

SHALOM

SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

VOLUME XXVIII, ISSUE 5, JANUARY, 2009

FROM YOUR ASSOCIATION MINISTER

Just what is the Pastoral Office? has been a question for me since I began in this position. I've always felt that a clearer understanding of Office would provide both clergy and laity firmer group to stand on, a more solid position to consider our ministry together. So why not continue that discussion into the New Year? Listen to portions of a sermon given at an Installation Service in the SWWA. "The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ..." Eph. 4:11 & 12.

It continues to be true. "The Gifts he gave." This is about the reception of the Gifts, the recognition that what comes here in the Pastor and Teacher does not come because of our intellect, our personal style, our particular abilities, it's a gift and those who are called and given the gift, (you wouldn't be called if the gift was not available and given to you) respond with gratitude and obedience. One is ordained to be a Pastor and Teacher. The Teacher part is often missed. However, they have been trained to have control of a body of knowledge. They are to make available the tradition of the Church. They are not answer givers. Their task is to interpret in light of the tradition. The key here is making available the tradition of the Church, not one's personal opinion. Teaching and preaching are not just a personal opinion of the one who has studied. Teaching and Preaching are making available the tradition of the Church in the equipping of the saints for the mission of the Church. One of the ways that the ordained minister equips the Congregation of the Saints is by making the tradition available to personal and corporate issues in the life of people and the life of the community. If the congregation is in conflict, the role of the ordained is not only to make a social system response. Many laity among us know such systems better and have better conflict resolution skills than clergy. So, when conflict arises, the ordained one looks to the traditions and asks, "Did the Corinthian have similar problems?" This ordained teacher, preacher, pastor has control of a body of knowledge, not all knowledge, but a body of knowledge to make available the Tradition. All of this then is for one purpose and that is to equip the congregation for its ministry. It is my contention that what will equip the congregation is the Bible and the tradition interpreted by one who has been called by God and given the charisma (the gifts). One whose experience, seen through the scriptures and the tradition, serve to equip us all for the call to servanthood.

So, what do you think?

With Great Hope in the New Year,

Bob

SPRING TRAINING EVENT FOR EDUCATORS

“It takes a Church to Raise a Christian” training event will happen Saturday, March 28 at First Congregational UCC in Fort Atkinson. The keynote speaker will be Dr. Leah Gunning Francis, Associate Professor at Eden Theological Seminary. Workshops will include:

The Teaching Ministry in the Life of the Congregation
Super Duper Super
The Hidden Curriculum
Embedded Curriculum
Adult Education Enneagrams
Cattail and Cottonwood Curriculum

Cost: \$25.00 before March 6 and \$30.00 after

CONTACT THE WISCONSIN CONFERENCE, UCC at www.wcucc.org or cmartell@wcucc.org or 608-846-7880

A DATE TO KEEP IN MIND AND PUT ON YOUR CALENDAR

The Spring Meeting of the Association will be held on May 2nd, beginning at 9 a.m. at St. John’s United Church of Christ in Monroe. Preliminary Topic “How Green is my Church?” More info to follow.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST SUPPORT STAFF EVENT

The Annual Meeting of the United Church of Christ Support Staff will happen in Wisconsin, April 16-19, 2009. United Church of Christ support staffs from local congregations, Associations, Conference and National Office are invited. Contact the Conference Office for more information. cmartell@wcucc.org or 608-846-7880. Also see the Wisconsin Conference Web site: www.wcucc.org

IN OUR PRAYERS (Please include these petitions in your prayers)

For the Son-in Law of Bonnie Van Overbeke, recovering from an auto accident
For Lora Whitten and our congregation at Edgerton, as she is installed
For Phil Haslanger and our congregation at Fitchburg, as he is called to be
their Senior Pastor

For Our Ecumenical Partners in:

The Moers Church District UEK, Germany, Ferdinand Isekeit, Superintendent
The Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Palestine, Metri Raheb, Pastor
The Daughters of St. Mary in Beni Souef and Cairo Egypt, & Sister Agapie Assad

Our Congregations at:

Fitchburg, Bonnie Van Overbeke and Phil Haslanger, Pastors
Fort Atkinson First Congregational, Christ Buckingham-Taylor, Pastor
Fort Atkinson Friedens, Terese Leonhard, Pastor

SERVE ON THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE?

The Southwest Association Nominating Committee will be forming in January to consider the roster for elections that take place at the Spring Association Meeting. Anyone who would like to serve on the Nominating Committee should contact Bob Mutton at the Association Office or Nancy Potter at 608-206-0731.

CONGREGATIONS SEEKING PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

Madison Orchard Ridge – seeking ½ time Associate (clergy or laity encouraged to apply)

CONGREGATIONS TO BE SEEKING

New Glarus Swiss – Interims, John Jewell & Petra Streiff
Whitewater Cong. – Interim, Craig Jan-McMahon

FROM THE CONFERENCE YOUTH COORDINATOR, LISA HART

Online registration for General Synod opened on December 1st. Registration for youth and chaperones who are going to General Synod as part of the Youth Trip (Service Experience) need to follow special instructions for registering. The youth trip is open to anyone who will be entering 9th grade in the Fall of 2009 to those who graduate in the Spring of 2009.

DO NOT REGISTER ON THE MAIN REGISTRATION PAGE. You need to contact me to find out how to register as part of the Wisconsin Conference Group.

The cost is \$515 for chaperones and \$465 for youth. The difference in cost is due to the higher registration fee for adults at General Synod (adults are \$175 and youth are \$115). The rest of the cost covers your lodging at Aquinas College from Wednesday afternoon (June 24) through Wednesday morning (July 1). It also covers the cost of thirteen (13) meals (Wed. dinner, daily breakfast, plus lunch and dinner on the three service project days). Other meals will be extra.

Cost for transportation is still being determined. For more information please email or call Lisa Hart (608) 846-7880 or lhart@wcucc.org

FROM YOUR SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

Conservation Tips for the Church

You would be surprised how many churches are ignoring the new re-cycling reforms. In our private lives we are beginning to become aware of the need to conserve our resources, both public and personal. For some job security and retirement income are threatened, and nearly all finally realize that the cosmic resources God has given us are not unlimited. But many of our churches have not provision for re-cycling used Sunday Bulletins or saving aluminum cans left over from the youth slumber party.

From time to time the Social Concerns Committee will publish in this space, *Conservation Tips for the Church*. If you have suggestions for this list, please send them to the Social Concerns Committee c/o the Association Office.

- **Get real about re-cycling:** Most communities have facilities for re-cycling paper, tin and aluminum cans, many plastics and glass. Does your church have clearly marked re-cycle bins strategically located near sanctuary and social areas?
- **Save on the church's electric bill** by using energy-saving bulbs, by adopting and publishing a policy of turning lights off in unused rooms, by coordinating maintenance procedures with custodial personnel, and by establishing a comprehensive schedule for cutting back on heating, air conditioning and water heating, room by room, if possible.
- **Save on the church's water bill** by posting reminders in the kitchens and bathrooms.

Conservation Tips for the Home

- **Get real about re-cycling:** Most communities have facilities for re-cycling paper, tin and aluminum cans, many plastics and glass.
- **Re-cycle personal items**, such as clothing which can be given to re-distribution programs or cut up to make rag rugs, old shoes which can be used for gardening.
- **Grow your own vegetables and flowers.**
- **Save on your electric bill** by using energy-saving bulbs, by cleaning out the lint under your refrigerator regularly (extends the life of the appliance too), by turning off the lights when you leave a room (extends the life of the bulb too), change the furnace filters monthly (saves electricity and the furnace fan motor).
- **Save water.** Turn off the tap while you brush your teeth or soap yourself in the shower. Catch rain water in a bucket by the roof downspouts and use it for watering the garden. Shower instead of bathing in the tub, and purchase shower heads that are designed for economy.

If people are reminded of conservation at church they will become better conservators at home. (Obviously these suggestions are not original. Sorry that we can't give credit for every source.

Do send us your thoughts and ideas: office@swwaucc.org

CLERGY RETREAT TOPIC IS STEWARDSHIP IN DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES

The Southeast and Southwest Clergy Retreat will happen at Pilgrim Center February 8-10, 2009. The topic will be "Stewardship in Difficult Economic Times" – a rather timely topic. This will include a look at stewardship in the congregation, as well as personal stewardship. Steve Clapp, president of Christian Community will be the keynote speaker. Steve has authored or co-authored over 30 books on religious faith and congregational life including "The Desires of Your Heart: Financial Giving and the Spiritual Life." A quote from Loren Mead of the Alban Institute, "The Christian community's stewardship resources offer a very practical approach which should produce excellent results for congregations which are facing stewardship challenges realistically. These resources push beyond the financial to the spiritual dimensions of financial health."

We will begin the retreat with dinner on Sunday, the 8th, and end with lunch on the 10th. You can register by calling or e-mailing the Association Office. The cost of the retreat will be \$100.00. Partial scholarships are available upon request.

JANUARY, 2009

- 2 Ministerial Development Group (MDG), Madison Lake Edge, 9:30 a.m.
- 4 Clergy Epiphany Party, Mutton/Ames, 5-8:00 p.m.
- 6 EPIPHANY
- 7 Periodic Support Consultations, Association Office, 12 Noon
- 8 MDG, Verona, 9:30 a.m.
- 8 Spring Meeting Planning Committee, Assoc. Office, 4 p.m.
- 8 Executive Committee, Association Office, 5 p.m.
- 11 Installation of Lora Whitten, Edgerton, 3 p.m.
- 12 Wisconsin Conference Staff Meeting, Deforest, 9 a.m.
- 14 UEK Working Group, Mutton/Ames Home, 12 Noon
- 14 Division on Christian Education, Assoc. Office, 5:30 p.m.
- 15 MDG, Evansville, 9:30 a.m.
- 15 Feminist Study Group, Assoc. Office, 3 p.m.
- 15 Division on Church & Ministry, Assoc. Office, 5 p.m.
- 16 MDG, Lake Edge, 9:30 a.m.
- 19 MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY
- 20 District IV, Evansville, 9 a.m.
- 21 District I, Dodgeville, 8 a.m.
- 21 District III, Portage, 12 Noon
- 22 MDG, Verona, 9:30 a.m.
- 22 Social Concerns Committee, Assoc. Office, 12 Noon
- 28 District II, Madison Plymouth, 8 a.m.
- 28 Authorized Lay Pastor Committee (ALP) Assoc. Office, 3 p.m.
- 29 MDG, Evansville, 9:30 a.m.

FEBRUARY, 2009

- 4 Periodic Support Consultations, Assoc. Office, 12 Noon
- 5 MDG, Verona, 9:30 a.m.
- 6 MDG, Lake Edge, 9:30 a.m.
- 8 Southwest/Southeast Clergy Retreat until 10th