



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

SYNERGY

The Newsletter of the Eastern Ohio and Western Reserve Associations

**Volume 5 Issue 7
August 2011**

In This Issue

Mission: 1 Campaign	1
Moderator's Musings	2
Youth Page	3
Managing Conflict	4
5 Ways to Meditate	6
Financial Summary	7

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Mission: 1 Campaign

Set for 11.1.11—11.11.11

For 11 days in early November, the entire United Church of Christ will make good on its "that they may all be one" motto with a coordinated mission campaign to gather more than one million food and household items for local food banks and marshal its 5,300 congregations to advocate collectively—and loudly—for hunger-related causes, both domestically and around the world.

"In a nutshell, 'One united church on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food-related injustice' is the centerpiece of this major push" the Rev. Geoffrey A. Black, the UCC's general minister and president told United Church News. "If you've ever yearned for the whole UCC to walk hand in hand to achieve a common goal, this is the answer to that prayer."

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In the 11 days, the United Church of Christ will collect more than 1 million items of healthy food and other household items for local food banks and outreach services. In the 11 days, the United Church of Christ will make an extra-special push to gather online contributions of more than \$111,111 for Neighbors in Need. In the 11 days, the United Church of Christ will offer more than 11,111 letters to Congress asking the government to reform U.S. foreign assistance in a way that more effectively benefits hungry and poor people worldwide, helping to provide a major final push to Bread for the World's 2011 "Offering of Letters" campaign.

On Nov. 1, the UCC's homepage at ucc.org will be converted into an online tote board that will tally the denomination's collective count of food stuffs, donations and letters—information that will be updated and celebrated in real time. Churches, as well as individuals, will be encouraged to self-report their participation.

"Our hope is that 'Mission: 1' will prove to be a game-changer in how we think of ourselves as one church in shared mission," said the Rev. Geoffrey Black. "This is a recognition that every local church is a center of mission and collectively we have power to make a huge impact."

Learn more at ucc.org/mission1. Additional materials, including study guides, promotional materials and worship resources are available.

Mission:1
11.1.11-11.11.11

That they may all be **1**

ONE UNITED CHURCH on a shared mission for 11 powerful days to feed the hungry and confront food-related injustice

ucc.org/mission1

Nov. 1-11, 2011

God is still speaking, **UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Moderator's Musings

-Mark Suriano, WRA Moderator

I have had the opportunity to meet with some of you these past few months and am impressed, as always, with your candor and your faithfulness. One thing is clear—that many of you are very interested in being together as the Association in meaningful ways, even though most of you are loathe to consider yet another “visioning process”!

Instead of a broad range process, we will be moving toward vitality by starting first with opportunities to be the Association in meaningful ways and by having intentional and focused conversations on particular areas that affect our lives as members and churches of the United Church of Christ.



In light of all this I invite you to begin to get excited about the Mission 1 effort by the denomination, which the WRA is working on as an Association wide challenge and celebration. Watch for details from the WRA very soon! I also want you to know that a conversation has been joined at Council regarding our continuing challenge and call to be a multi-racial, multi-cultural, open and affirming and accessible to all churches. I am sure that you and your churches will be invited into that conversation as the days progress.

I am also pursuing some resources on discernment and church renewal that I hope you and your churches will find useful as we move further into a new millennia of ministry in Jesus' name.

Thank you for who you are and for what you do!

Education For Ministry

Seminary Based Program

Approved for PIM

Scripture was written from a different perspective in a different time and culture. Slavery was commonplace, people traveled from town to town by foot and science was almost non-existent. So how does Scripture inform us in our century?

EFM is designed to help ordinary Christians see the faith journey of those who have gone before them in a new light. By seeking out the wisdom of the Bible and the insights of great theologians, we can add new dimensions to our spiritual journey.

This program, through the University of the South, is a four year course that covers the Bible, church history and theology. If you are interested, but are unsure of making a four year commitment, don't worry. You only need to commit to one year at a time. All students must begin with year one.

EFM uses the critical, historical method of Bible study and we use theological reflections to inform our daily walk. For PIM credit, year one may be used in place of Introduction to Biblical Study and Old Testament I and II; year two—New Testament I & II; year three—Church History; year four—Theology. If you are interested in making your faith journey with other seekers, this group may be for you.

Don't delay—this could be the most important decision you will make this year.

Although fall is over a month away, now is the time to communicate your interest. We must have your commitment by August 15th so that texts can be ordered. This is a fee based program that costs \$350 per year. We meet weekly from September through May. For more information call Carolyn Chapman at 330-666-4465 or email at crflow-ers1@hotmail.com.

Lay School of the Church

Fall Quarter

This fall, beginning September 14, the Lay School of the Church will be offering UCC History and Polity taught by the Rev. Dr. Rip Noble. This class is mandatory for anyone seeking authorization in the United Church of Christ and is a fascinating and fun class for all persons interested in learning more about the UCC. More information will be forthcoming. If you want to be sure to receive information about the class or have any questions, please contact Joan Ishibashi at jishibashi@wraucc.org.

Also, many people benefitted from the dynamic workshop offered at First Church in Oberlin by author and TV host Phil Cousineau. He is returning to northeast Ohio for a series of events the first weekend in November. More details will be provided in the near future. Joan Ishibashi is the contact person for his visit.

Youth & Stewardship Page

-Margaret Mills, Minister for Stewardship, Education

Youth Calendar

Date	Event
October 6, 2011	EOA/WRA Educators/Youth Leaders Gathering at Gerry's House. Watch for details to follow, but save the date.
November 18 - 20, 2011	Ohio Conference Senior High Fall Youth Event. Held at Pilgrim Hills and using Justice LED resources. The theme is <i>Let Justice Roll</i> based on Amos 5:24 - "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever flowing stream." Musicians: Andra Moran and Stephen Daniel King. For more information or questions regarding the event, please email Bree at blee001@defiance.edu or Margaret at mmills@wraucc.org .
January 27 - 28, 2012	It's Your Turn: Youth Leaders Lock-In. EOA/WRA and open to the Ohio Conference. This year we'll be back at the Radisson and the National UCC Church House in Cleveland. Program begins after supper on Friday and ends at 3PM on Saturday. Save the date!
March 3 - 4, 2012	EOA/WRA Junior High Retreat at Pilgrim Hills. Yes, it's Saturday from 10AM to Sunday 11:30AM. The theme will follow the Fall Youth Event <i>Let Justice Roll</i> and the Amos 5:24 scripture.
March 16 - 17, 2012	Ohio Conference Educators and Youth Leaders Gathering. This will be held at Tempel Hills.

If you have events you would like to advertise on our Youth Page, please send them to Margaret at mmills@wraucc.org.

Great Lakes Association of United Church Educators: G.L.A.U.C.E.

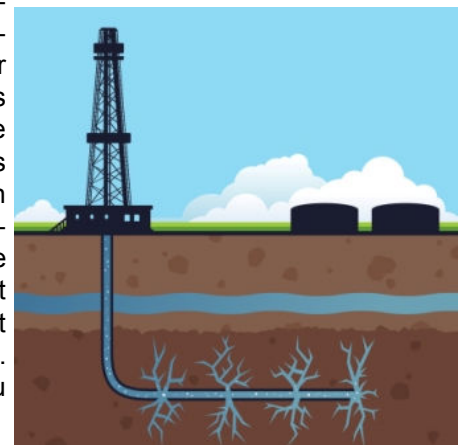
You are invited to the annual GLAUCE event to be held October 11 – 13, 2011 at Potawatomi Inn, Pokagon State Park, Angola, Indiana. The theme is *The DNA of an Inclusive Church*. The goal is to explore the integration of hospitality in the teaching ministry. How can we impact the local church to understand its role as teaching ministry? How do we assimilate and deepen the relationships of adults, youth, and children into congregational life? Scripture focus is Hebrews 13:1–2, 8: *Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

The keynote speaker is Steve Clapp, President of Christian Community, Inc. Workshops offered include Faith Practices 101; Confirmation Conundrums; Justice LED; Milestones; Personal Care Boundaries; Belonging: Getting People Connected and Helping Them Stay That Way. All this plus the chance to share and fellowship with others in our Great Lakes region should encourage you to participate. For more information, contact Marilyn Freeman at pilgrimce@ameritech.net.

Environmental Justice

WRA Church in the World presents the third in a series of justice events—Environmental Justice.

On September 29, 2011 we will meet at Old South Church (9802 Chillicothe Road, Kirtland, OH 44094) to share ideas and hear information on Environmental Justice. Church in the World members will meet at 6:30PM. The program, which is open to everyone, will be from 7:30PM to 9PM. Part of the discussion will be on the practice of fracturing rock in an attempt by the gas companies to extract gas from underground deposits. Unfortunately, all the information points to the damage the practice (known as fracking) does to the underground water tables. Come and hear information on this practice and share ideas for action steps as is happening in New York and Pennsylvania. For more information, contact Margaret Mills at mmills@wraucc.org. Hope to see you there!!



Managing Conflict

The Medina United Church of Christ is serious about dealing with conflict whether it occurs in our personal lives, in our churches or in our communities, nation and world. Conflict does not have to rip us apart or leave irreparable wounds. Instead, we can learn how to “fight fair” and minimize damages conflict can inflict.

The church is offering *Managing Conflict*, a course to equip persons with the understandings, tools and skills to manage conflict when it occurs. The course includes four intensive and interactive sessions and will be held bi-weekly October 6 through November 18. All sessions will run from 7PM-8:30PM and will be held at the Medina UCC, Liberty and Broadway, on the Square in downtown Medina.

Who Should Attend?

- ◆ Those who are not currently involved in a heated conflict and want to act BEFORE conflict gets out of hand.
- ◆ Those seeking to prevent high levels of conflict.
- ◆ Anyone seeking to improve their relationship skills.
- ◆ Clergy and other church staff.
- ◆ Lay leaders of congregations.
- ◆ Community leaders and members of community organizations.

“You don’t have to hold onto your pain for fear that you won’t have any left for the next decade!”

Managing Conflict will be led by Gene Kraus, ordained UCC minister, member of Medina UCC and congregational consultant. He has extensive experience managing conflict in churches and teaching reconciliation skills.

For more information and a registration form go to <http://eoaucc.org> to download the flier.

Synergy Goes Digital!

That’s right! *Synergy* is going digital. Please complete the form below and indicate if you’d like to receive *Synergy* in your email or if you’d rather continue to receive a hardcopy in regular USPS mail. Send the form to:



EOA/WRA Support Center

2560 Clearview Ave. NW

Canton, OH 44718

Or you can email your preference with all the info requested below to support.center@eoaucc.org.

Please make the subject: *Synergy* Goes Digital

I’d like to receive *Synergy* as an email as a hardcopy delivered by the USPS remove from mailing list

PLEASE PRINT

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

We Can Be Christ to the World

**-Ron Dauphin, Pastor,
Olmsted Community Church**

Olmsted Community Church in Olmsted Falls is blessed by the wider ministries of the UCC in many ways. This year alone, we've gotten great curriculum and worship resources from *Faith Practices*, called on Ohio Conference staff for leadership and stewardship guidance, borrowed books from the *Gerry's House* library, sent our kids to Lott's Creek on a mission project, planned a fall mission trip to India with Global Ministries staff and cheered our youth on their way to regional events. Visitors come to worship because they find us through the www.ucc.org website. Association staff help solve problems and our WRA program group keeps me connected to other pastors for sharing and support.

It's our privilege to give back through **Our Church's Wider Mission**, knowing that we're also making a difference in other churches, neighborhoods, outreach ministries and justice programs. By strengthening the connections, together we can be Christ to the world.

EOA & WRA Clergy and Guest Golf Outing Makes Tsunami Relief Effort

-Rev. Eric Walch

On June 6th, 15 golfers gathered at Zoar Golf Course for the annual spring golf outing. This year, the Mulligan Tournament raised \$75 for Japanese Tsunami Relief. All who gathered enthusiastically supported the new twist on the



day with each flight declaring a winner. Rev. Barry Bordenkircher got a closest to the pin as did Rev. Jeff Shultz. Winners of each flight were Reverends Jeff Shultz, Wally Scofield, Eric Walch and Arnie Klaiber. Rev. Ed Thurmond won the belly putter for golfer in the greatest need for an improved putting stroke. Rev. Don Nichols was the best golfer

with a yellow ball. Rev. John Brownsberger got the come-back award from surgery. Rev. Joyce Morris won her division and plans to bring more people from Western to the next tournament. Birdies were recorded by Rev. Earl

Robert, Eric and Jeff. Rev. Bill Rodefer was honored for the most accurate driver of the ball. All who attended had a great time and look forward to the fall tournament.

Fiesta de Esperanza

-John Muskopf

Paradise UCC in Louisville, Ohio is happy to announce their Fiesta de Esperanza, or "Festival of Hope" scheduled for 3:30-6:30PM on Sunday, October 16. It will serve as an introduction to the mission trip to Tijuana Mexico, endorsed by the EOA Department of Church in the World.



The trip will take place in February, 2012 and will give its participants an up close and personal look at our country's nearest neighbor to the south. We'll spend a week building a concrete home for a deserving family, sharing meals with them, visiting the border area and interacting with social service agencies in the Tijuana region.

It is open to members of any church in the EOAWRA and will be led by two men with significant experience in this mission.

Come to the Fiesta and learn all the details about the trip. There will be presentations and a meal. If you would like to help prepare the meal or have any questions about the Fiesta, ask for Marita Hahn-Royer at Paradise UCC, 330-875-2677. We will be giving you more information about the trip in future issues, but you could check out these web sites today: www.esperanzaint.org or <http://www.youtube.com/user/trinityuccwooster#p/u/9/HsQReMN2EAI>.

The Oldest Church in the Western Reserve

The first UCC congregation in the Western Reserve. The First United Church of Christ, Austinburg, will celebrate 210 years on Sunday, October 23, 2011. Please hold this date to celebrate with special worship and a reception.

Settlers began arriving in Austinburg in 1799 from Connecticut. Rev. Joseph Badger preached the first sermon here in August, 1801. When he returned on October 24, 1801, they formed the organization with 16 charter members. In 1811, Rev Giles Cowles traveled from Connecticut to answer Austinburg's call as the first settled pastor.

You may contact Rev. Allison Milligan at the church at 440-275-5125, or the church historian Virginia Seifert, at tgseifert@windstream.net with comments or corrections.



This photo is of the Ohio Conference General Synod delegation taken in Tampa, FL in July.

You can watch a Summary of the General Synod at any of these sites:

<http://www.wraucc.org/eaucc>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9RbfRxHQB0k>

<http://vimeo.com/26427280>

5 Ways to Meditate

-Teresa Blythe

Meditation is a spiritual practice that can draw us deeply into the heart of God. It's also good for the brain! When we meditate, we concentrate on one thing so that our thoughts aren't racing around pulling us places we don't want to go. So set a timer for 10-20 minutes, set your intention to drawing closer to God, and try one of these five simple ways to practice meditation:

1. Breathe in for 4 counts and out for 6-8 counts. Concentrate on your breathing. When your mind wanders to something else, gently return to your counted breaths.
2. Choose a sacred word. Sit in silence as you breathe quietly and evenly. When your thoughts begin to race, gently return your attention to your sacred word.
3. Choose one of your senses, such as hearing, to concentrate upon. Do nothing but listen to the sounds around you. If you start to judge or interpret the sound, simply return to listening. Be fully in the moment, listening.
4. Imagine your mind is a stage and thoughts are actors who jump on the stage one at a time. You are the director and have asked for the stage to be empty. When a "thought actor" jumps on the stage, gently ask it to move off. Imagine all the actors remaining quietly seated in the audience, meditating with you.
5. Walk slowly and silently outdoors. Concentrate on looking at all that is around you without judging or interpreting. When your thoughts start to wander, bring them back to the direct experience of walking, breathing, viewing and sensing.

Our Prayers and Sympathy



Our prayers and deepest sympathy are extended to Margaret Borrelli on the passing of her beloved dad, Ronald Gibson. Margaret is the former Director of Gerry's House, Faith Formation staff person at Church of the Redeemer in Westlake and the Convener of the Partners in Education for the Ohio Conference. Please keep Margaret and her family in your prayers as this is the third loss of a close family member this year.

Please keep Lori Wick, Educator at Paradise UCC in Louisville, in your prayers as she recently lost her mother. Lori has been active in the association and has hosted a number of youth and faith formation programs at Paradise.

Churches in Transition

(* denotes churches who are receiving profiles)

Eastern Ohio Association

- Atwater Congregational UCC (Atwater)
- Bethel UCC (Beloit) [On Hold]
- Edinburg UCC (Ravenna)
- *Grace UCC (Canton) *Part Time*
- Grace UCC (Uniontown)
- Richville UCC (Navarre) *Part Time*
- *St. John UCC (Bolivar) *Part Time*
- *St. Paul (Port Washington)
- *St. Paul's UCC (East Canton)
- St. Peter's UCC (Apple Creek)
- *Stow Community Church (Stow)
- Suffield UCC (Suffield)
- Trinity UCC (Canal Fulton)
- * Zion UCC (Hannibal)/Immanuel UCC (Clarington)



Western Reserve Association

- *Bainbridge Community UCC (Bainbridge)
- *Burton Congregational UCC (Burton)
- Claridon First Congregational UCC (Huntsburg)
- Community UCC (Shaker Hts.)
- Community UCC (Solon)
- *Dover Congregational UCC (Westlake)
- Fellowship UCC (Wickliffe) *Part Time*
- First Congregational UCC (Berea) [On Hold]
- *First Congregational (Lorain) *Part Time*
- *Pilgrim Christian Church (Chardon)
- Strongsville UCC (Strongsville)
- Unionville UCC (Unionville)
- West Park UCC (Cleveland)



Vital Signs



EOA Vital Signs

As of June 30, 2011

Total actual income for operations	\$263,683.65
Total actual expense from operations	\$302,605.21
Difference	(\$38,921.56)

WRA Vital Signs

As of June 30, 2011

Total actual income for operations	\$343,076.66
Total actual expense from operations	\$379,724.01
Difference	(\$36,647.35)

We wish to thank you for your continued giving to Our Churches Wider Mission!

Coming Events!

Day With God & Self is a day-long retreat on Saturday, Sept. 10 offering an opportunity for reconnecting with the Holy. Spiritual direction and Reiki (at \$10) will be available during the day. Cost is \$30 for the day. Add \$40 if you would like to come the night before. For registration call the Ohio Conference office at 800-282-0740, or on line at ocucc.org. For more information call Janet Burkhart at 330-682-3791.

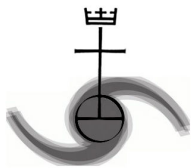
Widening the Welcome 2: Inclusion for All. September 29 - October 1, 2011 at the Doubletree Hotel, Columbus. There will be education about mental illness and disabilities, ways to promote awareness and accessibility in your church and more. Keynote speakers will be Thomas Reynolds, Carolyn Thompson, Christine Guth and J. Bennett Guess. Visit www.wideningthewelcome.com for more information.



Found and Forgiven - The Musical. Come to this inspiring musical Saturday, November 5th at 3:00PM and 7:00PM at Trinity UCC, 915 N. Main St., Akron. It's a musical by our own Rev. Sharon Alberson based on the story of the Prodigal Son. The event is sponsored by the Urban Ministry Group of the Eastern Ohio Association. Tickets are \$10 Adults, \$5 Children 10 and under; \$5 Spaghetti Dinner (4:30-6:30pm).



WRA Fall Meeting. The fall meeting for WRA clergy and delegates will take place on Saturday, November 5 at Faith United Church of Christ, 575 Richmond Road in Richmond Heights. Northeast Ohio's Connie Schultz, Pulitzer prize-winning author and columnist for the *Plain Dealer*, will give the keynote address.



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