



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

United Church of Christ

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July 2009

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"The Wrath of Mortals "

I have been angry all week. I know, I know, I seem like a peaceful and nice guy most of the time, but I can get pretty riled when I hear of an injustice. I am sure a lot of you can too. The past couple of weeks, there have been two big issues that have left me pretty hot under the collar (no pun intended, well, at least not much of one!). These issues are, to wit (don't you just love the phrase "to wit?"), the current budget crisis in Illinois and the protest movement in Iran. Let's take the issue that's a little closer to home first. I am one of many Illinoisans who are furious with the state General Assembly and the Governor for playing politics with people's lives. Playing a political game of "chicken" and using our most vulnerable citizens, who are clients of a number of our state-run or state-funded social service agencies, as pawns in their little chess game is unconscionable! I know a lot of deals have to be made in order for any legislation to pass. I know our state is in a terrible deficit situation and that Illinois didn't get this way over night. Like many of you, I get that; I am not naïve. But threatening to cut social services is NOT the answer!

If the state follows through with this, which at the time I am writing this there are indications that social services cuts MAY be taken off the table, the consequences will be disastrous. Many mentally ill people would be left with no resources and would have to fend for themselves. The same thing goes for a lot of folks with substance abuse problems. A lot of them could potentially get in trouble with the law as a result or possibly act out in ways that might harm other people. No doubt some of these unfortunate individuals would wind up jailed or hospitalized or homeless when, with the proper help and resources, they could continue to live in their communities and keep their conditions under control. Programs for the mentally handicapped and senior adults would be severely impacted as well.

Women's shelters would also be hard hit by these cuts. Critical services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault could be lost. Some shelters would be forced to close; some already have. I could envision a

worst-case scenario in which some women could even be killed by their abusers because there would be no shelter available to them. This is an intolerable situation.

The people of Iran have been dealing with an intolerable situation as well. Just because they wanted to protest what appeared to be a rigged election, scores of Iranian citizens have been threatened, beaten, tear-gassed, and even killed by government forces. Journalists have not been allowed to send reports out of the country. Twitter and Facebook were even shut down by the government in the first days of the protests. The government appeared to not take the claims of election fraud seriously.

These are just people who want to be free and to have the unhindered ability to exercise their inalienable human rights. But those in power are apparently afraid of that level of freedom and are doing everything they can to force Iranian citizens into compliance and silence. The citizens of Iran need our prayers and support.

Yes, such situations make me angry. I have to acknowledge that. But then I must step back a bit. While righteous anger is appropriate in certain circumstances, one must make every effort to monitor and control anger. The book of James, the lone example of New Testament wisdom literature, gives this advice: "You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness" (James 1: 19-20 NRSV).

I believe that is an excellent roadmap for working out disagreements. It is the more "excellent" way of love. It would be awesome if our state elected officials and the leaders of Iran would heed this terrific advice. Listen. Be slow to speak. Be slow to anger. Come to think of it, why don't we all take to heart these wise words?

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.

Choir Rehearsal:

Wednesdays at 6 pm. New members welcome.

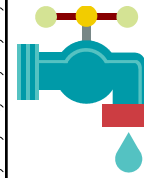
Upcoming Events

July 12: Strengthen the church Offering

July 26: Baba Pool Party

July Birthdays

2nd Karen Castle
2nd Deidre Hughes
3rd Bryan Crow
4th Connie Kramer
10th Dana DeLong
15th Matt Baba
15th Phyllis Landwehr
15th Gary Shepherd
16th Hugh Muldoon
20th Wil Davis
22nd Retha Daugherty
24th Baylen Earles
24th Belinda Cole
25th Cordy Anderson



Green Tip of the Month

Submitted by Bob Tyson

Buy a water filter for your kitchen faucet and put it to good use as a way to eliminate those plastic water bottles that are clogging landfills and burning up energy in recycling plants. About 1.5 million tons of plastic are used on the bottling of 89 billion liters of drinking water each year. (The 2 main brand names are PUR and BRITA at Wal-Mart and Target. Price is approx \$15-20).

Strengthen the Church Offering

Submitted by Gary Shepherd

The Annual Strengthen the Church Offering, one of our 'five for five' offerings of Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) will be taken on Sunday, July 12. The Strengthen the Church funds are used to build our denomination's future through the God Is Still Speaking ministry, new and renewing churches., youth and young adult ministries, and lay and pastoral leadership formation, especially among women and people of color. It is a way to help invigorate our congregations, foster new leaders and grow the

UCC's presence as a community of extravagant welcome. Programs supported through this offering include the Media With A Mission, which spreads the word about churches; supports the work of new church leaders, especially among teens and young adults; and provides assistance to new churches and churches in difficulty, like the Beecher Memorial UCC in New Orleans, which was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. Strengthen the Church provides a great opportunity to help reach out to the many people who have no spiritual home, and show them that a place exists for them within the UCC -- as they say, no matter who they are or where they are on life's journey.

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.

Good Shepherd News

Sierra Club Hikes/Outings

Submitted by Bob Tyson



Bored during the summer? Join my Sierra Club hikes/outings. The Sept.-Dec. schedule is on-line at <http://illinois.sierraclub.org/shawnee/outings.htm>. They will also be posted in the Friday edition of the newspaper before each hike as well as listed at both outdoors stores and SIU Recreation Center base camp.

Welcome the Caravan to Cuba--July 14

Submitted by Margie Parker

The Pastors for Peace Caravan to Cuba will be making its annual stop in Carbondale on Tuesday, July 14. You are invited to join the Caravanistas for a Cuban dinner and live music at the Unitarian Fellowship on July 14th beginning at 5:30 pm. Hot! Sauce, a Latin jam band with Mel Goot and Tom Hensold, will perform at 5:30, followed by dinner. At 6:45 pm

Rev. Tom Smith, president of the IFCO/Pastors for Peace Board of Directors, will share his perspective on the importance of challenging an unjust embargo that asks us to hurt our neighbors.

Three more Caravanistas are traveling with the Caravan and are seeking overnight hosts. If you have some space and would like the opportunity to get to know one or two great people and find out why they're making this journey, call Margie Parker at 549-7193.

Best Wishes...

Submitted by Gary Shepherd

- ◆ Best wishes for recovery to Maggie Baba, who has went through gall bladder surgery, and to Frank Hayes and Lee Hartman as they face various health issues.
- ◆ Goodbye and best wishes to Vern Crawford and Lenore Langsdorf, who are moving out to the hill country of Texas this month. They will be greatly missed. At the worship service on June 28, Terry presented to Vern and Lenore a framed photograph of the congregation taken at the church's 50 Anniversary celebration on May 11, 2008.



Good Shepherd News

Building & Grounds Meeting

Submitted by Richard Cox

To quote EMINEM from his new CD "RELAPSE", "Where do I start and where do I begin." Buildings and Grounds is still ripping right along. The downstairs floor has been replaced. The removal of the rug and glue and the installation of tile came well under the budget the council allowed of three thousand dollars. The entire project was just around \$2500. Lowe's did an all-around great job.

On to other things...Belinda's lawn care is flawless. She makes a very hard job into fun and rewarding to all that help her. We are blessed to have people like Belinda with such positive energy.

Terry is another member that can be counted on to be there. He recently painted the pastor's office and does more than his share of weeding in the garden and watering of the potted plants.

The turnout for our Saturday get together is at times great, but we have to admit usually only two or three people are steady in their participation on a weekly basis. There are many more things that we are planning to do.

The ladies room has a new curtain under the changing station made from recycled fabrics and sewed by hand. That is one of our covenants. Recycling, and we did not use electrical power to sew the curtain together.

The fountain is used during service and on occasion when someone just wants to turn it on for their time in the garden for relaxation or meditation. If someone notices that the fountain needs water, feel

free to ask a buildings and ground person to fill it or feel free to fill it. The birds sure do love the water. The birds are also encouraging anyone that notices when the fountain is low on water to add to it.

We have plans to fix up the two picnic tables, put up a volleyball net, and there are two croquets sets in the shed that would like to see daylight again. There has been some talk about an exercise group forming, maybe with a volleyball net up that could help kick it off.

With great gratitude from the congregation, we thank the people who have helped with building and grounds in June: Belinda Cole, Terry Moore, Janet McCready, John McNeal, Jan Ritzel, Dale Ritzel, Richard Cox, and Deidre Hughes and Brandon Hubley and their little girl, Jolie and their very big friendly dog.

All are welcome, invited, and encouraged to come out on any Saturday between 10 a.m. and noon to share their time with us.



Lowe's worker pulling up the stubborn carpet



Old Fashioned Ice Cream Social August 9th

*Submitted by Peggy Igleheart,
Hospitality Committee*

Mark your calendars for a fun time after church on Sunday, August 9th! We're going to have an old-fashioned ice cream social with homemade ice cream! Since we have such a nice shaded area in the side yard at church, we decided to have it there and then folks who are less likely to enjoy the heat, can spend time

visiting inside in fellowship hall.

This is a potluck, so bring your favorite dish to share and any meat you want to cook on the grill. If anyone has a grill that they could bring for lunch, let me know. Belinda and I will be bringing our grill and we probably need another grill or two to accommodate everyone's food. Hospitality Committee will provide plates, utensils, napkins, cups, ice, and jugs of cold water and lemonade for everyone. If anyone has an ice cream maker and can plan to make some ice cream before hand or while we're ... (cont., page 5)

Ice Cream continued from Page 4

...eating lunch, please let me know. Belinda and I will be making peach homemade ice cream and bringing it to share – so we need two or three more flavors of ice cream to share with the group.

We plan to set up the volleyball net – does anyone have a volleyball they can bring? Let me know. If not, then we can buy one to keep on hand. We also have crochet to play if anyone would like to do that. Of course we'll have our usual games with prizes that will be fun for the young and the young at heart! :) Bring a lawn chair if you want to enjoy the outdoors to sit and chat, cheer on our game-players, or rest after playing games!

Here is the list to help you organize:

- *Dish to share for potluck (this can be the homemade ice cream if you have an ice cream maker)
- *Meat to grill for you and your family
- *Volleyball if you have one (let Peggy know)
- *Lawn Chair
- *Spirit of fun to share with everybody!

This is a family-friendly gathering that has historically been a great time for all and well attended. So, hopefully everyone will plan to join us for some fun and fellowship with our church family! SEE YOU THERE!!!!!!

Caravan to Cuba Collecting Construction Supplies

Submitted by Margie Parker

The Friends of Cuba who organize the Caravan to Cuba are seeking donations of medical, educational and cultural aid, but note that the principal focus this year is on construction tools and materials that are needed for long term hurricane reconstruction.

The following message from Pastors for Peace explains the need:

“Three hurricanes hit Cuba in the fall of 2008. Only 7 people died thanks to the massive evacuation measures undertaken by the Cuban authorities. But the damage to crops and buildings was enormous – estimated to be \$10 billion, which amounts to \$900 for every Cuban. 60,000 houses were destroyed and almost half a million damaged – that’s about 20% of Cuba’s entire housing stock. Cuba has already repaired a quarter of the damaged homes, but they urgently need physical resources – tools and construction supplies.”

The best thing we in the US can do to assist the reconstruction is to get the economic blockade lifted so that the Cuban government can purchase needed supplies that are so close at hand in the US – which is why we in IFCO/Pastors for Peace are organizing a

US-Cuba Friendship Caravan this July to openly challenge the blockade. But as part of the challenge we are collecting tools and construction supplies to take with us as a humanitarian donation.

We are collecting items such as the following:

- * Hand and power tools (110 volt) of all kinds for carpenters, electricians, plumbers, roofers, masons and painters – tools must be in good condition and rust-free.
- * Construction supplies – nails, screws, bolts, washers, plumbing fixtures and fittings, electrical wiring, energy-efficient bulbs, lead-free paint, masonry materials and mixtures.
- * Work clothes – work boots, work gloves, dust masks, protective eye glasses.

The Friends of Cuba are also collecting monetary donations to cover the minimum \$450 cost of sending aid on the Caravan. Please consider donating material aid, which can be placed in the box in the narthex, or making a donation. Checks can be made out to the Peace Coalition of Southern Illinois and sent to 1702 W. Taylor Drive, Carbondale, IL 62901. For more information or to volunteer to help with cooking or packing, call Margie Parker at 549-7193. also some updates from Bread for the World.

Pastor Search Committee Update

Submitted by Peggy Igleheart, Chair



After input from our church family, our conference minister, and many hours of committee work, our church profile is complete. Thanks to everyone for their input and to Sheldon for her guidance during this process. We have also completed the short advertisement that goes out to potential candidates as well as our summary advertisement for candidates who are interested in reading more about COGS. All of this has been emailed to Sheldon Culver, our conference minister. If you would like to read over the advertisements, you can go to the UCC website at www.iscucc.org and look under "Illinois" to find ours.

Sheldon will be adding our ad to the website this week and will be receiving profiles from potential candidates to share with us. She will return to meet with our committee on July 28 to educate us on how to most effectively review profiles and begin interviewing potential candidates. Sheldon has shared with us that there are several candidates who have already expressed an interest in coming to COGS, so our committee is looking forward to finding out more about these candidates and determining which ones we feel are a potential "fit" for COGS.

Once our committee reviews potential candidate profiles, we will determine who we would like to interview and then send them a packet of information about COGS, Carbondale, and the surrounding region. A phone interview will be set up with each person we want to speak with more in-depth and then we will decide who are candidates that we want to meet in person. Those arrangements will be made as the "second round" of interviews for candidates we're seriously interested in considering.

As always, out of respect for all our candidates, we will continue to keep the strictest of confidentiality regarding specific names of potential candidates and appreciate your understanding regarding this. We will continue to keep everyone informed of where we are in the process and welcome any questions or comments from our church family that may arise.

I want to also take this opportunity to acknowledge all the committee members who have been working so hard and put in many hours on a weekly basis to keep this process moving along in a timely way. We are blessed to have such a dedicated and gifted group of folks representing our congregation for such an important task. Our committee includes Retha Daugherty, Chaplain; Bryan Crow, Secretary; Jan Ritzel, Gary Shepherd, Richard Cox, and Erika Peterson. Each has brought their individual gifts and talents to this committee and has contributed to the overall success of our committee work.

Statement of Friendship Sent

Submitted by Terry Moore

A statement of friendship to the people of Iran was sent in behalf of the Church of the Good Shepherd to an outstanding theologian, Rita Brock, to be delivered on a June 30-July 15 trip to Iran. Because

of the dangers right now, Dr. Brock has not been able to leave for Iran. She will go when it is possible and will deliver our statement. She thanked us for the statement. Marissa Winegar first called our attention to Dr. Brock's planned visit.

Geoffrey Black Elected UCC President

Excerpts from articles by J. Martin Bailey and Renee K. Gadoua

The Rev. Geoffrey Black, who has served for nearly a decade as minister of the UCC's New York Conference, was called by election to succeed the Rev. John Thomas as General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. Thomas was ineligible for an additional term.



Black is a graduate of Lincoln University in Pennsylvania and Yale Divinity School. He served as a chaplain at Brown University and ministered in churches in Queens and Hempstead before joining the denomination's national staff in Cleveland, Ohio.

June was GLBT Month

Submitted by Terry Moore

We celebrated our Open and Affirming Covenant on June 7 with a pulpit exchange with the Metropolitan Community Church of Paducah, KY -- a church with a special mission to the GLBT community. (GLBT stands for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender.). Rev. Lillian Ferguson pastor of the Paducah MCC church, preached at our service. Our pastor, Rev. Sam Foskey, preached at the MCC service. The experience was well received at both churches. We look forward to future activities together.

Margie Parker presented a certificate given our congregation by the United Church of Christ honoring our 20th anniversary as an ONA (Open and Affirming) congregation. We were the 24th congregation in the UCC to declare ourselves Open and Affirming.

June 28, 2009 marked the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in New York

City which are generally considered the beginning the modern day movement for equality for GLIBT persons.

We had hoped that the Illinois legislature would pass a bill allowing for civil unions for same sex couples. The bill was swept aside in the legislative scramble to address the current budget mess. We remain hopeful that the house and senate will get back to voting on such a bill.

Meanwhile six states now allow more than civil unions, but real marriages for same sex couples. We remain hopeful that equality for same sex couples will become a reality in the not too distant future.

We are looking forward to planning a picnic for GLBT persons in our area. Those plans are still being formed..

AgJOBS Introduced in 111th Congress

NFWM (National Farm Worker Ministry)
News & Views, Spring 2009.
Submitted by Margie Parker

Most of the workers who hand harvest the crops in our multi-billion dollar agricultural industry are immigrants and the majority lack legal documentation -- despite our dependence on them.. On May 14th, the Agricultural Job Opportunities, Benefits and Security Act -- AgJOBS -- was reintroduced in the Senate by Sen. Diane Feinstein (SB1038) and in the House by Reps. Berman and Putnam (HR 2414). AgJOBS is a bi-partisan bill agreed to by both farm worker advocates and major agricultural employers to address the agricultural immigration crisis. It allows immigrant farm workers to earn the legal right to permanently stay in this country by continuing to work in agriculture and reforms the current H2A guest worker program, providing growers with a stable workforce.

Note -- NFWM encourages concerned citizens to contact Congress to urge support for AgJOBS. The Congressional switchboard number is 202-224-3121.

Good Shepherd Covenants

Just Peace, Whole Earth, Open and Affirming

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 clergy persons 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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