

SHALOM

SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

VOLUME XXVIII, ISSUE 7, MARCH, 2009

FROM YOUR ASSOCIATION MINISTER

I can't remember a time that was as anxiety producing and desperate as these days. Any glance at newspapers or television news programs provide a constant flow of bad news getting worse. Conversation with friends about pensions, invested funds and housing costs seem to end with a gloom that permeates even an attempt at humor. All this can translate into despair about everything, especially the Church. Questions of survival seem to be on the top of the list of concerns.

It is well to remember that the Church and the message of the Gospel seems to do better in Hard Times – in times of trial. We tend to be less willing to put our faith in the Gospel promise when we are full. We place our trust in ourselves, in our things... in our togetherness. When things get tough we are more willing to look outside ourselves and hear the Hope offered... Hope that is rooted in the biblical witness. We are surrounded by Hope, not happy optimism, but Hope rooted in the deep promises of the Gospel. Now is a time of great opportunity for the Church. We have a Word to say to people who are anxious and panicked. We have promises to proclaim to folk who are frightened. This is a time to witness to the love of God. Be not anxious. Fear not. God awaits you. You have promises to depend on.

With the Greatest of Hope,

Bob

**SPRING MEETING THEME: “LIVING IN GOD’S CREATION
REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE**

We’ll gather at St. John’s UCC in Monroe on May 2, 2009. The agenda follows:

9:00 a.m.	Registration and Refreshment
9:30 a.m.	Welcome
	Roll Call of Churches
	About this local Church
	Hymn Sing
10:00 a.m.	Presentation by Dr. Calvin DeWitt – “Care of the Creation”
11:00 a.m.	Break
11:15 a.m.	Presentation by Ryan Schryver – “Wisconsin’s Inconvenient Truth”
12:15 p.m.	Stories from Congregations
12:45 p.m.	Lunch
1:45 p.m.	Business Meeting
	Election of Officers
	Acceptance of 2010 Budget
	Introduction of New Clergy
	Partnership Updates
	Announcements and Other business
2:15 p.m.	Worship
3:00 p.m.	Adjournment

You will receive registration materials in the coming months.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS:

Dr. Calvin DeWitt is a scientist, writer and environmentalist who will share his interest and enthusiasm for the environment and our “earthkeeping” responsibilities as Christians. Dr. DeWitt is Professor of environmental Studies, UW-Madison and Founding Director of Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies. He helped found and holds memberships in various Christian and environmental societies and has published numerous articles concerning environmental issues.

Ryan Schryver provides a detailed overview of the issue of global warming from the global scale, but also focuses on the changes global warming is causing in Wisconsin, what our future holds and actions being taken at the state level to address the problem.

Mr. Schryver is the Grassroots organizer and Clean energy Advocate for Clean Wisconsin where he works to promote clean energy policies. He was trained by former Vice President Al Gore and several of the nation’s leading scientists to give presentations and lead discussions on the topic of global warming. Ryan’s detailed knowledge of state policies and experience in grassroots organizing offer a unique perspective on a topic some have called the greatest moral issue of our time. In addition to his work with Clean Wisconsin, Ryan serves on the Board of Directors for the Wisconsin Interfaith Climate and Energy Campaign.

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 cmaretell@wcucc.org or 608-846-7880

YURS TO GO EAST (Just for a short time)

For more than 20 years, the Wisconsin Conference has had a clergy exchange program with the United Reformed Church of Great Britain. Each year a clergy person is sent to represent each Church, spending about a month traveling in the Southwest Province of the URC. This year it is one of our own. Rev. Mark Yurs and his wife, Sherrol, will represent us and will be in England beginning in early March. We say, “traveling mercies” dear brother and sister.

IN THE TOP THREE

Congratulations to First Congregational UCC in Baraboo. They were honored as one of the highest giving (per capita...\$50.86 with 129 members) congregation in the UCC giving to One Great Hour of Sharing.

NEW GROWTH AT PAOLI

When you walk into Zwingli UCC in Paoli, you can see continuing new growth with the birth of Samuel Rabe Thiessen on Saturday, January 24. Mother and Father, Sister and Brother... all doing well.

DISTRICT MEETINGS IN MARCH

Clergy gather for Bible study, prayer and theological discussion of a paper. This month we'll be discussing a paper by Parker Palmer (except for District I doing the Wehrli paper) entitled, “The Broken-Open Heart – Living with With and Hope in the Tragic Gap.” Papers are available at the Association Office.

We meet:

District IV	March 17, 9 a.m.	Evansville
District I	March 18, 8 a.m.	Dodgeville
District III	March 18, 12:15 p.m.	Portage
District II	March 25, 8 a.m.	Madison Plymouth

GERMAN GUESTS TO BE IN SWWA

We have lots of lead-time, our ecumenical partners from the Moers Church District in Germany will be with us October 10-20. October 14 and 15 we will be together at Pilgrim Center to do a study on the Book of Acts. There will be 13 folk from Germany with us. If you have interest in hosting or being part of the retreat, contact the Association Office.

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

Thanksgiving for the healthy birth of Samuel Rabe Thiessen

Godspeed and Traveling Mercies for Mark & Sherrol Yurs

For Joe Adkins, recovering from surgery

For the mother of Terese Leonard recovering from surgery

For Our Congregations at:

Juneau St. Stephens – Carol Lange, Pastor

Lake Mills First – Neil Partington, Pastor

Liberty Ridge – Marty Yeager, Pastor

LAKE MILLS HAS NEW CENTURY HYMNALS FOR SALE

The First congregational UCC in Lake Mills is replacing all of their New Century Hymnals. The hymnals are several years old and are in very good condition. We have 112 hymnals for sale at \$5.00 each. If you are interested in purchasing these hymnals, please call the church at (920) 648-5813 or email us a fcuccim@charter.net

FREE – Just call...

Want to give away chalk board with aluminium frame and tray (4' 12')

Monticello Zwingli UCC – Phone (608) 938-4369

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. cmartel@wcucc.org or 608-846-7880. Also see the Wisconsin Conference Web site: www.wcucc.org

LAY ACADEMY YOUTH MINISTRY LEADERSHIP

A wonderful team has crafted yet another year of Lay Academy to focus on Youth Ministry Skills. Dates and topics are:

- * Faith Foundations – September 25-26, 2009
- * Theory of Youth Ministry – November 13-14, 2009
- * Leadership Development – January 29-30, 2010
- * Management Matters – March 5-6, 2010
- * How to Program for Success – April 23-24, 2010

Excellent instructors in the field will teach each weekend (Friday 7-10, Saturday 9-3) at the Conference Center in DeForest. For registration information, visit our website at

www.wcucc.org

MARCH 2009

- 2 Board of Directors, WI Conference, DeForest, 10 a.m.
- 4 Periodic Support Consultations, Association Office, 12 Noon
- 5 Ministerial Development Group (MDG), Verona, 9:30 a.m.
- 5 Assoc. Meeting Planning Committee, Assoc. Office, 4 p.m.
- 5 Executive Committee of the Association, 5 p.m.
- 6 MDG, Madison Lake Edge, 9:30 a.m.
- 9 Wisconsin Conference Staff Meeting, DeForest, 9 a.m.
- 12 MDG, Evansville, 9:30 a.m.
- 12 Feminist (Women authors) Study Group, Assoc. Office, 3 p.m.
- 12 Division on Church & Ministry, Assoc. Office, 5 p.m.
- 17 District IV, Evansville, 9 a.m.
- 18 District I, Dodgeville, 8 a.m.
- 18 District III, Portage, 12:15 p.m.
- 19 MDG, Verona, 9:30 a.m.
- 20 MDG, Madison Lake Edge, 9:30 a.m.
- 25 District II, Madison Plymouth, 8 a.m.
- 25 Barth Study Group, Association Office, 1 p.m.

APRIL 2009

- 1 Periodic Support Consultation, Assoc. Office, 12 Noon
- 2 MDG, Verona, 9:30 a.m.
- 2 Executive Committee, Assoc. Office, 5 p.m.
- 3 MDG, Madison Lake Edge, 9:30 a.m.
- 6 Wisconsin Conference Staff, DeForest, 9 a.m.