



NewsNotes

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

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CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH, UCC

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SUNDAY WORSHIP
9:00 AM
10:30 AM

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Susan Henderson
Interim Senior Minister

Nae Pearson
Director of Music

Kristen Curlee
Christian Education
Interim Coordinator

Dianne Abraham
Church Administrator

Susan Gray
Support Administrator

Time moves on no matter the joys and challenges of daily life which make it seem as though it stands still. How is it that Thanksgiving is already here? It will be good to gather around the table with family and friends to reflect on the many blessings we have experienced. We will ask God to bless the food then the focus will shift to our blessing God with gratitude for prayers answered, wisdom revealed, strength granted and hope given. We will give God thanks for one another.

The feast of plenty, spread for many, calls us to prayerfully remember what aches the heart. Empty chairs once occupied by people we love and cherish will make us feel sad. Too few dollars have been a hardship for too many. The absence of job opportunities is an undesired reality. We continue to fight for peace.

Gathered around many tables, we will say a prayer for this community of faith. It has been a fruitful year of preparation and anticipation. Soon we will settle into new relationships and discover new ministries. In the meantime, we wait while searching filled with gratitude.

Time does not stop. The day for celebrating with gratitude will go more quickly than we desire. Soon after the table is cleared, and the game is over, the sound of bells ring in the distance. Soon we will be dancing through advent and blessed by Christmas. Enjoy!

Rev. Susan A. Henderson

Senior Minister Search Committee Update

Your Senior Minister Search Committee has been hard at work with publication of the job announcement nationally on August 19 in the UCC Opportunities Bulletin, mailing of an outreach letter to 62 leaders in the UCC, making follow-up phone calls to letter recipients, and receiving and reviewing profiles from clergy interested in our position. The committee is extremely pleased with the applications we have received already and we expect to receive many more before the end of the 3-month application period on November 15. Even as we receive new applications, we have begun our first round of telephone interviews.

Searching for a new minister is a long and careful process of continual discernment. Members of the committee have found reading the profiles to be inspiring and enriching as candidates share their faith journeys, experiences in ministry and personal statements about ministry. We expect the telephone interviews, and later the in-person interviews, will deepen this process of discovery, culminating in a candidate that we will present to the congregation next year. The committee meets weekly and you may follow its progress by monitoring the information displayed in the entrance lobby. We are grateful for your prayers, comments and support throughout this process.

Anyone wishing a copy of the final Church Profile or Senior Minister Position Description may pick them up in the church office. You won't want to miss the photo addendum to the profile that we created from pictures by Carl and Elsa Brandt, Wayne Gray and Cory Gray. *The CCC Senior Search Committee*

Thank you from the Board of Stewardship

The Board of Stewardship would like to thank each and every person who has contributed to this year's stewardship campaign. As a congregation, we are doing well in a tough year, but our pledge total is still below that of last year and budget. We are still working toward our goal of 100% participation, so **if you have not pledged yet, please know it is not too late!**

Pledging is a powerful and singular tool when it comes to setting our annual budget (aka the Unified Budget.) We at CCC are a self-governed and self-funded congregation. We fund our budget entirely through the annual stewardship campaign, asking our members and friends to pledge an amount that each will give to the church over the year. No funds come to us from a higher level in the United Church of Christ.

We don't have just a few wealthy members who make large contributions, our average annual pledge is less than \$3,000! It's just us folks, giving what we can to continue the mission and programs of CCC. So again, thanks to everyone for every pledge and every contribution. This year, *we have truly come together to share abundantly our gifts.* And next month, we expect to share with you this upcoming year's stewardship campaign theme. *The Board of Stewardship*

Synopsis of Investment Analysis ~

In response to a concern expressed recently by a Church member, an analysis has been made of the Church's investment strategy from 1996 through the present. The analysis compares the Church's investment in the Moderate Balanced Fund (MBF) of the United Church Foundation (UCF) with a hypothetical risk-free investment of the same amount in a laddered series of Treasury bills and CDs. The results show that although the investment in Treasury bills and CDs would have generated more annual income in most years, the MBF investment both supported our national denomination and resulted in a greater total yield when combining growth and income. A copy of the analysis with supporting graphs may be obtained from the Church Office Administrator, Susan Gray.

Opportunities to Give and Serve ~

Assistant Financial Secretaries Needed ~

Ever wonder what happens to contributions after you drop them in the collection plate? It is the job of the Financial Secretary and Assistant Financial Secretaries to count the weekly collections and deposit them in the bank. CCC is in need of two Assistant Financial Secretaries to help once a month with this important task. You do NOT need to be an accountant or bookkeeper to help out. The duties would include opening envelopes and recording amounts into an easy to use Access computer database. On the job training will be provided with an experienced Financial Secretary or Assistant Financial Secretary. Assistant Financial secretaries would not be working alone at any time and would have an experienced coworker. The counting takes approximately two hours after the 10:30 service is completed.

If you are interested in providing this valuable service to CCC, please contact either:

Greg Muncill, Financial Secretary (301) 565-9441

Sue Dollins, Assistant Financial Secretary (301) 438-8874



Children at Play ~

Did you notice the new shade covers over the toddler playground? The Silver Spring Child Care Center purchased these awnings over the summer. SSCCC actually owns all the equipment in the play area, though CCC owns the land. Because the Center serves young children, ages two to five, the lot is actually a tot lot; that is the equipment is sized specifically for toddlers. In particular, the bench swing is unsuitable for older children. Please remember that any time children from CCC use the play area, they must be accompanied and supervised by an adult.



Help Wanted - PAID Positions! ~

Church Sextons ~ for regular 8:00 AM – 1:30 PM slot on Sundays at Christ Congregational Church. Duties include: opening and closing the church; being a friendly public face of CCC; setup and take-down of tables, chairs, etc for functions; being the go-to person for questions from visitors and members; light janitorial work as needed (for example, cleaning up spills); staying in or near the office during the church service; being alert to unusual people or circumstances. This is an ideal position for a responsible person who wants to earn a little extra income. If you are interested in this position, or want more information, contact: trustees@cccsilverspring.org.

Snow Shoveling ~ We are looking for hard-working teenage CCC youth to help shovel snow from church sidewalks this winter. Shovelers will be paid \$12 per hour. Contact Christopher Lewis at (301) 593-5628 for information.

Library News ~

See the listings on the web site of new books in the library, including an update from Stewards of the Earth.

Advent and Christmas 2009
Dancing Through Advent



Advent Wreath Workshop ~

The 2009 Annual Advent Wreath Workshop is next Sunday, November 29 starting at 11:45 after the 10:30 service. Everyone (young, old, and in between) is welcome to come and have soup together, and make an Advent Wreath. If anyone is willing to bring soup or greens or otherwise volunteer to help, please sign up on the sheet on the Bulletin Board. *Marjorie Hoffman, Church Life Board.*

Christmas Assistance for the Mbare Church in Zimbabwe -

The Mbare Church is Vesta Sithole's home congregation in Zimbabwe. Arrangements have been made for CCC members and friends to provide Christmas food the congregation. Mbare is home for multitudes of Zimbabwe's poorest citizens who have been driven to the city by rural poverty and who are unable to better their circumstances given the continuing economic plight of the country. There are many children who have lost their parents to AIDS, and who are now living with grandparents who are challenged economically to care for them. Unlike other years, this year there is food in Zimbabwe, but because of the fallen value of Zimbabwean currency, US dollars are needed to buy it. Our dollars will be sent directly to an account accessible to a friend of Vesta's who is a leader of the Mbare Church and who will personally oversee the purchase and distribution of the food. Contributions should be made payable to CCC, and earmarked for the Mbare Church on or by December 6. This will make it possible for her to buy mealie meal, cooking oil, beans, beef, tea and sugar to be delivered in time for Christmas. *The Board for Social Witness and Board for Christian Education*

Christmas Bazaar: an Alternative Gift Sale ~

Join Christ Congregational Church in support of SERRV International, **Saturday, December 5th from 9 am to noon** Do more than just Christmas shopping this year. When you buy hand crafted jewelry, toys, instruments, clothes and household décor from SERRV you support equal rights for women; guide sustainable development and pay a fair wage to the artisans around the world. Contact Kristen Curlee at Kristen@christ-ucc.org for further information.

For a complete Advent Schedule See the CCC website at Cccsilverspring.org.

Thank you, Cub Scouts!

Cub Scout Pack 275, chartered to CCC for 60 years (since 1949) recently participated in the national scouts effort "Scouting for Food.". By collecting donations from the neighborhood surrounding CCC, Pack 275 collected 52 shopping bags of food to be used for Thanksgiving baskets for the Shaw Community, and nearly 1400 pounds of food for the Manna Food Bank. Many thanks to CCC's generous neighbors and our ambitious and hard working boys! In addition, while we had the boys here, we planted tulip bulbs by the front doors facing Colesville road. Many thanks to Christopher Lewis for setting everything up for the scouts. Watch for beautiful blooms in the Spring! This is a small token of the Pack's appreciation for our strong 60-year old partnership with CCC! *Carolyn Hoskinson, CCC member and Pack 275 Secretary*

Our Cup Is (not quite) Half Full - The Board of Trustees and the Board of Stewardship express our gratitude for your faithful giving. But as we near the halfway mark in our fiscal year, we find that income from all sources has fallen behind what we planned on when the budget was approved. We encourage all pledgers to ensure that their pledge contributions are up-to-date by the end of December. We encourage non pledging contributors to give to the extent they are able. Thank you for your faithful stewardship.

Library Notes October 2009 ~

Books have been donated over the summer to the church libraries. Two went to the children's collection. Several, some given by Terry Strand, went to the spirituality shelves (found to the left of the meditation room). Thank you, Terry. The church also has an interesting environmental collection (to the right of the general shelves). Come to the second floor and take a look at these libraries. All materials can easily be checked out.



The 12-volume set of the Interpreters Bible has been moved to the top shelves as are copies of the Revised Standard Bible which a study class could use. Three volumes of the *New English Bible* have been given by former pastor Jim Todhunter. Two include the Apocrypha.

Other “new” books, all paperbacks, include:

A Credible Jesus: Fragments of a Vision, by Robert W. Funk, Polebridge Press, 2002, 185 pp., with appendices. The everyday world and words of Jesus are explored as the revealed and ongoing sources of divine wisdom... “both unsettling and reassuring.”

More of the Acts Seminar, FORUM, Spring 2002, 120 pp., Polebridge Press, is Part 3 of a scholarly seminar on the book of Acts.

What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul Of Tarsus The Real Founder Of Christianity? by N. T. Wright, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977, 192 pp. “No,” says the respected author, “Paul was the faithful witness and herald of Jesus.”

Faith And Feminism: A Holy Alliance, by Helen LeKelly Hunt, Atria Books, 2004, 208 pp., index. Biographies of Emily Dickinson, Teresa of Avila, Sojourner Truth, Lucretia Mott and Dorothy Day, and a disussion of the religious aspects of feminism. “Universal and compelling” said Betty Friedan.

A Black Theology Of Liberation, by James L. Cone, Orbis Books, 19th edition, 2008, 214 pp., includes critical reflections after 20 years by several contributors.

HIV/AIDS And The Curriculum: Methods of Integrating HIV/AIDS in Theological Programs, edited by Musa W. Dube, WCC Publications, 2003, 173 pp., essays by young African scholars.

Blessing New Voices: Prayers for Young People and Worship Resources of Youth Ministries, by Maren C. Tirabassi, United Church Press, 2000, 132 pp.

And two hardcover books:

The Experiment Hope, by Jurgen Moltmann, Fortress Press, 1977, 190 pp., 14 essays by a German theologian on ethics, religion, philosophy and politics.

The second book is rare and welcome, *Virgil Williams*, by deceased member Ruth Nicholson Post. This is a limited edition, by Illuminations Press, 1998, 143 pages. The illustrations include “The View of Mt. Katahdin” which played such a wonderful role in the preservation of our Retreat House. (The story of the painting is with the soft cover edition of VIRGIL WILLIAMS which was given to the library in 2008.)

All new books are on the third shelf to the right.

Peggy Mentzer, Library Volunteer 301-847-0079

Stewards of the Earth Library ~

The Environmental and Fair Trade section of the library is run by the Stewards of the Earth. Funding comes jointly from the Board of Social Witness and from the proceeds of the Fair Trade Coffee Project. New additions for 2009 include:

...And Distributed to Whoever had Need. The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics by Ched Myers

Cutting Your Car Use by Randall Ghenh with Anna Semlyn

Invoking the Spirit: Religion and Spirituality in the Quest for a Sustainable World by Gary Gardner

Simpler Living Compassionate Life, a Christian Perspective, with Henri Nouwen, Ricahrd Foster, Cecile Andrews and others

Small is Still Beautiful (Economics as if Families Mattered) by Joseph Pearce

Depletion and Abundance, Life on the New Home Front (or One Woman's Solutions to Finding Abundance for Your Family while Coming to Terms with Peak Oil, Climate Change, and Hard Times) by Sharon Astyk

The Ravaging Tide: Strange Weather, Future Katrinas, and the Coming Death of America's Coastal Cities by Mike Tidwell

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life by Barbara Kingsolver with Steven L. Hopp and Camille Kingsolver

Farewell, My Subaru: An Epic Adventure in Local Living by Doug Fine

Not Really an Alaskan Mountain Man by Doug Fine

Energy Savers, Tips on Saving Energy and Money at Home by the US Department of Energy. (pamphlets, several copies)

What Would Jesus Buy, Starring Reverend Billy and the Stop Shopping Gospel Choir, presented by Morgan Spurlock (DVD)

Eating Mercifully, the Humane Society of the United States (DVD)