



Church of the Good Shepherd
Faith Action
A Just Peace, Whole Earth, Open and Affirming Church

United Church of Christ

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June 2009

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"Looking Back and Moving Forward"

By now, we've all shared our stories of the great "derecho" storm of 2009. Wow, that thing that blew in here on May 8th of this year was really something! Some winds were moving at a speed of over one hundred miles an hour. Countless trees were knocked down, many of them huge, old trees that even took up sections of sidewalk as they fell. A number had huge root balls; some were bigger than a person, or persons.

Millions of dollars of property damage. About 68,000 residents without power. At least one fatality during the storm and one person killed during the cleanup. Curfews in place. Many roads were impassable due to downed trees and power lines. We won't be forgetting that storm any time soon.

And I think we won't forget the way everyone pulled together. Yes, there were repair scammers and constructions scammers out there; such disasters often bring out the predators and vultures of the human world. But in most cases, the best of human nature rose to the top just like the best cream in the pail. Neighbors helped neighbors. Tree service, highway maintenance, and utility personnel worked long, hard hours in dangerous and nasty conditions to help people and to get our communities somewhat back to normal. Our government officials also responded to the crisis promptly and with great wisdom and common sense. Everyone involved in the recov-

ery efforts deserves our praise and thanks.

And the thing is, we are probably going to need their services again. The consequences of global warming/climate change are becoming more frequent and more violent. This may not be the last derecho that Southern Illinois has to face. I hope it is, but we can't count on that. The only thing we can do is to engage in a cross-cultural and global effort to change our ways in regards to the environment (and hope it is not already too late). You all know what I mean: we must reduce our consumption (yes, I am preaching to myself here), use less energy, recycle/reuse, seek out renewable sources of energy, and basically, learn to live more simply and tread more lightly on Mother Earth.

Can we do it? I don't know, but I think so. I really do. If we can exhibit the goodwill, unselfishness, and teamwork that we demonstrated during the recent "inland hurricane," we may just be able to pull ourselves back from the brink of ecological catastrophe. And if we can accomplish that, what else can the human race achieve? An end to poverty, hunger, and war? "Those are just pipedreams," some might say. Well, I don't know about that. I'd prefer to say that those are challenging but achievable goals. And all successful endeavors start as just dreams anyway.

Sam Foskey

Good Shepherd News

Happenings

Recurring Events

First Sunday: Communion

Adult Sunday School: 9:30 am

Overeaters Anonymous:

Mondays at 7 pm.

Circle of Peace:

Tuesdays at 5:30 pm. For more information call Wil Davis at 549-4836.

Recurring Events

Choir Rehearsal:

Wednesdays at 6 pm. New members welcome.

Forty Signs of Rain Discussion:

Wednesdays at 7:15 pm in the fellowship hall/basement

Birthdays

June 3 Luis Clark

June 3 Marisa Winegar

June 3 Kian Stevens

Green Tip of the Month

Submitted by Bob Tyson



Are you broiling, roasting, or baking a dish that will cook for an hour or more? Don't preheat for more than 10 minutes for breads and cakes. When roasting meats or baking casseroles, turn off the oven 15 minutes before cooking time runs out; food will continue to cook without using the extra electricity. This will save an average of 2 kwh of energy. If 30% of households did this, 60 million kwh of energy could be saved.

Dinners for Fun and Fellowship and Other Events...

Submitted by Peggy Igleheart, Hospitality Committee

Have you gotten your dinner group together with your church family members? If you haven't, it's never too late! The weather has been beautiful and there is no better time than spring and summer to get a group together for a picnic, visit on the wine trail, pot luck at someone's house, meal or dessert at a restaurant! Sharing in games at each other's houses is a great, informal way to get to know each other and have a wonderful time. Wii is popular now and can give you lots of laughs together, as well as other games like Pictionary, Taboo, and Charades that can be enjoyed as a group! If you've forgotten who is in your group, the list is under the bulletin board at the top of the stairs at church. There isn't a "leader" or "coordinator" for each group, so I encourage you to take the initiative to get your group together and have some fun! If your group HAS gotten together, that's

terrific! Get everyone together again before it gets too hot to enjoy the outdoors!

Be watching for information to come on a Sunday in August for our Annual Ice Cream Social at Evergreen Park. Nothing like a fun day together with great potluck food, games with prizes, plenty of homemade ice cream, and fellowship with each other!

The Hospitality Committee also plans to mark a Saturday on the calendar in the fall for our Annual Bonfire, so be watching for a date to add to your plans for the fall!

Creating, building, and maintaining our relationships with each other is one of the most important activities where we can devote our time. We're all busy and have a million things to do with work, school, family obligations, volunteer commitments and who knows what else that eats up every hour of our day. Look at how you fill your days and see if there are a few hours you can squeeze in time with your church family. You'll be glad you did.

Good Shepherd News

Adult Sunday School Starts New Course

Submitted by Bob Tyson

Starting the first Sunday in June, the Sunday morning class starts a new DVD course on science and religion. Each Sunday the video will run 30 minutes, followed by discussion. It is listed as a 12 week course.

Update from Pastor Search Committee

Submitted by Peggy Igleheart, Chair



The process is moving steadily forward toward finding our new pastor. We are right on schedule with our timeline. The draft of our church profile is complete and available for anyone to obtain

through the church office between now and Sunday, June 21. A copy has been sent via email to everyone with current email addresses provided to the church office. If you do not have an email address and want a copy, simply call Cassie in the church office and she can mail you a copy or leave one with your name on it in the church office for you to pick up at your convenience.

Our church profile is a very important document for any candidate interested in applying to become our pastor at COGS. This document is a compilation of all the answers from the surveys completed by our church family as well as additional information compiled by the search committee. Our profile is the most beneficial document for a pastoral candidate to get the best understanding of the demographics of our church family, the collective values and beliefs of our church family, and what we are looking for in a pastor as a church family. I encourage you to review this document and if you have any suggestions for the committee, please put them in writing with your signature and submit them to the church office by June 21. The Search Committee will not be able to consider feedback that is not in writing, signed, and received by June 21. We will have a potluck following Sunday morning worship on June 21 in order to open the floor for discussion regarding our profile and celebrate the completion of this important document.

Sheldon Culver, Conference Minister, will be attending our Search Committee meeting on June 22nd where we will review all written feedback and finalize the document.

Our timeline will proceed as follows:

June 22 - July 13

Committee will create the remainder of the contents to be included in the packet each potential candidate will receive.

July 20

Committee to create a statement to advertise regarding position opening. All information will then be forwarded to Sheldon Culver for distribution to potential candidates.

July 27

Committee to begin receiving information on potential candidates.

We hope everyone has felt heard throughout this process and we plan to continue to provide regular updates regarding our progress. Please remember that names of any potential candidates are kept in strictest confidence among committee members out of respect for the privacy of potential candidates. Thank you for your understanding regarding this need for confidentiality, while also being assured that you will be kept informed of all other aspects of any progress made.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me (KyIgle@gmail.com / 713-0545) or another member of the committee if you have any questions or need clarification regarding any part of this process. Our committee members include Retha Daugherty, Bryan Crow, Gary Shepherd, Jan Ritzel, Erika Peterson, and Richard Cox.

Good Shepherd News

Thank Yous and Congratulations!

Submitted by Gary Shepherd

Thanks

Special thanks to all those who helped clean up the church yard of downed limbs after the Great May Derecho. These included: Richard Cox, Terry Moore, Jan and Dale Ritzel, Eric Schaubert, Sam Foskey, Mike Morgan, Margie and George Parker, Gary Shepherd, and Bob Tyson.

Also, thanks to Richard Cox and Terry Moore for painting the pastor's study.

Congrats

A great big congratulations goes out to Maggie Baba who graduated from Carbondale High School this month.

Vegetarian Challenge

Submitted by Kate Baba

Beginning March 1st, the Ad Hoc Covenant Committee is challenging and encouraging YOU to eat vegetarian the first Sunday of every month. This is an activity that is in accordance with our covenants and won't be too taxing. Start slowly. As we often say, "baby steps" at first. But just a few reminders, pancakes, doughnuts, sweet rolls and cheese quiche are vegetarian foods.



Our Condolences

We send our love and sympathy to the family of Ettelye Horrell, who died on May 21 in Hanover, New Hampshire. Ettelye was one of the earliest members of the church and continued her interest in and support of the church even after moving to Massachusetts in 1994 and later to Hanover.

Carbondale Interfaith Council

2009 Prayer Cycle

LOCATIONS AND DATES

(All dates are Mondays)

June 1: First United Methodist Church
June 8: Grace United Methodist church
June 15: Good Samaritan Ministries
June 22: Islamic Center of Carbondale

Members Write 24 Letters Supporting Reforms to US Foreign Assistance

Submitted by Margie Parker



On Pentecost Sunday, May 31, church members wrote twenty-three letters to Congress and one letter to President Obama as part of the annual Bread for the World Offering of Letters. The letters urged that reducing poverty be made the pri-

mary focus of U.S. foreign assistance, and also urged reforms to make the process of providing aid more efficient and effective. This was about the 20th year that Good Shepherd has participated in the annual advocacy for policies that aim to reduce hunger.

Eleven letters were written to Rep. Jerry Costello, ten to Sen. Durbin, and only two to Sen. Burr. If you'd like to write him a letter, check the information in the Covenant section or log on to www.bread.org/OL2009 for information and a sample letter. The Covenant section contains excerpts from my Mission Moment on the topic and also some updates from Bread for the World.

Jan Ritzel and Richard Cox Honored With
Annual Russell A. French Award
as Outstanding Laypersons of the Year

Submitted by Margie Parker

Following are the citations read in presenting Jan Ritzel and Richard Cox with the award on May 10 and 17.

It won't take long for most of you to recognize the first person who is being honored with the Russell A. French Award this year. Her name is practically synonymous with the Building and Grounds Committee which she has headed for the past ten years and been a part of for much longer. She has seen the church through floods and wind, and through leaky roofs and basements. She was instrumental in establishing the memorial garden and continues to share her gardening expertise in keeping it going. She was also key in renovating the kitchen, bringing it from the 1950's to the new century with far more cupboard space as well as good looks. She's worked at the high end, contacting contractors and overseeing projects such as the indoor and outdoor ramps and the recent "flood control" work. And she's worked at the low end, doing the grunt work of weeding and watering the garden and sopping up water in the basement.

She has also overseen the upkeep of the parsonage, participating in both the planning and carrying out of projects such as carpeting, painting, and repairs. Now that it's the "former parsonage," she's taken on the added duties of finding renters and serving as their liaison to the church.

A dedicated environmentalist, she takes care of recycling the paper, cans, and bottles when they accumulate in the bins at church. She's also a creative seamstress, having helped sew many of the banners that grace the sanctuary.

She has served several rounds on the Church Council, including a year as president. She has also served on the Pastoral Relations Committee and is currently a member of the Search Committee. She has spearheaded the annual Spirit of Christmas gift-giving project for several years and this year chaired the annual Plant Sale when no one else volunteered for the task.

Somehow she has also found time to volunteer in the community, working on Red Cross Blood Drives for many years and helping the Band Boosters with uniforms when her daughter Erika was in the high school band.

While she received the French Award once before for many years of teaching Sunday School and multiple years of coordinating Vacation Bible School for the Interfaith Council, it's clearly time to once again honor **Jan Ritzel** with this year's French Award as Outstanding Layperson of the Year.

This year we're also honoring a second person with the Russell A. French Award. This individual overlaps with Jan in some respects, but has also made his own unique contributions to the church in the short time he has been a member. Like Jan he has a green thumb and has jumped in to help bring the garden back to its natural beauty. He shares Jan's concern for the state of our church building as well as the grounds, beginning with an overnight shift during our "Great Basement Flood of 2008." Recently he led a team in making a list of projects that need doing. Most notably, and with great courage, he painted the bell and bell tower that sorely needed it. So great is his commitment to and enthusiasm for these tasks that he volunteered to become the new chair of the Building and Grounds Committee, an offer which Jan welcomed.

Along with Jan, he is currently a member of the Search Committee. He is also serving on the Hospitality Committee. During our 50th Anniversary Celebrations, he joined the team planning an Art Show at church and suggested that an Art Show be held at the Carbondale Civic Center as well. He spent many hours hanging the art and also helped with both receptions.

He is a strong gay rights activist - speaking up in church, asking the annual Martin Luther King event to address GLBT concerns, joining the Southern Illinois AIDS Project to help plan a memorial service and organize a fall Walk-a-Thon, and leading our church in sending a letter to every church in Illinois South Conference to urge their support of the Illinois bill supporting civil unions.

Beyond all this, his most outstanding and probably longest lasting contributions to the church are the magnificent weavings which grace our sanctuary, both the awesome sets of paraments in green, blue, purple, red and white for every liturgical season of the year, and the amazing weaving portraying our church building and the logo representing our three covenants, which was unveiled a year ago on our 50th Anniversary Sunday. These beautiful weavings will be enjoyed by many generations at Good Shepherd. For these gifts and for so much more **Richard Cox** is being honored with this year's French Award as Outstanding Layperson of the Year.



Good Shepherd News

Notes from Building and Grounds

Submitted by Richard Cox

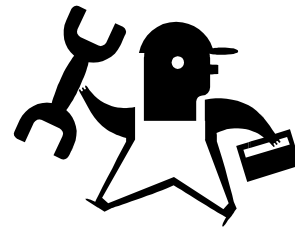
The wind, the beautiful wind. The sky, the earth and fire. Transformation. Where to start, I am sitting outside in the swing at my weaving studio. The yard is full of light and limbs. The Building and Grounds people have been very busy lately, cleaning, clearing, and dragging limbs to the street. Some volunteers have been filling our trucks, and we take the remaining limbs home with us. Soon the grounds will be even more beautiful with the continued work the committee is doing. The limbs will be removed, but the fun times and experience of working together to get things done will be with us for a long time.

In the last month or so, much has been going on, and the hard work is paying off. There is a transformation in progress. The credit has to be given to the Spirit inside one and all. That Spirit inside one and all is Love. I personally would like

to thank all of the members and friends of the church who have done a tremendous job. The list is very long. Our church is blessed to have such a beautiful congregation.

I take a break from writing and watch the birds and hear their songs. I see the smoke from the two piles of burning limbs, some from our yard and some from the church's yard. They burn together.

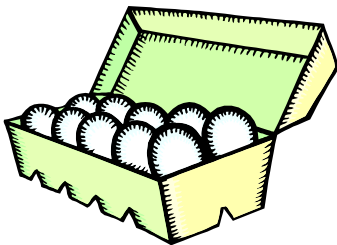
The Building and Grounds Committee continues to meet every Saturday, rain or shine from 10:00 am until 12:00 pm. All are welcome! We sure do have lots of fun getting things done.



Community News

Egg Cartons Needed!

Submitted by Margie Parker



The Food Pantry's monthly delivery of federally-funded commodities on June 19 will include: 29 cases of eggs (each containing fifteen dozen eggs), totaling 435 dozen eggs!

The eggs will be packaged in some bulk way, and not in individual cartons. What a wonderful gift - with only two problems:

1. Need for Refrigerator Space
2. Need for Egg Cartons

There is a need for as many egg cartons as we can collect by June 19. Egg cartons can also be dropped off at the pantry's location at University Baptist church, 700 S. Oakland, Carbondale or call Margie Parker at 549-7193.

Many thanks for your help!

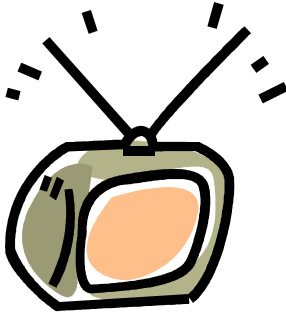
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REALITY TV; IS IT A VIRTUAL SIN TO WATCH CONTESTANTS STRUGGLE?

By Mary Elise Lowe, from *The Lutheran magazine* May 2009.

Summarized by Bob Tyson



Some say this is just entertainment and viewers are not doing any exploitation. Besides, contestants know what they are getting into. Others say the programs are demeaning, humiliating, and exploitive and suggest it is not ethical to watch these shows. The 8th commandment says "you shall not bear false witness against a neighbor." Martin Luther's catechism elaborates on "what does this mean?- we should fear and love God so that we do not betray, slander, or lie about our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way." Luther's expla-

nations of the commandments (what does this mean?) not only explains what we should not do, but also what we should do.

The theme of reality shows is designed to raise tempers, threaten relationships, bring out the worst in people, promote lying, scheming, gossip, and give false testimony about each other. So is it wrong to be entertained by the struggles of others? In Luther's treatise *The Freedom of the Christian*, he writes: "The Christian man is the most free lord of all and subject to none; a Christian is the most dutiful servant of all and subject to everyone."

Does this mean we are to defend and uphold the honor of our neighbors even if they are TV contestants? God does not want our neighbor deprived of their reputation and character. If Luther was alive now he may suggest we violate the 8th commandment when we judge contestants, gossip about them, and celebrate their shortcomings. Preserving their dignity might compel us to change the channel.

BFW's 2009 Offering of Letters

Excerpts from *Mission Moment* by Margie Parker

The Bible clearly speaks to us on behalf of the poor and the hungry. Many of you are already familiar with Bread for the World, a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad.

You probably don't know that our current system of providing foreign assistance is based on an Act passed in 1961. It now has 33 goals, 75 priority areas and 247 directives, carried out by 12 departments, 25 agencies and nearly 60 government offices. If it sounds complicated and in need of reform, well, it is! Bread is encouraging support for the Initiating Foreign Assistance Reform Act of 2009 to begin the process of making our foreign aid more efficient and effective.

Bread for the World is also suggesting that reducing poverty needs to be a primary goal of U.S. foreign assistance. Currently only \$1 out of every \$16 in aid is spent on the world's 10 poorest countries. Only

40% of total foreign assistance goes to poverty-focused development programs such as immunizing children, training teachers, building wells and schools and rural roads, and training farmers to increase their productivity. It is encouraging to know that most often this aid is delivered directly to local communities by nongovernmental organizations such as Church World Service and World Vision.

Here are just a couple of examples of such projects. Pedro grew up in Nicaragua during the bloody civil war in the 1980s. As a result he never got to attend school. But he and his wife and three children now have some land from a Nicaraguan Christian nongovernmental organization that has received U.S. foreign assistance. They are receiving training in farming using worms to produce organic fertilizer for their crops. It's a tremendous help for the soil that has been devastated by hurricanes, mudslides, and deforestation.

In Kenya, HIV-positive people are realizing something once they begin taking the anti-retroviral...

BFW continued on Page 7

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BFW continued from Page 6

... medications that save their lives - they're hungry. Along with regaining their strength, they're regaining they're appetites. Often, though, while they were sick they couldn't tend their crops. So the doctors and staff that are treating them now assess the household's nutritional needs and give "prescriptions" for food - fruits, vegetables, beans, corn, oil and sugar. But not wanting to create dependency on handouts, they began training clients to grow passion fruit, with the idea of setting up a

factory to make passion fruit juice, a popular treat. A holistic approach, with flexibility to meet multiple needs, was important in this and many other efforts to overcome poverty.

It can be done! We can make a difference! Writing letters is one of many ways we can choose to help those who are hungry.

Bread for the World Asks Support for Reform in U.S. Foreign Assistance

From Fresh Bread, May 22, 2009.

Submitted by Margie Parker

The Initiating Foreign Assistance Reform Act of 2009 (H.R. 2139) will be taken up by the House Foreign Affairs Committee after the Memorial Day recess. The bill, which begins the process of making foreign assistance more efficient and transparent, was introduced by Rep. Howard Ber- man (D-CA), chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Rep. Mark Kirk (R-IL).

In a special effort, Bread activists sent more than 4,000 letters from 35 Offerings of Letters, supporting H.R. 2139, to Washington by overnight

mail. They were hand-delivered to representatives' offices.

As of May 20, 11 representatives have signed on to cosponsor the bill.

Putting Faith into Action: Ask your representative to cosponsor H.R. 2139, the Initiating Foreign Assistance Reform Act of 2009. The bill is a critical first step in making foreign assistance more effective, efficient, and transparent. To see a sample letter and learn more about improving foreign assistance, Bread for the World's Offering of Letters for 2009, go to www.bread.org/OL2009.

Good News in U.S. Budget for Fiscal Year 2010 – International

From Fresh Bread, May 22, 2009.

Submitted by Margie Parker

The administration's FY10 budget request includes \$53.8 billion for international affairs programs. Of this, a total of \$20.5 billion is for poverty-focused development assistance - an increase of \$2.58 billion over FY2009.

The request includes \$3.4 billion to address global food insecurity. Food aid, cash for local and

regional purchase of food aid, increasing agricultural production and productivity, and nutrition for children under age two are included in the food security request.

The administration sent a message of support for the Millennium Challenge Account by requesting \$1.43 billion for the program.

Good Shepherd Covenants

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Good News in U.S. Budget for Fiscal Year 2010 – Domestic

From Fresh Bread, May 22, 2009.

Submitted by Margie Parker

The administration requested an increase of \$1 billion per year for child nutrition programs to expand program access and improve nutritional quality.

The budget also requests \$5 million in funding for the Hunger-Free Communities Program, a two-part grant program that would support the work of local anti-hunger efforts. Hunger-Free Communi-

ties, the focus of Bread's 2005 Offering of Letters, was adopted as part of the 2008 farm bill.

The budget provides adequate full funding to enable the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) to serve all eligible women and children. WIC is a discretionary program, so it can only serve as many participants as there is funding available.

The request would make permanent the expansion of several tax credit programs to help low-income families. These include the Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, and Making Work Pay Tax Credit.

It's Time to Ratify The Law of the Sea Treaty

From Church Women United Action Alert, May 29, 2009. Submitted by Margie Parker

The first annual World Oceans Day is approaching on June 8th. What better time to act to protect the earth's waters and promote peace, security, and sustainability? The Law of the Sea, a widely-supported treaty known as the Constitution for the World's Oceans, needs priority status from the White House before it will be brought to the Senate floor.

Here are a few reasons why ratification will advance U.S. goals:

***Responsible Stewardship.** Ratifying the treaty would put us in a position to further global efforts to protect marine life, conduct research, and prevent marine pollution. U.S. laws are already strong in these areas; if we join, we can urge other countries to fulfill their obligations to keep the seas clean and safe for future generations.

***Peace, Equity, and Security.** No one nation controls the world's vast oceans, which cover over two thirds of the planet. Only through a comprehensive set of rules can all countries maintain their rights to navigate the waters safely and freely. Additionally, the treaty provides legal framework to ensure that disputes on international waters are resolved peacefully.

***Economic Opportunity.** Ratification of the treaty would expand U.S. economic opportunities, but do so with better management for sensitive Arctic ecosystems than currently exists. It would give our nation expanded supervision of an area larger than the continental U.S. It would also allow U.S. businesses to access resources in the deep seabed, within a set of rules that all nations must adhere to.

Ratification of the Law of the Sea Convention will demonstrate U.S. commitment to working cooperatively with the international community and prepare the ground for ratification of other important treaties, including the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Copenhagen Climate Change Protocol, CEDAW (the Women's Convention).

If you would like to encourage President Obama to support ratification, you can call the Whitehouse comment line at 202-456-1111, if possible before 5 pm Eastern on June 8th.



Good Shepherd Covenants

Just Peace, Whole Earth, Open and Affirming

Officiating Weddings

Excerpts from a letter by Rev. Chuck Schepel, circulated to the Illinois South Conference Justice and Witness Team by its Chair Rev. Gail L. Geisel.

Submitted by Margie Parker

Dear Colleagues,

I have seen reports on TV and the local newspaper informing me and others that many San Gabriel Valley clergy will no longer perform marriage ceremonies until that right is available to all. I note the participants are well represented by the UCC. Congratulations to the UCC and each of you for taking a stand on behalf of justice for all.

While I celebrate and honor your public stance and am alarmed at the passage of Proposition 8, I am writing to share my current position and express a pastoral concern. My understanding is that officiating a marriage ceremony by a clergy person covers two functions. There may be more; I'll address two.

The first function is that the officiating clergy person is an agent representing the government (in this case California) endorsing and witnessing a legal agreement between two parties. This act is affirmed by signing a marriage license. As we well know, Proposition 8 has set parameters that define the two people by gender. Terrible and unjust idea!

My argument about the first function is that it entangles church and state. In spite of the historical and cultural baggage, I see no reason why clergy should be conducting the business of the state when it comes to marriage. Let the court issue the marriage license and perform the ceremony and keep religion out of the legal proceeding.

About two years ago, while serving as intentional interim minister at Mt. Hollywood Congregational Church, I publicly stated, with affirmation by church leadership, that I would no longer sign marriage licenses until such time as all couples could be legally married in California. The church, probably because it is an O&A congregation, was most supportive. That action was certainly to support gay marriage; obviously, it was also a statement opposing the legal role of a clergy person in the marriage enterprise.

The second function is the ecclesiastical/pastoral responsibility of officiating at the covenanting of two people between themselves and their God, as they define their Higher Power, in a lifelong relationship of matrimony. That function is not about the state. It is about the role of the church as institution and the pastor as priest offering a blessing upon two people as they enter a holy union. I am concerned that when clergy refuse that role for the sake of state/civil issues they forfeit a pastoral responsibility. My hope is that clergypersons who determine not to perform any marriage ceremonies do so with full knowledge of what they are forsaking.

So it is not simple or easy to serve both state and religious convictions. It is even less easy as we confront contemporary issues of how the state defines marriage and how the popular culture perceives or does not perceive marriage as a holy institution. ...

So we have a calling – to be prophetic and pastoral at the same time. We each decide how to balance those two roles and functions I've described in this complicated 21st century world. I do wish you well in our common struggle for justice in the life of a contemporary church and the spiritual journey of our own lives.



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June 7, 2009

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