

COMMUNIGRAM

VOLUME 39, ISSUE 14

AUGUST 15, 2007

FROM THE PASTOR

I believe one of the major tasks mainline congregations have left to traditional church government and local church tradition is “discernment.” We go along doing “good and noble things” without asking who we are in relationship to the world, to our local community, or even who we are in relationship to ourselves. We join because we like the folk and the folk seem to like us. We stay because we feel like we belong, or the congregation helps us get some of our needs met, or because we like our identity in relation to the congregation, or because we are able to accomplish something through the congregation, or, maybe if we are lucky, we stay because all of those things are present for us. Asking big, community questions is something from a bygone era. Discernment was something we did long ago.

In Diana Butler Bass’ book, *The Practicing Congregation*, Bass sees a number of vital congregations who are bucking the downward spiral trend of many mainline congregations. Bass believes the starting point for these vital congregations is to assume we live in a post-Christian setting, and that we will never go back to the privileges once granted to us by the established culture. Discernment is the primary Christian practice these vital congregations use to buck the trend.

I believe we are slowly developing into a “practicing, vital congregation.” The basis for our discernment is coming out of work we continue to do with our identity and work we are doing to discern a new path for our church government.

We are becoming more and more United Church

of Christ as we participate in National Youth Event in Knoxville, Tennessee, march in Fourth of July parades, send four women to the Mix in ‘06 Annual Women’s Event in Indianapolis, and send twenty-four youth, young adults, and adults to the General Synod in Hartford, Connecticut. One of the more incredible stories out of our recent General Synod delegation was that Brent Anderson and Caryl Henkel attended their first General Synod. Brent’s mother and Caryl’s daughter, Mary Anderson, attended the 25th General Synod. Brent’s great-grandmother, Mary’s grandmother, and Carol’s mother, Elizabeth McClure, attended the first General Synod. That is not an extra credit logic problem, that is an incredible legacy! Out of our General Synod experience, we shall shine a light on

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Vacation

Rev. Mike Mulberry will be on vacation from Saturday, August 18 through Saturday, August 25. If you have a pastoral emergency, please contact Rev. Deborah Owen at 398-8600 or 442-2915.

MODERATORS MUSINGS

Summer is almost over and September is coming, so it's time to get serious. With only four and a half months left in my tenure as moderator, CUCC still does not have a moderator-elect. The position of moderator-elect does not really carry much responsibility, so the

problem must be that the moderator-elect becomes the moderator after one year. After the Church Life Board meeting on Thursday, I spoke to Deb Townsend about why the Nominating Committee was having such a hard time filling this position and her response confirmed my suspicions. She

said that everyone knows what a huge job being moderator is.

The official constitutional description of the moderator's job is as follows:

A Moderator to be elected at the Annual Meeting and to serve for a term of one (1) year as Moderator-elect, one (1) year as Moderator, and one (1) year as

past-Moderator. The Moderator shall be the Executive Officer of the Church, shall preside at all meetings of the congregation, shall be chair of the Church Life Board, and shall make a written report of the year's work at the Annual Meeting of the Church. The Moderator or persons (preferably members of the

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Community UCC and justice for children.

We are becoming a focal point for justice and peace ministries as we continue to run the longest running protest in Champaign-Urbana (The campus refers to us affectionately as the "granola church" for our "Food for Thought" handouts each Wednesday.), hosted the "War Made Easy" movie with a talk-back with the author, Norman Solomon, following, and we also are the host church for the New Sanctuary Movement in Champaign-Urbana. Our children not only donate to Humane Borders but can articulate what Humane Borders does and why they do what they do. This past spring we celebrated close to twenty-five families who are part of a Community Supported Agricultural

shares, and we continue to have important discussions centered around food, faith, justice, and immigration.

We are becoming more and more of a safe haven for LGBTQ individuals and their families. One of our most wonderful community groups is the LGBTQ group. This past winter we studied an award-winning curriculum on sexuality and scripture and viewed the movie, "Call Me Malcolm." We have surrounded and supported Ms. Jennifer Little and her journey toward ordination which culminates this fall with her ordination at our church on Sunday, September 23. Throughout her ordination process, Community UCC stood with Jennifer, advocated on her behalf, and now seeks to celebrate the gifts she brings to ministry as a leader among us.

We are becoming more and more of a progressively Christian church as we reasoned with Rev. Michael Montgomery, who came from Chicago Theological Seminary, to share what it means to be "liberal" or "progressive" in this day and age. This fall we will begin evening circle studies with a curriculum from The Center for Progressive Christianity entitled, "Living the Questions."

Through leadership and good work that has been done and is continuing, we are changing the financial culture of our church. We are openly talking about our finances and how we might chart a healthy path. Congregational leadership is also helping us to envision what we might do with our building and space in a way that is faithful and consistent with how God is still speaking in our world.

As we discern who we are as a progressively Christian, LGBTQ Open and Affirming, Just Peace, United Church of Christ congregation, we are becoming. My hope and prayer is that we will move from being a practicing and vital church to a church that not only has the word "justice" on our lips but also becomes a part of every single relationship within our community. For that to happen, we will need to actively seek out relationships with the poor of our community and the poor of the world. They will whisper to us the ways that God is not only speaking but the ways God is working. But for now.....we are becoming.

Shalom,
Mike

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT CUCC

8/18, Saturday ~ 9:00 am Women's Book Club *Espresso Royale* by Krannert

8/19, Sunday ~ 9:30 am Worship at Crystal Lake Park with potluck afterwards; **No Youth Group tonight**

8/21, Tuesday ~ 5:00 pm UCF Welcome Back Dinner

8/22, Wednesday ~ 11:45 am Prayer Protest; **6:30 pm** Chime Rehearsal (S)

8/23, Thursday ~ 9:00 am Bulletin Deadline; **9:30 am** Preschool Play Group; **8:00 pm** AA (FH)

8/25, Saturday ~ 9:00 am Women's Book Club *Espresso Royale* by Krannert

8/26, Sunday ~ 9:30 am Worship (S); **9:30 am** Nursery (N); **10:30 am** Coffee Hour (P); **11:15 am** New Sanctuary Movement House Party; **6:00 pm** CUCC Youth Group

8/27, Monday ~ 10:00 am Communigram Deadline

8/29, Wednesday ~ 11:45 am Prayer Protest

8/30, Thursday ~ 9:00 am Bulletin Deadline; **9:30 am** Preschool Play Group; **8:00 pm** AA (FH)

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Church Life Board) designated by the Moderator will be one of the delegates to the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ, the Eastern Association of the United Church of Christ, and to the Sunrise Cluster. The Moderator is empowered, in consultation with the Pastor, to designate persons to represent the congregation in meetings, committees, associations, United Church Foundation Board, and the like when participation of the Community United Church of Christ has been approved by the Church Life Board.

BEING MODERATOR IS RIDICULOUSLY EASY!

It is much easier than being PTA President or Community Life Calendar Keeper. Being moderator is so easy that sometimes I feel like I've forgotten something and I have to reread the constitution just to be sure that I'm doing it right. I've started volunteering for extra duties just because I feel guilty watching the Schnuers work so hard.

I think that the misconception comes from the fact that

under the previous polity being moderator was an extremely time consuming job. Not only was the moderator performing the job of parliamentarian, they were expected to negotiate contracts, work on the budget, and be the catch-all person for every job that wasn't being done by somebody else, because so many decisions were made at the Church Counsel level. Thanks to the Many Gifts Polity, things don't work that way anymore.

Most of the really difficult jobs that involve contracts and finance have been divided up among the members of the Sound and Ethical Practices Identity Team with Richard and Susan Schnuer as the coordinators. The moderator is still expected to sign contracts and keep up with the activities of this team along with all the other teams but not at the micro-managing level of previous years.

Aside from running our monthly CLB Meetings and occasional Congregational Meetings, I spend most of

my time as moderator acting as a gatekeeper and cheerleader. Members of the Congregation come to me with their problems or concerns and I try to help them figure out which team will be best able to help them. I have also spend some time this summer trying to make sure that things that were left over from the previous polity have not fallen through the cracks in the transition to the new polity; things like did the chimney ever get tuck-pointed.

So here are some qualities that I think are important in a CUCC moderator. If you possess at least some of them, please call me with any questions that you have. I promise I will not twist your arm.

The ability to get out of the house one evening per month

The ability to open email and reply.

The ability to remember things, write things on a calendar, and occasionally go through several weeks of accumulated papers (usually when memory fails).

Desire to read the CUCC Constitution from start to

finish and occasionally refer back to it.

A reasonable knowledge of parliamentary procedure. (Everyone else on the CLB has some knowledge as well, so between us we usually figure it out).

A sense of humor and ability to accept well intentioned advice. As of yet, I have heard no criticism.

The ability to let those more talented than yourself get on with things without be micromanaged.

That's it. That's all there is to it. YOU TOO CAN BE A MODERATOR! And if you ever get stuck, the past-moderator is there to help. The real work of the Church Life Board is being done by the Board members, not the moderator, so the next time you see any of the following CLB members, please say thank you: Becky Duffield, Michelle Franke, Ruth Gilbert, Ellen Kordik, Peggy Wade, David Wilcox, Richard and Susan Schnuer, Jennifer Kelleher, and David Gertseneker.

Vicky Robertson

Soon to be past-moderator



Rally Day 2007

Sunday School Kicks Off on September 9th

9:00 am until 10:00 am

Children:

- Bring your Bible
- Bring your enthusiasm & sense of adventure
- Bring your parents

Join us down in the Fellowship Hall as we go through the different stations on Rally Day!

CUCC YOUTH GROUP

Calling all 6th – 12th graders! We hope that you will join us each week as we gather. Typically, we gather from 6-8 pm in the Tower Room, although during the summer we are just as likely to gather at one of the area parks or pools.

We have good things in store for the fall, and we hope you'll put us on your calendar and make a commitment to join us!

August 19th: Vacation

day, no Youth Group.

August 26th: We're helping with the New Sanctuary Movement Dinner at 11:30, following church. We'll gather downstairs to help set up tables, do the decorations, as well as serve beverages, etc.

Don't forget, your Eastern Association Youth Event Registration Form is due today!

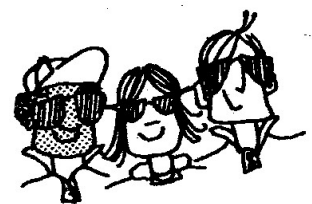
Sept. 2: Labor Day, No Youth Group

Sept. 9: Our New Year Kick-off. Have we got fun in store for you! 6-8 pm at church.

Sept. 14-16, Eastern Association Youth Event!

Sept. 23: Our own Jennifer Little will be ordained at 3 pm. I'd like for us to be present to support her and celebrate with her.

Sept. 30: Expectations, communication, and surviving! 6-8 pm in the Tower Room



SUNDAY SCHOOL KICKS OFF ON SEPTEMBER 9TH!

During the coming year, we will be going on an amazing journey. We'll travel with Abraham and Sarah through their desert home. We'll walk with Mary and Joseph as they look for a home for their new baby. We'll remember our ancestors through an ancient meal, and we'll be swept up by the wind and fire of the Spirit!

Join us on Sept. 9th at 9:00 am as we prepare for this journey. We'll prepare backpacks for the journey; we'll look to our Bibles as a map for the way, and we'll celebrate our families as our strength for the journey.

What do you need to do to join the excitement? Join us on Sunday morning at 9:00 am in the Fellow-

ship Hall. We'll have the resources and supplies. Bring your Bible, your enthusiasm and your sense of adventure!

Parents, we'll need you to join us also. You will be asked to escort your child through the different stations. Get your coffee, and join us at 9:00 am in the Fellowship Hall.

IT TAKES A CONGREGATION TO RAISE A CHILD...

And we need your help. We are still looking for a number of people to assist in our Sunday School program.

We need Shepherds to serve for 1 semester. These are the people who accompany a class to the different Rotations each week. Shepherds don't have responsibility for lesson preparation. Rather, they are the ones who really get to know the kids, and are available to help out with extra hands.

We need Rotation Leaders also. These are the people who agree to teach for a 3 week session. You are responsible for teaching a lesson with a single focus to the 3 different age groups (curriculum is easy to use and allows for lots of creativity!).

We are also looking for someone to co-teach the Preschool Class. We have a wonderful teacher, Susan Requa, but need another person to work with her.

Finally, we are looking for a few brave souls who would be willing to help us with something a little different. We are looking for folks who will teach 3 different sessions to one age group.

If you would like to join the fun and excitement, if you want to be part of this journey of faith, then please let Tracy know. We have a place for you!



INTRODUCING A NEW CHILDREN'S CHOIR AT CUCC

We are very excited to offer a children's choir for the children at CUCC ages kindergarten through 5th grade. Audrey Vallance has offered to lead this choir. Below you will find a registration sheet. Please be sure to let us know which time is best for rehearsal for your child.

Please bring this form with you on September 9.

Registration Form K-5 Children's Choir

Child's Name: _____

Address: _____ City & Zip _____

Phone Number(s): _____ Email Address _____

Name of Parent or Adult Contact: _____

Please pick one of the following times that is best for the weekly Children's Choir rehearsal:

_____ Sundays following worship 11:45 am until 12:30 pm

_____ Sunday evenings 5 until 6 pm.



PRAYER CHAIN IN THE FUTURE OF CUCC

My Dear Friends at CUCC,

Then a priestess said, speak to us of Prayer.

And he answered, saying:

When you pray you rise to meet in the air those who are praying at that very hour, and whom save in prayer you may not meet.

*I cannot teach you how to pray in words. God listens not to your words save when he himself utters them through your lips.*¹

Prayer is a powerful way to connect us to God and to one another. In a congregation, a prayer chain is a way to further the words and life of God. Through the prayer chain, all of us can participate in the joys and concerns of the church beyond Sunday morning. Not only does a prayer chain hold in prayer those whom we love, but a prayer chain links our congregation with immediate joys and concerns we wish to place before God. Below is a sample of how a prayer chain might work in our congregation.

Goal: Immediate and Corporate Intercessory Prayer

1. When you receive a call, write the prayer down and read it back to the person calling.
2. Immediately call the next available person.
3. If you cannot continue the call right away, ask the person calling to continue in your place.

4. Call starred (*) numbers between 7 am and 9 pm only.
5. When initiating a call, please state your name as the initiator, which should be continued in the ongoing message. When you initiate a call, try for a message that is both simple and brief.
6. A prayer chain call is completed when it returns to the initiator.
7. A prayer chain call may be left on another member's answering machine if not home (use your discretion) but the caller must also continue to the next available person.
8. Please respect confidentiality, if requested.

Please initiate the prayer after 6 pm if possible (unless it is an emergency to allow for more availability of prayer chain contacts.

In prayer, know that you are recognizing your solidarity with God, your solidarity with others for whom you pray, and the contours of your own values.²

Look for more details to follow in the Sunday bulletin.

Godspeed,
Patricia Donahue

¹ The Prophet, Kahlil Gibran, Alfred A. Knopf. Publisher. New York, 1923, P. 67, P. 68;

² Michael Mulberry, June 3, 2007

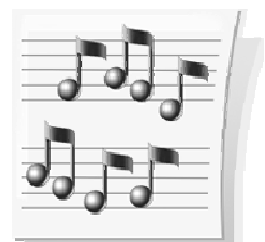
ATTENTION ALL MUSIC LOVERS!

The CUCC chime choir is starting rehearsals again after our summer break and we welcome music lovers of any age to join us. We normally meet only twice a month for an hour

at a time, on Wednesday evenings. Even if you've never chimed before, we would be happy to teach you. Our first practice will be Wed. August 22, 2007 from 6:30 – 7:30

PM. If you have questions please call Elizabeth Easley or Linda Morgan.

Come and join us--We hope to see you there!



SIDNEY DAIRY BAR RIDE II

Join us on the second annual Ride to the Sidney Dairy Bar on Saturday, August 18 (rain date September 1). We will meet at the Meadowbrook Park Prairie Play playground parking lot at the corner of Vine and Windsor in Urbana at 12:30 PM. We will then pedal our bikes to the Sidney

Dairy Bar on the back roads of Champaign County for a deserved reward. It is about a 10.5 mile ride to Sidney. We will ride back and return between 3:00 – 3:30 PM. Families welcome. Helmets required. Talk to Tom Ward for more information.



THANKS FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR GENERAL SYNOD

To the Congregation:

Ken and I would like to express our appreciation for the financial support from the church for our trip to Synod. While we were prepared to proceed with the expenses required in attending Synod, our budget smiled a big sigh of

relief when the support checks arrived!

In addition, the checks of support truly made us feel like we were there on behalf of the congregation, not just ourselves. So as we listened to debates, attended talks and carried on conversation with other

attendees, we had our home congregation in the back of our mind.

Synod is truly an event worthy of your time and energy. We hope each of you will be able to attend in the future. Bill Moyer's talk was a knock out!

Many thanks,
Ruth and Ken

“Synod is truly an event worthy of your time and energy.”

FLAT BREAD Printed from COOKS.COM

1 1/2 c. whole wheat flour
1/2 c. sugar
1/2 c. butter, softened
1 c. boiling water
4 - 4 1/2 c. white flour
1 c. buttermilk
2 tsp. baking powder
1 1/2 tsp. salt
1 tsp. soda
Heat oven to 400 degrees. In large bowl combine whole wheat flour, sugar, butter and water. Let stand until cool (about 5 minutes). Stir in remaining

ingredients using enough flour to make dough easy to handle. Turn dough onto lightly floured surface and knead about 5 minutes. Divide dough in quarters and cut each quarter into 8-10 portions. Roll out each portion on floured surface as thin as possible. Flat breads will be irregular in shape. Place on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake 5-10 minutes depending on thickness, or until golden

brown.

Note: You may roll these out to any thickness you like. Also, since I don't like rolling out the dough I use a tortilla press. It goes much faster, you can control the size and thickness of each piece.

Several people requested the recipe for Flat Bread that was used for the August 5 Communion Service.

Pat Syoen



COMMUNITY UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Parish Nurse: Linda Morgan

Community Life Calendar Keeper:

Jennifer Kelleher

jlk208@gmail.com

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Kara, Abe Mulberry, David Robertson

UCC Campus Ministry Staff

Campus Minister: Rev. Karen Bush

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The next Communigram will be mailed out on August 29

**Summer Sunday
Schedule**

9:30 am Worship

9:30 am Nursery

10:30 am Coffee Hour

6:00 pm CUCC Youth Group

**Sunday Schedule Begins
September 2**

9:00 am Sunday School (9/09/07)

10:15 am Worship

11:30 am Coffee Hour

6:00 pm CUCC Youth Group

Information for Any Scheduling at CUCC

To schedule any meetings or events to be located at CUCC please contact Jennifer Kelleher at jlk208@gmail.com.

Outdoor Service at Crystal Lake Park

Sunday, August 19 at 9:30 am Worship

After worship picnic with your family and other Community UCC folk.



What You Can Bring:

- ⇒ Lawn Chairs or Blankets
- ⇒ Salads, sandwiches or dessert to share
- ⇒ Your tableware

Susan Requa will preach and there is special music by the Sweet Adelines and also by Mark Hatlestad, Grandson Of Curt and Jan Wilson.
Hope to see you there!

