



# NewsNotes

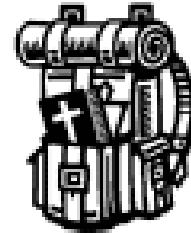
**Christ Congregational Church, United Church of Christ**  
A Just Peace and Open and Affirming Church  
Becoming an Anti-Racist Church

Volume 64 - Number 8

August 3, 2009

## Blessing of the Backpacks - Sunday, August 30

As I was walking through Target the other afternoon aisles opened before me revealing the back to school display. Bin after bin filled with crayons, markers and colored pencils, pallets stacked waist high with unopened notebooks, reams of lined paper and pocket folders with all the latest characters from pop culture photographed on front. Back to school is just around the corner. Seeing all the school supplies made me think back to some of my firsts... my first day of kindergarten, my first day of high school, my first day of college, my first day at a new job. We mark the beginning of school in the secular world, but it made me wonder how we recognize these beginnings and these first in our faith journey? What role does our faith have as we head off to school?



As a community of faith each time a child comes forward for baptism we covenant together to support and nurture that child throughout his or her life. We promise to teach him or her the stories of Jesus, to welcome him or her in worship and to be guides through all the ups and downs of life. And yet, how do we support our children as they head back to school? How do we support parents as they put their kindergarteners on the bus for the first time? We need to search for new and different ways to connect our faith community to our secular world of school and work. So this year as we begin a new school year we want to recognize these beginnings in our community of faith together. We want to pause for a moment and recognize that school is beginning again. On **Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup>** you are invited to bring your backpack, computer bag or briefcase to church. We will gather to bless the beginning of another academic year. In blessing our backpacks we will also bless each other. We will remember our promises to support one another on our journeys with Christ as we set out for classrooms, offices, shops and wherever else life takes us. *Kristen Curlee*

## Senior Minister Search Committee Update

The Search Committee began our work with a Retreat, June 13-14, facilitated by the Hinkelman-Bahn's. We've met weekly and have met twice with the Associate Conference Minister, Rev. Kwame Osei Reed, who walked us through the UCC search process again and thanked us for our commitment to the search process and to confidentiality. Kwame reviewed the draft Church Profile and Position Description with us and then led us through the initial process of identifying criteria and a method of measurement to be used when reviewing candidates' profiles.

We have finalized the Church Profile and the Position Description. We have also developed the Synopsis to be published in the August 2009 edition of the United Church Opportunities Bulletin. We anticipate the initial receipt of candidates' profiles by the end of August. We will continue to meet weekly and you may follow our progress by monitoring the chart displayed in the entrance lobby. We welcome your prayers and comments

*The CCC Senior Search Committee*

## Intermediate Staffing Plan for July, 2009 - June, 2010

In April 2009, at their respective meetings, CCC's Executive Committee, Board of Trustees and Personnel Committee approved an Intermediate Staffing plan for specific ministry and program areas for July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010. The Intermediate Staffing plan positions are stipend without benefits.

| <u>Ministry/Program</u>               | <u>Weekly Hours</u> | <u>Staff person</u> | <u>Areas of Responsibility</u>                      |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---|
| Children/youth/families               | 20                  | Kristen Curlee      | church school, youth program, CE Board, worship     |
| Youth                                 |                     | Kristen Brown       | filling in for Kristen Curlee through December      |
| Social Witness                        | 2.5                 | Anne Weissenborn    | program and mission development, SW Board           |
| Camping ministry                      | 5                   | Anne Nicotera       | coordination of summer camps                        |
| Music ministry                        | 10                  | Nae Pearson         | children, youth, sr. adults, pastoral care          |
| Adult ministry                        | 15                  | to be determined    | adult education, sr. adults, pastoral care, worship |
| Administrative Assistant for Programs | 10                  | to be determined    | church school, adults and youth                     |

The above plan is in addition to current staff – Rev. Susan Henderson, Interim Senior Minister; Nae Pearson, Director of Music (30 hours), Dianne Abraham, Church Administrator, Susan Gray, Program Support Administrator (30 hours), and evening/weekend office/building staff.

The above plan supports the Long Range Staffing Plan recommendations which were approved at the June 2009 Annual Meeting as a vote of affirmation and general direction. The Intermediate Staffing Plan allows us to continue leadership for vital ministries and programs of CCC, and remain flexible with staffing during this interim and transition time. This plan will be evaluated again in Spring 2010 in anticipation of a call and the arrival of a Senior Minister. *Tim White, Moderator; Cyndy Wright-Johnson, Moderator Elect; Trish Esposito, Past Moderator*

### Congratulations to Cyndy Wright-Johnson

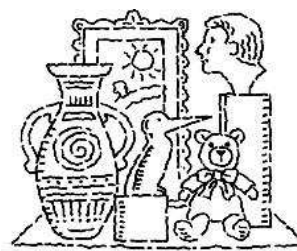
Please congratulate Cyndy Wright-Johnson on her election as this year's Moderator-Elect! Her election was unanimous at the Executive Council's July 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. Cyndy and her family have been part of CCC for many years contributing to CCC greatly in many areas. Cyndy's involvement includes service on the boards of Christian Education and Trustees, member of the Retreat House Committee and Retreat House Planning Ad Hoc Committee and member of the Ruth Richardson Memorial Fund Committee. Cyndy is a "P.K.", a "preacher's kid" so church has been very much a part of her life. *Tim White, Moderator & Priscilla Peterson, Nominating Committee Chair*

## Senior Adult Arts and Craft Show

Sunday September 6 following the worship service  
In the Conference Room.

Our Creative Seniors are asked to bring samples of their work for display on September 6th.....so if you can knit, stitch, quilt, paint, make jewelry, take photographs, or any other crafts and would like to take part please call RUTH HAIGH at 301-588-6789 for all the details.

These items will be on display for everyone to view the work of our talented seniors after the church service. *Senior Adult Committee*



## ARTS & CRAFTS

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### Don't Miss the Annual All-Church Picnic September 13, 2009 following the 10:30 Service

Connect with friends (old and new) at the first Sunday of the season.  
Stupendous subs and dessert provided -- Side dishes desired!

Please sign up outside the church office

Come and help rally the team, and kick off a year to remember!

### Sixth-Grade O.W.L.

CCC's "Our Whole Lives" (O.W.L.) human sexuality program for the sixth grade youth will be held during the fall. This program, created jointly by the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Church, encompasses human sexuality, sexual orientation, family relationships, interpersonal communication, informed decision-making, handling peer pressure, and a bit of conflict-resolution, all presented in the context of our Christian faith. The goal is to go beyond the public school Sex Ed programs, help our youth be comfortable and deal positively with the changes that they will experience as they enter adolescence, and help them effectively handle the social pressures they may encounter. The program tries to build the youth's sense of self-worth and their trust in themselves. It actively encourages family discussion of the lessons and related material, recognizing that each child's family is his or her best source of information and moral values.

All prospective parents and guardians are invited to an **informational meeting** about the "Our Whole Lives" program from **6 to 8:15 PM on Sunday, September 20**. (You do not have to be CCC members.) While we meet, the 6<sup>th</sup> graders will join the other CCC middle schoolers for supper and Fun Night activities. Parents should bring a sandwich (or whatever) for supper. We'll furnish drinks and chips.

**OWL will begin on September 27, with a commitment meeting that both parents and youth are required to attend, from 6 to 8:15 PM** (supper provided). During that meeting, you will be asked to sign a **Parent Commitment Form**, giving your **permission** for your child to participate, and to **pay for the parents' and children's books (\$30/set)**. If you already have the books, you do not need to buy another set.

OWL for 6<sup>th</sup> graders will continue through December 6.  
For more information, please contact Jim Conklin, 301-587-6210.

## Silver Spring Interfaith Housing Coalition

Christ Congregational Church was a founding member of Silver Spring Interfaith Housing Coalition (SSIHC) in 1991 and has been a generous supporter and active participant ever since. Through stabilization, housing, community involvement, education, mentoring, and supportive services, SSIHC works to empower homeless/low income families and individuals move towards independence and self-sustainability. CCC is currently looking for a volunteer to represent us on the SSIHC Board of Directors. It's an opportunity to get engaged in a local, ecumenical and vital mission and to represent your church at the same time. For more information, please visit the SSIHC website <http://ssihc.org/> and contact Paul Holmes at 301/593-6558 or [pholmes@usaid.gov](mailto:pholmes@usaid.gov).



Thank you

I want to extend a heart felt thank you to Christ Congregational church for your support of Montgomery Blair High School. We truly appreciate your service to our students and use of your rooms for our Advanced Placement Exams. The exams take a lot of planning and the church went out of its way to accommodate our needs. Again, thank you for your graciousness.

*Alphonso Burwell, AP Exam Coordinator, Guidance Counselor*

Would you like to gain insight into homosexuality or transgender issues? Here are some books that can be checked out from the church library:

**SHE'S NOT THERE: A Life in Two Genders**, by Jennifer Finney Boylen, 2000, 300 pp., hardcover. "Exuberant memoir of a man named James who becomes a woman named Jennie"... "at turns funny and deeply moving."

**THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CLOSET: The Coming-Out Crisis for Straight Spouses and Families**, by Amity Pierce Buxton, 1994, 332 pp., paperback. "Real life stories selected to illustrate common issues rather than private lives are told in the spouses' and children's own voices."

**NOW THAT YOU KNOW: A Parents' Guide to Understanding Their Gay and Lesbian Children**, by Betty Fairchild and Nancy Harvard, 1998, 281 pp., paperback. "In their own words" "sane and sympathetic." The authors are active in PLAG.

**TWO TEENAGERS IN TWENTY, Writings by Gay and Lesbian Youth**, edited by Ann Heron, 1994, 182 pp., paperback, includes recommended additional fiction and non-fiction titles.

**IS IT A CHOICE? Answers to 300 of the Most Frequently Asked Questions about Gay and Lesbian People**, by Eric Marcus, 1999, 212 pp., includes a bibliography, resources and index.

**TAKING A CHANCE ON GOD: Liberating Theology for Gays, Lesbians and Their Lovers, Families and Friends**, by John J. McNeill, 1988, 213 pp., hardcover. The author is a former Jesuit priest who ministered to the gay community as a priest, psychotherapist, and author for many years.

**HOMOSEXUALITY: A new Christian Theology**, by Elizabeth R. Moberly, 1983, 56 pp., paperback. "A reassessment and restatement of the traditional Christian distinction between the homosexual condition and its expression in homosexual activities," with notes and bibliography.

**COMING OUT WITHIN: Stages of Spiritual Awakening for Lesbians and Gay Men**, by Craig O'Neill and Kathleen Ritter, 1992, 236 pp., paperback, "written by a Catholic priest and a psychotherapist, ...moving from unacceptance and loss to spiritual and psychological health," with notes and additional readings.

**STRANGER AT THE GATE: To Be Gay and Christian in America**, by Mel White, 1995, 345 pp., paperback. "We learn as much about growing up in the Christian right as we do about gay life in (this) heartfelt and revealing memoir" "from the prison of intolerance to the heights of personal liberation."

**HOMOSEXUALITY AND CHRISTIAN FAITH: Questions of Conscience for the Church**, edited by Walter Wink, 1999, 133 pp., paperback. Short pieces from prominent religious leaders "provide clarity on the biblical witness and authority...and the challenges that churches must face."

**TRANSGENDER POCKETS**, by At One, a network of transgender people in the UCC, 2002, 43 pp. The library has two copies of these diverse and informative writings.

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| <p>The deadline for the next NewNotes is 5:00 PM Sunday, August 30, 2009<br/>Send articles to Susan Gray <a href="mailto:cccoffice@christ-ucc.org">cccoffice@christ-ucc.org</a> or leave them in the NewsNotes Box.<br/>Publication will be on Monday, September 14 and mailing on Tuesday, September 15</p> |
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**Christ Congregational Church**  
9525 Colesville Road  
Silver Spring, MD 20901

**NON-PROFIT ORG.**  
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**HAPPENINGS In August and September**

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| Sunday, August 9 ~                     | Fair Trade Coffee Sale   |
| Wednesday, August 12 ~                 | CCC Volunteers at Shepherd's Table   |
| Monday, August 17 ~                    | Board Meetings   |
| Sunday, August 30 ~                    | NewsNotes Deadline<br>Blessing of the Backpacks  |
| Friday, August 21 -Sunday, August 23 ~ | Beach Weekend  |
| September 6 ~                          | Senior Adults Arts and Crafts Show   |
| September 9 ~                          | CCC Volunteers at Shepherd's Table<br>Sunday School Teacher Training   |
| September 10 ~                         | Chancel Choir Rehearsals Resume  |
| September 12 ~                         | Board for Social Witness Retreat<br>Sunday School Teacher Training<br>Potluck for Families with Young Children |
| September 13 ~                         | Fall Season Begins<br>All Church Picnic and Rally Day  |

**CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH, UCC**

**Phone: 301-585-8010**

**Email:**

[cccoffice@christ-ucc.org](mailto:cccoffice@christ-ucc.org)

**Rev. Susan A. Henderson,**

Interim Senior Minister

**Nae Pearson,**

Director of Music

**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)