

**COMMAntary: an e-newsletter of the
Minnesota Conference - United Church of Christ**
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God is still speaking,

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Volume 6, Number 03

20 January 2010

A Message from the Conference Minister

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

We had a chance this week to take a "first look" at calendar 2009 Minnesota Conference contributions to Our Church's Wider Mission and each of the "Five for Five" offerings. We learned the following: [...continue reading.](#)

News of the Conference

Joys and Concerns

1. Pastor and friends from United Church in Mapleton request your prayers for the family of 16 year old Troy Schultz, who died Monday, as the result of a vehicle accident. Troy was one of the two Mapleton area youth who died in the accident Monday. It is a tragic loss and time of deep sadness for the whole Mapleton community. Troy was active in the United Church. He experienced believer's baptism in 2008 and was part of the youth mission trip that same year, to Loveland, CO. He will be greatly missed. Troy was the nephew of Pat and Hugo John (Hugo is a member of the Committee on Ministry and a former Moderator of the Conference and Chair of the Board of Directors).

2. Thank you! The response to the dramatic need in Haiti has been overwhelming. The UCC's online giving has shattered previous rates and records. You can read that story on the [UCC News website](#). There is certainly still time to give, and the need is still great. [Click here to give online](#), or checks can be sent to the Conference Office (122 W Franklin Ave #323, Minneapolis, MN 55404). Make checks out to "Wider Church Ministries" and write "Haiti Earthquake Relief" in the memo line.

3. Congratulations to The Rev. Dr. Sandra Johnson, who has just announced her retirement from the First United Church of Northfield. Sandy has served UCCMN as Chair of the Committee on Ministry, and will continue to live in Minnesota following her retirement on June 30th. Blessings to Sandy and the Northfield congregation as they celebrate this successful partnership!

4. Sunday, January 17, 2010 at an ALL Congregational meeting, the members of Wabasha United Church of Christ unanimously voted to offer/accept Pastor Jim Clausen as our new full time pastor. His start date will be March 1,

Quick Links

[Donate to Friends of the Conference](#)

[Minnesota Conference Website](#)

[Minnesota Conference Calendar](#)

[National UCC Website](#)

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2010.

5. We are saddened to announce the death of Rev. Stanley M. Johnson. A full obituary can be accessed by clicking [here](#). The following information comes from The Associated Church in Owatonna, where Rev. Johnson served as Minister Emeritus. Rev. Johnson, Minister Emeritus of Associated Church in Owatonna died early last Thursday morning at Cedarview Care Center in Owatonna. Stan was a retired Minister Member of the Twin Cities Area Presbytery and had served churches in Kasota, MN and Crookston, MN before going to Associated Church in 1970.

Yearbook & OCWM Form Reminders!

A friendly competition has started between the conferences of the UCC. We're going for the glory of being in the top 7 conferences returning our yearbook forms, but I can't do it without you! Already 8 forms have been returned - thank you! We're looking for the other 130 to come in. Forms are due back in the Conference Office February 12th, but send them early if you've got them!

OCWM Goals forms were also sent out at the end of 2009. It helps us greatly to receive as many of those back in the Conference Office as we can. So far, we've only had six of these returned. Your help with these two items is greatly appreciated.
Thank you!
Alison Bents

One Great Hour of Sharing Resources

One Great Hour of Sharing® Resource Materials have begun arriving in UCC Churches. If you do not receive yours by January 31, 2010, please call UCC Resources toll-free at 1.800.325.7061. The New OGHS video [is available here](#). Watch, download and share it. Bulletin Inserts and sample Worship Materials [are also available here](#). All resources are reproducible and may be used in the promotion of the OGHS Offering.

The suggested date of this Lenten offering is March 14, but may be received at the time most suited for your congregation. Thank you for your generous support!

When Disaster Strikes

We are all reading about and watching the unfolding relief efforts in Haiti. The UCC Disaster Response Ministries sends this information as a reminder for all of us that material donations can cause more harm than good. [This linked brochure](#) has good information to be shared about successful donating and volunteering. Please review and share this information.

ASDIC Decolonization Retreat

ASDIC Decolonization Retreat: February 13th and 14th

Saturday 10:00 a.m. to Sunday 4:00 p.m.
Benedictine Center, Maplewood, MN

We are renewing our invitation to you to participate in our ASDIC Decolonization Retreat scheduled for February 13th and 14th, starting at 10 a.m. on Saturday, ending at 4 pm on Sunday. The location shall be The Benedictine Center- St Paul's, 2675 Larpenteur Avenue East, Maplewood, MN 55119, 651-777-7251. [Click here for more information.](#) [Registration form available here.](#)

Lenten Study on Immigration

The Minnesota Conference UCC Immigration Task Force invites you to consider immigration as a theme this Lenten season. Members of the Task Force are available to preach, lead adult education forums or Lenten studies. The Immigration Task Force (ITF) has created a Lenten study guide based on liberation theologian Dr. Miguel De La Torre's new book, *Trials of Hope and Terror: testimonies on immigration*. Dr. De La Torre is our guest speaker at our ["No Human Being is Illegal: Mobilizing for Humane and Just Immigration Reform"](#) on January 30-31. The guide will blend lectionary readings, discussion questions, and theological reflection along with sections from the book. The book contains descriptions of economic and social factors and first person accounts of Latino migrants. These descriptions are "testimonios" from those who suffer under our current policies and those who are actively engaged in the pro-immigrant movement. [Click here for more information](#), and contact Rev. Loren McGrail at lorenmcgrail@mac.com.

News from our Local Churches

St. Anthony Park UCC, St. Paul

Raising Boys

Friday Night Out - January 22, 5:15pm

5:15 Spaghetti supper

6:00-7:45 "Raising Boys" presentation & discussion

What are some of the challenges and joys of raising boys? How do parents, grandparents and others tune in to boys' emotional, social and spiritual development? How does the cultural context affect how boys mature and develop? Peter Watkins, Mike Shimek and Bob Bartlett, each of whom is a local educator in the area of boys' and men's spirituality and development, will lead the program. Free and open to the public.

Saint Paul's UCC, Saint Paul

You are invited to learn more about scripture!

Please join us in learning more about "Scripture: How we get scripture and how we interpret scripture" St. Paul's UCC on Summit hosts two evening sessions with the Rev. Dr. Anita Bradshaw leading both sessions tonight, Wed, Jan 20th and next Wed, Jan 27th from 6:30-7:30 pm. The church is located at 900 Summit Ave, on the corner of Milton and Summit, across from William Mitchell School of Law. Parking is in the rear as well as on the street. Call 651-224-5809 for more info. www.SPUCConSummit.org

Falcon Heights UCC, Falcon Heights

Juncture

Humanity **One** Divinity

An innovative experience in worship

This Month's Theme: This Could Get Messy
- reflecting upon the times we have to stand up for something -

7:00 pm - Sunday - January 31

Falcon Heights UCC

1795 Holton St. at Garden Ave., Falcon Heights, MN

[Download a flyer here.](#)

Many souls - One Spirit

Union UCC, Saint Louis Park

Arts, Awareness, Action - Joining Together to END Poverty

February 6, 2010, 7:00-9:00 pm

Union Congregational United Church of Christ

3700 Alabama Avenue South

St. Louis Park, MN 55416

www.unionslp.com

You're invited to attend an upbeat, arts-driven, solution-focused event that tackles the goal of ending pover [Download a flyer here](#) to learn more about this exciting event. Questions: Call Brenda @ 952-929-8566 Ext. 12 for directions due to road construction.

Pilgrims UCC, Maple Grove

Drum Circle Invitational

@ Pilgrims United Church of Christ, Maple Grove

Tuesday evening, February 9 from 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Bring your drum (djembe's, ashikos, bongos...) and join us for a night of rhythm and sacred drumming. If you've drummed before, come and join us. If you've never

drummed before but want to, come and join us. If you just want to watch, come and join us. Bring a drum, bring a friend. A few extra drums will be available if you don't have one. If you have extras, bring them along. We'll provide snacks to keep the energy going. Please RSVP to info@pilgrimschurchurchucc.org.

Hazel Park UCC, Saint Paul

Hazel Park is beginning an exciting new venture with the Emergency Foodshelf Network. **Fare For All Express**, a cooperative food-buying program, is coming to East St. Paul! This money-saving program offers fresh produce and quality meats at a savings of 30-50%! **Fare For All** is open to anyone who is looking to stretch their food budget. In partnership with Hazel Park Congregational United Church of Christ, **Fare For All** will sell food packages in East St. Paul one Wednesday each month. The first distribution will be February 3rd, from 4:00-6:00pm. Learn more [about the program here](#), and view a [brochure by clicking here](#).

Upcoming Events

Service of Installation

Service of Installation for Rev. Connie McCallister

Sunday, January 24, 2010, 2:00pm
Mendota Heights United Church of Christ
680 Highway 110
Mendota Heights, MN 55118
651-454-1311

We have the opportunity as neighbors and partners in ministry within the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ, acting as an Association, to join with Rev. Connie McCallister and Mendota Heights UCC on Sunday, January 24, 2010 at 2:00 pm in the Service of Installation for Rev. McCallister. Clergy are invited to robe and wear red stoles. A luncheon will be held before the service of installation, at 12:30 PM. If you plan to attend, please RSVP directly to the church at (651) 454-1311. We urge you to have your church represented by lay and clergy persons, and to announce this event in your church bulletin. If you are unable to attend, you are encouraged to send letters of greeting to Rev. McCallister at the above address.

Service of Installation

Service of Ordination and Installation for Obadiah Ballinger

Saturday, January 23, 2010, 3:00pm
Community United Church of Christ
1145 Summit Avenue
Saint Paul Park, MN 55071

We have the opportunity as neighbors and partners in

ministry within the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ, acting as an Association, to join with Obadiah Ballinger and Community UCC on Saturday, January 23, 2010 at 3:00 PM in the Service of Ordination and Installation for Obadiah Ballinger. All clergy are invited to robe and wear red stoles. A light meal will be served after the service. We urge you to have your church represented by lay and clergy persons, and to announce this event in your bulletin. If you are unable to attend, you are encouraged to send letters of greetings to Oby at the address above.

2030 Clergy Network Celebrates 2010

All 20/30 clergy and soon-to-be clergy are invited for dinner and fellowship on Friday, January 22 from 6:30-9:30pm at the home of Rev. Jennie Ott, 1206 6th St. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413. Hosted by Rev. Jane McBride and Jennie Ott. Dinner will be provided; please bring a beverage to share. All spouses and partners welcome! For more info, contact Jane (janemcbride@juno.com, 612-521-3930) or Jennie (jennieott12@gmail.com, 612-354-2948).

No Human Being is Illegal

No Human Being is Illegal: Mobilizing for Humane and Just Immigration Reform

With Noted Liberation Theologian Dr. Miguel De La Torre
author of *Trails of Hope and Terror: Testimonies on Immigration* and Director of the Peace and Justice Institute
at Illiff Seminary, Denver, Colorado

Explore the faith foundations of immigration reform
Mobilize in support of humane and just immigration reform

Day 1 - January 30, 2010

7:00-9:00pm
at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
Keynote: Dr. Miguel De La Torre

Day 2 - January 31, 2010

at St. Luke's Presbyterian Church
10:30am - Interfaith Service followed by lunch
1:00-5:00pm Community Forum

Learn more and register in advance by clicking here:
www.uccmn.org/ministrygroups/immigration

High School Youth Event



**High School Youth Event
March 5-7, 2010
Camp Koinonia, South Haven, MN**

Early Registration: by Feb 1, \$75
youth \$50 adults

After Feb 1st: \$85 youth, \$60
adults

Deadline for all registrations: Feb 26

Senior High Youth (grades 9-12 only) and their Adult Leaders (21 and older) are invited to attend this event. Registration begins at 6:30pm on Friday, March 5 (dinner will not be provided that Friday evening). The event will conclude at Noon on Sunday.

Questions? Call Leah Springer or Wade Zick at 612-871-0359 or email: leahs@uccmn.org or wadez@uccmn.org. Many thanks to the Youth Event Planning Team for their leadership! Registration forms now available HERE: www.uccmn.org/childrenandyouth

UCC Web University!

**The next UCC Web University will be
Feb. 26-27 at Church of the Beatitudes
Phoenix, Arizona**

Does your church want to build an effective web ministry on the web-but you're feeling technologically and financially challenged? This Congregational Vitality event is for you!

Join us for workshops on:

- How to build effective websites at low cost.
- How to increase traffic to your website.
- How to develop cost-saving email newsletters for your church.
- Safe youth and young-adult ministry on Facebook.
- Safe and secure online fundraising.
- Social media: the next wave for local church communication.

\$100 covers the full three-day event, including dinner on Friday and a box lunch on Saturday. A discounted \$50-fee covers Saturday-only workshops and lunch.

To register, and for more information visit ucc.org/vitality/web-university. More questions? Write to vitality@ucc.org

Sponsored by the Congregational Vitality and Discipleship Team, Local Church Ministries, United Church of Christ

Children's Ministry Meeting

Keep your children in church this summer!

- Bring your solutions to share
- Experience worship together
- See the new 2010 resources available
- Lunch and great coffee provided!

Please watch for a Partner in Education event later this spring, details coming soon.

There is no cost for the event.
Feb 25, 2010, 11:00-1:30pm

Linden Hills UCC, 4200 Upton Avenue S, Minneapolis, MN
RSVP to Leah by February 21
@ leahs@uccmn.org or 612.871.0359

Day on the Hill Training

The Justice and Witness Team of the Minnesota Conference UCC will be offering a **Day on the Hill Training, Saturday, March 13, 2010 at Mayflower Community UCC, Minneapolis**. Save the date now! More details to come.

Academy of Vital Christianity

Get geared up for Spring Classes with the Academy of Vital Christianity! Find a list of all the classes at the [Academy's website](#). You can also register for classes at that same website. Register now to take advantage of the early registration discounts. Download regionally oriented bulletin inserts [here, on the right hand side of the page](#).

The Academy for Vital Christianity, in partnership with the Minnesota Conferences of the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church, offers a wide variety of classes designed for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of the Christian tradition.

Classifieds

Job Opportunities

Check out the Employment Opportunities portion of the Minnesota Conference Website. [Click here to see listings.](#)

Current listings:

- Interim Pastor - The Congregational Church of Excelsior
- Interim Pastor, Shared Ministry, 2 Congregations - Minnesota Lake
- Pulpit Supply - First Cong UCC, Hancock
- Part-time Pastor - St. Matthew's UCC, Forest City & Peace UCC, Eden Valley
- Community Nurse - First Cong UCC, Anoka
- Director of Children's Ministry - Good Samaritan

- United Methodist Church, Edina
• Director of Outdoor Ministries - Illinois South Conference ([click here for this position only](#))

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