

**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 04

27 January 2010

News of the Conference

Joys and Concerns

1. Prayers for Rev. Betty Johnson and the United Church UCC/ABC in Mapleton, as she concludes her ministry in their midst.

2. Congratulations to The Rev. Jan Bodin and Faribault Congregation UCC! Jan will begin February 1st as Acting Minister.

The new StillSpeaking Magazine!

Don't miss the debut! Arrive early. Be one of the first subscribers to the UCC's new 'StillSpeaking Magazine.' The premiere issue is in production, so get your subscription at a special introductory rate. The discount expires July 1, so don't wait. [Click here](#) to learn more about the magazine and to subscribe now!

Camp Brochures are at the printer!

The Pilgrim Point Camp brochure is ready for the printers and you can get your sneak peak at all of our offerings for 2010 here on the [Pilgrim Point Camp website](#). The brochures should be back from the printer next week and former campers will receive their copy soon. Churches will receive theirs shortly afterward. Be sure to check out your church packet for ideas for fundraising camp scholarships and a Pilgrim Point Camp poster to put up in your church.

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!

Haiti Earthquake Response Update

We've received two important documents from the

Quick Links

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[Minnesota Conference Website](#)

[Minnesota Conference Calendar](#)

[National UCC Website](#)

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Disaster Response office of the UCC in Cleveland that we now pass on to you. You can download the [Haiti Earthquake Frequently Asked Questions](#) sheet here. You can also find a [brief summary](#) related to the possibilities for Hatians coming the U.S. The Disaster Response office reports that some UCC congregations have been asking how they may provide a welcome to Hatians who are coming to the U.S. Their recommendation is to connect with any Hatian community in their local setting and offer their assistance.

Lenten Study on Immigration

The Minnesota Conference UCC Immigration Task Force invites you to consider immigration as a Lenten theme. 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. [Click here for more information](#), and contact Rev. Loren McGrail at lorenmcgrail@mac.com.

Seminary Sunday is February 28th

Plan to participate in celebrating the work of CUE, (Chicago, United, and Eden Seminaries) on **Seminary Sunday, February 28, 2010** (or any Sunday that is convenient for your church). The role of our seminaries in the life of our churches is critical. Chicago, United, and Eden Seminaries train individuals for ordained ministry, and they provide resources for lay leadership programs, Christian Education and youth programs. In addition, our seminaries provide leadership, preaching, and continuing education opportunities at conference and association meetings. All of our churches are enriched by the work of our UCC seminaries.

If you would like CUE brochures, posters, or offering envelopes, or if you would like a student from United Seminary to speak or preach at your church, please email CUE Development Coordinator, [Kiely Todd Roska](#). Printable bulletin inserts will be included in the COMMAntary in early February, or can be emailed directly to your church.

Upcoming Events

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

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 12:00pm on Sunday.

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

Spiritual Life with Social Action

**Practicing justice connecting living faith:
spiritual life with social action**

A young adult panel discussion with music & free food
February 11, 2010, 7:00pm
Sateren Auditorium, Augsburg College
Learn more at www.jrlc.org

Save the Date

**To Sing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land:
A Chapel Series Celebrating
African American Sacred Music**

Tuesdays, February 9, 16, and 23, 2010, 11:35am
United Theological Seminary

sponsored by the Multicultural Student Alliance at United Theological Seminary
of the Twin Cities

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.](#)

Renewal of Ordination Vows

**Join In A Renewal of Ordination Vows
Sunday February 28 4:00pm**

The Minnesota Conference UCC invites all ordained clergy of the conference to join with our three conference ministers, and other clergy colleagues in a renewal of ordination vows. The renewal of vows worship service, and dinner following will be a wonderful opportunity to celebrate ordained ministry as well as recommit to the vows each has made "to remain steadfast in faith and fruitful in good work." We are delighted and honored to have all three of our conference ministers leading worship! Holy Communion will be celebrated along with a blessing of the liturgical stoles of the ordained ministers. To make our time of celebration and collegiality complete, members of The Congregational UCC will serve a homemade lasagna dinner.

The Renewal of Ordination Vows Worship and dinner is meant for all ordained clergy of the Minnesota Conference. Family and laity who wish to join in this renewal celebration with our ordained ministers are warmly welcomed and encouraged to be with us for this special occasion.

Renewal of Ordination Vows
Sunday, February 28, 4:00PM
The Congregational United Church of Christ,
Rochester
965 17th Avenue SW Rochester, Minnesota

Please RSVP by February 15 to The Congregational UCC, Rochester, 507-289-4581 so the dinner planners can prepare lasagna. Please indicate if you prefer a vegetarian option. Don't forget your stoles, family members, lay leaders and friends.

The Professional Development of Authorized Ministries Team of the Minnesota Conference thanks The Congregational United Church of Christ and our three Conference Ministers for organizing and hosting this time of celebration and renewal.

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!

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

Food & Faith

Food & Faith: Ethical Dimensions of America's Food System

Questions that will be addressed at the conference:

- How sustainable is our food system in the United States?
- What impact does it have on the environment and on people, both urban and rural?
- How do the social teachings of our faith traditions speak to concerns about food production?

For more information about the Minnesota Consortium of Theological Schools, please visit their website at www.mncts.net. A poster can be [downloaded here](#).

Food & Faith: Ethical Dimensions of America's Food System is being planned and carried out by the Northland Ministries Partnership, a rural ministry committee within the Minnesota Consortium of Theological Schools. The event has been approved by all seminary executives and is being partially funded by all the seminaries and the Yackel Foundation.

Immerse Yourself in the Love of God

Immerse Yourself in the Love of God Minnesota "Open and Affirming" Celebration Clark Memorial United Church of Christ

April 25, 2010 | Workshops @ 2:30pm, Worship @ 4:00pm

Workshops will focus on ONA 101 (the basics) and the inclusion of the "transgender" ONA commitments. Preacher will be Rev. Dr. Anita Bradshaw, former National Field Organizer for the Welcoming Church Movement. Music will be provided by the choir of Spirit of the Lakes and Minnehaha United Churches of Christ. [See and use this linked poster](#).

Witnesses... to God's Love for All

Witnesses... to God's Love for all
The Minnesota Gathering
College of St. Benedict
(prior to the MN Conference UCC Annual Meeting)
June 10-11, 2010

Beginning with Dinner on Thursday, June 10, our 3rd annual gathering will feature keynote presenter, Rev. Michael (Mike) Schuenemeyer, Executive for Health and Wholeness Advocacy with Wider Church Ministries in the national setting of the United Church of Christ. We will spend time exploring what it means to be witnesses to the "open and affirming" movement and how we share our stories of faith both individually and as a church. Look for flyer to be coming out in early March.

News from our Local Churches

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.

Mayflower UCC, Minneapolis

The Time is Coming for Marriage Equality

On Thursday, January 28th, Mayflower is hosting a Marriage Equality forum sponsored by People of Faith Allies (an inter-faith coalition of religious leaders) and OutFront MN. 2010 will be a pivotal year for showing that support from Minnesotans for Marriage Equality is strong. This evening will be geared towards planning, discussion and education. The event will run from 6:30-8:00pm. If you have any questions about this event, please contact Mike MacMillan, Lilly Resident at Mayflower UCC, 612-824-1761 x 133 or mamacmillan@mayflowermpls.org.

Celebrate Recovery

Sunday, February 7, 2010

Mayflower Congregational Church UCC
106 E Diamond Lake Road, Minneapolis, MN 55419

Guest Preacher U.S. Rep. Jim Ramstad

Worship Times: 8:30 and 11:00am

[Download a flyer here.](#)

Do Support Love - Freedom to Marry Day Rally Thursday, February 11th, 8:30am - Capitol Rotunda

Make your sign and head over to the capitol to show your support for enacting marriage equality legislation in Minnesota as Clergy and faith leaders lead an inspiring rally for justice! We need a big turnout to show that marriage inequality is a moral issue and that there is strong support from people of faith in correcting this injustice. The UCC, always seeking transformation in all areas of injustice, can be a powerful voice! Contact Mike MacMillan, Lilly Resident at Mayflower UCC for more info: 612-824-0761x133 or mamacmillan@mayflowermpls.org.

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@pilgrimschurchucc.org.

Classifieds

Job Opportunities

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

Current listings:

- Interim Pastor - Congregational Church of Excelsior
- Interim Pastor, Shared, 2 Churches - Minnesota Lake
- Pulpit Supply - First Cong UCC, Hancock
- Part-time Pastor - St. Matthew's UCC, Forest City & Peace UCC, Eden Valley

The Last Adventure of Life

UCC minister, Rev. Maria Dancing Heart Hoaglund, from Washington has published a book that many pastors in her area have been finding very useful. From the book description:

The Last Adventure of Life is an inspirational resource book that weaves together some of the best stories, poetry, scripture, prayers, and guided meditations from all walks of life to help those facing death or grief in their lives. It also includes chapters on grief and healing resources. It's intended for anyone desiring to go deeper spiritually. Some are saying that it is the most loving, gentle book they've read about death. Others have said that it's one of the best introductions to hospice that they've seen. Anyone interested in end-of-life, grief, the mystery of life, and transitions of all kinds will find this book useful. The book also addresses many of the body-mind-spirit, complementary approaches to healing and end-of-life care.

Rev. Maria Dancing Heart Hoaglund grew up in Japan, daughter of Lutheran missionaries. She is a UCC minister who has been doing hospice ministry for over 15 years. She is a bridge-builder and transformational healer who honors the unity and interconnectedness of all life. Read more and order her book at www.changewithcourage.com

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