



CROSS CONNECTION

The Newsletter of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ
Published Semi-Monthly
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150 Years and Going Strong



*No matter who you are
or where you are
on life's journey,
you'll find a home here!*

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2010 Confirmation Class Statement of Faith

The United Church of Christ is a non-creedal denomination, which means that you don't have to agree with everything in the Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed, UCC Statement of Faith, or any other creed, in order to be a member. Still, ancient and modern creeds can be helpful as we try to discern throughout our lives what we *do* believe.

In Confirmation, we spend a lot of time talking about what we believe. When the 10th grade students are Confirmed on May 2nd, they will be asked to present their own statements of faith – in the form of traditional statements, music, artwork, or however the Spirit leads them. As preparation for the creation of those statements of faith, our joint 9th and 10th grade Confirmation class spent time on January 23 creating a 2010 Confirmation Class Statement of Faith. The format is based on the Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed, and UCC Statement of Faith, but the students were not allowed to copy exact words from those examples. I think you will find that they are very articulate in their own expressions of belief. Here is what they said:

- We believe in God, who created the earth and heavens.
- We believe in God, the Father or Parent.
- We believe in God, who answers our prayers and listens to us.
- We believe in the almighty and all powerful and all knowing God.
- We believe in the forgiving God.
- We believe in God, who is a part of the Holy Trinity.



- We believe in Jesus Christ, who is the Messiah and Son of God.
- We believe in Jesus Christ, the healer and teacher and prophet.
- We believe in Jesus Christ, who was born of Virgin Mary.
- We believe in Jesus Christ, who died to save us.
- We believe in Jesus Christ, who is a part of the Holy Trinity.
- We believe in the Holy Spirit, who is with us all the time and in our hearts.
- We believe in the Holy Spirit, who fills us with love, joy, knowledge, understanding, kindness, hope, and forgiveness.
- We believe in the Holy Spirit, who is a part of the Holy Trinity.
- We believe in ourselves as children of God.
- We believe in being forgiven and forgiving others.
- We believe in eternal life with God in heaven.
- We believe in doing God's will.
- We believe in being God's hands in the world, by being missionaries to the world, aiding others through hard times, praying for others in need.

We believe these things to be true in the name of the Christ.

~9th and 10th Grade Confirmation Students

Rev. Désirée H. Gold, Pastor

Office Hours
Tuesday—Thursday
10:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m.

Office Phone:
(651) 459-1501

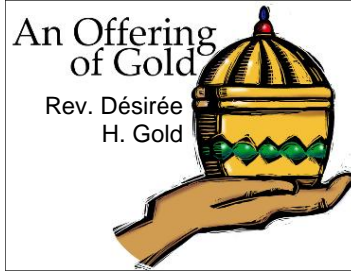
Rev. Gold's e-mail:
pastorgold@inbox.com



PRAY! PRAY! PRAY!

Nita Bertram; Daniel and Eric Bies; Bill and Isabel Board; Bill Bothun; Beth Davies; John and Karen Greenwell on death of John's sister-in-law; Don Hanson; Ruby Hanson; Arlean Kropelnicki; Chris Miller; Joann Nelson; Richard Piel; Sandy Rabe; Jamie and Adam Roberts; Lucy Spicer; Amber Van-Tassel and Derek Rasmussen, married on January 30.

Gary Afdahl; Angie Barta (Doreen Barta's mother-in-law); Vera Ben-shoof (Bonnie Vink's mother); Abi Christopherson (Elaine Mitchell's friend); Patricia Clark (Doreen Barta's mother); Diane (Carole Weitzel Biscoe's friend); Jim Gregory; Obid Hofland (former pastor); Donna Johnson (Gary Afdahl's mother-in-law); Denise Heschke Krech (Marilyn Heschke's daughter); Richard Lara (in prison); Jason Lindemann & family; Fred Minister (Stan Barta's cousin); Joan Peterfeso; David Sauve (Beatrice Sauve's brother); Gene Sauve (Ron Bonnevier's friend); Emilie Stordalen (Pastor Gold's cousin); Elaine Torseth (friend of CGUCC); John Vorlicky (Jamie Roberts' father); Andrew Witherspoon; Lorraine Wohlers; Midge Youngquist's grandmother and mother; victims of the earthquake in Haiti.



Recently several of you have commented to me about the length of our Prayer Concerns list, saying it's longer than ever. Indeed, we have added a lot of names in recent months, while we have not removed many. There are probably several reasons for this. One is that I may have a different policy/rationale for keeping names on the prayer list than other pastors. Another is undoubtedly the fact that more people get sick in the

winter months. Some names may remain on the list simply because we have been unable to obtain updates on those people or because people have forgotten to ask us to take names off the list. Regardless of the reason, it is clear that there are many people in and around our church family who are hurting, and they are all in need of our care and our prayers.

As your pastor, I try my best to reach out to you when you are facing difficulty, and I cherish this opportunity and the time I spend with you. Unfortunately, however, I am only one person, and I have not yet figured out how to visit three hospital patients at once or even how to make pastoral phone calls to more than one person at a time (conference calls don't work great for this sort of thing).

Partly with this in mind, Gayle Korth has offered to assist me in making phone calls and visits. Gayle introduced this idea to you in the last issue of the Cross Connection, and I wanted to expand upon it a little more here to let you know how grateful I am to have her help. She has been around CGUCC a lot longer than I have, which means she knows some of you very, very well. This does not mean that she will visit you in place of me, but it does mean that we will go on some joint visits together (as we did last Friday) and that she can provide me with additional insight on situations about which I may not have been aware. She is kind, compassionate, and as a former parish nurse she has knowledge and skills which can come in handy in many pastoral situations.

I will continue to make my regular pastoral phone calls and visits and to respond to pastoral emergencies as they arise. We will simply all have the benefit of an additional person making these phone calls and visits. The pastor should never be the only person in a church to call and visit members, not just because the pastor cannot be everywhere at once but because as Christians we are called to love and reach out to our neighbors. I know that many of you already do keep tabs on our sick and shut-in members, and I am always thankful to hear you say, "I just visited this person last week," or "You should give this person a call, because I just talked with them and they have not been feeling well." I am now grateful to have Gayle's help with this, and to have the Church Council's approval on our new venture.

May all of you be well...but if you are not, know that God is with you and that we will be here to help you through your struggles.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Gold

Next New Member Class

Our next Membership Exploration class will take place after worship on Sunday, February 7th. If you are interested in joining Cottage Grove United Church of Christ or would just like to know more about how our congregation and the United Church of Christ work, you are invited to join us.



**Become
Part of
Our
Church
Family**

Mortgage Reduction Brainstorm Session

Please join us for a half hour after church on Sunday, January 31 to brainstorm different methods to reduce our church mortgage. We will meet from 11:30-12:00. There are many different things we can do in addition to our successful Scrip program. Help us think of them! Come with ideas!



Installation of Church Leaders

On Sunday, February 7th, we will install our church lay leaders to their positions. This ceremony will take place during the normal worship service and will be a way to formally recognize the ministry of those who serve our church. All new and incumbent members of the Board of Shared Ministries, Church Council, and Executive Team are asked to be in attendance. Please RSVP to Pastor Gold.



Communications/Marketing Team

The Communications/Marketing Team will meet Tuesday, February 2, at 3:00 p.m., and then every first Tuesday of the month at 3:00 p.m. The meetings will be in Pastor Gold's office.



Trash to Treasure Sale Soon

The dates to put on your calendar are April 16 and 17, the two days of the big annual Trash to Treasure sale. Start sorting and saving. We will have space to start accepting things at the church following the annual Palm Sunday breakfast.



American Red Cross Blood Drives

The Blood Drive Team, working with the American Red Cross, has scheduled two future blood drives at CGUCC, one on Thursday, August 19, 2010, and another on Wednesday, January 5, 2011. If you would like to become involved in bringing the blood drives to our church, please talk with Pastor Gold or call Becky in the church office.



With Thanks to All of You

No wonder there's such warmth behind the thanks this brings your way—

Your special kindness brought such joy, it really made the day,

And when a group of people does the thoughtful things you do, it's hard to find words warm enough to thank each one of you!

Thank you all for your thoughts and prayers. All the cards and phone calls brightened my days!

Love, Isabel Board



Administrative Assistant on Vacation

From Friday, January 29 through Sunday, February 7 Administrative Assistant Becky Graff will be on vacation with her family in Florida. If you would like to offer assistance to Pastor Gold in the office during Becky's absence, please contact Pastor Gold.



Cross Connection

A Periodical Newsletter of
**Cottage Grove United Church
of Christ**

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of every month

Edited by Becky Graff

**Back issues available on our
Church web site at
www.cgucc.org**

Submit articles via e-mail at
cgucc@usfamily.net or drop
them off at the office.

Becky Graff, Editor

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Strong Response: UCC's Online Giving for Haiti Surpasses All Previous Records

Written by J. Bennett Guess
January 19, 2010

Giving to the UCC's Haiti earthquake response is shattering previous online giving rates, indicating a generous outpouring from across the United Church of Christ, church leaders say. Within six days of the disaster, a total of \$250,603 has been received from 2,366 online donors. That far exceeds a previous online giving record set in early 2005 when \$112,000 was raised at ucc.org over 23 days from a little more than 1,000 donors to aid victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami.

"It's no surprise that UCC people are being very generous in reaching out to our sisters and brothers in Haiti," says Susan M. Sanders, the UCC's minister for global sharing of resources. "But this unprecedented outpouring also shows that people are remembering to give through the UCC in times of disaster, and demonstrates that we are getting more comfortable with offering our gifts through online methods." The UCC's online tally has more than doubled during the past 72 hours, and Sanders expects giving to remain strong for several days, if not weeks.

The totals, at this point, do not account for off-line — or mailed in — gifts, which are just starting to arrive at the UCC's Church House in Cleveland. "Just this morning, we received a call from the Financial Development office asking for our assistance with opening the mail, because the response has been so great," Sanders says.

Sanders also has heard accounts of incredible generosity among local churches. "I'm just now starting to get reports of congregational offerings, and they appear to be very, very strong," she says. Trinity UCC in Chicago received \$90,000 in special Haiti offerings taken at the congregation's three services on January 18. Peace Congregational UCC in Clemson, S.C., a small new church start in the UCC's Southeast Conference, gave its entire \$700 weekend offering to support Haiti relief.

UCC funds are already flowing to mission partners in Haiti, including support for relief kits organized by Church World Service and funds for medicine and supplies for area clinics provided by Interchurch Medical Assistance. Funds have also been shared with Global Ministries for support of partners, the National Spiritual Council of Churches of Haiti (CONASPEH) and House of Hope. Additional distributions are being made as relief and recovery efforts continue. "Our first task is to pray, then to donate to relief efforts already underway," Sanders told United Church News last week. In response to the many who have inquired about volunteer opportunities in Haiti, Sanders recommends, at this point, a financial contribution to the Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund or volunteering in rebuilding efforts still underway in New Orleans.

"The logistics of getting into Haiti and finding an effective relief activity are very difficult," Sanders says. "World governments, humanitarian agencies and mission groups already stationed in Haiti are responding to needs as quickly as possible, and managing volunteers would only add to the complexity of their efforts." Sanders reminds UCC supporters that while the church responds immediately at times of natural disasters, its commitment to recovery and rebuilding is long-term. "The UCC will be working in Haiti for many years to come, long after the media spotlight has turned elsewhere," she says.

Donations can be made online at www.ucc.org or sent to the Minnesota Conference Office UCC (122 W Franklin Ave #323, Minneapolis, MN 55404). Make checks out to "Wider Church Ministries" and write "Haiti Earthquake Relief" in the memo line.



Kim and Patrick Bentrott Photo



St. Rita's Concert of Joy 2010 - "What a Wonderful World"

To Benefit Friends in Need Food Shelf

Friday, February 5, 7:00 p.m. - The Church of St. Rita, 8694 80th St. S, Cottage Grove MN

Admission will be a free will donation for the Friends in Need Food Shelf. At this time of year, cash donations are preferred to support the food shelf in coming months. Non-perishable food items will also be accepted. St. Rita's music ministries are pleased to have the St. Thomas Aquinas choir join us for this year's performance. Come and celebrate the joy of music and giving!



February

- 1 - Emily Ernster
Veronica Radke
- 2 - Ramona Westerberg
- 6 - Bernice Kuehn
Megan Richter
- 7 - Karen Greenwell
- 8 - Ken Eshom
Renotta Scherr
Carrie Tate
- 9 - Barb Larson
Ava Youngquist
- 10 - Darrin Hunter
Steven Miller
- 13 - Joan Goebel
Amy Howard
- 14 - Julia Biscoe
Karly Biscoe
- 15 - Kathy Hunter
- 17 - Heather Biscoe
- 21 - Christine Eberhardt
Karen Spicer
- 22 - Greg Bonngard
Ken Huber
- 23 - Colton Brown
- 24 - Harlow Radke
- 27 - Evan Murr
- 28 - Kathleen Huber



Evenings at the Bigelow: Art and Soul "Readings and Reflections on Love"

Thursday, February 11, 7:30 PM
Bigelow Chapel, United Theological Seminary



This unique evening of music and readings celebrates the universal themes of love. The musical headliner will be local musician, Leslie Ball, whose first solo recording, *Loring Park*, earned her a Minnesota Music Award for best female songwriter. Leslie's considerable musical abilities are surpassed only by the warmth and genuine love that she shares with her audience. Interspersed throughout the evening will be selected readings on love of family, earth, God, and country, romantic love, love of pets, and more. This popular annual event is always an enjoyable and magical celebration.

Open to the public. Walk-ins welcome,
or you can register by contacting Renee Flesner (651-255-6138).
Fee: \$20.00, Students: \$10.00

Inviting All Young Adults

An Interfaith Panel Discussion among Young Adult Leaders and Activists in Minnesota will take place on Thursday, February 11, 7 p.m. in Sateren Auditorium on the Augsburg College Campus, in the Foss, Lobeck and Miles Center, 625 22nd Ave. South, Minneapolis, MN 55454.



Joint Religious Legislative Coalition and the New Fire Movement are hosting an event to highlight the great work being done in Minnesota for social justice by young adults. This multi-faith panel will discuss the connection between one's faith and working for social justice; how different faith communities approach positive social change; the variations in different traditions' approaches to justice; and each panelists' work for positive change in their communities.

If you know a young adult leader in your faith community who would be a good speaker, please nominate them! The deadline for nominations is January 22nd, 2010. For more information on the event or to nominate a good speaker visit www.jrlc.org. Then plan to attend this informative event, celebrating the leadership of young adults in Minnesota's social justice movement.

United Theological Seminary to Hold Class at CGUCC

CGUCC will be hosting the following class beginning in April offered by United



Theological Seminary. Because we are hosting the class, our church receives two scholarships to attend. If you are interested in attending, please see either Diane Davies or Pastor Gold.

WRESTLING WITH THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AND SUFFERING

The problem of evil and suffering is both ancient and new. How we interpret the problem or challenge of evil and suffering greatly affects how we experience and respond to it. It is in this sense that this course seeks to explore ways of interpreting this phenomenon. It will not settle for easy answers. It will explore alternative theological interpretations of dealing with the challenge.

Eleazar S. Fernandez is professor of constructive theology at United and an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

When: Tuesdays – April 13, 20, 27; May 4, 11; 7:00-9:00 PM

Cost: \$175.00 (early registration) or \$225.00 after March 13

Marvelous Mitten Maker Yarn Raiser

Sponsored by CGUCC Women's Fellowship
Now through February 22nd

Supplies Needed:

Skeins of 4-Ply worsted weight washable yarn, fleece and batting, cash donations, JoAnn Etc. gift cards (available thru Scrip)



MMM was organized 25 years ago to make mittens, scarves, hats, sweaters, afghans, quilts and baby items for the needy. 160 people knit, crochet, sew fleece, gather materials, and wind yarn into balls. Last year they distributed over 16,000 items to kids through the St. Paul Public School System. In addition child and adult items were supplied to the Dorothy Day Center, Union Gospel Mission, and Listening House. Extra items are given to Health Partners for their free clinics, Regions Hospital ER, The White Earth Indian Reservation and the Salvation Army. Items are gathered every month by volunteers and stored at the St. Paul Public School System's storehouse for distribution in October.

MMM uses approximately \$20,000 worth of yarn each year with 80% donated by the knitters themselves. The other 20% needs to be purchased. This is where we come in.

Our goal is to raise over \$1,000 worth of yarn, fleece, batting, and cash or gift cards. Help us to fill up our box, which is located in the Gathering Room at the church. Be sure to see our display and samples. MMM was featured in the Woodbury Magazine in December, 2009. We will bless the MMMs and the recipients of their gifts during worship on February 28.

We are also looking for additional volunteers.

If you have questions, please contact Judy and Ron Bonnevier, MMM Co-ordinators at 651-739-5203 or Elaine Mitchell, Project Chair at 651-459-6298.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone for including me in your prayers and thoughts during and following my surgery at Abbott Northwestern Hospital. Your prayers worked, because the surgery was a success and I am fully recovered.

Kandy Hartson, Pastor Gold's Mother

P.S. Special thanks to the Caring and Sharing Team for the lovely get well card!



“Macbeth” at the Guthrie Theater

by William Shakespeare, directed by Joe Dowling

Tuesday, February 16

Performance at 7:30 PM with panel and audience discussion to follow.



The Guthrie and the Minnesota Consortium of Theological Schools invite you to attend “Macbeth” and a panel discussion titled “Power and Corruption of Power: Reflections on Shakespeare's Macbeth.”

Panelists on Tuesday, February 16:

Dr. Bill Cahoy, Dean of the School of Theology, St. John's University, moderator

Congressman Keith Ellison, representing the Fifth District of Minnesota in the United States Congress

Mr. Peter C. Hutchinson, President, The Bush Foundation; Co-founder, Public Strategies; Independence Party Candidate for Governor, 2006

Dr. Sharon Tan, Associate Professor, United Theological Seminary
Rabbi Marcia Zimmerman, Senior Rabbi, Temple Israel

Coming Up in Worship

Sunday, January 31

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:15 a.m. Worship

11:30 a.m. Mortgage

Reduction Brainstorming Session

12:00 p.m. Fellowship

Sunday, February 7

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:15 a.m. Worship with Installation of Lay Leaders

11:30 a.m. Fellowship

11:45 a.m. Membership

Exploration Class

Sunday, February 14

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:15 a.m. Worship

11:30 a.m. Fellowship

11:45 a.m. Membership

Exploration Class

Sunday, February 21

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:15 a.m. Worship

11:30 a.m. Fellowship

Sunday, February 28

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:15 a.m. Worship with

Blessing of Marvelous Mitten Makers

11:30 a.m. Fellowship

Participating in Worship in February

Head Usher—Rod Heuer

Altar Team—Judy Bonnevier

Communion Preparation—Nancy & Wes Hillman

Participating in Worship in March

Head Usher—Wes Hillman

Altar Team—Yvonne

Bonngard

Communion Preparation—Diane Davies

We need communion stewards for May and June. If you are able to take a turn preparing communion, please call Pastor Gold or Becky in the office.

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STOP!!
If you would rather not receive this news
letter, please call or send an e-mail, and we
will take you off our mailing list. Thanks!



Winter Family Funfest Pot Luck Supper and Talent Show

Saturday February 27, 5:30 PM

**All ages are welcome, from 2 to 92. Come and
share your talent with us.**

**Singing, dancing, instrumentals, comedy, skits, model your
home-made clothes, or surprise us with a hidden talent!**

**Bring your favorite dish to share.
Beverages and rolls provided.**

**Call or email Elaine Mitchell at 651-459-6298
or lainiesue@hotmail.com**

**to sign up to perform or volunteer to help on our committee.
Many hands are needed.**

**The price of admission is a non-perishable item or monetary
donation to the Friends in Need Food Shelf.**

Deadline for performance sign-up is February 21st.

