

# The Church Bell

## The Newsletter of the United Church of Christ, Congregational

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### ENCOUNTERS

By Elaine Miller, Assistant Pastor

It's not easy to write this article because in one sense the story is one of privilege that cannot be explained away. In another sense, it is a story of testimony to the realness of the message of our faith which we profess most earnestly in the season of Lent. You will have to be the judge.

I was called to the desk at the gate on the return flight from a recent trip to Florida. It seems that there was an open seat in first class that "had my name on it" because I am now a Silver Elite member with Delta airlines due to the number of miles I've flown in the past year. The flight was completely booked, and my original seat next to my husband was to be reassigned to someone else who was not a Silver Elite member. My husband no longer qualified for Elite status since he had used frequent flyer miles for one of our trips, never mind that my miles had continued to increase exponentially because of his desire to take me to far off lands. He said, "Take it." I said, "I won't do it. I don't deserve it. You take it." The person at the counter said to me, "You have to take the seat. It's a gift to you." I was dumbstruck...there was no disagreeing because the decision was made. Miraculously, I was silent. As the plane was loaded, I took my seat in 2A and Bob took his in 15C – and then I sobbed, using up my entire package of Kleenex, for half of the flight from Fort Myers to Detroit. I was distraught, as weird as that may seem. And then it dawned on me that this was, in a strange way, the Lenten journey story.

I am, we are, the recipients of a generous, undeserved gift of grace that we have not earned and do not deserve. But it is ours all the same because of God's mercy-filled love.

### APRIL WORSHIP SCHEDULE

#### April 3

Lent IV

"It Does Move"

**John 9:1-41**

*Communion*

#### April 17

Palm and Passion Sunday

"The Voice of the People"

**Matthew 21:1-11**

**Matthew 27:15-26**

#### April 10

Lent V

"Jesus Wept"

**John 11** *selected verses*

#### April 24

Easter Sunday

"What Story Do You Tell?"

**Matthew 28: 1-15**

*Bells and Brass*

### WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Women's Fellowship will meet on April 7<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30 am in the Mayflower Room. Hostesses will be Dorothy Blair and Jill Macy. Thelma Raines will have devotions, and the program will be Sara Bye's report on their family trip to Guatemala.

## **HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE – April 17-24**

### **Palm/Passion Sunday – April 17**

#### **Morning Worship**

**10:30 am – sanctuary**

The traditional gospel voices of Palm and Passion Sunday will call us to open our lives to the rich blessing of our passion narrative and invite us into the sacred days of Holy Week.

#### **Taize Prayer Service**

**8:00 pm – Danforth Chapel**

*Our congregation is welcome for Morning Prayer from 8:15-8:45 am at St. Paul's Episcopal Church each weekday morning during Holy Week.*

### **Maundy Thursday – April 21**

#### **Tenebrae and Communion**

**8:00 pm – sanctuary**

Tenebrae is the Latin word that means 'shadows', and with solemn dignity we will share this old service of song, story, and candlelight. A special communion service will be held on this memorial of Jesus' last supper.

#### **Prayer Vigil**

**beginning at 9:00 pm – sanctuary**

Again this year, a unique prayer service is being organized in our church for the hours between Maundy Thursday evening and Easter morning sunrise, April 21-24, 2011. This traditional vigil, which is possible only through the efforts of our entire church family, offers individuals and small groups the chance to gather prayerfully in our sanctuary at various times throughout the Easter weekend. A burning candle is kept lit throughout this time as a sign of our faithfulness as we wait for the hope of resurrection. Our sign-up sheet will be in the sanctuary beginning on April 10th.

### **Good Friday – April 22**

#### **Prayer Vigil continues**

**sanctuary**

#### **VMA Prayer**

**Noon – First Baptist**

#### **Church**

#### **Service of Darkness**

**8:00 pm – sanctuary**

Composer Dale Wood's "A Service of Darkness" is a beautiful musical reflection for choir and organ on the seven last words of Jesus on the cross. Our Adult choir will help us focus our hearts and minds on the powerful story of Good Friday during this simple worship service.

### **Holy Saturday – April 23**

#### **Prayer Vigil continues**

**sanctuary**

#### **Easter Eve Great Vigil (St. Paul's church)**

**8:00 pm – St. Paul's Church**

Our friends from St. Paul's Episcopal Church have invited us to join them in this ancient and traditional service of prayer and the retelling of salvation history for sunset on Easter Eve.

### **Easter Sunday – April 24**

#### **Sunrise Service**

**5:45 am – Clay County Park**

Come and join our morning watch, as we await sunrise and the joyful news of resurrection by the river.

#### **Easter Breakfast**

**6:45 am – Clay County Park**

Like the early disciples, come break bread together with other followers around the fire!

#### **Morning Worship**

**10:30 am – sanctuary**

With bold voices, brass, bells and pipes, we will announce our Easter proclamation, concluding our Holy Week journey.

### **EASTER LILIES**

If you have a lily you would like to share with us this Easter season, you may leave it in the church office during Holy Week to have in the sanctuary on Easter Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>. Please attach your name and let the office know if you would like your lily to be in memory or in honor of someone.

### **ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

The 2011 South Dakota Conference UCC Annual Meeting will be hosted by First Congregational United Church of Christ in Pierre, SD beginning Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> through Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. The theme will be "Rivers of Living Water".

## **SECOND-HOUR PROGRAMS CAPTURE OUR INTEREST**

The next "Second Hour" session will be held in the Mayflower Room on April 10, right after Coffee Hi. Dr. Frank Main will lead the conversation on "Capturing Compassion: Actionable Hope," following a light meal of soup and bread. The "Second Hour" programs are offered as part of this year's Lenten journey, and are sponsored by our church's Caring Ministry. A sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board downstairs though registration is not required. Hope to see you there! ~ Elaine Miller and Marj Coker, Caring Ministry Coordinators

## **VERMILLION FOOD PANTRY**

Items needed at the Food Pantry (located at Trinity Lutheran Church, 816 E. Clark Street):

Jams and Jelly - 18 ozs.	Cold Cereals
Chunky Soups - any flavor	Chicken Soups - rice/noodle
Chili - family size	Tomato and Creamed Soups
Soda Crackers - 4 pack	Pork N Beans - large cans
Rice Meal Packages	Rice - dry white 1# and 2#
Beef Stews - family size	Instant Mashed Potatoes - 18 ozs.
Scalloped Potatoes	Pasta/Spaghetti Noodles - 1# and 2#
Tuna and Hamburger Helper	Instant Pudding/Jell-O
Pancake Mixes and Syrups	Chili with/without Beans
Muffin and Cake Mixes	Toothpaste - family sized
Toilet Paper - wrapped, 4-packs	Hand Soaps - bath size
Shampoo - 6 to 10 oz.	Diapers: sizes 4, 5, and 6
Mixed Fruit – canned	Canned Vegetables
Detergent – small bottles	Canned Pears/Peaches
Mac n Cheese – 7 oz. size	Motel-Sized Shampoos, Conditioners and Soaps are in high need!

Plant an extra row in your garden for the Food Pantry this spring! The Food Pantry accepts garden produce all summer and fall. Think ahead when you plant. They would appreciate it.

## **FYI...WCM AND OCWM**

As I'm preparing to attend the Spring meeting of Common Global Ministries on April 6-8, it seems timely to offer a bit of information regarding the Wider Church Ministry offices that are in part supported by Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) money. I will attempt to provide some insight in the next three issues of the "Bell" regarding resources and opportunities available to any and all of us who relate to the United Church of Christ (UCC). All of these can be perused by going to: [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org). Click on "Index" and surf away!

First of all, each UCC congregation is asked, not required, to contribute to a common fund, OCWM, which is the key means of financial support for the program, administration, and mission work of both the SD Conference and the UCC as a whole. Just one tenth of the \$10,000 budgeted by UCCV for support of OCWM this year is received by the ministry offices at the "Church House" in Cleveland. I am continually amazed at the creative energies found there that can empower and assist us as UCC-ers in our many expressions of God's extravagant welcome. Here are a couple of examples how we can be a part of the global church:

- Florence Coppola and Rev. Mary Schaller Blaufuss work closely in coordinating efforts to provide assistance, physically and financially, through "National Disaster Ministries" and "Volunteer Ministries." Individuals and groups are able to determine how they can best be of help in times of disaster or as short-term mission personnel for specific projects. This is how we donated clean-up supplies following flooding in Iowa two years ago.
- Linda Lawrence is a one person "show" as she manages the relationships between schools, children and sponsors through the "Child Sponsorship" program. It's EVEN possible to travel with Linda to one of the more than 15 international centers as she monitors the progress of the sponsored children and the accountability of the schools. I always get enthused about our global presence listening to her reports. You can, too, by checking out: [www.globalministries.org](http://www.globalministries.org), clicking on "Get Involved," then on "Child Sponsorship."

Thanks for your time. Next month.....Local Church Ministries.

Elaine

### THANK YOU FROM WORLD SERVICE AND SOCIAL CONCERNS

We have heard for years through parents and others who have helped develop our sense of spirituality that one way to be happy is to “count our blessings.” That self-inventory has been the impetus in the formation of the annual appeal for **One Great Hour of Sharing** as the fifty-plus year goal of our ecumenical partners continues: to collect special gifts to assist those in need. These gifts make a difference in the lives of people by providing clean water, healthy food and support in response to equally critical needs wherever they exist. **One Great Hour of Sharing** Funds makes possible disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development aid. Thank you to each one of you who “counted your blessings” by contributing to this year’s special offering.

### VMA LENTEN PRAYER 2011

VMA Prayer at noon each Friday – soup lunch follows:

April 1	First Methodist Church (16 N. Dakota Street)
April 8	St. Agnes Church (416 Walker Street)
April 15	Trinity Lutheran Church (816 E. Clark Street)
April 22	First Baptist Church (101 E. Main Street)

## APRIL CALENDAR

### Friday, April 1

1:00 pm Baking Bandits

### Sunday, April 3

8:15 am Morning Prayer Service

9:00 am Adult Bible Study

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Coffee Hi

Diaconate meeting

5:00 pm Confirmation II

6:00 pm Dinner

6:30 pm Confirmation I

7:00 pm Unitarian Fellowship

8:00 pm Taize

### Tuesday, April 5

6:00 pm B. C.

7:00 pm Boy Scouts (every Tuesday)

### Wednesday, April 6

5:30 pm CE Board meeting

7:00 pm Adult Choir

8:30 pm Meditation

### Thursday, April 7

9:30 am Women's Fellowship

3:30 pm PALS

### Friday, April 8

1:00 pm Baking Bandits

### Sunday, April 10

8:15 am Morning Prayer Service

9:00 am Adult Bible Study

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Coffee Hi

5:00 pm Confirmation II

6:00 pm Dinner

6:30 pm Confirmation I

8:00 pm Taize

### Tuesday, April 12

6:00 pm B.C.

### Wednesday, April 13

7:00 pm Adult Choir

8:30 pm Meditation

### Thursday, April 14

12 noon PALS

6:00 pm Milk 'n' Cookies

### Friday, April 15

1:00 pm Baking Bandits

### Sunday, April 17

8:15 am Morning Prayer Service

9:00 am Adult Bible Study

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Coffee Hi

Trustees meeting

WSSC meeting

5:00 pm Confirmation II

6:00 pm Dinner

6:30 pm Confirmation I

7:00 pm Unitarian Fellowship

8:00 pm Taize

### Tuesday, April 19

6:00 pm B.C.

### Wednesday, April 20

7:00 pm Adult Choir

8:30 pm Meditation

### Thursday, April 21 – Maundy Thursday

8:00 pm Tenebrae and Communion

9:00 pm Prayer Vigil Begins

### Friday, April 22 – Good Friday

12 noon VMA Prayer - 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist Church

8:00 pm Service of Darkness  
Prayer Vigil

### Saturday, April 23 – Holy Saturday

Prayer Vigil

### Sunday, April 24 – Easter Sunday

5:45 am Sunrise Service

6:45 am Easter Breakfast

8:15 am Morning Prayer Service

9:00 am Adult Bible Study

10:30 am Worship

11:30 am Coffee Hi

No Confirmation

8:00 pm Taize

### Tuesday, April 26

6:00 pm B.C.

### Wednesday, April 27

7:00 pm Adult Choir

8:30 pm Meditation

### Thursday, April 28

6:00 pm Milk 'n' Cookies

### Friday, April 29

1:00 pm Baking Bandits