



ConnTact

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Meet Your Local Church Ministry Team

by *Christine Palm*

How do you listen to a church? That's the challenge the Local Church Ministry Team (LCMT) faces daily. The 15 members of this group of lay and ordained leaders approach every interaction with members of any of the 256 Connecticut churches of the UCC as an opportunity to listen, and to get people talking to one another about their hopes, needs and challenges.

"We're here to promote covenantal relationships," says LCMT Chair Doby Hall. "We listen to churches, and we hope they will come to us with their needs and expectations, because we're here to respond." The team focuses its efforts on several areas of church life, especially Christian education, worship and evangelism, youth ministries and leadership development, with the overall goal of increasing the vitality and effectiveness of local churches. *Continued on page 4*

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Transformative Title IX



The Rev. Dr. Davida Foy Crabtree, Conference Minister

Not long ago, in a matter of two hours or so, I watched 39 year-old Regina Jacobs break a world record in track, and then the Husky women defeat Duke to lay claim to first place in the national basketball polls. I was thrilled to have been able to see both of those.

As one who grew up in the era when physical education for women consisted of square dancing, half court basketball, and bowling, with gymnastics and field hockey

occasionally thrown in, I have been a big supporter of Title IX as it applies to athletics. Simply put, Title IX prohibits any dis-

crimination or exclusion, on the basis of gender, from any program receiving Federal financial assistance. That seems eminently fair to me, but today Title IX – and the 30 years of progress and opportunity for women athletes it has created – is under attack by those who seek to undermine its clear intentions.

As the founding director of the Prudence Crandall Center for Women in New Britain, then a community-based service and advocacy organization, I attended every meeting of the local board of education. Having built that relationship, we at one point requested the privilege of doing a study of men's and women's athletics in the school system. The results did not surprise anyone. Women's teams were only allowed to practice when men dis-

n't want the gym or the field, had no uniforms, and coaches were generally not available.

Title IX has transformed women's athletics. It has also transformed at least two generations of women who will never see themselves the way my generation did – second-class citizens whose physical development was a postscript. The issues about Title IX are fundamentally about women's development, not about men being deprived. As a society we make compromises in order to provide for everyone.

God, Genesis tells us, created male and female in the image of God. Together, in full equality, we bear that image – not fully, or we'd be God, and not the same as each other or there'd be no male and female. But equally we bear that image. We are equally important, and our individual and collective development and leadership are imperative for our stewardship of the earth and its peoples.

Title IX has given us the Husky women and athletes like Regina Jacobs and Florence Joyner. It has given today's girls and women a different future in substantial ways. Why would we want to go back?

COVER STORY *Continued from page 1*

Your Local Ministry Team

How does this important mission translate into the everyday work of your church? It can be something as concrete as making certain books available to a church's Sunday School class and distributing flyers for a particular church's outreach programs, or as lofty and inchoate as leadership development and stewardship.

"It's a 'bottoms-up,' rather than 'top-down' kind of structure, which is really the embodiment of the spirit of the UCC," says the Rev. Kathy Peters, Associate Conference Minister for Local Church Ministries, who facilitates the operation of the LCMT. "Our hope is that individual church leadership

will be pro-active and share their expertise as well as their needs. For example, we are running a Moderators' Workshop on May 31, and we need to hear from people who can help lead it, as well as those who need to learn skills so they can become better moderators. We're trying to hook people up with one another."

Peters and Hall express a mixture of bemusement and mild disappointment that church leaders – whether lay or ordained – are often reluctant to take advantage of the resources and energy of the Ministry Team.

"It's sort of a provincial New England tradition to take care of our own," Peters says with a laugh. "And sometimes, we all need encouragement to share our needs."

"There's always more to gain from churches sharing, rather than doing it by themselves," Hall adds.

Over the years, the Ministry Team's structure has evolved considerably to make it easier for church leaders to partake in all the Ministry Team offers. In 1997, when the Connecticut Conference was restructured and the state was

divided into three regions, three LCMTs were formed. But by 2000, it became clear that it made more sense to have the LCMT operate statewide, because churches often were united by need, rather than strictly by geography. In this way, they can be "clustered" according to the specific resources they seek. For example, there might be an inner city church in two different regions that is struggling with declining membership. By bringing together lay and ordained leaders from both, the LCMT can bridge the geographical gap and get at the heart of the two churches' challenges.

The group is chartered for 20 members, and currently there are five vacancies. This structure allows for one member from each of the Associations, and five "at-large" members. LCMT members would appreciate nominations to the team. Please call Nominating Committee Chair Esther Shoup at 860/871-0044, or email her at ewshoup@aol.com.

• United Church News •

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Soundings by the Silver Lake Board

Since Silver Lake Conference Center is in the midst of transition, the SLCC Board of Directors thought this would be a good time to take some "soundings" around the Conference about the ministry of "the Lake" and its future direction. The SL Board was formed four years ago to ensure that focused attention is given to this important ministry. Their role is in policy oversight, program development, visioning and planning.

Following are opportunities to participate in these sessions at which two board members will facilitate, listen to and record your concerns and ideas. Directions to each location will be available on the Conference web site: www.ctucc.org.

Sunday March 2, 2003 3 PM
South Congregational Church
9 Pleasant Street
Middletown

Sunday March 2, 2003 3 PM
Center Congregational Church
155 Main Street
Torrington

Sunday March 2, 2003 3 PM
First Congregational Church of Willimantic
199 Valley Street

Wednesday, March 12, 2003 7 PM
First Congregational Church of East Hartford
837 Main Street

Sunday, March 16, 2003 3 PM
Saugatuck Congregational Church of Westport
245 Post Road, East

Tuesday, March 25, 2003 7 PM
North Haven Congregational Church
28 Church Street

Spring Plantings 2003 Weed It and Reap!

(Ministry with All God's Folk)
March 29, 2003 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Church of Christ Congregational
1075 Main Street
Newington, CT
Sponsored by
the Ministry Teams
of the Connecticut Conference
United Church of Christ

For information contact Sarah Annis
866-367-2822 Toll Free CT
860-233-5564
saraha@ctucc.org

Therefore: Be It Resolved...

As individuals, congregations and a denomination, we in the UCC have a vital and abiding interest in the power of "the word." We know on the one hand that our lives are shaped daily by the words we use and

the words that flow through us from the media, from the workplace, from books and magazines, and from conversations.

On the other hand, we profess to be part of the "People of the Book," and followers of the "Word made flesh." We sit in the pews of our sanctuaries weekly to hear the Word proclaimed, dramatized and interpreted. And while we are there, at our best, we are awaiting the sense of the Spirit, trusting in the manner of our Pilgrim forebears, that "there is yet more light to break forth" from that creative, life-giving Word on both a personal and a corporate level. That waiting is rooted in the fact that every one of us needs a liberating Word powerful enough to break through the crust formed by the endless words around us, words that in their sheer massiveness can so easily paralyze us with fear, despair, prejudice, and apathy.

One of the most creative ways that God provides us, as a Conference, with that "reminding, challenging, renewing Word" is through the process of writing, debating and voting upon Resolutions and Affirmations at our Annual Meetings and General Synods.

Whoa, just a second, don't change the station. Put down that remote and pay attention. Let me restate the assertion even more boldly: Resolutions and Affirmations are indispensable in shaping our UCC identity, in clarifying our "world view" and in prodding us to apply our Gospel of Hope in the world."

Did I hear you snicker? You don't buy that? Because they are exercises in partisan politics? Because Christians should pray and not argue? Because they are forgotten as soon as they are dealt with? Because they have no tangible effect beyond the meeting that considers them? Because they are not the proper form of Christian witness?

If that's your reaction, you're not alone. You share one or more of those reactions with thoughtful Christians on both sides of the so-called liberal/conservative divide. On many issues it wouldn't be hard to argue that we tend to be more talk than action, especially on endemic issues like racism, and there is a school of thought that maintains Christians shouldn't talk about controversial issues at all. Yet out of the prophetic motive I would maintain that our resolutions and affirmations have made an enormous difference.

Over the past thirty-two years, the Connecticut Conference has passed 191 Resolutions or Affirmations, give or take one or two, with almost all falling into the former category. The imbalance in favor of urging actions is understandable with the historic commitment of each of the four strands of tradition in our background (Congregational, E & R, and Christian) to social justice. We in the UCC feel a strong urge to "tangibilize" our faith, to incarnate our convictions. So we have urged our congregations to support children at risk on many occasions; declared sexual misconduct to be unacceptable and provided training for authorized ministers regarding its seriousness; and encouraged advocacy for reproductive rights, for hunger relief and for environmentally sound lifestyles. We have opposed gambling, reliance on fossil fuels, inhumane prisons, violence as way of solving problems, and, yes, racism wherever it is found. We have spoken and acted as peacemakers. Those "words" voted at annual meetings have indeed made a difference.

Nor should we underestimate the value of Affirmations. Without urging any particular action, they act in an even more direct way to define who we are as a Pilgrim People, what theological principles we tend to adhere to consistently over the years. For example, in 1989, the Conference affirmed persons with physical and developmental challenges as full partners in ministry. In 1978, the delegates affirmed a General Synod Resolution on International Disarmament, and in 1996 the basic right of all people to affordable housing was affirmed. We

Continued on page A7

Disaster Ministries Training Events

Jane and Newell Curtis, Conference Coordinators

Training for a disaster response after the fact is too late! For that reason, we are willing to meet with people from several UCC churches in your area to provide training in how the faith community can respond to disasters whether they are natural (hurricanes, floods, etc.) or technological (oil spills, hazardous wastes, toxic materials, etc.).

Does your church have a disaster response plan? Do you have a data bank of church members with specific skills or background in such areas as first aid, CPR, electrical repair, plumbing or food service?

Is there a plan for changes that would be needed to transform your church building into a shelter? Is there an immediate network of public agencies, ecumenical or interfaith groups and other resources to initiate collaborative efforts?

If you have questions regarding any of the above, please contact Jane & Newell Curtis
Phone: 860-399-9584
Address: 1414 Essex Road, Westbrook, CT 06498
Email: njcurtis@ricconnect.com

Silver Lake, A Place of Nurture, A Place of Support

Across our United Church of Christ, one of the things that the Connecticut Conference is known for is its Outdoor Ministries program at the Silver Lake Conference Center in Sharon. Silver Lake is more than the buildings and the natural setting, though they are beautiful. It is the special sense of community that is shared and nurtured there. Thousands of young people and adults have been to "the Lake" and feel a

Lake, died there on January 7th. He was just 21. It was a place he loved, and he worked hard to make it a better place.

I felt a special affinity with Justin. We traveled a similar path while at Silver Lake. He, like I, was a conferee, and served his first summer on the "Camp Family," a distinct part of the summer staff. Later, he too was a member of the Ecological Task Force. It's hard to describe

It was a place he loved, and he worked hard to make it a better place.

special relationship with the place and with those who share the experience.

Even though I have been a part of Silver Lake since the 1970s, I recently had occasion to see first hand just how strong that bond is. We of the Silver Lake community were saddened when Justin Ramos, a staff member living and working at Silver

those who work on this part of the staff. Let's just say that the harder you work, the more you sweat, and the dirtier you get, the better the day is. He, like I, reveled in that.

We both took time off between high school and college and enjoyed the beauty and solitude of Silver Lake after the thousands of conferees had gone home. Justin worked at the

Edith Guffey, Associate General Minister of the UCC, to be Keynote Speaker at Annual Meeting of Connecticut Women of the UCC



Edith Guffey, Associate General Minister of the 1.4 million member United Church of Christ will be the keynote speaker at the 75th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Women of the United Church of Christ. Ms. Guffey serves the U.C.C. as the operational executive of the Office of General Ministries and is responsible for the day to day work of that office in Cleveland. In the past, Edith served as the chief statistician for the U.C.C., editor of the Yearbook, listing the 10,000 ministers and 6,000 churches in the U.C.C. and is administrator of General Synod, the biennial meeting of the denomination. Edith's message, "Never Underestimate the Power of Church Women" will inspire those attending with her dry wit and humor and broad Faith base.

The 75th Annual Meeting, "CELEBRATE THE PAST—FOCUS ON THE FUTURE" will take place on Saturday, April 26 at the First Congregational Church of East Hartford, 837 Main St, East Hartford, beginning with registration and coffee at 9:30 a.m. Participants will be treated to many interesting displays, a bookstore and SERRV shop. The day will include music, worship, recognition of Past Presidents, installation of officers, recognition of special women, and much, much more. We expect to conclude at 3 p.m.

For more information or to register, call Pam DiDio at the Conference Office at 1-860-233-5564 or toll free, 1-866-367-2822, ext 101. Cost, including luncheon is \$10.00 before April 23, or \$15.00 after that date. Bring your Campbell's labels and new yarn for York Correctional Institution. Our offering will go to Silver Lake Conference Center. Save the date now and plan to join us in fellowship.

Sharon site, helping Property Manager, Mike White, where needed.

What struck me as the news of Justin's sudden death traveled through the Silver Lake community was the way in which so many people quickly rallied together. Individuals came forward, offering to clean buildings, supervise meals or work with groups on retreat in Sharon. The week-end of Justin's wake and memorial and burial services, the Conference Center was fully manned by former staff members, so the current staff could attend. Our Conference Minister, an alumna herself, ensured that pastoral support was available for the numerous staff members, past and present, who attended services, as well as for Justin's family. It was estimated that over 400 people attended the calling hours,

gathering to honor Justin and support one another in their common loss.

The Reverend Boyd Johnson led the memorial service at Justin's home church, First Church of Christ, in Woodbridge. As I sat and looked around the church, I saw it filled with our Silver Lake family - volunteers and conferees who had known and worked with Justin. Most members of his "Camp Family" and staff attended as a group. His "Camp Family Dad" from that first staff summer, James Kenny, who now lives in Colorado, personally called each member of that family, and flew to Connecticut to attend the services.

A group of musicians who attended and led conferences during the summer sang some of Justin's favorite

songs, including "Freebird," a song that was particularly meaningful to him and is emblematic of Justin's life. At the invitation of Justin's family, Mike White spoke at the service and shared some of his experiences with Justin and reflections of the young man he knew and loved. Mike and Jen White's acts of ministry and support to the gathered staff were a credit to both them and to Silver Lake: a place of nurture and support. Godspeed, Justin.

The Rev. David F. Peters

David Peters has served the Roxbury Congregational Church since 1986. He is a member of the Silver Lake Conference Center for six summers and lived and worked there during the winter of 1976. He is member of the SLCC Buildings and Grounds Committee.

Joyce Yarrow Named Silver Lake Transition Director

Joyce Hatton Yarrow, a well-respected non-profit professional with extensive experience in youth recreation programs, has been named Transition Director at Silver Lake Conference Center in Sharon, CT. In this position, she will serve as a bridge between the past and the future directors of SLCC and help guide this important UCC resource through its next critical stage of development.

This is not the first time Yarrow has helped guide part of the UCC mission through a transition period; in the summer of 2002 she served as Interim Associate Conference Minister for Administration between the tenures of Ken Ulmer and Charlie Kuchenbrod.

Yarrow has 15 years of experience in training and consulting, with an emphasis on non-profit management and boards of directors. In recent years she led training retreats for both the Board and the staff of the Connecticut Conference. Currently, she is a training consultant with not-for-profit organizations, including The Connection, Inc., a statewide human service and community development corporation, for which she is designing a training curriculum for their 200-member staff.

Yarrow's experience includes leadership and executive development as a Corporate Trainer and Educator at Rensselaer Learning Institute in Hartford (1966-2002), and as President and Executive Director of the Institute for Non-Profit Training and Development (1987-1996) at the Hartford Graduate Center. In addition, she served on the Hartford Seminary Board for 10 years.

Yarrow also has served as Executive Director of the Hartford YWCA (1979 to 1987), the New Britain YWCA (1971-1979) and, from 1964 to 1971, the Northern Middlesex YMCA in Middletown. In each of these positions, she improved and expanded the facilities' enrollments in year-round swim, fitness and club programs, the boys' and girls' day camps, counselor-in-training/community-wide swim programs, and the family swim club. In addition, she established the Middlesex agency's first stand-alone Teen Center.

"Camping is in my blood, and a faith-based camp is an answer to my lay ministry dreams," Yarrow said. "Silver Lake is a sacred and special place for so many people. I have attended many weekend retreats there over my 30-odd years in

Connecticut. Now, in a time of transition and healing, God is calling us to listen to one another and continue that ministry in all that it can become. I am thrilled to be a part of this exciting place at such an exciting time!"

Yarrow says her goal is to work with the SLCC Board and committees, as well as year-round and summer staff, to carry on the traditions there while moving the facility forward.

"It has been a very difficult time for SLCC with the recent Health Center fire and the loss of Justin Ramos," Yarrow said. "But I have been so impressed with the outpouring of help and support for the SLCC ministry. Past staff, volunteers, Board and committee members and UCC pastors and church members have jumped in and offered their volunteer efforts to do whatever is needed. We are so grateful to everyone."

Despite these recent challenges, Yarrow says SLCC is anticipating an exciting and productive summer session.

"The Board and I are working very closely and everything is on schedule for a wonderful summer season," she said. "The summer conferences are all lined up, staff is being hired, plans for the new Health Center building are well underway. In addition, several 'Soundings' meetings are set up for February and March to discuss Silver Lake for the express purpose of seeking input on the future director and programming for SLCC. So while some things will be different, the spirit of Silver Lake will continue to grow and flourish in us all."

"We are thrilled to have Joyce on our team," said the Rev. Davida Foy Crabtree, Conference Minister. "She combines the spontaneity one needs for youth work, with the practical, no-nonsense approach required to manage a large and diversified facility."

Yarrow is an active member of UCC South Church in Middletown, where she serves as Vice President of the Church Council, and is on the Nominating Committee, Planning Oversight Group, and Audit Committee, and often leads Adult Education sessions.

In her new position, Yarrow will be at Silver Lake at least once a week and sometimes over the weekends, and at other times will work out of her home or the Conference Office. She encourages people to email her at joycey@ctucc.org.

Rev. Dr. Joseph Neville Submits Resignation



move back into parish ministry. The unrelenting call of the local parish has been beckoning me for some time. To my delight, I was asked to serve as interim pastor with a Connecticut Conference church, which is struggling mightily to reclaim its ministry of transformation. After some weeks of discernment, I agreed to see what God has in store for us in that venue.

Dear Davida,

It is with mixed feelings that I submit my resignation as Western Regional Minister of the Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ, effective March 7, 2003.

My time here has been filled with blessings and challenges. The Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ is strong and vital. It has been a source of professional growth. We all can be proud that its staff, clergy and laity are about God's mission in the world.

However, at this stage in my ministry, it feels right that I

Davida, I am grateful for the ministry you shared with me and the leadership you offer to this conference and national church. I am appreciative of the support and collaboration of our regional ministry team, shared with Judy Hjorth and Kent Siladi. Our Associate Conference Ministers have been a source of support, competency and friendship. I have been blessed by them and look forward to further interaction from a different point of reference.

Grace and peace,

The Rev. Dr. Joseph Neville

Joe Neville has served a Regional Minister for the Western Region of the Conference since the fall of 1997. Over these years, he has worked with search committees in 46 churches, some of them more than once. He has guided church leaders and pastors through the thickets of conflict, inspired countless numbers with his preaching, and called us all to be a more faithful Church. Those with whom he has worked describe him as a "great coach" whose skill in working with challenging situations has been dynamic, calming and focused on the Gospel. Joe's sense of humor and integrity have endeared him to his colleagues. "We will miss Joe deeply because of who he is and his commitment to the Gospel and the vision of the United Church of Christ. We are pleased that he will be interim minister at Center Church in New Haven, and thus remain an integral part of our life as a Conference. Still, his region and the wider Conference are losing an important leader. We're indebted to Joe for all the gifts, wisdom and skill he has brought to our staff team and to the churches and pastors," commented the Rev. Davida Foy Crabtree, Conference Minister.

He leaves us now to serve as Interim Minister of Center Church, UCC in New Haven.

PILGRIMS & PARISHES

EDITED BY JEAN HAMILTON

Bridgewater

Congregational Church held a Public Speaking/Lay Reading Seminar. It was an opportunity for people to brush up on their skills, hear tips from old hands, and practice with a friendly crowd.

Westbrook

The First Congregational Church has a monthly column in their newsletter with activities for parents and children to do together. The activities are based on a Biblical theme.

Rocky Hill

Congregational Church Quilters have distributed 1200 ABC quilts made for AIDS babies and other young children with serious diseases. The group also makes lap robes, pillows, and walker bags for nursing home patients.

Ivoryton

Congregational Church has started an after-school program one afternoon a month for church school age children. Using the "one-room-school-house" model the children gather as a group for stories, crafts, acting, singing, and prayer.

Ridgefield

The First Congregational Church has a Mission Apartment. Subsidized by the Trustees the program provides for families in need with a two bedroom apartment and regular support to enable them to move out on their own. Church members meet regularly with the family to help them to develop skills and give them a jumpstart.

Thompson and Windsor

Thompson Congregational Church had a guest speaker for worship on the Sunday between Christmas and New Year. The Pastors daughter on her winter break delivered the sermon for that service. First Church in Windsor invites returning college students to participate in the leadership of that particular service.

North Greenwich

The youth of the Congregational Church have been participating in the "Good Dog Foundation." They have been acting as persons confined to bed, in a wheel chair or on crutches in the training of these dogs that are used in visits to nursing homes.

Somers

Congregational Church invited members to share their artwork for a display during the 275th Anniversary Banquet and 276th Annual Meeting. The display remained in place during January.

Branford

First Congregational Church held their annual Flour Festival. Members of the Middle School Youth Group and Senior High Youth Group baked bread and pies. The goodies were sold for Thanksgiving.

Enfield

The search committee of the Congregational Church began their process by being blessed with prayer shawls lovingly knitted by the prayer shawl ministry.

Union

The Congregational Church Union Scouts provided the senior citizens with a 5 gallon pail of sand and salt mixture.

South Windsor

Wapping Community Church has formed a discussion group for those who are currently unemployed or in transition. They have also discussed developing a talent pool within the church to create networking for those in a job search.

West Haven

First Congregational Church held a celebration dinner marking the 80th anniversary of the "Pebbles" women's service group. The group was started by a Sunday School teacher at the church. Her class became known as "Miss Stone and her Pebbles." Their motto was "Not Self, But Service."

Recent Pastoral Transitions in Connecticut

New Calls

Bailey-Francois, Don from Associate Pastor Ellington Congregational Church to Pastor Ellington Congregational Church, January 20, 2003.

Bickel, Robin from Associate Pastor Plymouth, MA to Associate Pastor Storrs Congregational Church, January 1, 2003.

Dutton, Dwight from Pastor Broadview Community Church Hartford to Pastor First Church of Christ, Congregational, Groton, March 2, 2003.

Hawken, Jane from Pastor Wilton, NH to Pastor Second Congregational Church Middle Haddam, January 27, 2003.

Hughes, Teresa from In-Care CT to Pastor Stanley Memorial Church New Britain, March 10, 2003.

Rider, Jeffrey from Pastor Vero Beach, FL to Pastor Congregational Church of Greens Farms Westport, January 1, 2003.

Resignations

Anderson, Shirley from Pastor Higganum Congregational Church to Pastor Millbury, MA, January 1, 2003

Carque, Patricia from Pastor First Church of Christ in New Haven seeking a new call, December 31, 2002.

Etter, Laurie from United Church of Christ of Oakdale to chaplaincy, December 29, 2002

Parsons, Shepard Pastor First Church of Christ in New Haven seeking a new call, December 31, 2002.

Reynolds, Cindy from Associate Pastor Middlebury Congregational Church to Associate Pastor Glen Ridge, NJ, February 1, 2003.

Yudt, Alan from Pastor UCC in Devon to Pastor Manheim, PA, March 2, 2003.

Retirements

Raeburn, Craig Pastor Second Congregational Church of New London, March 30, 2003.

CLASSIFIEDS

Lost and Found
FRANKLIN — Missing from Annual Meeting display area a long white damask tablecloth. Contact: Peggy Wright or Cecile Gilson 860-233-5564 [3/03]

Positions
BLOOMFIELD — Director of Christian Education needed part time (20 hrs wk). The First Congregational Church of Bloomfield is looking for a self-starter to help grow the Christian Education Mission. The church is located in a diverse community of 20,000 and has a church membership of 440. The Sunday school enrollment is 35 and reflects the diversity of the community. Responsibilities include Sunday school, Christian Education Board Support, and partial responsibilities for the Pilgrim Fellowship. Contact: Interim Pastor Rev. Linda Huff at pastorbloomfield@usa.net or Tel. 860 242-0776 or mail resume to 10 Wintonbury Ave. Bloomfield, CT 06002 [4/03]

COVENTRY — First Congregational Church of

Coventry seeks choir director to contribute to our enthusiastic music program of 1 adult and 1 youth choir. Experience in choral direction and piano skills required, organ skills desired. One Sunday service September - June. Opportunity exists to substitute for organist on Sundays during the summer months. Position available now. Compensation commensurate with experience. Contact: First Congregational Church 1171 Main St. PO Box 355 Coventry CT 06238 Attention: Music Board [4/03]

NEW HAVEN — The Church of the Redeemer is looking for a church secretary, 35 hours per week, Monday through Friday, 9-3, and Wednesdays 5-7. \$25,000 per year. For more information or to apply contact The Rev. Lillian Daniel Church of the Redeemer 185 Cold Spring Street, New Haven, CT 06511 phone: 203-787-5711 e-mail: redeemer@snet.net [5/03]

NEW HAVEN — Church of the Redeemer in New

Haven seeks a Director of Christian Education for 15 hours per week with responsibilities on Sundays and Wednesdays. Salary level is \$9,700. Contact: For more information or to apply contact The Rev. Lillian Daniel Church of the Redeemer 185 Cold Spring Street, New Haven, CT 06511 phone: 203-787-5711 e-mail: redeemer@snet.net [5/03]

SUFFIELD — The First Church of Christ, Congregational (UCC), Suffield, CT, seeks an enthusiastic, committed Associate for Christian Education. Position is part-time, 25 hrs. per week. Our need is for a person of substantial leadership capability who can provide strong vision for our educational ministries with all ages, working collegially with staff and leaders to empower laity and guide programs. Starting time is negotiable. Please send files to: CE Search Committee, First Church of Christ, 81 High Street, Suffield, CT 06078 [4/03]

Black History Month

February is Black History Month, and the Dunbar United Church of Christ is celebrating Black History with a program designed to deliver messages of hope, diligence, reconciliation and harmony among races to the Greater New Haven neighborhood and beyond.

The program, "The Ties That Bind," is sponsored by Dunbar United Church of Christ, The Office of Multicultural Affairs of Southern Connecticut State University, and Center Church on the Green UCC. It aims to highlight the need for education, cooperation, leadership and justice as ties that bind us together as one human family, more than the distinctions of race, religion or culture that can separate us. Ideally, every person who participates will benefit from these ties of possibility, which were envisioned by the founders of our nation.

"Ties" refer also to the opportunities available to all people for achieving the "American Dream." The premise of this program is that one's beliefs act as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Secretary of State Colin Powell summarized this observation when he said, "If you can see it, you can be it." Through the various presentations, music programs and the example of the speakers as role models, we hope the audience will be inspired to view all aspects of their life in a positive way.

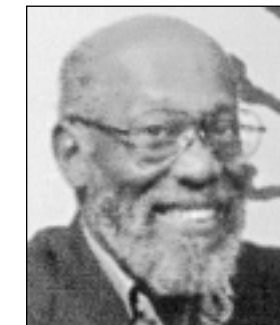
Following is a schedule of the events which comprise this program. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH SCHEDULE			
DATE	TIME	EVENT	VENUE
3/2/03	4:00 p.m.	Valerie Tutson	Dunbar UCC
3/9/03	4:00 p.m.	William Pinkney	Center Church



BIOGRAPHIES

Valerie Tutson: A professional storyteller, with an emphasis on African traditions, Valerie has traveled the world and shared stories and songs in Europe, Canada, Africa and the US. In addition to telling stories at festivals, in theatres, schools, churches, libraries, parks, prisons and open spaces, Valerie has taught drama at an Alternative Middle School in Providence for over ten years. She also hosts and produces CULTURAL TAPESTRY, an award winning public affairs show celebrating diverse cultures.



William Pinkney: An adventurer, author and lecturer, Captain Pinkney is currently Master of the recreation of Freedom Schooner *Amistad*. In this floating classroom he visits ports nationally and internationally as an ambassador for friendship and goodwill to promote reconciliation and harmony among races by teaching the historic lessons of perseverance, cooperation, leadership and justice inherent in The Amistad of 1839.

THE PROPHET MOTIVE • GORDON BATES / Continued from page A3

Therefore, Be It Resolved...

declared in 1997 that we aspire to be a Just Peace Conference, following our General Synod's similar action in 1985. We affirmed multiple General Synod Resolutions by becoming an Open and Affirming Conference in 1989. Such declarations provide the backbone of our denominational identity.

It is equally significant that our biennial UCC General Synods, over roughly the same period of time, have been even busier, as those assemblies tried to discern the needs of the times.

Communism, the international arms race, the beginnings of space exploration, inclusive language, corporate social responsibilities, civil liberties, genetic engineering gambling and AIDS, among many other topics: were brought into focus from the perspectives of the Gospel and critical Christian think-

ing over the centuries. Many are topics that the Connecticut Conference had or would ultimately address. Many are areas of concern that are yet to be faced in our Conference.

Some Resolutions and Affirmations at the General Synod were initiated by actions taken at one of our Annual Meetings. In 2002, we voted unanimously to send one of our Resolutions to the next General Synod in July 2003, regarding the tensions between North and South Korea. The passage of that resolution strengthened our relationship not only with our newest church venture, but with the Kyungki Presbytery in Korea as well, as we shared their agony a little and pledged to stand with them in the search for peace on that peninsula.

On all levels, what we support or oppose determines both how others view us and how we view ourselves in faith and life.

To improve and energize that mechanism of self-definition, the Conference Board has formed a Resolutions Process Review Committee, chaired by Rev. Scott Morrow, Pastor of the North Haven Congregational Church. The Committee filed a pre-

liminary report on February 6 and will file a final report in June 2003.

The review is not about whether to have resolutions and affirmations. It is to re-examine how we engage in that process. The prophetic "voice" must never be muted or lost. Nevertheless, discerning that voice has been and remains an essential part of our calling as Christians. We may not all agree on what that voice should say to our churches, our culture and our world, but the ongoing struggle to sense and follow the will of God is precisely what resolutions and affirmations entail and what, by debate and voting, we seek to accomplish as individuals, as congregations and as a denomination. On that journey, we slowly but surely delineate the shape of our faith, the strength of our hope and the scope of our love. "God is," as the UCC claims, "still speaking." Pray God we will continue to be gifted to hear and respond.

(Direct any comments or questions for the Resolutions Review Committee to Gordon Bates at the Conference Office).

SPRING PLANTINGS 2003 Blooms in Newington

As winter turns to spring's brighter and greener days, the Connecticut Conference celebrates the seasonal change with Spring Plantings 2003: Weed It and Reap! Spring Plantings will offer a day of workshops and fellowship, and a time to lift spirits and voices together in worship. This opportunity to share and experience new ideas for ministry takes place on Saturday, March 29 from 9 to 3, at the Church of Christ, Congregational (UCC) at 1075 Main St. in Newington.

Participants can choose from among five workshops in each of three, 75-minute sessions. The wide-range of topics include global mission, Just Peace, refugee resettlement, Bible study, regarding Iraq, spiritual direction, contemporary worship and more. The event will also feature informative displays, a SERVV sale and a Hartford Seminary book sale.

Spring Plantings is co-sponsored by the Conference's Justice and Witness, Local Church and Wider Church Ministry teams. The cost, including lunch, is \$10 for adults and \$5 for childcare. (Childcare must be requested in advance.) To learn more about this exciting day, please contact Sarah Annis at 860-233-5564, toll-free at 866-367-2822 or online atsaraha@ctucc.org.

EVENTS

Thursday, March 6 9:15-4 • Rocky Hill Congregational Church, Rocky Hill • Barriers to Growth for Midsize Churches • Leader: Rev. Alice Mann, The Alban Institute Cost: \$40 includes lunch Contact: Ms. Sue Furness, susanf@ctucc.org 860-233-5564 ext 112

Thursday, March 6, 2003 7:30 PM • Marquand Chapel, Yale Divinity School New Haven • Bartlett Lecture • "Being Faithful in an Faith Full World: Reflections about Commitment" The Rev. Dr. Barbara Brown Zikmund, Professor at the Graduate School of American Studies at Doshisha University and former President of Hartford Seminary.

Saturday, March 8, 2003 8:30-3:30 • Norfield Congregational Parish Hall, Weston • Discerning Your Congregation's Future • Leader: The Rev. Dr. Robert Friedrich details a more effective and consensus-driven way to lead and grow a church. Each attendee will receive a resource kit. Cost: \$129 per person with discounts for three or more from the same organization. Contact: www.churchdrs.com or 8666-355-5374 or seminar@churchdrs.com

Sunday, March 9, 2003 12:15-1:45 • First Congregational Church of Haddam • Faith That Draws Us Together and Drives us Apart • Peace and Violence in Christianity and Islam A Forum for Adults, teens and children. Forum presenters Ali Antar, Imam of Greater Hartford Islamic Center, Dr. Fatma Antar, Professor of Economics, Manchester Community College, and The Rev. Ralph Ahlberg, Minister Emeritus of Round Hill Community Church, Greenwich. Preacher for 10 AM worship that day is The Rev. Gordon Bates, Associate Conference Minister for Justice and Witness Ministries, CT Conference, UCC. Brunch 11:30-Noon. Cost: Donations accepted for brunch Contact: 860-345-2742 Please reserve for brunch by 3/2/03

Sunday-Tuesday, March 9-11, 2003 • Incarnation Center, Ivoryton • In-Care Retreat • Personality, Prayer, and Pastoral Ministry: a Retreat for In-Care Candidates; Leaders: Lindsey Huddleston & John Danner Cost: \$150 Contact: Rev. Carole Carlson, carolec@ctucc.org

Sunday, March 16, 2003 3-5 PM • First Congregational Church, Vernon • Centering Prayer • Deepen your prayer and enhance your present spiritual practice with this ancient Christian meditation of silent prayer. It is a simple form of prayer designed to deepen your relationship with God and give you peace. Cost: Free Will Offering Contact: Mary Bello, CSJ 860-243-2374

Monday, March 17, 2003 7-8 PM • Spiritual Life Center, 120 Mountain Ave. Bloomfield, CT 06002 • Pondering Prayer: Praying with and through the "Impossible Situations" • In the midst of the inevitable crisis of life, we can invite God's transforming presence into the deepest concerns of our hearts. Input along with scripture, music, readings, and quiet reflection will help you to experience pondering prayer. "But Mary treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart." Cost: \$20 Contact: Mary Bello, CSJ 860-243-2374

Tuesday, March 18, 2003 9:30-1:30 • First Congregational Church, Cheshire, CT • What Can We Learn From Paul About Renewing Our Churches? • Leader: Dr. David J. Trobisch, Bangor Theological Seminary Cost: \$12 for Lunch Contact: Ms. Sue Furness susanf@ctucc.org 860-233-5564 ext 112

Sunday, March 23, 2003 4 PM • First Church of Christ, Wethersfield • First Church Concerts • The Selfish Giant, based on the work of Oscar Wilde Music by Liza Lehman Cost: Donations are welcome Contact: 860-563-7759

Saturday, March 29, 2003 9 - 3 • Church of Christ, Congregational, Newington • Spring Plantings 2003 "Weed It and Reap!" • Come join your sisters and brothers in Christ for Spring Plantings 2003. This is an opportunity to attend three workshops on a variety of topics; share lunch and fellowship time together, and lift your spirits and voices in worship! Cost: \$10 includes lunch Contact: Sarah Annis, saraha@ctucc.org 866-367-2822 or 860-233-5564

Sunday, March 30, 2003 3 PM • First Congregational Church of Vernon • Afternoon of Heavenly Harp • Sharon Hanjian Rondeau, an award winning harpist will showcase the harp as a versatile solo instrument, performing Celtic and other traditional melodies. Cost: \$6; \$4 seniors and students Contact: 875-7580

Sunday, April 27, 2003 10 AM • The Congregational Church in Killingworth • Fifth Annual Youth Gathering • Why? To connect youth from area groups, To excite the youth of our churches, Develop fellowship in a safe and invigorating environment, To provide a network for our youth groups. Who? Middle school and High School youth Come for the entire day or come for the afternoon activities. Music Workshop - Yoga - Challenge Course - Labyrinth - Leather Craft - Kite Design and more Contact: for Registration forms and information contact Rev Ed @ 860-663-1789, Karen @ 860-663-3866 or e-mail us at Reved@rcn.com

Tuesday-Wednesday, May 6-7, 2003 • Wisdom House, Litchfield • Leadership Retreat for Associate Pastors • leaders: Rev. Jerry Handspicker & Rev. Patricia Kogut Cost: \$170 Contact: Ms. Sue Furness susanf@ctucc.org 860-233-5564 ext 112

Tuesdays, May 6, 13, 20, 27 • CT Conference Office, Hartford • Profile Writing & Interviewing Workshop • Leaders: Ms. Lindsey Huddleston & Rev. Carole Carlson Cost: \$135 Contact: Ms. Sue Furness susanf@ctucc.org 860-233-5564 ext 112

May 13-15, 2003 • Craigville Conference Center on Cape Cod • NEAUCE 2003! Sparks of the Spirit • A Conference designed and created for Pastors, Associate Pastors, Youth Ministers, Christian Educators, Youth Leaders and Sunday School Teachers The Rev. Martin Copenhaver, Senior Pastor, Wellesley Congregational Church, UCC Keynote speaker and Worship Leader. Contact: Sarah Annis saraha@ctucc.org

Wednesday, May 14, 2003 9-5 • Orange Congregational Church, Orange • Clergy Misconduct Prevention Training • Cost: \$45 Contact: Ms. Sue Furness susanf@ctucc.org 860-233-5564 ext 112

June-August, 2003 • Appalachia • F.A.S.T. 2003 • Faithful Advocates Serving Together, Rehabbing homes in Appalachia. To engage in a life-changing educational study, action, reflection experience, which will lead to a broader understanding and advocacy. Sign up now - space is filling fast! Registration forms available online at www.homelandministries.org/missions/vim Cost: \$190, excluding transportation. Contact: Brenda Tyler 1-888-346-2631.

July 10-17, 2003 • at General Synod 24 in Minneapolis • Maybe Ministry Young Adult Conference • For those 18 to 30 years of age who have been hearing God's call but are unsure how to respond, this Conference will help them explore the possibilities of ministry in the UCC. We will examine as a group our personal understandings of calling, church and ministry, surrounded by the opportunities introduced to us with in the Synod experience. Registration will be limited to 10 people. Contacts: Rev. Mark Diters, 860-653-7289 or Rev. Kristen Kleiman, 860-644-0833.

September 19-21, 2003 • Camp Jewell YMCA Colebrook • Start Something Youthfest • Pastors, Youth and C.E. directors watch for the video and promotional materials in your mail box. www.startsomething.org Cost: \$125 Contact: Rev. Kathy Peters kathyp@ctucc.org