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**FROM YOUR ASSOCIATION MINISTER**

**It doesn't have to be the blue iris, it could be weeds in a vacant lot, or a few small stones, just pay attention, then patch a few words together and don't try to make them elaborate, this isn't a contest, but a doorway into thanks, and a silence in which another voice may speak.**

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By Mary Oliver, from her book of poems, "Thirst"

Have a blessed summer and... Pray

Bob

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**PARTNERS IN EDUCATION AVAILABLE TO LOCAL CHURCHES**

Partners in Education are education consultants who are ready and able to help Congregations strengthen their teaching ministries. They are available to assist your congregation in:

- Developing a mission statement
- Selecting resources
- Planning your teaching ministries

In addition, they are trained to lead workshops:

- How to select curriculum for your Church
- Christian Parenting
- The workshop Rotation Model
- Refresh, Recharge, Renew Your Faith
- 101 Ideas for Adults to Grow in Faith

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Contact Rev. Gail O'Neal at the Conference Office, 608-846-7880.

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

Tom Neilsen and the congregation at New Glarus in the Transition  
 Bob Mirshak, recovering from a hospitalization  
 Jacki Mitchell, recovering from cancer treatments  
 Deb Krause, Den at Eden Seminary, recovering from breast cancer  
 Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin Conference  
 Our German/Russian Trip  
 Search Committees at:

Darlington  
 Edgerton  
 Mineral Point  
 Dane  
 Grand Marsh/Westfield  
 Our Congregations at:  
 Baraboo, Doug Fauth, Pastor  
 Barneveld, Bob Sichta, Pastor  
 Belleville, Heide Hackman, Pastor

**NEILSEN RESIGNS AND WILL HEAD SOUTH**

Many of you already are aware that I made the decision to resign from my nineteen-year position as the senior pastor at Swiss Church in New Glarus. You also are likely aware of my 25 years of work in Latin America in Human Rights and Development. During this time, I made more than sixty trips throughout various countries of Latin America. Although this work has primarily focused on Chiapas, Mexico and El Salvador, it has allowed me to build a network of relationships with like-minded people in Latin America. I am the only Euro-American and Protestant in SICSAL, an international human rights organization for Latin America. This unique role provides both opportunities and challenges. Through these trips I have become proficient in Spanish, and I have increasingly become appreciative of the need for building trusting personal relationships.

As I leave Swiss Church, plans are being made for me to work with them in continuing the programs that have become integral to the church. Well over 80 people from Swiss Church have participated in mission trips to either Chiapas, El Salvador, or both. The current programming in El Salvador includes a child sponsorship program (education) involving 163 sponsors presently matched to 163 children, habitat style construction projects, and opportunities to develop interpersonal friendships with people in the third world.

At this stage of life, I feel I am being called to a tent making ministry in which I am offering the opportunity to you, your church, or groups within your church to similar projects to those mentioned above. I'm available at (608) 527-2381 until June 16<sup>th</sup>, or (830) 393-0401 after that or by e-mail

**SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION**

**UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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at [tneilsen\\_99@yahoo.com](mailto:tneilsen_99@yahoo.com). Although we will be living in south Texas, I am certainly open to offering this service throughout the country, but especially here in Wisconsin.

#### **HERITAGE AND CALL DVD VIDEO**

An excellent DVD video put together to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UCC was available free of charge at the Spring Association Meeting in April. The video is an historical look at the 50 years of the Southwest Association, UCC. It is filled with images of ministry and congregations that date back to the mid 50's and move to the present. The technical work was done by Paul Hedges of Orchard Ridge UCC in cooperation with a number of clergy. Rev. Phil Haslanger of Fitchburg Memorial had a major hand in writing the script. The DVD was shown as part of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration on Oct. 14 at First Congregational UCC in Madison.

#### **CHARLIE WORKMAN HABITAT HOUSE**

Charlie Workman is known throughout the Southwest Association from his years as pastor at Zwingle Church in Monticello and his times as serving as either an interim minister or providing pulpit supply. Within Green County this 91 year-old is known as the "Father of Green County Habitat for Humanity." He and his wife, Marilyn, are the primary benefactors for the affiliate. In honor of his years of service and their monetary contributions, GCHF is naming a house in his honor. The Green County UCC churches are committed to this local mission project as a means of building community while providing a home for a needy family. The hope is to broaden the effort throughout the SWA.

Work on the Charlie Workman House in Browntown, WI will begin on Saturday, July 5<sup>th</sup>. Teams from the UCC churches and individuals are wanted to volunteer from identified Saturdays from July until mid-October. Visit the website at [www.greencountyhabitat.org](http://www.greencountyhabitat.org) or call Carol Holmes at 608-225-0341 for more information.

Monetary gifts in support of this house are also most welcome. Donations should be mailed to Green County Habitat for Humanity, P.O. Box 298, Monroe, WI 53566. Note that the donation is for the Charlie Workman House. Another way to

show support is to send a team of bicyclists or come as single rider to the Bike 4 Habitat on Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup> in Brodhead. Check the website for details.

#### **CHURCHES SEEKING**

Dane Immanuel  
Darlington Immanuel, Sue Strickler,  
Interim  
Edgerton  
Grand Marsh/Westfield  
Mineral Point First, Beryl Melcher,  
Interim

#### **CRAIGVILLE THEOLOGICAL COLLOQUY**

The theme of this year's Craigville Colloquy is "God's Shalom: Confronting the Many Faces of Violence." It will happen at the Craigville Conference Center on Cape Cod July 14-18. We have brochures.

#### **CHECK OUT THE ASSOCIATION WEB SITE**

The Division on Lay Life and Leadership has taken the Association website as their project and have done a great job. We now have a new page where people can sign up to receive Nancy's Association E-News. You can go to the home page and follow the link or just copy this one, <http://www.swwisconsinucc.org/ecommunications.htm>

If you wish to receive the Association Newsletter, Shalom, by e-mail or would like to start on or improve your church's website, check this link so they can let us know of your interest. Contact Nancy Potter for suggestions and critique.