

Mission Moment

A Family of Many Families

As a mother, wife, and member of the United Church of Christ, Moira appreciates the church's support for families. She says, "The UCC is a family of many families. Not all of us look alike or live alike, but we all tend to worship in local churches that value our differences as strengths. I want to raise my children in a loving church where we can find unity through diversity.

"I want my children to help lead their generation toward social justice. The church I grew up in didn't study the Bible or ordain women as pastors. It is important to me to raise my son and daughter in a church where women are pastors and language is gender-neutral in our hymnals.

"I've learned so much about my own faith by watching their faith develop. The faith and compassion my kids express is so natural — it's almost like it's in their bones — and this makes me feel more confident and assured in my own interactions.

"Inevitably, every child will develop some views different from their parents. In the UCC, we are committed to these differences. It's as though parents and children covenant to learn from each other. The church helps our family understand change and, often, to embrace it. 1 John 3:18 tells us, 'Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in action and truth.' We all must speak and act in truth and devotion. I feel confident my children will feel a sense of place in the church."

September 2008



God is still speaking,

Mission Moment

God's Shalom

“If you want peace, work for justice.” With those words, Pope Paul VI activated his generation. The UCC General Synod, in its 1985 Just Peace Church Pronouncement, defined “just peace” as the interrelation of friendship, justice, and common security from violence. It called the church to a vision of shalom rooted in peace with justice.

What is shalom? Typically we think of peace. But it also includes prosperity, welfare, health, well-being. The best single word is “wholeness.” Shalom is measured by what happens to each and every member of society, especially those without power.

There are many ways to work for justice. Some are called as activists, engaging in public witness, policy advocacy, and grassroots empowerment; some as teachers or preachers, doing issue education, theological reflection and discernment; others to ministries of direct service and presence. All are working to build a more just, compassionate, peaceful world—to restore God’s intended shalom.

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God is still speaking,

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Celebrate UCC American Indian Congregations

“Christianity doesn’t come in clean,” said Dr. Martin Brokenleg, professor of Native American Studies at Augustana College in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Christianity was not Good News for most of the world’s indigenous peoples because it entered their lives accompanied by government policies, military oppression, and education efforts to alter native beliefs and practices. Yet, God was still speaking.

We celebrate the historic United Church of Christ ministry with and among native communities. UCC individuals and congregations are invited to intentionally remember and pray for the nineteen UCC congregations located on American Indian reservations, dating back to the 1870's, and one multi-tribe UCC congregation founded in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1980.

On the Standing Rock, Rosebud, Cheyenne River, Santee Sioux, and Fort Berthold Reservations, in the Ho Cak community near Black River Falls, Wisconsin, and in the urban Indian community in Minneapolis, these congregations and the UCC’s Council for American Indian Ministry provide spiritual, community and personal nurture, engage in leadership development, work for American Indian justice, and serve the wider church.

September 2008

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



God is still speaking,

Mission Moment

It's back to school time. Who's helping the teacher?

“Does this church have a good children’s program?”

That’s a frequent question asked by visitors and newcomers to our United Church of Christ congregations, and churches really want to be able to answer, “Yes!” Through its Partners in Education ministry, the United Church of Christ helps church school teachers in congregations all across the country with resources, books, curricula, and workshops to assist them in planning, preparing, and presenting educational programs that enliven and inspire the children and the adults in their churches.

These “partners” are members of UCC congregations, working within our Conferences and with the support of national staff on the Worship and Education Team of Local Church Ministries. In addition to their work with curricula and lesson planning, they offer confirmation programs, help make our language more inclusive, and support youth ministry.

Our churches are blessed with committed teachers in our local congregations and with the Conference and national staff to support, encourage, and equip them in their ministry. We’re at the beginning of another school year, and our teachers all across the church are ready to teach a new generation about the marvelous things God has done and is still doing today. Let’s ask God’s blessings upon them, teachers and students alike!

The work of our Conferences and national setting are supported by your generous gifts to Our Church’s Wider Mission. Thank you!

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