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Northwest Word

News from the Northwest Wisconsin Association
United Church of Christ

Volume 47, Issue 7
September 2010

NEIGHBORS IN NEED ONE OF 5 FOR 5 GIVING OFFERINGS

*Submitted by Carol Weber
member Division on Ministry of the Church in the World*

A quote from Archbishop Desmond Tutu sets the tone for our compassion as we ready for the Neighbors In Need Offering.

"If you choose to be neutral in situations of justice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor".

In our support of THE NEIGHBORS IN NEED OFFERING we have the opportunity to help those who seek justice, seek freedom from violence, freedom from discrimination, hunger and poverty. Does not Christ ask us to be His servants in the service of humankind?

Neighbors in Need is the UCC's annual offering to support Ministries of justice and compassion through out the United States, including the Council for American Indians, CAIM, and justice and peace advocacy efforts and direct service projects funded by the UCC Justice and Witness Ministries.

Most congregations will receive this offering on October 3, 2010 as part of World Communion Sunday, however, another Sunday may be your choice for your church. This offering will also make your church a part of the 5 for 5 challenge in our Northwest Association!

Resources for this vital offering should be at your church in late August for your promotional guideline, or, order at UCC Resources at 1 800 537 3394 or

www.uccresources.org.

ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE through your churches participation in this vital UCC offering where each of us can make a difference in a world without hunger, loneliness and injustice.

A litany for your use.

AN OFFERTORY LITANY FOR ANOTHER WORLD IS POSSIBLE

Liturgist: Praise be to God who calls us to imagine and believe that Another World is Possible

People: Mission is that dimension of our faith that refuses to accept reality as it is, and aims to change it.

Liturgist: God of all times and places and people, remind us of the world as You intended it: free from hunger, poverty, violence and oppression. Give us the courage and generosity to match our imaginations.

People: We dedicate this Neighbors In Need Offering, not what we have, but what we use. Not what we dream but the good we can do.

Liturgist: As living disciples of Jesus, having compassion for all, we seek to bring wholeness and truth, working for justice and peace, reaching the lonely, feeding the hungry and celebrating hope for all of God's people

People: Deliver these our gifts as the Lord requires us...to do justice and love kindness and to walk humbly with our God.

2010 Confirmation Retreats

*Submitted by NWA Confirmation Retreat
Coordinator Rev. Philip Schneider*

Follow me! If the mission of the church is to follow Jesus, how do we hear his call? How do we, as disciples of Jesus live that mission? And, how do we, as members of the church witness to the life and love of Jesus Christ?

"Follow Me" is the theme for the 2010 Confirmation Retreats! We are called as disciples to follow spiritually, physically, emotionally, culturally and morally, but how exactly do we understand that calling?

**The 2010 Confirmation Retreats will be
October 8-10 at Moon Beach and
October 22-24 at Camp Pepin.**

Registration information is enclosed and also available on the Northwest Association website at www.nwwaucc.org. Scholarships for students and chaperones alike are available through the Northwest Association.

Questions? Contact the Association office at 715-834-6530 (rhonda@nwwaucc.org) or the NWA Confirmation Retreat Coordinator, Rev. Philip Schneider at 1-715-842-3733 (patorpcs@hotmail.com)

See you at the retreat!



House Calls

*When it's over, I want to say: all my life
I was a bride married to amazement.
I was the bridegroom, taking the world into my arms.*

*When it is over, I don't want to wonder
if I have made of my life something particular, and real.
I don't want to find myself sighing and frightened,
or full of argument.*

I don't want to end up simply having visited this world.
—Mary Oliver, "When Death Comes"

These closing lines of Mary Oliver's poem took my breath away when I read them this summer, sitting on my deck in the sunshine.

It made me wonder how many of us end up doing just that—visiting the world instead of planting ourselves in the midst of all its glorious confusion, wonder, amazement, and richness.

Living with intention, gusto, and curiosity requires a little more effort than just getting by. It means looking for possibility and taking chances, daring to dream and then living into the dream. It means connecting deeply with the earth and all who dwell therein.

It is, I believe, the kind of life God wants for us. It's the most profound way we can express our gratitude for the myriad of gifts we've been given.

Who knows whether you'll find the spark in life by running marathons or rafting whitewater rivers, by immersing yourself in service to others or exploring the limits of creativity, by probing into the mysteries of science or jumping out of airplanes? Seeking and finding it will help keep you from being a tourist in this world.

The same holds true for our churches. Too often, we go through the motions. If we decide to pursue change at all, it's often in the smallest of increments. We figure if we can tweak one thing, shuffle a couple of others, change the number of people on a committee, that we'll really change the

heart of our life together. Incremental change like this will preserve a system, but it won't breathe real, new life into it.

Jesus calls us to transformational change—big and sweeping, daring and risky. It will look different to each faith community. But it will require courage and gusto, intention and curiosity. It may be confusing and messy, but it will be a glorious mess. And it might just amaze you.

How will you take the world into your arms? How will your church do it? Will you be a visitor in this world or a vibrant force in it? Only you know the answer.

*"O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all
the earth" Psalm 96:1*

Dear Northwest Association churches,

We have been sitting in the closet of the NWA office way too long...*please* someone adopt us and treat us with the respect and love we deserve.

With love from,

58 original sampler copies of *The New Century Hymnal*

If you are interested, please contact the NWA office:
rhonda@nwaucc.org.

THANK YOU NOTES

We received many thank you notes from those attending summer camps. Your per capita dues make it possible for us to offer scholarships to people going to our church camps. "Thank you on their behalf," for your faithful participation in this ministry scholarship to camp.



ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES

Rev. Nancy Zorn Micke—August 20th—10 Years
Rev. Bonnie Jones Witthuhn—Sept 24—30 Years

Bits and Pieces

As they say, all good things must come to an end.....Thank You to Christine LaDuke who did an outstanding job providing the Bits and Pieces column for the past two years. Christine you will be missed!

Fireside Fellowship — **Ebenezer UCC** from **Stratford** gathered around the campfire for Fireside Fellowship five times this summer. All ages shared fellowship and sang along to folk, spiritual and even a few polka's. The young ones were treated to a bedtime story read by Pastor Bev Davis, everyone had their fill of s'mores!

Back to School — **First Congregational UCC** from **Eau Claire** continues to sponsor the **Good Neighbor Project**. Just \$5 helps one lower income student and their family with student fees, snacks, school supplies and other items teachers determine will help with learning. They have made a difference in 129 students lives!

Marble Mania — members of **First Congregational UCC** from **River Falls** as part of a community outreach program participated in a marble tournament during River Falls Days. Our own Rev. Chris Myers came away as champion!

Playtime! — **First Congregational UCC** from **Park Falls** hosts a community playgroup group for parents and children (ages birth to 5 years). What a wonderful way to share good conversation, stories, crafts and snacks!

If anyone has a specific topic you'd like included in these newsletters, please send an email to office@nwwaucc.org — PLEASE title the email "Northwest Word –Bits and Pieces" so it won't get lost in filtered emails. Thanks!

IN OUR PRAYERS

Those who live in harm's way, those who hunger and thirst, those who mourn.

- † Lynne Panci, the office manager at Moon Beach, living with cancer.
- † All those whose lives, livelihoods, and safety continue to be affected by the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico.
- † Rev. Matt Schneider-Adams, who broke his wrist in a fall from scaffolding on a youth mission trip.
- † Fred Benson, long-time active layperson in the Northwest Association, recovering from triple-bypass surgery.
- † Rev. Gene Lackore, diagnosed recently with prostate cancer.



Five NW Association churches: **Arpin** — St. John's United Church of Christ, **Ashland** — Presbyterian Congregational United Church of Christ, **Athens** — Christ United Church of Christ, **Black River Falls**— Ho-Cak United Church of Christ, **Bloomer**— First Congregational United Church of Christ.

(Each month, we ask you to keep five churches and their ministry in prayer for the general health, growth, and welfare of the congregations.)



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SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Wednesday	Sept 01	10:00 a.m.	Division on Ministry in the Local Church meets at the NWA office.
Thursday	Sept 2	10:00 a.m.	Executive Committee meets at NWA office.
Tuesday	Sept 7	10:00 a.m.	Cable District meeting at First Congregational UCC-Park Falls.
Thursday	Sept 9	10:00 a.m.	Division on Church and Ministry meets at the NWA office.
Tuesday	Sept 14	10:00 a.m.	Division on Mission of the Church in the World meets at the NWA office.
Thursday	Sept 16	10:00 a.m.	Tomah District meets at First Congregational UCC-Tomah.
Tuesday	Sept 21	10:00 a.m.	Merrill District meets at Ebenezer UCC-Stratford.
Tuesday	Sept 28	10:00 a.m.	Menomonie District meets at First Congregational UCC-Menomonie.