

The Church Bell

The Newsletter of the

United Church of Christ, Congregational

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September 2009

To all of our members and friends, old and new . . .

The Diaconate Board of the
United Church of Christ, Congregational
requests the honor of your presence at a

Homecoming Celebration

September 13, 2009

Adult Bible Study – 9:00 am
(Reminder: Our children's education programs are on Wednesday nights!)
Morning Worship Service – 10:30 am
Barbeque and Fellowship – 11:45 am

No RSVP required. Please join us and bring a friend!

Greetings Friends,

One of our favorite bible stories: "The Parable of the Good Samaritan" occurs in a section of the gospel when Jesus is describing our relationship to the world (Luke 10). Jesus is approached by a lawyer who poses two very important questions: "What must I do (to inherit eternal life?)" and "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus' answer to the lawyer is the marvelous story of the seemingly faithful people (a priest and an elder) who "pass-by" a man in great need and a hated foreigner (Samaritan) who offers extraordinary love and compassion. This year I would like to invite us to consider the place of our faith in an ever-changing world by focusing on these two challenging questions:

1. *What must I do?* We will think together about how our faith is lived in specific action and personal ministry, big and small, in the world around us (work, family, school, neighborhood, towns, international, creation). What are we doing now and what more would we like to be doing on behalf of our faith?
2. *Who is my neighbor?* We shall explore Christianity's relationship to many of the world's great faith traditions. We shall seek to understand our own faith in light of the tradition of our neighbors. This is an important time in the history of our world for this important work.

Through our worship, education, fellowship and prayer we will nurture and learn ways together to allow our faith to be vital and relevant in the world in which we live. Please take a look at all of the information in this newsletter, finding opportunities for our common growth and good. May God be our guide and goal.
Steve

SEPTEMBER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

September 6
“Wisdom at the Crossroads”
Psalm 8
Communion

September 20
“At the Core”
Genesis 1: 1-25
Baptism

September 13
“All My Relations”
Hebrews 11:39-12:2
Homecoming Sunday

September 27
“Trusting Gratitude”
Psalm 107

UNITED CONGREGATIONAL WOMEN

United Congregational Women will be meeting on Thursday, September 3rd, at 9:30 am. Hostesses will be Joanne Allen and Julie Moen. Thelma Raines will have devotions and a representative from MOPS will be with us to tell about their group.

NEW LOOK FOR TAIZE

As we begin the second decade of sharing prayers in the manner of Taize with our USD community, our worship service will get some new leadership and a new look!!! Rev. Rita Powell, who helped Steve lead the student trip to France last spring, will not only be assuming more leadership for the weekly service but will be organizing a student community who will help facilitate this important ministry. The service will still be held in the Danforth Chapel but will be moving to a new time: **Sunday evenings at 8:00 pm**. Rita spent several months as a permanent member of the Taize community in France, and her vision will surely enhance the power of our musical prayer. Steve and several members of our church family will still be actively involved, and we hope the new time will open the possibility of more participation by all of you. The first prayer service in the manner of Taize this year will be held on Sunday night, September 20th. We hope you will join us.

NEW MEMBERS

On Sunday morning October 18, 2009, we will be receiving new members into our church family. There will be an orientation gathering on Sunday night, October 11th, at 7:00 pm in the Mayflower Room. If you are interested in membership or know of someone who might be, please contact Steve, Elaine or any member of our Diaconate Board.

PERSONAL LEAVE

There are many people from this congregation who are helping to make it possible for me to take a leave for the month of September so I might spend some time in Germany. My daughter and her family anticipate the birth of their second daughter on September 6th and have requested my presence. I am grateful for the opportunity to be with them. I leave on September 1st and will be back in the office on October 2nd. My thoughts and prayers are with you as the next church and school year present new and exciting, spirit-nurturing ministries.

~ Pastor Elaine Miller

SD CONFERENCE UCC NEWSLETTER CHANGE

The S.D. Conference U.C.C. newsletter, “The Observer,” is now available ONLY online. The decision was made in early summer to discontinue any hard-copy mailing but encourage all who are able to receive it via the internet to contact the S.D. Conference office to get on the e-mail list. Send your e-mail information to Karen Peters, Office Administrator, at: kpeters@sodakucc.org.

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE AVAILABLE

The new sound system has the capability of producing a great CD copy of our church’s weekly Sunday worship. It is then delivered to some of our less mobile members. If any other member would like to listen again to a particular worship, or maybe a special anthem, or knows of someone else who would appreciate hearing it, contact Alice Barnes at either (cell) 670-0405 or (home) 624-8320.

WHY LAF NEEDS YOU! WHY YOU NEED LAF!

This year our LAF program turns 10 years old! It has been changed and refined over many seasons, but one constant theme has remained very true about our educational belief within this family of faith: **each of us has something to offer and all of us have something to learn.** This simple idea is the driving force behind our LAF gathering. Whenever we are together amazing educational and spiritual things happen.

One of our goals this fall is to try and get more people involved in our Wednesday nights: not just more families or more small children but more of all of us. We hope to try and convince you that not only does LAF need you but just maybe – you need LAF. Do you have an hour on Wednesday nights that you could share? It might just turn out to be a gift for you!

Here are some roles to think about:

Recess leaders/walkers: (3:00–4:00 pm) we need some adults to meet our Jolley students and walk them to the park for recess/free play then on to the church.

Snack preparers/servers: (3:30-4:30 pm) we need help preparing and serving our after school snacks.

Buyer: (Time at your convenience) we need some shoppers who will purchase food each week for our snacks and meals.

Food preparation: (4:30-5:30 pm) we need folks to help prepare our evening meal (set-up, cutting, cooking). How about Guest Chef? If you would like to plan a meal for the whole gang – we'll provide the support to make it happen.

Food servers: (5:15-6:15 pm) we need folks to help serve and nurture the sharing of our evening meal.

Table host/greeters: (5:15-6:15 pm) we need folks to create a welcome environment at tables for families and children sharing both food and spirit.

Clean-up crew: (6:00-7:00 pm) we need folks to clean up our dining area and kitchen following the evening meal.

Tutors: (5:45-6:45 pm) we need folks to work with older elementary students as they do homework in the Lighthouse.

Story reader: (6:15-6:45 pm) we need a reader each Wednesday in the pre-school room.

Helping hands: (5:45-6:45 pm) we need extra hands with our youngest children as they work through their evening – sometimes parents can't be present and extra hands are needed.

Wouldn't it be a beautiful picture if our usual 125 participants turned out to be 250 because so many of you volunteered to help....what would we all learn about ourselves and each other and the way God works in the world? If you would like to take a chance at volunteering give us a call in the church office.

EXPANSION OF CARING MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

The Caring Ministry Team has become aware of an opportunity to expand its mission of visitation. Several individuals have made it known they are available and willing to provide rides for: appointments, the airport, groceries, errands, events, etc. We are creating a pool of volunteers interested in this particular aspect of the Caring Ministry. Please contact Marj Coker if you would like to be a provider OR if you are in need of such assistance: 605-624-4646 or mccreads@yahoo.com.

GRIEF GROUP

A Grief Group was organized this past year at the request of area Hospice staff. A new session starts on Tuesday, September 8 from 4:00 to 5:30 pm. It is open to all who have lost a family member or friend and may be helped in their grief by its encouragement and support through a group process. It will meet weekly for five weeks at the Sanford Health Center Board Room. There is no cost but registration is requested. Group facilitator is Dr. Chris Roseman, Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Coordinator, Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program, USD. Specific details can be received and concerns addressed by calling Dr. Roseman at 605-677-5842.

VERMILLION FOOD PANTRY

Food items most needed at the Food Pantry are: peas, soda crackers, pancake mix, syrups, jelly/jams, and scalloped potatoes/instant potatoes. There is an immediate need for chunky style soup. Our hope is to fill the four boxes in the church narthex as soon as possible. When you are shopping, pick up a can of chunky style soup.

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Tuesday, September 1

6:00 pm B.C. at Dickenson Home
7:00 pm Boy Scouts (every Tuesday)

Wednesday, September 2

5:30 pm LAF Registration
Adult Choir Sup and Sing

Thursday, September 3

9:30 am United Congregational
Women

Sunday, September 6

10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Coffee Hi
Diaconate meeting
2:30 pm Care Center Worship

Tuesday, September 8

6:00 pm B.C.

Wednesday, September 9

3:10 pm Jolley LAF
5:30 pm LAF
7:00 pm Adult Choir

Thursday, September 10

6:00 pm MOPS

Sunday, September 13

9:00 am Adult Bible Study
10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Homecoming Barbeque
12 noon Confirmation I

Monday, September 14

7:00 pm Mayflower Mondays

Tuesday, September 15

6:00 pm B.C.

Wednesday, September 16

3:10 pm Jolley LAF

5:30 pm LAF

7:00 pm Adult Choir

Thursday, September 17

7:00 pm Trustees meeting

Sunday, September 20

9:00 am Adult Bible Study
10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Coffee Hi
8:00 pm Taize

Monday, September 21

7:00 pm Mayflower Mondays

Tuesday, September 22

6:00 pm B.C.

Wednesday, September 23

3:10 pm Jolley LAF
5:30 pm LAF
7:00 pm Adult Choir

Thursday, September 24

6:00 pm MOPS

Sunday, September 27

9:00 am Adult Bible Study
10:30 am Worship
11:30 am Coffee Hi
8:00 pm Taize

Monday, September 28

7:00 pm Mayflower Mondays

Tuesday, September 29

6:00 pm B.C.

Wednesday, September 30

3:10 pm Jolley LAF
5:30 pm LAF
7:00 pm Adult Choir

Growth Opportunities This Fall

Worship, Music, Education, Spiritual Nurture, Fellowship, and Service

(For information on any activity, please contact the persons listed in parentheses or call the church office: 624-3120)

Faith Education for Children *pre-school – 5th grade* (CE Board/LAF Team)

The Loaves and Fishes (LAF) Gathering

Registration Gathering: Wednesday, September 2, 2009, 5:30-6:30 pm, in the Mayflower Room

First Meeting: Wednesday, September 9 and evenings, 3:12-5:30, 5:30-6:45 pm

Regular Gatherings: Wednesday afternoons and evenings, 3:12-5:30, 5:30-6:45 pm

Music, art, story and ritual will lead us into an experience and an exploration of our faith stories and Biblical foundations. Children are our focus but all ages are welcome. Dinner is served!! Please come to our registration for more information!!

Adult Bible Study (Barry and Mary Vickrey)

First Meeting: Sunday, September 13, 2009, 9:00 am, in the Mayflower Room

Regular Meetings: Sundays, 9:00-10:15 am, in the Mayflower Room

All adults are invited to join this lively conversation about the scripture text for the day. This is a great way to prepare for the message heard in the worship which follows.

MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers) (Mary Hulac)

First Meeting: Thursday, September 10, 2009, 6:00 pm, in the church basement

Regular Meetings: Second and Fourth Thursdays, 6:00 pm, in the church basement

Moms and their pre-school aged children are welcome to come together for fellowship and support in this important program.

Mayflower Mondays Adults (Steve Miller)

First Meeting: Monday, September 14, 2009, 7:00 pm, in the Mayflower Room (UCC basement)

Regular Meetings: Mondays, 7:00-8:30 pm, in the Mayflower Room (UCC basement)

Come join our on-going discussion about the relationship of our faith to the world around us by exploring other religious and spiritual traditions. Drop-ins are always welcome.

B.C. (Before Confirmation!) 6th – 7th grade (Steve Miller)

First Meeting: Tuesday, September 1, 2009, 6:00 pm, pool party at Dickenson's (230 S. Yale)

Regular Meetings: Tuesdays at 6:00 pm, in the Lighthouse

Middle school aged youth will begin to prepare for our confirmation process through study and reflection, service and play. This is a dinner gathering!

Confirmation I 8th grade (Levi Froke, Steve Miller)

Organizational Meeting: Sunday, September 13, 2009, 12:00 pm, in the Sanctuary

Regular Meetings: TBA, in the Lighthouse

Confirmation is the rite of passage when young adults examine their spiritual identities and struggle to find their own path and make their own personal faith decisions.

Taize Prayer Service (New day and time**)** (Rita Powell)

First Meeting: Sunday, September 20, 2009, 8:00 pm, at Danforth Chapel

Regular Meetings: Sundays, 8:00-8:45 pm, at Danforth Chapel

A quiet, reflective evening prayer service using the beautiful music of the Taize Community. A meditative way to mark the new week. All University and Vermillion community are welcome.

United Congregational Women *All Women* (Alice Barnes, Thelma Raines)

First Meeting: Thursday, September 3, 2009, 9:30 am, in Pilgrim Hall

Regular Meetings: First Thursday of the month, 9:30 am, in Pilgrim Hall

A fellowship and learning opportunity for all women in our community.

Senior Choir *9th grade - adult* (Gretchen Burbach)

First Rehearsal: Wednesday, September 2, 2009, 5:30 pm, picnic and sing at the church

Regular Rehearsals: Wednesday evenings, 7:00-8:00 pm, in the choir loft

All are welcome to join our joyful and prayerful song. Childcare will be provided.

Celestial Bell Choir *Adults* (Anthony Burbach)

First Rehearsal: Mid- October, in the Music Room

Regular Rehearsals: TBA – chosen by the group

Our bell choir is a playful way of sharing music with the congregation in a non-stressful environment. Beginners are always welcome. We will be working on special music for the holiday season. E-mail me if you are interested or have questions – burbacao@sanfordhealth.org.

Dinner for Eight Adults (Joanne Allen, Elisabeth Giles)

A wonderful chance to relax with small groups of friends, old and new, to share food and fellowship.

This ever-changing group meets several times a year. More information to come. If you are interested in this group activity, call or e-mail the church office to be added to the list.

Prayer Team (Marj Coker)

Would you be willing to offer a few minutes of prayer each day on behalf of those in our community who have special needs and concerns? This is an important work which helps sustain the pastoral ministry to our church family. To learn more about being a part of the prayer team, contact Marj Coker at 624-4646 or mccreads@yahoo.com.

Caring Ministry Team (Marj Coker)

Our recently launched lay visitation program provides friendship and support to those in our church family whose ability to get out and about is limited. We are expanding our activities to include writing cards and notes and are creating a pool of volunteers willing to provide rides to appointments, the airport, grocery shopping, errands and the like. If you would like to be involved in any of these types of caring ministry, contact Marj Coker at 624-4646 or mccreads@yahoo.com.

Prayer Shawl Ministry (Mantles of Love) (Cyndy Chaney)

Regular Meetings: TBA

Care for others and the love of knitting (and crocheting) have been combined into a prayerful ministry that reaches out to those in need of comfort and solace. Many clicking needles and flying hooks are needed to make these special prayer shawls.