



NewsNotes

Christ Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
A Just Peace and Open and Affirming Church
Becoming an Anti-Racist Church

Volume 64 - Number 11

October 14, 2008

~ A Legacy Remembered ~

For eleven years the Rev. Joey Noble served Christ Congregational Church as Associate Minister. Looking back there is much to celebrate about her ministry. Memories about retreats and sermons and afternoon teas are spoken often with great affection. It is all good.

Many words have been used to describe Joey and her ministry; chief among them love and acceptance. "She had a way of making each person feel as though they were special." Stories remind us that Joey's laughter warmed the heart and her faith touched the soul. Yet, her humanness could never be denied.

It has now been ten years since Joey died from breast cancer. While time has passed, there is still an ache here and perhaps to some degree there will always be. So it is important to pause to remember, to give thanks for her gifts and once again move into the future with great hope.

On Sunday October 19th we will acknowledge the ten year marker of her death and embrace the loss still felt by many. Most importantly, we will honor the spiritual legacy of her life and ministry which is enjoyed by each and every person who enters our sacred space. Please join us for worship and celebration!

Special note: The "Tents of Hope" project, calling attention to the dire situation in Darfur, will be dedicated in Joey's honor! Her husband David Smock and daughters Faith and Vicki plan to join us.

Rev. Susan A. Henderson



Thank You from the Board of Stewardship! ~~

The Stewardship Board reports that additional pledges were made over the summer, bringing the total for this year to \$700,864 pledged by 206 individuals and families. This is a 10% increase over pledges for the 2007-2008 year! Seventeen new pledges were made by families and individuals who had not previously pledged, and 121 members or families increased their pledges. Thank you to everyone who pledged any amount! For those who were unable to make a pledge last spring, it is not too late to pledge for the remainder of the year. Just call the church office at 301-585-8010 to request a pledge form.

The recent financial instability in the economy is already creating uncertainty for many of us and increasing the needs of people throughout the world whom we reach in our mission giving. We encourage you to make every effort to fulfill your pledge as scheduled. Please contact the church office if you need to make a change in your current pledge.

~ Looking Ahead - Staffing and the Senior Minister Search ~

Since July, the Executive Council has been wrestling with two major issues: staffing and the Senior Minister search. At its September retreat, the Council devoted the day to exploring various short- and long-term options for staffing after the Rev. Sandy Dodson's departure at the end of October.

In a series of town hall meetings and *NewsNotes* articles this fall, the Council will share with the congregation its conclusions and recommendations regarding the opportunities and challenges facing CCC in this interim and transitional time.

After an intense day of wrestling with staffing on September 19, the Council members present reached three significant conclusions:

- 1. CCC has a unique opportunity to build a long-range vision for staffing in response to the questions: How do we define who we are? What kind of community *are* we inviting people into? What kind of community *do we want* to invite people into?**

How we answer these questions as a faith community will build a road map for discerning how staff will help move CCC toward realizing its vision. This road map will be an important component for the profile CCC develops for the Senior Minister search. Council members concluded that two factors affect the conversation about staffing: costs and the search for a Senior Minister. Budgetary considerations almost certainly will require us to prioritize our vision as we seek to grow membership and stewardship to the point where our sharing of God's gifts empowers us to realize our vision fully and completely. Secondly, there are some positions about which a new Senior Minister will want to – and should -- have some input.

- 2. CCC needs more time to prepare options and recommendations to carry us into the future. Since these options and recommendations will be included in the profile we develop for the Senior Minister search, the interim ministry period may extend beyond 23 months. Therefore, we should temporarily postpone beginning the Senior Minister search.**

As one Council member put it, "We're not ready [to start the search for a Senior Minister] – we need to be where we are a while longer." Another described the interim period CCC is experiencing as one of "creative chaos" – a time to wrestle and be open to the leading of the Holy Spirit."

- 3. CCC should boldly seize this moment as an opportunity to come to terms with our history and to take the time we need to prepare for our vital and exciting future.**

Historically, CCC has demonstrated the courage to take the time to discern where we are and where we need to go. In that patience and willingness to make time for discernment, CCC trusts in the Holy Spirit to lead and to guide.

In the coming months, the Council will sponsor a series of town hall meetings when members and friends can learn more about these recommendations and the questions that require answers. The Council will continue to wrestle with these questions and present conclusions and options for the congregation to consider. As clarity and consensus build around these important questions, the Council will develop recommendations for the congregation's review and discernment.

Trish Esposito, Moderator, and Jackie Walters, Communications Officer

A Request from Narcotics Anonymous ~~

The NA group that meets here each weekday has again requested that CCC open its doors on Thanksgiving Day from 10 AM to 9 PM. Having a place to go on a family holiday is an important source of strength and renewal for folks in self-help groups. Hosting the event is dependent on our ability to staff the day. Twelve volunteers are needed in 1-hour shifts to staff the building, give directions and generally support the event. What little training is needed can be “on-the-job” from one volunteer to the next. There is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board. If you can give an hour of your day, please sign up. We need to let the NA Coordinator know by Sunday, October 26 whether or not we have enough volunteers to host the event. Contact Dianne Abraham at 301 585-8010, ext. 222 or at Dianne@christ-ucc.org for more information.



Good News About Communion Sundays

Are your children struggling to stay through an entire adult worship service on Communion Sundays? The church has begun a special program following Children’s Time on Communion Sundays. The children will be given the option of either staying with their families, or leaving for a brief activity and then returning to the worship service in time to participate in Communion before the end of the service. We are really excited and looking forward to this special time together with the children! Communion Sunday is the first Sunday of every month. Carolyn Hoskinson is organizing this program, but needs a second volunteer, or rotation of volunteers, to help throughout the year. This would be a once a month commitment, the first Sunday of every month, and no prep time, just Sunday morning. Preferably this should not be someone who is already teaching church school because we want to give our current teachers a chance to worship. Please let Carolyn know if you can help for one or more Sundays. You can reach her by email at hoskinson.caryolyn@epa.gov, or by phone at 301-589-0153. *Do this in memory of me.* – Luke 22:19, Good News Bible.

~ The Struggle to Become Anti-Racist ~

At CCC, we honor and celebrate people of all races, cultures, ages, abilities, sexual orientations and gender identity. In June 2006, CCC accepted and affirmed an Anti-racism Covenant. While no one in this faith community is free from unconscious racism, we, as a congregation, have committed ourselves to an anti-racist stance. Recently, following one of our worship services, the Rev. Susan Henderson was greeted with racist comments and unkind remarks. This personal encounter has been painful for both Susan and this congregation. This incident is not consistent with who we strive to be.

The CCC Executive Council has sent a letter expressing condemnation about the remarks and asserting the church’s commitment to becoming anti-racist. The Rev. Sandy Dodson has extended an invitation to meet and talk with the person involved. Susan has addressed the person directly. Last spring, members of our faith community participated in a powerful Sunday evening series exploring racism in our society and on a personal level. This recent incident unfortunately reinforces to us all that there is still much work to be done and our journey continues towards becoming an Anti-racist church.

In peace,
Trish Esposito, Moderator

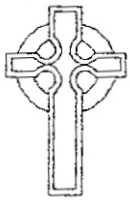
An Invitation ~~

CCC member Bill Neal extends an invitation to parents and grandparents to visit a session of Montgomery County's Teen Court. Run by volunteer teens performing the roles of bailiff, clerk and jury with an adult judge presiding, Teen Court offers teenage offenders a chance to learn from their mistakes without the high cost of a criminal record. Teen Court is a real justice program run by teens for teens, offered as a positive experience to divert a first time teen offender away from a pattern of criminal behavior. The crime is generally a first offense, and the respondent must admit involvement (guilt) since this is a disposition (sentencing) hearing only. Cases heard in Teen Court involve crimes such as shoplifting, vandalism, taking a weapon to school, reckless endangerment, possession of alcohol, possession of marijuana, to name a few. After careful consideration of the facts, the teen jury deliberates and decides upon a constructive disposition. The next sessions will take place October 22, November 12 and 19 and December 10 and 17, 5:15 PM – 7:15 PM at the Judicial Center, 50 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland.



American Red Cross Blood Drive

The next blood drive will be Sunday, October 19 from 8 AM to 1:30 PM in the Social Hall. Call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE or sign up in the Lobby to make an appointment. Walk-ins are welcome. *Dick Meyer*



Ecumenical All Saints Service Of Remembrance ~

Saturday, **November 1**, 4:00 PM at Marvin Memorial United Methodist Church. The Chancel Choir and Clergy of Christ Congregational Church will join with Marvin Memorial United Methodist Church for a service of prayer, singing, and healing, in remembrance of those saints in our lives who have gone before us. The combined choirs will offer sublime music for the service, which will also incorporate congregational singing of chants from the Taize community. Prayers for the faithful departed will include a candle-lighting ritual and individual prayers for healing and wholeness. The service will last for one hour and members and friends of CCC are cordially invited to this meaningful worship experience. You may contact Nae Pearson at 301-585-8010, ext 224 for more information. We hope that you will join us. The church is located in Four Corners at 33 University Blvd East in Silver Spring, MD.

"Faithfulness Together"

The County Executive's Office of Community Partnerships invites you to save the date for *Faithfulness Together*, a conversation about Justice, Mercy and Self-sufficiency in a Diverse County with the Rev. Dr. James A. Forbes, Jr. Dr. Forbes is President and Founder of the *Healing of the Nations Foundation* and Senior Minister Emeritus of The Riverside Church in New York City. **Sunday, November 16, 3 PM – 6 PM at B'nai Israel Congregation 6301 Montrose Road, Rockville, Maryland 20852.** Join more than 500 lay and clergy community leaders from across the County as we enter into constructive dialogue about those on the margins in our community. Expect to speak truthfully, listen deeply, and plan constructively to do the work we are compelled to do because of our faith together on behalf of Montgomery County.

Save the Date ~

Mark your calendars! CCC is celebrating the 64th anniversary of its founding on Sunday, December 7. During the 10:30 service we will honor all our ordained clergy who have served the church. A special reception will be held after the service.

Communicating as a Couple ~

Have you ever wanted to have better communication patterns with your partner? Couples Communication, a group that meets monthly here at the church, works towards those goals. If you are interested in finding out more information about Couples Communication, please contact Terry or Bruce Strand 301-942-8883 or Julia Jarvis or Randy Gibson 301-270-0514. A new training class will be offered after the first of the year.

TENTS OF HOPE – A journey of compassion and peace with the refugees of Darfur, Sudan

The mission of the **Tents of Hope** Project, with which the UCC is a partner, is to create a community-based response to the ongoing genocide in Darfur by raising awareness, promoting advocacy and extending humanitarian aid. The campaign will culminate in a collective action on the National Mall on November 6-9 for which CCC will paint two banners to represent our commitment to this effort.

The Youth of CCC and the Board for Social Witness invite everyone to join in painting our banners after the second service on two Sundays, October 19 and November 2. On November 9, all are encouraged to attend the Mall event, departing from CCC at 8:30 am for an ecumenical worship service. This month you can learn more about Darfur using written materials to be available on October 19. Later, please consider speaking out to the media and decision makers about the need for aid, refugee protection and solutions, and making a contribution to a relief organization such as Wider Church Ministries, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115 (write “Sudan/Darfur Crisis” on check’s memo line).



Lets Take a Hike!

CCC has an active Outdoor Spirited Group of hikers. They have explored Harpers Ferry, climbed Sugarloaf Mountain and hiked the more rugged terrain of the Shenandoah National Park. Their next hike will be on **November 8th** for a guided walking tour of the Antietam National Battlefield (ANB)--with historical interpretation provided by David Langbart, a research historian and archivist at the National Archives. David has studied and explored all of the Civil War battlefields in Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

Sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office and pick up a flyer with further details about the three options for hiking the battlefield. Participants should plan to meet in the CCC parking lot at 7:30 AM on November 8th, arrange ride sharing, depart for Antietam at 8:00 AM sharp, and arrive at the Antietam National Battlefield Visitor Center by 9:00 AM. The full walking interpretive tour of 10 miles should end by 4:00 PM, with a return to CCC by 5:30 PM.

The rain date for this trip is November 15th. There will be Sunday service bulletin announcements and a signup sheet with more trip details on the church office bulletin board in October. ANB maps and information are at <http://www.nps.gov/anti>. The trip leader is Tim Wehrkamp, t.wehrkamp@att.net, 301-552-1836.

Deadline for the next NewsNotes is 5:00 PM Wednesday, November 5
Send articles to Susan Gray cccoffice@christ-ucc.org or leave them in the NewsNotes Box

Christ Congregational Church
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Mailed October 14, 2008

HAPPENINGS In October and November

Thurs., October 16 ~ Third Thursday Discussions
Fri., October 17 - Sun., October 19 ~ Men's Retreat
Fri., October 17 ~ Parent's Night Out
Sat., October 18 ~ Trustees' Retreat
Quilters and Banner Making
Sun. October 19 ~ Blood Drive
Sisters for Sisters
CCC Book Group
Mon. October 20 ~ Board Meetings
Sat. October 25 ~ Halloween Party
All Hallows Eve Organ Festivities Concert
Sun. October 26 ~ Farewell to Sandy and Jaime Potluck Lunch
Thurs. October 30 ~ Senior Adults Day Trip to Gettysburg, PA
Sat. November 1 ~ All Saints Service with Marvin Memorial UMC
Sun. November 2 ~ Covenant Conversations
Wed. November 5 ~ Deadline for the next NewsNotes
Fri., November 7 - Sun., November 9 ~ Senior High Retreat
Sat., November 8 ~ Day Hike to Antietam National Battlefield
Sun., November 9 ~ Senior Adults Seminar - *Alzheimers Disease*
Wed., November 12 ~ CCC volunteers at Shepherd's Table
Sun., November 15 ~ Town Hall Meeting

**CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH UCC**

Phone:
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Email:
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Rev. Susan A. Henderson,
Interim Senior Minister;
Rev. Sandra K. Dodson,
Associate Minister;
Nae Pearson, Director of
Music; **Sarah Anders,** Director
of Senior Adult Programming;
Dianne Abraham, Church
Administrator
Susan Gray, Support
Administrator

At CCC, we honor and celebrate
people of all races, cultures, ages,
abilities, sexual orientation, and
gender identity.

www.christ-ucc.org