeAnn accepted a call to serve as pastor of St. Paul's UCC on May 1, and was ordained to the ministry on July 16.

New Phone Number for Art Wille

Art Wille, the Associate Conference Minister for Support of Pastors and Care of churches in both the Northeast and Northwest Associations, now has a new cell phone and number. The Conference asks you to do all your cell phone communication with Art using this number:

608-630-3134

This telephone number for Art, provided by the Wisconsin Conference as part of his new call, will be posted in all NEA publications and websites from now on. Calls to Sue Taylor, the Administrative Assistant for Art and for Kent Ulrey, can be directed to 608-846-7880.

Kandler Honored (and Surprised) with New Anthem

On Sunday, October 2, First Congregational UCC of New London and its bell choir surprised Rev. Harvey Kandler on the 53rd anniversary of his ordination. The choir, under the direction of Sandy Eithun, played a setting of *I Am Thine, O Lord* that Eithun had composed for Rev. Kandler for the occasion of his 50th anniversary of ordination. Scheduling glitches three years ago prevented the new composition from being played then. Eithun, a prolific music director and composer, is Rev. Kandler's cousin.



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