

## An Introduction to Annual Reports

Week after week "Mission Bite" reports on a vital ministry or mission of the Minnesota Conference - through programmatic or staff endeavors, through our many ministry and mission partners, and through our local churches. The Conference Bylaws say "to assist in fulfilling the strategic mission priorities of the Conference, specific programmatic functions of the Conference are carried out through **Program Ministry Teams and/or Task Forces.**" Through the first week in June, each "Mission Bite" will come from one of the Program Ministry Teams or Task Forces of the Conference. This will provide them an opportunity to tell you of the ministry and mission in which they have been engaged. These "Mission Bite" entries will serve as this year's "annual report" from each team, a public way to be accountable. More than seventy-five individuals from not quite that many local churches serve on nine Program Ministry Teams or Task Forces that address these Conference mission priorities:

- **Prophetic Witness:** Global Partnerships; Justice and Witness; Immigration; Open and Affirming/Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (ONA/LGBT); Emmaus Anti-Racism Leadership;
- **Nurturing Gifts and Leadership Abilities:** Professional Development of Authorized Ministers Team; Women's Ministries;
- **Healthy, Vital Congregations:** Evangelism Team - transitioning into a Vitality Team;
- **Christian Formation and Discipleship:** Faith Formation for Children and Youth.

These "Mission Bite" reports will be archived on the website both with past editions of COMMAntary and with Annual Meeting materials.

## Mission Bite: from across the Minnesota Conference

*2011 Emmaus Antiracism Team Report*

In 1999, The Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ, at its Annual Meeting in June, passed a resolution to begin the process of becoming an anti-racist, multi-cultural Conference of the UCC. The Conference Council commissioned an Emmaus Anti-Racism Task Force to start planning the Conference's journey toward racial justice. In June 2004, the Annual Meeting of the MN Conference authorized the formation of the Emmaus Ant-Racism, Multi-Cultural Transformation Leadership Team.

Since then, the Emmaus Team has not only taken on a shorter name, but we have also undergone many structural changes. The purpose of the team is to communicate and enact the ministry goals of the Minnesota Conference UCC to be a conference that is multi-cultural, anti-racist, racially just, and multi-ethnic by:

1. Assisting churches, pastors, and lay leaders in developing a Racial Justice Action Plan



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2. Facilitating churches with the United Church of Christ's Sacred Conversations on Race
3. Providing ongoing resources to churches, pastors, and lay leaders for sermons, special events, workshops, and adult-ed/adult forums that seek to provide continuing education and awareness of racism and racial justice work

**There are 6 stages on the continuum of becoming an anti-racist, multi-cultural institution:**

1. **Exclusive** (an intentionally segregated community)
2. **Passive** (a segregated community that tolerates a specific and limited amount of diversity)
3. **Symbolic Change** (a community that creates a policy or law stating that they will intentionally become multi-cultural by seeking out communities of color)
4. **Identity Change** (a community that develops an action plan to begin analyzing systemic/institutionalized racism and how racism is perpetuated within their community)
5. **Structural Change** (a community that intentionally changes their structure, policies, and practices to ensure full participation and representation of different communities of color)
6. **Fully Inclusive** (a community that equally reflects the representation of people from different racial, ethnic, economic, and cultural groups within the full life, participation, and decision-making practices of the community).

***Where does your church fall on the spectrum?***

Talking about racism and how it is intentionally and unintentionally being perpetuated within our congregations and lives is a difficult, and sometimes, emotional task. But it is necessary to begin this dialogue so that we are one step closer to being a conference reflective of the entire body of Christ.

The Emmaus Team is made up of people from all walks of life, different racial and ethnic backgrounds, and different age groups who bring together a multitude of knowledge, training, and experience with racial justice and anti-racism training. This year, we have worked closely with Hazel Park UCC as they begin their process toward becoming a multi-cultural, racially just congregation; and we have begun the process with Lyndale UCC and Plymouth Congregational UCC as they make preparations to start their own journeys.

We are making preparations for the workshops that we will be presenting at this year's 2011 Annual Meeting: Cracking the Shell of Whiteness: examining what is white privilege; an open discussion with two churches-UCC New Brighton and Hazel Park UCC-who have worked closely with the Emmaus Team; and two workshops dedicated to Native American issues that exist.

If you are interested in working with the Emmaus Team, visit one of our workshops or our information table at Annual Meeting, or contact us by emailing us at: [mnuccemmaus@gmail.com](mailto:mnuccemmaus@gmail.com).

We send you all peace and blessings on your individual and collective

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the Wider Church

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Headlines from across the United Church of Christ

Right now: A call to prayer from Rev. Geoffrey Black

[UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns](#)

Right now: Celebrate 25 years of Open and Affirming

[Global Ministries](#) of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ

Right now: Check out [an interview](#) with Tom and Monica Little in East Timor

[Association of United Church Educators](#)

Right now: Regional educator events announced

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Right now: United Church Home creates haven for homeless teens

journeys toward becoming the beloved community representative of all the people of God,

The 2010-2011 Emmaus Team:

Pamela Cook, UCC, New Brighton

Doug Federhart, Spirit of the Lakes UCC, Minneapolis

Moussa Foster, UCC, New Brighton

Gary Kwong, UCC, New Brighton

Rev. Elena Larssen, Associate Conference Minister

Lyn Clark Pegg, Peace UCC, Duluth

Rev. Lawrence T. Richardson, Interim Chair, Spirit of the Lakes UCC, Minneapolis

Marco Sherve, Minnehaha UCC, Minneapolis

## Joys and Concerns

1. An Ecclesiastical Council for Doug Federhart will be held Tuesday, May 10 at 7:00pm at Minnehaha UCC/Spirit of the Lakes UCC (4001 38th Avenue S, Minneapolis). A light supper will be served at 6:00pm. To ensure a quorum for the council, please RSVP to the church at 612-729-7556 or [office@spirit.org](mailto:office@spirit.org). Anyone who wishes to have supper before the Ecclesiastical Council is requested to so indicate with the RSVP.

2. Jeanne Bringgold-Pro will be ordained Sunday, May 15 at 3:00pm at Macalester-Plymouth United Church (1658 Lincoln Ave, St. Paul). All clergy are invited to robe and wear red stoles. Refreshments will be served at the church following the service. Please RSVP to the church at 651-698-8871 or [office@macalester-plymouth.org](mailto:office@macalester-plymouth.org) if you plan to attend.

3. The congregations of the Rainy River Regional Parish (Pilgrim Congregational Church of Williams, First Congregational UCC of Baudette, and United Congregational UCC of Birchdale) have voted to call the Rev. John Tschudy as their pastor, effective July 1. In his more than 30 years of ordained ministry, John has served churches in Minnesota (First Congregational UCC of New York Mills), Iowa, South Dakota, and most recently Wisconsin. He is a graduate of United Theological Seminary. We welcome him to the northern-most congregations in the Conference.

4. The United Church of Christ is issuing an appeal in response to severe flooding and to what authorities describe as the worst-single stretch of tornadoes in more than four decades. Over 200 deaths have already been reported. Friday, the United Church of Christ issued a US Spring Storms Appeal for \$250,000 in response to ongoing flooding and storms. [Click here to donate](#); as we see on the nightly news, the need is great.

5. It is with great sadness that we report the death of David Cox this past weekend. David is the husband of Rev. Molly Cox, member of Edina Morningside UCC, and UCC minister in the Minnesota Conference. Our condolences and prayers go to the family. Cards and notes may be sent to Rev. Molly Cox, 4920 Morningside Rd, St. Louis Park, MN 55416.

6. Many, many thanks! This past weekend 18 volunteers gave 500+ hrs of volunteer time @ Pilgrim Point Camps and Retreats! Thanks UCC New Brighton & Mizpah UCC in Hopkins! Can you help this May with volunteer work too? Don't hesitate to get a hold of Wade Zick at [wadez@uccmn.org](mailto:wadez@uccmn.org) to sign up!

**2011 Annual Meeting - only 3 days left to register at**

**the early bird price! Register now!**



**Don't forget to get yourself registered for the 2011 Annual Meeting! Only 3 days left to register at the early bird price! Do it now!**

Visit [www.uccmn.org/annualmeeting](http://www.uccmn.org/annualmeeting) to see the schedule, get registered, and read up on the resolutions and proposed bylaw changes. We'll see you there!

**Save the Dates!**

### **SAVE THE DATES!**

**Cross+Training: Getting Fit for 21st Century Church Leadership**  
Fifth Annual Fall Leadership Event! **September 29-30, 2011** (1:30pm Thursday through 3:30pm Friday) at **Christ the King Retreat Center**, Buffalo, MN. Open to authorized ministers and lay leaders.

**An open conversation with Rev. Geoffrey Black, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ**  
Friday afternoon, **November 18, 2011** at **United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities**. Open to UCC seminarians, authorized ministers, and lay members of local churches.

**Details to follow. Mark your calendar now!**

### **Pilgrim Point needs hospitality volunteers!**

**If you would like to spend some time up at beautiful Pilgrim Point this summer, read on...**

We are seeking volunteers to help with preparing meals and all-around hospitality during camps between July 8<sup>th</sup> and August 28<sup>th</sup>, as well as Labor Day weekend. In order for volunteers to have time to settle into the rhythm of the camp work, we need people who can stay a minimum of one week (from Sunday to Sunday).

As a hospitality volunteer, you will stay in the newly refurbished Gate House, enjoy the beautiful natural surroundings, and contribute to a very special experience for campers.

If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity to serve as a volunteer at Pilgrim Point, please contact Robin Nelson at [robinn@uccmn.org](mailto:robinn@uccmn.org) - looking forward to hearing from you!

### **Free Immigration Related Films!**

Rev. John Guttermann has the license to to show four wonderful immigration films (all are offered FREE, though gas money is appreciated but not required for longer drives; the films must be shown without charge; films cannot be lent; if you do not have the technology for showing films, equipment can be provided; no venue is too small). Each film offers a unique take on the the gifts immigrants bring and the daily tragedies created by the US's failed, broken, and dysfunctional immigration system.

1. **abUSed** - This film is about the Postville, IA raid and the aftermath (97 minutes). <http://www.abusedthepostvilleraid.com/> Special thanks to Jewish Community Action for helping to arrange for the acquisition of this film.

2. **Brother Towns** - This is the story of two towns linked by immigration, family and work: Jacaltenango, a highland Maya town in Guatemala and Jupiter, a coastal resort town where many Jacaltecos have settled in Florida (58 minutes). <http://www.brothertowns.com/>

3. **Papers - Stories of Undocumented Youth** - an inspiring documentary film that interweaves the stories of undocumented students from several nations, the DREAM Act, and the need for comprehensive immigration reform (88 minutes). <http://www.papersthemovie.com/>

4. **The Visitor** - a 2008 'comedy/drama' and winner for best director at the 2009 Film Independent Spirit Awards. The film weaves into its story an accurate portrayal of our U. S. detention and deportation system that is the too common experience of hundreds thousands of immigrants in the United States (1hr 45 min). <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0857191/>

In addition, Rev. Guttermann has three core presentations on immigration (these, too, are offered free). All presentations are subject to frequent updating and revision. These are offered free (though gas money for longer drives will be appreciated). If it is your custom to offer a gratuity, gratuities for future bookings are payable to The Advocates for Human Rights.

1. Faith, Migration, and Immigration Reform (an overview of values, migration, and our failed immigration system);
2. Faith, Immigrant Detention, and Deportation;
3. In development - "Welcoming Communities."

Presentation will be adapted to your group. Faith or values frame is appropriate to the setting/group. Special requests for topics or questions you would like covered are welcomed. I bring other information, opportunities for action, and more.

Please share this information. Bookings for now through 2012 are being sought and accepted. Contact Rev. John Guttermann for more information. Email: [intpasj@me.com](mailto:intpasj@me.com) Cell/text: 651-485-3104

## Clergy Clusters in the coming week

**Southwest Cluster:** Tuesday, May 10, 11:30am  
First Congregational UCC, Mankato

**Twin Cities West Cluster:** Wednesday, May 11, 11:30am  
Chapel Hills UCC, Edina

**Lakes and Rivers Cluster:** Friday, May 13, 6:30pm  
Papa's Italian Restaurant, Zimmerman - in honor of Rev. Don Britt

## Recommitting Minnesota to Fairness

**Wednesday, May 11, 2011, Minnesota Statehood Day, Gather at 2:00 p.m., program begins at 2:30 p.m.**

**Meet at the Floyd B. Olson Statue, Southwest of the Capitol front door to march to the Rotunda**

**Join the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition in honoring Statehood Day; we are calling the public and our elected officials to a more just and compassionate public stewardship.** Responding to the proposed service reductions that will impact our most vulnerable neighbors, the faith communities of Minnesota will pray for our elected officials and encourage them to find a more generous and balanced public stewardship of the state budget. [Download the flyer](#) and learn more at [www.jrlc.org](http://www.jrlc.org).

## Center for Progressive Renewal Webinars

### UP COMING FIVE WEEK COURSE -

#### Church Renewal 101

**Thurs, May 5-Thurs, June 9, 2011 / \$299.00 / 6:00 p.m.**

This five-week online learning opportunity will be led by one of the country's leading experts in the field. Renewing a church requires a unique skill set in pastoral and lay leadership. In this course, Rev. Michael Piazza, former pastor and dean of the Cathedral of Hope in Dallas, Texas, will teach you the basics of turning your church around. Rev. Piazza grew the Cathedral of Hope from 230 members to more than 4,000 members and has consulted with numerous churches across the country as they have sought new life and renewed mission. This course will change your ministry forever.

**"Register for a May Course and get all six May Webinars for Free!"  
(A \$100.00 Value!)**

### UP COMING WEBINARS -

#### Leading Change. . .While Avoiding Martyrdom

**Thursday, May 5, 2011 / \$14.99 / 6:00 p.m.**

Many things probably need to change for a congregation that is stuck or in decline. As a congregation slips, further into decline management increases while ministry decreases and making changes become increasingly difficult. Rev. Michael Piazza will lead this webinar discussing the many aspects today's church leaders face. How do you make changes in a stagnant, controlling, fearful environment? How do we make changes in a culture which, according to Edwin Friedman suffers a "failure of nerve?"

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#### 11 Secrets to Stewardship Success

**Thursday, May 12, 2011 / \$14.99 / 6:00-7:00 p.m.**

Learn eleven practices that churches of any size can implement to dramatically improve the results of their stewardship program. Coy James will instruct on how these principles can benefit both church staff and lay leaders, so make sure the entire leadership team participates in order to get the most from this experience.

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### ***From a Mustard Seed: Enlivening Worship and Music in the Small Church***

Tuesday, May 31, 2011, 07:00pm - 08:00pm

Small congregations can, and should, have beautiful worship! In ***From a Mustard Seed***, a new webinar based on the book of the same name, an experienced pastor-professor and an experienced church musician will provide a model for faithful and excellent worship in congregations that average 75 or fewer people in weekly worship. This interactive webinar will offer a vision, spiritual practices and practical guidance for transforming your congregation's worship. Participants will reflect on the theology of worship and ways to enliven diverse styles of music in corporate worship. While the limitations of small congregations are obvious to their members and leaders, the possibilities for creative music and worship are often greater than we can imagine!

Rev. Bruce Epperly, Ph.D. is a theologian, spiritual guide and pastor. Ordained in the United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), he is the author of 19 books including *Holy*

*Adventure: 41 Days of Audacious Living; God's Touch: Faith, Wholeness, and the Healing Miracles of Jesus; and Tending to the Holy: The Practice of the Presence of God in Ministry*, selected as the 2009 Book of the Year by the Academy of Parish Clergy. He has been described as one of America's leading process theologians.

Daryl Hollinger, DMA, is Dean of the Chapel and Adjunct Professor of Worship and Music at Lancaster Theological Seminary. He serves as Minister of Music at St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. As a composer, Daryl has received commissions from choral groups, congregations and national organizations. His most recent set of compositions, "From Every Corner: Diverse Organ Preludes," was published by Augsburg Fortress Press.

*This webinar will begin at 6pm and will run for one hour. PLEASE NOTE: All participants must have a unique login. Shortly after registering, you will receive a confirmation email with instructions on how to obtain yours. For questions, contact Gregg*

*Carlson [david@progressiverenewal.org](mailto:david@progressiverenewal.org).*

**Registration is \$14.99 per person. [Click here to register!](#)**

## Have some tough insurance questions? Ask Cathy Green, Insurance Board CEO



We are excited to host Cathy Green, President and CEO of the Insurance Board on May 24<sup>th</sup>. She will share her perspective regarding the common church challenges.

*Join us to hear some golden insurance tips and ask your toughest insurance questions.*

**What:** The Insurance Board (IB) presents: Spring-Time to review your church insurance policy. (What is the IB you ask? The Insurance Board is a nonprofit corporation established by the participating

Conferences of the United Church of Christ.) [www.insuranceboard.org](http://www.insuranceboard.org)

**Who should attend:** Ministers, Financial or Trustee Committee chairpersons.

**When:** Choose a time on Tuesday May 24<sup>th</sup>. The Insurance Board will conduct both meetings.

- 11:30am Lunch Meeting
- 7:00pm Coffee and Treats

**Where:** Falcon Heights UCC, 1795 Holton Street, St. Paul MN 55113

[Click here to RSVP](#)

## 2011 ONA Gathering



Our church is considering becoming Open and Affirming (ONA) - what will that mean for our congregation's life and mission? My congregation has been ONA for years, but how can we live out a wider welcome? What does it mean to minister to a wider community in the spirit of our open and affirming commitments? These are some of the questions we will consider at the 2011 Minnesota Open and Affirming Celebration "Building Inclusion: Laying a Foundation for Welcome," held on **Sunday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, First Congregational UCC, 1923 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave S, Anoka.**

**2:30pm: Workshops**

1. "Anti-LGBT Bullying: A Faith Response"
2. "Who are the Bisexuals?"

**4:00pm: Celebratory Worship Service**

Our preacher will be the Rev. T. Michael Rock, pastor of Robbinsdale UCC, who is also a curriculum writer and trainer for the Our Whole Lives Human Sexuality program in the UCC. Music will be provided by First Congregational Church of Minnesota UCC, Mpls.

The "Open and Affirming" program within the UCC comes from a 1985 General Synod Resolution calling on all settings of the church to adopt statements of "openness" and "affirmation" towards gay, lesbian and bisexual people. A later General Synod in 2003 also called upon the church to acknowledge and celebrate the gifts transgender individuals bring to the church. There are currently 37 "Open and Affirming" UCC congregations in Minnesota. The Minnesota Conference has also declared itself "Open and Affirming."

## 2011 General Synod

General Synod is fast approaching - are you going to be there? Keep an eye over here to keep up to date with new news items as we hear about them. Make sure, also, to throw [www.ucc.org/synod](http://www.ucc.org/synod) into your bookmarks!

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### Youth and Young Adult Volunteers are needed for General Synod.

We are seeking youth (13-17) and young adults (18-30) who plan to attend General Synod who are **dancers, actors and strong writers** to volunteer with projects for Worship and Liturgy at General Synod.

Volunteers are also needed for the General Synod **Youth Choir!** Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all youth are welcome!

Please forward the volunteer's contact details to [youth@ucc.org](mailto:youth@ucc.org) or have the volunteer (parent/guardian if applicable) contact us. Indicate the area the youth/young adult will volunteer.

Thank you for your recommendations for volunteers and peace to you!

Waltrina Middleton, Local Church Ministries  
Minister for Youth Advocacy and Leadership Formation  
Congregational Vitality and Discipleship Team  
[middletonw@ucc.org](mailto:middletonw@ucc.org)

P 216-736-3871 | F 216-736-3818 | [www.ucc.org/youth](http://www.ucc.org/youth)

**Want to go to camp?**

# PILGRIM POINT

camps & retreats,

Playing and Living Joyfully this summer at  
Minnesota Conference Sponsored Youth Camps!

**Middle School Week: July 10-16, 2011**

[Online registration is now open](#)

**Senior High Week: July 31-August 6**

[Online registration is now open](#)

*Camp costs: \$325 by April 30, after April 30 \$350*

***\*\*Only three days left of early registration!\*\****

*Other opportunities this summer @ Pilgrim Point:*

Wayzata Community Church sponsored camps:

Senior High: June 11-17, 2011

Junior High: June 18-23, 2011

Children's: June 24-27, 2011 or June 27-30, 2011

Cross Generation: June 30-July 2, 2011

[Click here for more information](#)

**July Family Camp**

sponsored by Union UCC, Saint Louis Park

July 17-22, 2011 [Click here for more information](#)

**August Family Camp**

sponsored by Mayflower UCC, Minneapolis & Saint Anthony Park UCC,  
Saint Paul - postcard available [by clicking here](#).

August 7-12, 2011 [Click here for more information](#)

**This fall's Minnesota Conference Retreats:**

**Men's Retreat: September 9-11**

**Women's Retreat: September 16-18**

Does your church want to reserve a part of the camp for your own  
retreat or camp? There are still weekends and parts of weeks  
available! [Check it out here](#).

For general information on Pilgrim Point Camps and Retreats, visit the  
PCCR website: [www.pilgrimpoint.org](http://www.pilgrimpoint.org).

**Local Church Events**

Check out all the events happening at our local churches across Minnesota on our [Local Church Events Calendar](#)! You can surf around the calendar to see what's coming up across the Conference. Just click on the title of the event in the calendar to get more details.

- Ongoing through May 14: [Cherokee West Art Fest, Cherokee Park United Church, Saint Paul](#)
- Wednesday, May 4: [Fare for All Express, Hazel Park UCC, St. Paul](#)
- Wednesday, May 4: [Journey of Faith with Clyde Steckel, St. Paul's UCC, St. Paul](#)
- Wednesday, May 4: [Tapping into Living Water, Wellspring of Faith, Burnsville](#)
- Saturday, May 7: [Centering Prayer, Mayflower UCC, Minneapolis](#)
- Wednesday, May 11: [Tapping into Living Water, Wellspring of Faith, Burnsville](#)
- Saturday, May 14: [Don Shier, Jimmy Martin & Drew Jansen in Concert, First Congregational UCC, Anoka](#)
- Sunday, May 15: [Top Ten Anthems, Parkview UCC, White Bear Lake](#)
- Wednesday, May 18: [Journey of Faith with Clyde Steckel, St. Paul's UCC, St. Paul](#)
- Wednesday, May 18: [Tapping into Living Water, Wellspring of Faith, Burnsville](#)

Would you like your events to appear on this calendar? Just email Alison Bents at [alisonb@uccmn.org](mailto:alisonb@uccmn.org). Simple as that!

## Employment Opportunities

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

## Pews available

St. Paul's United Church of Christ has approximately eight surplus pews of various lengths with a natural oak finish. Asking \$50 each or best offer. Please contact the St. Paul's UCC, St. Paul church office at [spoffice@comcast.net](mailto:spoffice@comcast.net) or 651-224-5809 if you are interested.

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