

# Mission Moment

## *Neighbors in Need*

Today we proclaim the Good News through our contributions to this morning's Neighbors in Need offering.

Neighbors in Need supports the work of the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM), which represents American Indian members of the UCC, launching new congregations, assisting American Indian pastors and congregations, and providing support for students attending Licensed Lay Ministry programs and UCC seminaries. It also helps fund the work of the Justice and Witness Ministries (JWM) of the United Church of Christ.

Through our gifts to Neighbors in Need, we support and encourage the prophetic service of our local churches, and while we feed and build, we also ask, "Why?" Why is there hunger and poverty in the wealthiest country in the world? And how can we change that?"

This question inspired the work being carried on by our Justice and Witness Ministries, enlivened by a spirit of power and of love, and in partnership with Conferences, local congregations and other organizations. Through your contribution to the Neighbors in Need offering, you support work for environmental justice, access to health care, and excellence in public education, to name just a few of the concerns we address through our Justice and Witness Ministries in the United Church of Christ.

Through your generous contributions to the Neighbors in Need offering, you share in our church's efforts for "justice for all."

*October 2008*



**God is still speaking,**

# Mission Moment

## *God called, and the youth came!*

It was one of the largest gatherings ever held in the United Church of Christ. Over 4,000 young people and their adult leaders swarmed over the University of Tennessee campus last summer at the 2008 National Youth Event!

Assembled in the basketball arena to begin and end each day, the youth applauded messages about how God is working in the lives of young people around the world. They swayed to music about their faith and their lives.

Yet despite the large crowds, the days held moments of personal sharing. In a workshop about applying our faith to daily life, a young teen voiced her concern that “everyone else seems to know their call. I am still waiting for mine, and it’s so hard to wait.” With compassion, another girl replied, “Don’t think you’re the only one. Even in this little group, others of us are waiting, too.” A third girl said, “I am sure of my call. It is for music ministry and youth work.” Then a boy added, “You are here. God called you here, to be with all of us. That’s important, and you responded.”

The church at its best is about lifting one another up and sharing our joys and burdens. No doubt, the youth of our church are some of our best.

*October 2008*

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



**God is still speaking,**

# Mission Moment

## *Small Institutions, Bold Missions*

Academies. Colleges and Universities. Theological Seminaries and University Divinity Schools. Small institutions with bold missions. Church-related higher education in the tradition of the United Church of Christ. On UCC Higher Education Sunday we celebrate our relationship with forty-six fully accredited institutions enrolling nearly 50,000 students. It's a long tradition, beginning with the founding of Harvard College in 1636, expressing our convictions that faith and learning are profoundly linked and that education is essential for both church and society.

Six of these institutions are historically African-American. The American Missionary Association founded more than five hundred schools and colleges for the freedmen of the South during and after the Civil War. The first collegiate degrees awarded to black persons in the South were earned by two men and a woman at Fisk University in 1875.

Today Dillard University, Fisk University, Huston-Tillotson College, LeMoyne-Owen College, Talladega College, and Tougaloo College are at the forefront of producing leaders. For example, Tougaloo, often called "the cradle of the Civil Rights Movement," is playing a pivotal role in the Jackson Heart Study, an unprecedented study of heart disease in African-Americans.

Let us celebrate the ethic of social responsibility and service of these forty-six educational institutions related to the United Church of Christ.

*October 2008*



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