



# NewsNotes

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

Volume 65 – Number 3

March 3, 2009



## Hearts Open - Lent 2009

The theme, Hearts Open, was adopted by the Deacons to help our congregation focus for the season of Lent. As we journey towards Easter, each of us is on a particular path, perhaps with an individually chosen discipline for these 40 days. We also share a common journey of walking humbly while doing justice and loving with kindness. These two words are meant to become a prayerful mantra that invites us to remain open to God's movement in our lives. They invite us to remain open to the offering of grace and healing, strength and endurance, wisdom and purpose. This season is about being open to personal change and being willing to "turn" towards life anew. These days, when we long for economic stability, a return to good health and healing from this extended time of grieving, we are encouraged to keep our hearts open to the light of God's love as it illumines hope and possibility.

As we continue to do good work during this interim period preparing for the next phase of the search process, our hearts are opened to necessary change and a creative vision for the future. Life is filled with many winding turns, but faithfully we walk and with hope we are rejoicing. With hearts open, day by day we find that renewed energy comes and joyful spirits immerge. How good it is that our prayers to reduce our mortgage were heard. Thanks be!

Yes, Lent offers us an intentional opportunity, individually and corporately, to focus on our faith walk. May this season be a meaningful one for you. With hearts open, may your faith grow deeper and your living be done more wisely. *Rev. Susan A. Henderson*

## Hearts Open -- Lenten Opportunities

### Bible Stories for Adults

Sunday mornings beginning March 1, John Gipson will lead a new adult education class focusing on the stories of the Bible. We will read both the familiar stories and the unfamiliar ones. The goal will be to understand the stories in context, how different people in different times have interpreted them, and what lessons they have for our current times, and for us as individuals. The class will meet at 9:00 in the Meeting Room (Room 108). Contact person - John Gipson, [Gipson@verizon.net](mailto:Gipson@verizon.net).

### Hearts Open and Affirming

Sundays during Lent - on the six Sunday evenings during Lent, March 1 – April 5, join us in the Conference Room for reflection and discussion focused on the intentionality of our being a church that purposefully welcomes and includes gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgendered people into our faith community. Using movies, stories and illustrations about individuals and families coming out, we will engage in a process of dialogue designed to help us talk openly about our experiences of being God's people. This event is open to everyone. Contact person - Rev. Susan Henderson, [susan@christ-ucc.org](mailto:susan@christ-ucc.org).

## "Days of Simplicity" Concert Series

Wednesdays during Lent - the "Days of Simplicity", join us for our third year of musical offerings and soup luncheons Wednesday, March 4 - Wednesday, April 8th. The musical offerings begin each week at noon in the sanctuary and last approximately 30 minutes. A simple home-made soup luncheon follows in the Conference room. Contact person – Nae Pearson, [HOLYMUSIC@comcast.net](mailto:HOLYMUSIC@comcast.net).

March 4 Ken Kolodner, hammered dulcimer  
March 11 Jay Marciano, Jazz piano  
March 18 Lynne Joseloff, flute  
March 25 Lazo Momchilovich, oboe  
April 1 Molly Stier, classical piano  
April 8 Nae Pearson, organ

## Stitching on Saturday

Saturday mornings during Lent, February 28 – April 4 from 8:30 – 10:00 in Room 208, women are invited to gather to do needlework or other crafts and get to know one another. Don't do needlework? Come anyway! Share a cup of tea or coffee and conversation. No assigned readings, no agendas. What does it mean to be a 21<sup>st</sup> century woman during those liturgical seasons that call for a slower pace, introspection, prayer and meditation? Contact person – Jackie Walters, [jjwalters.silverspring@verizon.net](mailto:jjwalters.silverspring@verizon.net).

## Healing Services

March 18 and 25

## Open Your Hearts to the Joyful Rhythms of Life!

Saturday, April 4, from 2 – 3:30 you are invited to an experience of group drumming, sponsored by the Board of Deacons. We will learn the basics of playing the drum and how to create wonderful music together! Beginners welcome. Drums and percussion will be provided and you are welcome to bring your own. Participants are invited (but not required) to make a donation to cover costs.

Drumming is an exciting way to connect with people, connect with your body, and connect with your spirit! It is a joyful, uplifting experience that is also a proven method of stress release. Katy Gaughan, a drummer and drum circle facilitator, believes in the healing power of music, especially in the joyful rhythms and vibrations of the drum. Katy's organization, **Music Heals Us** (<http://www.musicheals.us>) brings drum circles to churches, schools, professional settings and community celebrations.

Contact person – Ruth Prindle, [rprindle49@msn.com](mailto:rprindle49@msn.com)

## Commuter Contemplation

Try a little spiritual refreshment during the Lenten Season! It is easy, seemingly tame (don't count on it), and workable even in the busiest of schedules. Here is what you do: 1) When you arise, Google-up one of the four thoughts for the day listed below. 2) Read the thought for that day – usually a few brief paragraphs. 3) Let the thought rumble around for a minute or two. 4) Tuck it into your pocket or brief case. 5) Refer to it during the day – on the commute (not recommended while driving), breaks during the day, lunch time, etc. 6) Repeat daily with a weekend break. Contact person – Gordon Forbes, [gordonforbes@verizon.net](mailto:gordonforbes@verizon.net).

UCC Still Speaking	<a href="mailto:dailydevotional@ucc.org">dailydevotional@ucc.org</a>
Inward/Outward by the Church of the Savior	Google Inward/Outward
Writers' almanac by Garrison Keeler	Google Writers' Almanac
Center for Action and Contemplation	<a href="http://cacradicalgrace.org">cacradicalgrace.org</a>
with Father Richard Rohr	

## Holy Week Services

- Sunday, April 5                      Palm Sunday Worship Services at 9 and 10:30 AM
- Wednesday, April 8                Contemporary Stations of the Cross, 7:00 PM  
Foot Washing Service, 7:30 PM
- Thursday, April 9                    Maundy Thursday Service, 7:30 PM
- Friday, April 10                      Good Friday Vigil, 12:00 - 3:00 PM
- Sunday, April 12                      Easter Sunday Worship Services at 9 and 11:00 AM  
(The two services are identical, note change of time for  
the second service)



\* \* \* \* \*

### Easter Memorial Flowers

The church will be decorated with lilies and other flowers on Easter Sunday, April 12. If you would like to order an Easter plant as a memorial or in celebration of a person or event, please complete the form below. Plants are \$10 each and will be taken by the Deacons following Easter services to members of CCC who are confined to home, hospital or nursing home. Your check may be made out to Christ Congregational Church and noted as an Easter plant. Orders will be accepted by mail or may be left in the marked envelope in the church office. The deadline for receiving orders is Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>.

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

In Celebration of \_\_\_\_\_

or

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Plants \_\_\_\_\_ Check Amount \_\_\_\_\_

\* \* \* \* \*

**Moving Toward Our Future Requires All-Member Participation**  
**Join the Conversation on Who We Are and What God Is Calling CCC To Do**  
**March Meetings Provide Numerous Opportunities**

Moderator Trish Esposito has sent a letter to members and friends inviting them to respond to a proposed long-range staffing plan and to questions for the Local Church Profile. In a series of meetings throughout the month of March, members may offer their comments and recommendations on these important components of the search for the new Senior Minister. Those unable to attend meetings may respond to Trish's invitation in writing.

**Long-Range Staffing Plan** – The interim is a time for reflecting on where CCC has been and what it envisions for its future. An essential component of discerning what God is calling us to do is articulating a vision for how we propose to answer God's call. CCC took an important step in articulating a vision when it engaged in a strategic planning process in 2006-07. A critical next step is to develop a long-range (5-10 years) vision for how to staff so that our church can implement strategic goals successfully.

In a series of retreats and meetings throughout the fall and winter, the Executive Council worked to develop a solid proposal for the congregation's consideration. First, the Council studied the strategic goals (<http://www.christ-ucc.org/StrategicPlanning/StrategicGoalsJan20.pdf>) Based on its study, the Council suggests there are four key areas -- worship, education, music, and mission -- staff and members need to focus on to help CCC implement these strategic goals and those that remain to be discerned.

Building on this work, a subcommittee of the Council developed a proposed recommendation for a long-term staffing plan. The Council, Transitions Committee and Past Moderators from the last 30 years studied the proposal and provided comments and recommendations. Now members and friends of CCC have the opportunity to study the proposal and provide their comments and recommendations.

**Local Church Profile** – This document is the tool ministerial candidates use to learn about CCC in its entirety, from demographics to our aspirations as a faith community. In developing this document, the Profile Committee is to be as “candid and honest as possible in [its] descriptions of the history, traditions, hopes, and dreams of the members of [our] church.” The committee is also to solicit “information and perspectives” from the congregation through small group meetings and/or written surveys.

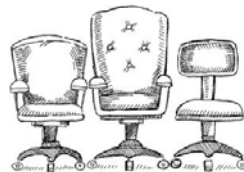
**How Does This Work?** Beginning on March 1, an information packet on the staffing plan will be available on CCC's website ([www.christ-ucc.org](http://www.christ-ucc.org)) and in the kiosk in the lobby. You may also call the church office and have a packet mailed to you. Separately, the Profile Committee will be sending a set of Local Church Profile questions that you are invited to respond to.

All members and friends are strongly encouraged to attend one or more in a series of discussion groups:  
Sunday, March 8 -- 9:45-10:30 and 11:45-12:45  
Tuesday March 10 -- 1-2 pm  
Sunday March 22 -- 9:45- 10:30 am and 6-7 pm  
Tuesday, March 24 – 7:30-8:30 p.m.  
Sunday March 29 -- 9:45 - 10:30 and 11:45 - 12:45

Boards and committees may elect to discuss these documents and questions at their regularly scheduled meetings and submit their comments to the Profile Committee.

Through April 5, you may submit comments in writing by mailing your responses to the questions and your observations, comments and suggestions on the staffing plan to the church, ATTN: Profile Committee, or dropping them in the “Profile Committee” box in the church office. Questions? Comments? Contact Trish Esposito, Moderator at [trishespo@yahoo.com](mailto:trishespo@yahoo.com) or 301-593-1858. Jackie

*Walters, Communications Officer*



**Staff Changes**

## Retreat House Task Force Nearing Decision on Architect

Three well-qualified architects from Winchester and West Virginia responded to the Request for Proposal that Task Force Chair Rick Sniffin sent out late last year. Two of the architects were able to make site visits to the House and meet members of the Retreat House Committee and Task Force at the closing retreat in November. The third also made a site visit on his own.

In lengthy, in-depth interviews conducted throughout January and February, all three architects expressed their emotional and professional response to the natural beauty of the location, the architectural integrity of the house itself, and the passion generations of CCC'ers have for the life they have experienced there.

Bringing their variety of experiences, from summer camp and retreat staff to managing complex construction projects, Task Force members probed for how each architect would approach designing a

Master Plan for the Retreat House property. The Task Force asked about each candidate's creative approach to retaining use of the current house; dealing aesthetically and practically with issues of accessibility, parking, and life safety; interacting with local civil authorities and managing contractors; conducting the necessary research to develop a solid Master Plan; and working with church members to define program needs and to present imaginative and viable options.

The Task Force held a separate meeting to review their responses to all three architects. One architect was selected for a reference check. Rick Sniffin will take the Task Force's recommendation to the Board of Trustees at its February meeting and recommend the Trustees approve entering into a contract with the successful candidate. Once the Trustees approve the contract and all architects have been notified, the Task Force will communicate the name and resume of the successful candidate to the congregation.

*Jackie Walters, Retreat House Task Force*

### Retreat House Committee Plans Opening Work Retreat

The annual spring opening retreat for preparing the Retreat House for the upcoming season will be held on **March 27-29**. Overnighters and day-trippers are welcome. Projects include general cleaning, yard clean-up, assessing access to the swimming hole and developing plans for safer access, and preparing the pavilion to house summer campers. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board outside the church office. For more information, contact Cory Gray ([longhair5@verizon.net](mailto:longhair5@verizon.net)) or Bruce Strand (301-942-8883).



### From CCC's Youth: Serrv

On the weekend of January 31<sup>st</sup> through February 1<sup>st</sup> twenty youth and five adults from CCC traveled to New Windsor, Maryland for a service weekend at Serrv International, a nonprofit organization dedicated to eradicating poverty wherever it resides. By focusing on our blessings, riches, and God given gifts we volunteered eight hours of our time to help package fair-trade products for resale. The products came from countries as far away as Indonesia, Peru, Vietnam and Israel-Palestine. Through learning about fair trade and a Christian's responsibility to give to those with less, we realized that our efforts were important and that we are called to continue to volunteer our time and effort instead money. In these hard economic times we fully realized that the impact of time and talents can out weight that of monetary support.

*Written by Liz Gipson and Elise Gifford and the Serrv Youth*

# Thank You

The family of Reverend Robert Marston would like to thank the many people at Christ Congregational Church who contributed their time and effort to making the memorial service on February 7, 2009, such a wonderful service of music, worship, and remembrance. We are so grateful for your thoughtfulness, kindness, friendship, and expressions of sympathy. We feel truly blessed by your warmth and consideration at our time of sadness.

Sincerely, *Julie Marston, John Marston, Susan Bratten and their families*

Many thanks to the people who made the Valentine Dance a huge success: Phil Michel and his committee from the Church Life Board (Anne Nicotera, Stephanie Peterson, Stephanie Fitzpatrick, and Carolyn West-Gipson) provided the refreshments, decorations and cleanup; Cindy Michel tended the door; and the people who danced, and those who came just to listen, provided the Building Fund with \$438. Band members were “pumped” by how well their efforts were received. I also thank you for that. *Chuck O’Connor*



## Planned Giving at CCC

A planned gift to the CCC Endowment Fund is a gift planned for during the donor’s life time. And usually (but not always) received by the church after the donor’s death.

You may recall that in November the Planned Giving Committee (PGC) sent out survey forms to church members and friends. The purpose was to determine your concerns about wills and planned giving in order to help the PGC develop appropriate learning opportunities. The PGC received 62 survey forms in return and is in the process of reviewing the responses to the 11 questions. Thank you for your participation. The PGC will make use of the information in planning future educational activities.

An easy way to leave a legacy (planned gift) to CCC is by a bequest in your will. If you have an immediate need to revise or make a will, the following language may be helpful to your lawyer: “I give, devise, and bequeath to Christ Congregational Church, UCC -----% of my estate or \$\_\_\_\_\_ from my estate”. This is a private matter which need not be shared with the church.

*The Planned Giving Committee (Dave and Toko Ackerman, Tom Ault, Chris Bublitz, Bruce Esposito, Mary Stone, Dick Meyer, Chair)*

## Giving with Flowers

Among the many ways CCC members and friends give generously to the church is through donations of flowers for worship. There are several openings on the Flower Calendar (posted in the lobby outside the Sanctuary). When you sign up, you choose the florist and place the order. Send or call your dedication for Sunday’s bulletin into the church office no later than the Wednesday before the Sunday your flowers will grace the altar.

## Hands-On Service Opportunities

The Board for Social Action is very grateful for the many ways in which members and friends of CCC contribute financially to programs outside CCC’s walls, either directly or through the congregation’s unified budget. There are also ways to become active participants in such programs. Good examples include driving for the Senior Connection, taking part in Rebuilding Together each April, preparing and serving evening meals at Shepherd’s Table the second Wednesday of each month, mentoring for Silver Spring Interfaith Housing Coalition, and helping with special events at Shaw Community Ministry. If you are interested in exploring such possibilities, check with a member of the Board for Social Witness and/or see the contact information on the BSW bulletin board in the lobby.

## Upcoming Events

### Work (fun) Day Help Needed This Month

CCC's Building and Grounds Committee is comprised of friendly church volunteers who devote a few hours of their time, usually during a Saturday morning, to help with small projects like raking, trimming, or painting, etc. Some projects are performed inside the church, some outside, to clean, beautify and make our church building safe. We welcome anyone willing to help. It's a great way to exercise, meet folks, and feel appreciated for making needed improvements to the church. Come to our next work (fun) day, Saturday, **March 14** anytime between 9:00 and noon. Questions? Please contact Christopher Lewis at 301-593-5628.

### Caring For Adult Siblings With Disabilities

**March 15** – One of CCC's small groups provides support to people who are caring in some way for their adult siblings with disabilities. We meet periodically to share ideas and friendship. All are welcome. Our next conversation is Sunday, March 15 at 6:00 PM in the Meditation Room. For more information, contact Sara Watson, saradwatson@aol.com.

### Sharing Resources, Changing Lives

This is the motto of the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering to be collected on Sunday, **March 22**. The first of four special mission offerings, OGHS supports international programs of health, education and agricultural development, relief, and refugee assistance. Watch for more information and bulletin inserts. *The Board for Social Witness*

### A Look at Couples Communication

Have you ever wanted to improve communication between you and your partner? Are you interested in finding out about successful methods of communication? Please consider coming to a meeting after the second service on Sunday, **March 22**. Members of the Couples Communication group will be available for an informational meeting to describe our monthly meetings and provide insight into the process. The requirement for taking part in the group is to be in a committed relationship. If you have questions, please call Terry or Bruce Strand (301-942-8883) or Leslie Weyn or David Bell (301-570-3762.)

### Red Cross Blood Drive

Sunday, **March 29**, 8AM to 1:30PM in the Social Hall. Please call 1-800-GIVE-LIFE or sign up on the Lobby Bulletin Board to schedule your donation. Walk-ins welcome. At the drive on October 19th, the Red Cross obtained 30 units of blood. This is a new high for us and the Red Cross goal for this site. Thank you. At the last drive on January 25, only 24 units of blood were obtained. Hopefully, we can do better on March 29. Stay healthy and keep your iron level up. Dick Meyer 301-445-1866

### Fun In The Sun!

Mark your calendars for Bethany Beach weekend, **August 21 to 23, 2009**. This is a great opportunity to stay with CCC friends and families at the Christian Church Conference Center in beautiful Bethany Beach, DE at reasonable rates just two blocks from the ocean. Come enjoy the beach, sunsets, rocking chairs on the porch, community playground right on the grounds, good meals, cards and games in Campbell Hall, and more. Cost for the weekend, including five meals, is approximately \$118 per adult, \$55 for ages 6-15 and free for under age 6. If you have any questions, contact Melissa Milkie at 301-585-2273 or [mmilkie@socy.umd.edu](mailto:mmilkie@socy.umd.edu).

The deadline for the next NewsNotes is 5:00 PM Sunday, March 29, 2009  
Send articles to Susan Gray [cccoffice@christ-ucc.org](mailto:cccoffice@christ-ucc.org) or leave them in the NewsNotes Box.  
Publication will be on Monday, April 6 and mailing on Tuesday, April 7

**Christ Congregational Church**  
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Silver Spring, MD 20901

**NON-PROFIT ORG.**  
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Mailed March 11, 2009

**HAPPENINGS In March and April**

Monday Mar 2 ~ Executive Council  
Tuesday, Mar 3 ~ Shalem Institute's "Date with a Mystic"  
Saturday, Mar 7 ~ Potluck Dinner for families with young children  
Sunday, Mar 8 ~ Fair Trade Coffee Sale  
Wednesday, Mar 11~ CCC Volunteers at Shepherd's Table  
Saturday, Mar 14 ~ CCC Work Day  
Monday, Mar 16 ~ Board Meetings  
Tuesday, Mar 17 ~ "Eat, Pray, Play" Seniors Retreat  
Thursday, Mar 19 ~ Third Thursday Discussions  
Friday, Mar 20 ~ Parent's Night Out  
Sunday, Mar 22 ~ US/Mid East Conversation with Dr. Anna K. Nelson  
Sunday, Mar 29 ~ Blood Drive  
Saturday, Apr 4 ~ Drumming Workshop  
Potluck Dinner for families with young children

See pages 1 and 2 for special Lenten events  
Lenten brochures are available in the lobby for details.  
Staff planning discussions take place on Mar 8, 10, 22, 24, and 29

**CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH, UCC**

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**Rev. Susan A. Henderson,**  
Interim Senior 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](http://www.christ-ucc.org)