

SHALOM

SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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FROM YOUR ASSOCIATION MINISTER

“God loves our enemies...The cross tells us that. God suffers on their account, feels anguish and sorrow because of them. God gave the beloved Son for them...God loves them. God gave everything for them...The best wisdom is recognizing the cross of Jesus Christ as the insuperable love of God for all people, for us as well as for our enemies. Or are we of the opinion that God loves us more than God loves enemies: Would we believe that we are God’s favorite children?...Is God’s love any less for our enemies, for whom God just as much came, suffered and died, as God did for us?... Who indeed could be more worth our love, who could stand in greater need of our love than those who hate?...When you reject your enemy, you turn the poorest of the poor from your door...How do we overcome evil? By forgiving it without end. How is that done! By seeing our enemies as they really are as those for whom Christ died, whom Christ loves.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer from “Testament to Freedom” – pages 285-288.

Happy Easter!

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.

DISTRICT MEETINGS

There will be **no District Meetings in April** due to Holy Week and Easter. We will resume in May.

IN OUR PRAYERS (Please add these petitions to your daily prayers)

For the family of Bonnie Van Overbeke in the loss of her Mother

For the family of Terese Leonhard in the loss of her Mother

For the family of Mary Ann Waterman who died in late March 23, 2009

(wife of the late Rev. Kenneth Waterman)

For the Spring Meeting of the Association in Monroe

For Deborah Dean-Ware & Lake Edge as she is installed

For Our Congregations at:

Lowell – Carol Lange, Pastor

Madison Community of Hope – Tisha Brown, Pastor

Madison First Congregational – Curt Anderson, Eldonna Hazen & Jerry Hancock,
Pastors

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

(We have brochures & additional info at the SWWA Office)

THE CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO GLOBALIZATION

A 2009 Theological Colloquy at Lakeland College June 9-11. The event will include participants from the Evangelical Church of Westphalia, Germany and the Evangelical & Reformed Synod of Honduras.

2009 WASHINGTON ISLAND FORUM – June 22-29 – “Encountering Jesus”

with the Rev. John Bell from the Iona Community and Dr. Marlene Kropf, of the Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

EMBRACING AGING IN THE CHURCH – May 29-30 – with Dr. Susan McFadden of

UW Oshkosh and Rev. John McFadden, former Senior Pastor of First Congregational UCC in Appleton, WI.

NEW ORLEANS WORK TRIP – Jan. 31-Feb. 8, 2009

Dodgeville Plymouth UCC and Mineral Point Cong. UCC

Seventeen hardy souls from at least three congregations joined forces at Little Farms UCC in New Orleans to bring repair and healing to the Crescent City, still wounded from the effects of wind and water that constituted Hurricane Katrina in August of 2005. Cheryl from Joliet, IL

joined us en route and Barbara from Albany, NY, drove in from Florida to complete the team – all the rest of which were from Wisconsin.

There are 29 houses currently under repair. Almost 300 have been restored to livable conditions or are nearing completion. Our work sites were located in East New Orleans, across the shipping canal from the downtown area. On the ½ hour commute each way from Little Farms, we were able to see the extent of devastation, still highly visible from the elevated roadways and bridges we used. The Lower 9th Ward – which was almost totally destroyed by water rushing in when a huge barge broke loose from its moorings and crashed through the protective sea wall guarding it from the shipping canal – had been taken in had by Brad Pitt and other wealthy notables and so is no longer a site in which the UCC groups are engaged.

Our site is in a middle class neighborhood, consisting mostly of brick, one-story bungalows and two-story townhouses. Most of the damage was from flooding, which generally reached a height of eight to ten feet, destroying the furnishings, interior structures and flooring, and sometimes roofs, but leaving the shells of the houses intact. One team (7) was assigned three basic tasks: dry-walling and taping the walls and ceiling of the two-car garage, laying ceramic tile on the kitchen and bathroom floor, and painting and trim work throughout closets and the ornamental iron grillwork around doors and windows. The other team's assignment in a townhouse several blocks away was much the same. By the time work stopped on Friday afternoon, virtually all the work assignments had been completed, except for some trim work in the dining area that required routing and the router could not be located.

One member of Little Farms congregation, with whom I spoke at the Potluck they threw for us, drove west for seventeen hours without a break until she stopped at College Station, Texas, where she stayed for two weeks. When she returned, her house was still under 8 feet of water, totally ruined. Fortunately she was able to work from her laptop and remained on the payroll throughout her absence.

We had two short worship services during the week, before we headed off to work. Lisa played hymns, Bill read scriptures and Alan delivered short reflections. Those who attended seemed to appreciate the services. The morale and cooperation, both at work and during mealtimes was, in my opinion, flawless and spirit-filled. We enjoyed one another's company, laughed a lot, worked hard and had fun. The only regret I heard voiced was that we didn't have enough time on the job; we could have gotten a lot more done if we had not had a half day off on Wednesday and had to quit work at 3 p.m. every day to avoid the traffic jams that begin about 3:30. Virtually everyone expressed a desire to return next year. The one certainty is that there will still be plenty of work to do.

CONGREGATIONS SEEKING PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

Madison Orchard Ridge – seeking ½ time Associate

CONGREGATIONS TO BE SEEKING

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

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.

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

CHURCHES IN SWWA WHO PAID 100% OF THEIR GOAL FOR 2008

Baraboo First Congregational
Brodhead Congregational
Darlington Immanuel
Edgerton Congregational
Endeavor Trinity
Fitchburg Memorial
Janesville First Congregational
Lowell First
Madison Community of Hope
Madison Orchard Ridge
Mazomanie UCC
Middleton Community
Monticello Washington Reformation

Barneveld Congregational
Columbus Olivet
Dodgeville Plymouth
Emerald Grove
Evansville Congregational
Ft. Atkinson First Congregational
Juneau St. Stephens
Madison First Congregational
Madison Lake Edge
Madison Plymouth
McFarland UCC
Mineral Point Congregational
Monticello Zwingli

**Mt. Vernon Zwingli
Platteville First Congregational
Portage Trinity
Reeseville First
Verona Salem**

**Paoli Zwingli
Platteville Mt. Zion
Potosi Davies Memorial
Sauk City First
South Wayne St. Pauls**

APRIL 2009 SHALOM CALENDAR

- 1** Periodic Support Consultations, Assoc. Office, 12 Noon
- 2** Ministerial Development Group (MDG) Verona, 9:30 a.m.
- 2** Social Concerns Committee, Association Office, 12 Noon
- 3** MDG, Lake Edge, 9:30 a.m.
- 6** Wisconsin conference Staff Meeting, DeForest, 9 a.m.
- 9** MDG, Evansville, 9:30 a.m.
- 10** GOOD FRIDAY
- 12** EASTER
- 16** MDG, Verona, 9:30 a.m.
- 16** UEK (German) Working Group, Mutton/Ames Home, 12:15 p.m.
- 17** MDG, Lake Edge, 9:30 a.m.
- 19** INSTALLATION OF DEBORAH DEAN-WARE
- 21** Clergy Consultations, Stevens Point, 10 a.m.
- 22** Commission on Church & Ministry, DeForest, 12 Noon
- 23** MDG, Evansville, 9:30 a.m.
- 23** Feminist study Group, Assoc. Office, 1:30 p.m.
- 23** Division on Church & Ministry, Assoc. Office, 5 p.m.
- 26** Installation of Mr. Paul Kuenning as Administrator at Fairhaven
- 28** General Synod Delegate Orientation, Mutton/Ames Home, 6 p.m.
- 29** Church Development & Renewal Committee, DeForest, 11:30 a.m.

MAY 2009

- 1** MDG, Lake Edge, 9:30 a.m.
- 2** SPRING MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION, Monroe, 9 a.m.
- 4** Conference Bd. of Directors, DeForest, 10 a.m.
- 6** Periodic Support Consultations, Assoc. Office, 12 Noon
- 7** MDG, Verona, 9:30 a.m.
- 7** Executive Committee, Assoc. Office, 5 p.m.