

COMMUNIGRAM

VOLUME 41, ISSUE 12

NOVEMBER 1, 2009

Letters from Leah “New Things”

On Candidating Sunday back in October, Sarah invited me to Tent Time with the Sunday School children. After introducing David, Chloe, and myself, I wanted to know if they had any questions for me. “You can ask me anything,” I said, which is true, not only for them, but for you too, by the way. I’m not sure what I was expecting. I was braced for some of The Big Questions. You know what some of The Big Questions are:

What happens when we die?

Why do bad things happen to good people?

If evil is an inherent part of Creation, then does that imply that God created Evil as well as Good and what does that do to our notion of a God that is all Good?

I think the average age in the room was 8. The Big Questions may have been a stretch, especially during this, our first conversation together. But, the questions they asked were good. The young people reminded me of something that morning -- It’s important that we know each other not just in terms of The Big Questions, but in terms of The Ordinary, Everyday Questions too. When we are first starting out and getting to know one another, it may be The Ordinary, Everyday Questions that matter most. We find points of connection there. The Sunday School children asked:

“What’s your favorite color?” (black, purple, or lime green)

“What’s your favorite food?” (artichokes)

“Your favorite restaurant?” (we like to eat locally)

“And, have you had more than 12 surgeries?” (nope, only one)

I loved their questions. We really got to know each other during those few minutes. I am looking forward to getting to know you – both in Ordinary, Everyday kinds of ways and in Big Question kinds of ways.

We’ll all have plenty of opportunities to get to know one another throughout December and into January. Look for the article in this Communigram for more information about attending a “Talk with Leah” session. Check your calendars and sign up. Check in with your friends, see that they’ve signed up too.

While talking with the kids that morning, I was reminded of a verse from the prophet Isaiah: “I am about to do a new thing!” (Isaiah 43:19a) When you get a new thing, rarely do you want to keep it wrapped up and in the box. No! Usually, we rip into it right away. We want to get it out of the box and see how it works. That’s what getting to know one another is all about. We are this “new thing” for each other. Let’s get out of the box and get to know one another, see how this “new thing” is going to work.

The “new thing” in your lives is doubled. You are getting a new pastor and a newly renovated building at the same time. God’s “new things” are multiplying before our eyes. What a remarkable time in the life of CUCC! I am positive that this is not the end of the “new thing” streak at CUCC. As we get to know one another and begin discerning about our life together at CUCC, I am convinced we will be celebrating an abundance of “new things”.

Until then, let’s enjoy getting to know our new building and one another. Thanks for the enthusiastic welcome we received in October. David, Chloe, and I are thrilled to be joining your Community.

WORSHIP AT COMMUNITY UCC IN THE PULPIT...

November 1st - Kim Tomaszewski

November 8th - Colie Huppertz

November 15th - Ellen Kordik

November 22nd - Eileen Gebbie

The deadline for the next Communigram is November 18th at Noon.

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear CUCC family and friends,

As this is my last Communigram article as your transitional pastor, I wanted to take this opportunity to tell you what a privilege and a true pleasure it has been for me to serve you, my church, in this way. This time with you in such a professionally "intimate" capacity has been one of the highlights of my life. I know I will always include it on the short list of those things in my life of which I most cherish and of which I am most proud.

I also want to thank you from the very most bottom of my heart for the open armed reception that you have shown me throughout this year and a half as your pastor and for the unexpected and extraordinary gifts of three Sundays ago. The love of the words spoken, the huge stack of your cards, letters, pictures drawn with other items included in the "box of love", my breathtakingly beautiful stole with the tree of life embroidered, the too generous envelope for my family, my gorgeous yellow roses (Elaine knows my favorite), and the reception of food and chocolate (you know me well) cake.

I know a team of you worked to put that all together for me. I won't try and name you all here for fear of leaving someone out but you know who you are. Thank you so much. Thank you to all of you. Each one of you is a gift and a joy and I love you.

If I try to put into words what that morning meant to me OR what You all mean to me, I will surely short out Jessica's laptop here for all the tears.

As what has become our tradition to tell our church children each week, "You are God's Best gift".

Moving on with joy~
Pastor Karen

Moderator's Musing

Congratulations to our Search Committee. Having been a part of a search committee in the past, I know how much work and time this committee put into the difficult job we asked them to do. I believe their discernment and prayer brought us together with the Reverend Lead Robberts-Mosser. Those of us that have had an opportunity to meet and listen to Reverend Leah Robberts-Mosser have had a wonderful experience. The weekend she and her husband Dave and daughter Cloe came to join us was a magnificent time. If you were unable to join us on Sunday morning, you missed the message of how the salt of the earth and chocolate chip cookies go together. If you're curious, ask one of the many children that were present that morning.

As Pastor Leah explained to us after the vote, because she and David had already decided on a journey of faith, she will be able to start with us sooner rather than later. If things continue to go as planned, she will be with us to begin Advent. Pray that they will be able to find good, affordable housing in C/U so that they can move soon. And if you have extra pull with prayer, say a good word about the house they need to sell in Battle Creek.

And let me say one more time a BIG thank you to our Transitional Pastor Karen. Being the independent, liberal thinkers we all are, we'd like to believe we made it through this transition by pulling on our own boot straps, but the fact of the matter is, we couldn't have done it without our favorite pastor. Her calm demeanor, loving style and gentle, confident leadership brought us to where we are today. She has expressed joy to me about Leah being selected to lead Community into our next chapter, but we couldn't have gotten there without her. If you see a bit less of Karen in the coming months, it will be for a well deserved rest. Well done Pastor KB, we love you dearly.

Lost and Found

A navy blue, finely pleated scarf was found at Clark Lindsey. If it belongs to you, please call Ruth Fisher at 344-5962. In addition, any personal belongings that are lost at the Church are held at the Church Office. Please contact Hailee if you are missing any items.

Scenes from Seminary by Eileen Gebbie

In every one of my classes I look to my professors for answers. What do I do with Leviticus? How about the genocide in Joshua? Eucharist schedule: what's best? The list is long but the answer I receive is always the same: what do **you** think?

Each faculty member expects us to approach the material and experience of a life of Christian faith directly and intentionally in order to make sense of it for ourselves. This is particularly true in Pastoral Care and Counseling. The final assignment is to write our theological anthropology, how we understand the relationship between humans and the divine. Our professor insists that we ground all of our work within our own ongoing discernment of scripture, theology, and living witness. That process sounded very intimidating until I let go, first, of the need for "the" answer and, second, saw that process as the same one we do in faithful community every day.

As UCCers we know that God is still speaking. No matter the cultural needs revealed in Leviticus (maintaining identity during exile), archaeological evidence behind Joshua (there was no mass conquest), or how often a congregation shares the holy meal (a sincere, local faith response), the texts and the practices continue to help us in our dialogue with Her. The only real answer is participation, together.



November Deadlines

Please note that the deadline for the December Communigram is earlier than normal due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. In order to mail the Communigram on time, please email all materials to info@community-ucc.org by 12:00 pm on November 18th. The bulletin deadline for that week will be earlier as well. Please have all submissions for Sunday's publication to the office by Tuesday, November 24th.

Thank you for your cooperation and have a happy Thanksgiving!

~Hailee

Talk With Leah

Reverend Leah Robberts-Mosser would like to meet with each and every one of us! Of course, that will be a real challenge in the next few months...but Leah is setting aside some small group meeting times that she hopes will be easy for all of us to choose a time to meet in December and January. Getting acquainted sessions will all be held in the parlor and are an hour long for visiting and sharing your visions for our church in the New Year with Leah!

Pick a date and sign up! Sheets will be posted in the parlor for sign up, or call the church office and speak to Hailee to get your name on the date of your choosing! We'd also like a "host" for each session who might be willing to provide refreshments. Spots are limited to 12 participants per session – only because Leah wants to get to know **YOU!** *Sign up today!*

'Recipe for Success' ...CUCC's 2010 Annual Stewardship Campaign

Get Ready, Get Set, Let's Cook!

I'm sure we all have that favorite meal that reminds us of home. We know that to have any chance of success in preparing that favorite dish, we have to know what the recipe is - the list of ingredients required. Miss just one ingredient or get the measure wrong, and the prospect for success in the final product will diminish greatly!

"You don't have to cook fancy or complicated masterpieces - just good food from fresh ingredients."

~Julia Child

Much the same could be said about the success of our church. There are ingredients that are absolutely critical in order to be a "successful church". What are the "proper ingredients" necessary to create an alive, vibrant, vital, thriving, and healthy congregation?

A successful recipe does exist but that recipe much like the varied dishes and tastes out there – depends on what you are looking for. We must use the ingredients God has given us and focus on who we are "cooking" for. Faith is our mixing bowl; faith in our Creator, in one another, and in the values we hold in common, but our recipe for success depends also on several key ingredients for a healthy and vital congregation.

Begin with a sense of **Identity** – at least a full cup– better yet, a cup overflowing – congregations have to be intentional about their identity as a gathered religious community – intentional about what they, as a church, stand for. At CUCC, we affirm every day that we are a Just Peace, Progressive, Open and Affirming Congregation. Add a level measure of the ownership of shared ministry. Congregations need to realize that ministers alone cannot make strong congregations – it is a partnership – a shared effort of doing ministry. Both congregation and minister need and aid each other in a **Relationship** built on shared purpose. Then add a generous helping **Commitment** in time, talent, and treasure from each member of the Congregation not just to the CUCC of today, but to its future in support of the Youth Programs that bring us such joy each year. Mix well with the standards of behavior that we set for ourselves in order to be in **Community**.

Oh, . . . and one more special ingredient - A gathered religious community ought to be a place to enjoy fellowship and have **Fun!** Add this ingredient to suit taste, but caution- this is not an ingredient to be stingy with! If church is not fun some of the time, we are going to learn that it is just not worth it much of the time! Vibrant congregations are places where we can enjoy fellowship and have fun together – where we can play together! There must be play times – potlucks and game nights and church retreats – women's groups and men's groups – work parties where there is fun in working together to accomplish a task – book discussion groups and lively conversations and sharing and coffee hours and music, music, music.

So join us this year as we celebrate *being* Community United Church of Christ, our unique presence in this community, and our vision for the future. Participate in the greatest feast – that of giving. **On Sunday, December 6th we will celebrate Stewardship Sunday and ask you to give your pledge for 2010.** (*pledge cards are included in this Communigram*) We have so much to be thankful for this past year . . .but so much work is still ahead of us – please take your seat at our table – we cannot cook without you!


To mark our successes, we are creating a CUCC Best Ingredients Cookbook. Everyone is invited to share recipes in this cookbook and you can find the form included in this Communigram.





NOVEMBER 2009

Community United Church of Christ Events Calendar

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 *See Schedule Blood Pressure Screening immediately following worship service	2 Campus Ministry Choir (Time, TBD)	3 6 pm Operation Snowball (Fellowship Hall, Conference Room, and Classrooms)	4 7 pm Choir Rehearsal 8 pm Campus Ministry Sanctuary	5 7 am Men's Fellowship @ Urbana Gardens 10 am International Group 2 pm - 4 pm Campus Ministry Open House	6 5 pm UCC Campus Ministry 9:30 am Women's Fellowship Meeting, Mt. Olive Baptist Church	7 9 am Women's Book Group
8 *See Schedule	9 Campus Ministry Choir (Time, TBD)	10 6 pm Operation Snowball (Fellowship Hall, Conference Room, and Classrooms)	11 12 pm Bulletin Deadline 6 pm Chime Choir Rehearsal 7 pm Choir Rehearsal 8 pm Campus Ministry Sanctuary	12 10 am International Group 1:30 pm Women's Fellowship 2 pm - 4 pm Campus Ministry Open House 8 pm AA	13 5 pm UCC Campus Ministry	14 9 am Women's Book Group <i>Church Work Day</i>
15 *See Schedule	16 Campus Ministry Choir (Time, TBD)	17 6 pm Operation Snowball (Fellowship Hall, Conference Room, and Classrooms)	18 12 pm Bulletin Deadline 7 pm Choir Rehearsal 8 pm Campus Ministry Sanctuary <i>Communigram Deadline</i>	19 10 am International Group 2 pm - 4 pm Campus Ministry Open House 8 pm AA	20 5 pm UCC Campus Ministry	21 9 am Women's Book Group
22 *See Schedule	23	24 12 pm Bulletin Deadline 6 pm Operation Snowball (Fellowship Hall, Conference Room, and Classroom)	25 6 pm Chime Choir Rehearsal 7 pm Choir Rehearsal 8 pm Campus Ministry Sanctuary	26 10 am International Group  <i>Thanksgiving</i>	27	28 9 am Women's Book Group
29 *See Schedule	30 Campus Ministry Choir (Time, TBD)				<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>*Sunday Schedule 9:25 am Choir Rehearsal 9:00 am Sunday School 9:15 am Choir Rehearsal 10:15 am - 12:00 pm Worship and Community Time 6:00 pm CUCC Youth Group 7:00 pm SET Meeting 7:30 pm AA</p> </div>	
					<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>CUCC Office Hours Monday Through Thursday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm</p> </div>	

Fall Work Day

All Church Work Day has been moved from Saturday, November 7th to the following Saturday, November 14th. It will still run from 9:00 am until 12:00 pm. This promises to be one of the most fun and exciting "Clean Up" days in our church's recent history. The renovations are scheduled to be completed and we will be preparing the spaces down stairs to be celebrated. Many hands will be needed and a simple breakfast will be provided.

Please look for up-coming information in the Parlor during Coffee Time and via email. Hope to see you there!

Message From the Faith Community Nurse Vial Of Life

Have you ever wondered what would happen if you had a medical emergency while at home alone, and could not verbalize your needs or give important health information?

Vial of Life is a Parish Nurse program designed to convey important health information to emergency responders in the home. It is especially important for seniors, those who live alone, or those with multiple health issues.

The Vial is a container that holds a paper with your personal health history such as illnesses, allergies, and current medications. The vial is kept in the refrigerator, and a Vial of Life sticker is attached to the front door of your home. In case of an emergency, the emergency responders have been trained to look for this sticker, and then know that they can find your health history in a easy-to-find place, the refrigerator.

If you would like to have a Vial of Life for yourself, or know of other persons who could benefit from them, please let me know.

Linda Morgan, RN
Faith Community Nurse

Sunday School

Dear Sunday School Parents:

Thank you for all your support in these first few months of Sunday School. Whether you are a shepherd, a volunteer teacher, or just making that commitment to get your little one(s) here every Sunday, please know your efforts are appreciated. The children appreciate the continuity and comfort of having as many of the same faces around them every week. We look forward to the upcoming church work day when we can start re-assembling our normal Sunday School classrooms. The past rotation was "David the Shepherd King." The next rotation to start after the Advent Workshop will be "Christmas Journeys". Also, in the next few weeks will start working on this year's Christmas pageant., "A Charlie Brown Christmas". We will need help with set, costumes, and running lines. Volunteers would be appreciated. Please remember that *in addition* to our regular offerings of K-12 Sunday School from 9:00 am - 10:00 am on Sunday mornings we are offering a *second* K/1 class during the service to coincide with our preschool class.

Thank you for all that you do!

The 8 Points of Progressive Christianity:

Jesus' path is selfless

By calling ourselves progressive, we mean we are Christians who recognize that being followers of Jesus is costly, and entails selfless love, conscientious resistance to evil, and renunciation of privilege.

The Center for Progressive Christianity (tpec.org)

Sarah J. Noceda
RE Director
sjnoceda@yahoo.com

Women's Fellowship Meeting World Community Day Press Release

Church Women United invites parishioners to attend World Community Day on Friday, November 6th at 9:30 am at Mount Olive Baptist Church. The church is located at 808 E. Bradley Avenue, Champaign. Our theme this year is "Piecing Earth Together" which focuses on the environment and on the call God gave us in Genesis 1:28-30 to be good stewards of the earth. Child care will be provided.

Church Women United was founded in 1941 as an ecumenical movement involving Protestant, Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and other Christian Women in United State and Puerto Rico. There are 1,200 units of Church Women United working for peace and social justice from a Christian basis, while supporting dialogue with all faith groups. If you have any questions or need a ride, please call Becky Hanson at 344-3977.

Dear CUCC family and friends,

Many of you will remember our beloved pastor Jack Good and his wife and our dear friend, Diana. Jack served our church as our pastor in the years from 1986 until his retirement in 2001. We are sad to report that Diana died the morning of Monday, October 26. She passed away at home with her family around her.

Diana was not only a cherished friend of everyone at CUCC but also served as our religious education director in teamwork with Gail Rost. From her very first days with us in 1986, Diana challenged us and inspired in us a new vision for intergenerational life and ministry within CUCC. Her deep love of children of any age and her appreciation of the gifts of seniors inspired her to consistently work (and encourage the rest of us) to bring the two ends of the life spectrum together - for friendship and for service to one another.

Diana's grace and gracious living in the face of the MS that plagued her life from the young age of 28 has been a profound example of courage and strength of spirit to all who are privilege to know her. Diana's quick wit, twinkling sense of humor, obvious delight in good discussions and intellectual engagement and deeply kind and compassionate heart were among the wonderful characteristics that made knowing her such a joy and a pleasure.

Determined to never be "cubby holed" into the traditional, "subdued" role of pastor's wife, Diana assertively created her own ministries in the church. From her love of reading good books, Diana began a church book club for anyone who loved to read-- a program that continues on today.

A professionally trained and active mediator, Diana brought a wonderfully well developed ability to ask the clarifying question and gently but clearly challenge also assumptions in whatever context she chose to enter as a leader or participant.

Born and bred in southern United States in a culture where woman were ladies first and foremost complete with white gloves and always pleasant demeanor whatever the circumstances, Diana's only concession to the traditional southern belle was her charming touch of a southern drawl and winning smile.

A woman ahead of her time, Diana was consistently a strong, kind, tremendously intelligent, passionate, playful and outreaching woman who spoke her truth without compromise and strived to live her deeply held values which included but not limited to: peace-making, care of the earth, the dignity of children and the elderly with the best of her ability.

Jack and Diana's love and devotion to each other and deep friendship with each other has continued to teach the rest of us by living example what marriage might mean in it's highest intention.

On a more personal note, Diana has been not only my friend and colleague (Diana served as campus ministry associate with a successful outreach to graduate students), but also my confidant, teacher, and adviser since our first days together at CUCC 23 years ago.

Scott and I have continued to be blessed with Diana and Jack's love and care long after their move to Virginia visa vie visits to their home, emails, and phone calls. We will miss her dearly and will continue to be grateful for all the laughter, tears, good discussion, and wise encouragement she and Jack both have given to our family from the very beginning of our family to present day.

I know you join me in extending our prayers and our love to the Good family including their daughter, Kristen, her husband George and their son, John, as we offer our heartfelt thanks to God for the life of our dear friend, Diana.

Pastor Karen

Jack and Diana Good
4434 Pheasant Ridge Rd #308
Roanoke, VA 24014

COMMUNITY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
JUST PEACE, PROGRESSIVE,
LGBTQ OPEN AND
AFFIRMING



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SUNDAY REGULAR SCHEDULE

9:00 am Sunday School

9:25 am Choir Rehearsal

10:15 am Worship

After the Children's Time,

Children up to 4 years old are welcome
in the nursery.

11:30 am Community Time

6:00 pm CUCC Youth Group

Label

The next Communigram will be mailed out on November 25th

CHURCH STAFF

Transition Pastor/Campus Minister:

Rev. Karen Bush

karen@community-ucc.org

Religious Education Director:

Sarah Noceda

sarah@community-ucc.org

Choir Director: Robert Smith

smithrob@champaignschools.org

Organist: Linda Vaughn

lindavaughn@community-ucc.org

Office Manager: Hailee Osterer

info@community-ucc.org

Faith Community Nurse:

Linda Morgan

Community Life Calendar Keeper:

David Gerstenecker

calendar@communiy-ucc.org

Child Care Providers: Jessica Bush,

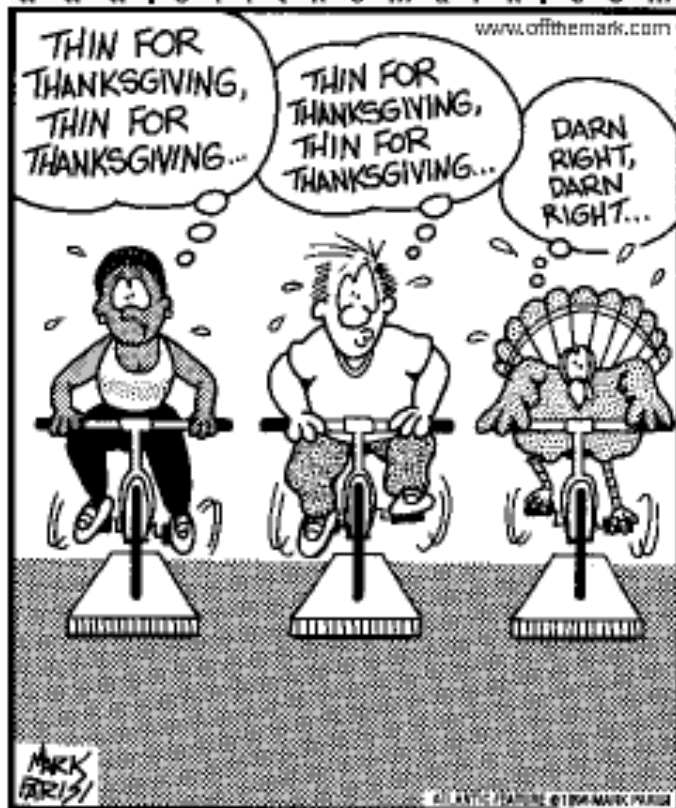
Lauren Knutsen, and Kathryn Scott

Children's Choir Director:

Christina Vergilio

cvirgil3@illinois.edu

off the mark by Mark Parisi
www.offthemark.com



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**Community United Church of Christ
2010 Pledge Card**

I/We _____

(Name)

(Address where quarterly report should be sent)

Choose to make a pledge to the 2010 budget of the congregation of Community United Church of Christ in the amount of \$ _____ for the year or \$ _____ monthly or \$ _____ weekly.

If my/our financial situation should change in such a way as to require a re-evaluation of the pledge amount, I/we will notify the church financial secretary of that fact to facilitate church planning.

.....
Stewardship pledges may be placed in the offering plate during Sunday Worship or mailed to the church in the care of our Financial Secretary, Tom Warembach.

Community United Church of Christ
805 S. Sixth St.
Champaign, IL. 61820

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