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FROM YOUR ASSOCIATION MINISTER

When I saw him, my first reaction was ‘there is a man carrying a heavy burden.’ He walked with his head bent down and a far away look in his eyes. It took us a few days to relax around each other, yet finally we were seated together at dinner and we were able to talk a bit about our countries, our churches and ourselves. He was the Superintendent (Association Minister) of the Rwandan Protestant Church that is in partnership with the Moers Church District. All the ecumenical partners of the Moers Church District were invited to the celebration of their 400th, yep, 400th Anniversary of the establishment of their district, the Association. As we shared some of our lives in the Church, Aaron told me of the tragedy of the genocide in his country. He was deeply and personally affected by it. During the Civil War when the Tutsi and Hutu fought, his wife and seven children were killed and he was spared by a fluke. He was gone for a few minutes on an errand when it all happened. It was difficult to imagine what he went through. He especially agonized, not only with the personal loss of those loved ones, but also that he was without family and in Rwanda that means you are a wandering stranger without roots. Aaron spoke of this slowly, with pause and at times with frustration and bewilderment. Yet, later in the week we laughed together about many things. His smile was bright and deep. I was tempted to ask him how he had been able to survive such loss, but before I asked, he told me. He said, “It never leaves me fully, and there are moments when despair comes rushing in from where I know not, but without the Hope that comes from touching Jesus, the Hope that comes from being touched by Jesus, the loneliness, fear and anxiousness would crush me. Believe it or not I feel lucky, many of those who have gone through what I did do not have this assurance, this Hope in the future. I think I’m here to remind people.” Let me tell you, I’ve been

reminded and his face continues to remind me.

Indeed, with the Greatest of Hope,

Bob

GODSPELLERS TO PERFORM AT MADISON COMMUNITY OF HOPE

On two weekends in November, The Gospellers, a gospel choir of the Wisconsin Conference, United Church of Christ, will tour western and eastern Wisconsin.

The Gospellers were organized to go on tour this past June in Germany on invitation of the church in Berlin-Brandenburg. Hosted by the Westend Gospelsinger in Eberswalde, Germany, the thirty-five members of the choir from Wisconsin always performed with local gospel choirs, experiencing the joy of choir fellowship with our German sisters and brothers.

Now the Gospellers will perform in Wisconsin on six occasions, four concerts and two worship services. They will sing music in the gospel tradition in six UCC congregations.

On Sunday, November 23, they will perform at the Community of Hope UCC in Madison. (7118 Old Sauk Road) At 3:15 p.m. a video of their tour will be shown and the concert will begin at 4 p.m.

INSTALLATION TO HAPPEN AT MINERAL POINT

On November 23, Rev. Todd Smith Lippert and the congregation at Mineral Point will make promises along with a representative of the Association. These promises will be for the sake and the mission of the Church in the World. We will gather at 4 p.m. Please come and support this new venture to confirm the Yoke

SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN
ASSOCIATION

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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between the Dodgeville and Mineral Point churches.

YURS EDITS BOOK OF FOSDICK SERMONS

Rev. Mark Yurs, Pastor at Salem UCC in Verona, has edited a book of sermons by Harry Emerson Fosdick entitled, "ANSWERS TO REAL PROBLEMS: Harry Emerson Fosdick Speaks to our Time." "Here is one of America's finest preachers talking about war, nationalism, relationship between liberals and conservatives, the plight of the church, public ethics, private morality and more." The book is published by WIPF and STOCK Publishers.

BARBARA MERWIN CALLED TO WESTFIELD/GRAND MARSH

The congregations at Westfield and Grand Marsh have called Barbara Merwin to be their Pastor and Teacher. Barbara is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and has been trained by the Commission Lay Pastor Program of the John Knox Presbytery. Barbara worked for the United States Postal service for 27 years becoming the Postmaster in Cambria in 1993. She has done pulpit supply in the area from Randolph to Cottage Grove. This will be her first call as a Commissioned Lay Pastor. Please welcome her.

DANE CALLS DENISE COLE

Rev. Denise Cole has been called to be Pastor and Teacher of Immanuel UCC in Dane. Denise is a graduate of Andover-Newton Theological Seminary and has served congregations in the SWWA at Columbus and Sauk City. She will begin at Dane on November 23 and be installed on December 14th.

YOUNG AMBASSADORS TO WISCONSIN AND BACK BAY MISSION IN BILOXI

This summer Youth from our partner Church in Germany (the Moers Church District of the UEK) will send you to Wisconsin to stay with families here from July 4 to 11, 2009. Following their stay here they will travel to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi from July 12 – 18. They will then return to Wisconsin for two days and with Wisconsin youth will sight-see in Chicago from July 21-24. The German youth will then travel to

New York City before flying home. If you have interest in participating in this even, as a host of participant, contact the Association Office or one of the advisors, Rev. Bill Kapp, bill_kapp@ucc-saukcity.org or Laura Stalder, lstalder@wisc.edu

CORRECTIONS FOR THE 2008-2009 DIRECTORY

Email for Bonnie Van Overbeke should be bonnievano@gmail.com
Email for Phil Haslanger should be phaslanger@charter.net
Christine Stack's name was omitted and should be listed in the Provisional Standing section
2805 Park Way, Stevens Point, WI 54481 (715) 345-7181
Lu Ferron's name was omitted and should be listed with the Authorized Lay Pastors

1357 Prairie Rd., Deerfield, WI 53531 (608) 764-5173
gardenerlu@hotmail.com

DISTRICT MEETINGS TO BEGIN IN OCTOBER

Due to the scheduling conflict of Mutton going to Germany, the District Clergy gatherings will begin in October. We sent you the paper Dr. Moyer presented to the Northeast Association at their Spring 08 meeting entitled, "The Church in 50 Years." We'll meet:
District I Dodgeville October 15 8 a.m.
District III Portage October 15 12 Noon
District IV Evansville October 21 9 a.m.
District II Madison October 22 8 a.m.

IN OUR PRAYERS

For Barbara Merwin and the Congregations at Grand Marsh and Westfield
For Lora Whitten as she is Ordained on Nov. 2 at St. Peter's Evangelical UCC in Ferguson, MO
For Denise Cole and our Congregation at Dane
For our Congregations at:
Darlington, Kathleen Rinear, Pastor
Dodgeville, Todd Smith Lippert, Pastor

Edgerton, Lora Whitten, Pastor

DISTRICT MEETINGS IN NOVEMBER

Clergy meet in Districts for Bible Study, Prayer, theological discussion and FOOD. This month we'll be discussing a number of sermons by Harry Emerson Fosdick. If you'd like a copy of the sermons and have not received them, contact the Association Office. We'll meet:
District IV Evansville Nov. 18 9 a.m.
District I Dodgeville Nov. 19 8 a.m.
District III Portage Nov. 19 12 Noon
District II Madison Nov. 26 8 a.m.

CONGREGATIONS SEEKING PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

Madison Orchard Ridge seeking 1/2 time Associate

CONGREGATIONS TO BE SEEKING

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

HERITAGE AND CALL DVD VIDEO

An excellent DVD video put together to celebrate the 50th 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 filed 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 50th Anniversary celebration on Oct. 14 at First Congregational UCC in Madison.

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.